



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE 2008

MARKING SCHEME

HEBREW STUDIES

HIGHER LEVEL



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General Comments

The first aim (i) of the syllabus reflects the desire to pursue the aims of the Junior Certificate course at a level appropriate to senior students. It requires specifically that students at Leaving Certificate should be able to read and understand Classical and post-biblical Hebrew. This aim is tested in each question in **part (b)** which normally, but not always, consists of a question concerning language.

The second aim (ii) of the course is “to enable students to deepen their understanding of the history, religion and civilisation of the Hebrew people by focusing in greater depth upon major themes regarding institutions, religious ideas and roles as they were expressed and developed during the course of Israelite history.” This fundamental aim of the course requires from the student – particularly at Higher Level - evidence of an in-depth knowledge of the history, religion and civilisation of the Hebrew people and major themes associated with these. It is for this reason that the essay question is allocated 50 marks in each question.

The Examination Paper

There are 3 parts to each examination question, **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)**:

The first part **(a)** seeks a knowledge of the background and significance of the *specific* prescribed text while part **(c)** seeks a knowledge of the *broader* related theme. Both **(a)** and **(c)** seek to test the second aim (ii) of the syllabus. The essay title in part **(c)** of each question is normally phrased in broad general terms to allow the student scope in interpreting it and to encourage originality in answering it.

Part (a) **25 marks** **Three points (8,8,9)**

It is expected that the student can readily translate the passage: what is expected here is the skill and competency to relate the passage to its historical, literary or cultural/religious background. For example (and depending very much on the specific text under discussion), the student is encouraged to take into account factors such as: if and how archaeology or the history of the Middle East generally, or the

specific literary style of the author, or the theological aims of the author or the general theme and tenor of the book from which the passage is taken, can help highlight the points made in the passage under discussion. It obviously depends very much on the passage under discussion but at Higher Level, the examiners expect to see a wider discussion that helps throw light on the text and not merely a synopsis or summary of the text.

The examiner looks for any **three** substantial and well developed points and awards marks to the degree in which these points are developed.

The three points made by the student are allocated **8, 8 and 9** giving a total of **25**.

Part (b) 25 marks

Three formats of question are normally found here:

- ***Write a brief note on....*** What is expected here are **two** substantial points which are developed (**13,12**). Marks are awarded for two relevant and well developed points. Again, depending on the passage, the student is encouraged to include in the answer any relevant references to archaeology, history, or references to other passages within the bible or Mishnah. All this fulfils aim (ii) of the syllabus.
- ***Parse and translate....***equal marks are given to translating and parsing. (This fulfils aim (i) of the syllabus)
- ***Give a suitable title....***this too fulfils aim (i) of the syllabus. **15** marks are awarded for correct grammar and **10** for appropriateness to the passage. Square script is expected and the student may very well find that a simple phrase he or she has come across in his/her study of this or other prescribed texts, or in the Mishnah, sums up very well the point of the narrative. For example, if a famous Rabbi has a well known short, succinct, saying that sums up the passage, such a

saying would be acceptable to the examiners. In that case the student is encouraged to give the name of the Rabbi. However, any title will be accepted if it is appropriate and grammatically correct.

Part (c) 50 marks (10,10,10,10,10)

Part (c) is designed to test the student's knowledge of the theme which corresponds to the theme represented by this section of the syllabus. In accordance with the aims of the syllabus the student is expected to show serious analysis of the topic. Simple descriptive summaries of the theme will be penalised at Higher Level. The title is always broad and general but the student is expected to *:

- show knowledge of the development of the theme historically.
- display knowledge of the theme in literature (biblical and Mishnaic) and include remarks about the literary genre, if this is appropriate.
- evaluate the importance of the theme...or the success or failure of an individual ..why he succeeded...why he failed. It is this evaluative or analytical aspect that is demanded by the syllabus.
- If it is primarily a historical question, then an evaluation would be welcome. Such an evaluation could take into account recent archaeology which proves or disproves a historical event.
- If there is a particular theological viewpoint -e.g. theological reasons which underpin an understanding of the exile in Babylon or the rise of the monarchy - these should be clearly brought out.

** use of the criteria listed obviously depends on the nature of the question*

It is essential that students include biblical/Mishnaic or historical references. This depends very much on the title but generally **four** references should be included. The student is encouraged to refer specially to a text e.g. Gen.6:9-2 or Ecc. 3:2-6 rather than in vague general terms. Similarly, where appropriate, precise historical dates should be included - e.g. 167-163 BCE when dealing with Antiochus. In other cases,

one might make a reference to “ the middle of the 7th century”. Students are also encouraged to quote a short phrase from a biblical or Mishnaic text.

The examiners look for **four solid points** which are allocated **10 marks** each. Each point is expected to be individual and substantial. The final **10 marks** are awarded for quotation or reference. (It may be that a candidate develops **three** points particularly well: the marking scheme can take cognisance of this). It is not the intention of the question or the examiners to be over-prescriptive in the way each question is answered, but there must be serious evidence of well thought-out and analytical answers with appropriate reference or quotation. The student is strongly encouraged to offer a creative evaluative answer and not simply descriptive summary.

