



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2023**

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 6

assessing

An Introduction to Islam

[SRE61]

THURSDAY 25 MAY, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of a mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for **GCE Religious Studies**

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including:
 - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching;
 - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies;
 - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice; and
 - approaches to the study of religion and belief (AO1); and
- analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study (AO2).

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Levels of response

In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

Each of the two assessment objectives have been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates. Having identified, for each assessment objective, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

Other Aspects of Human Experience at AS Level

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, when required, to access Bands 3–5.

Synoptic Assessment at A2 Level

Candidates must support their answer with reference to at least one other unit of study to access Bands 4–5.

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.
- Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material lacks clarity and coherence. There is little or no use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are basic and the intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate makes a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is limited use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Very Good): The candidate makes a very good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with clarity and coherence. There is very good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a very good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 5 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent response to the question asked • Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and knowledge • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A very high degree of relevant evidence and examples • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response to the question asked • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A very good range of relevant evidence and examples • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good response to the question asked • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A good range of relevant evidence and examples • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response to the question asked • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding • Demonstrates limited understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A limited range of evidence and/or examples • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response to the question asked • Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding • Demonstrates minimal understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • Little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis • An excellent attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • An excellent attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • An excellent attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure • An extensive range of technical language and terminology with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis • A very good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A very good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • A very good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis • A good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • A good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis • A limited attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A limited attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which struggle to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience • A limited attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis • A basic attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A basic attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which fail to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience • A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, where necessary, to access Bands 3–5.

Section A

Answer **one** question from Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 1 (a) Explain what Shahada and Zakat reveal about the beliefs and practice of Islam.

Answers may include:

- Comments relating directly to the Shahada and Zakat.
- The Shahada is the first Pillar and is the foundation of all the other Pillars.
- It is recited daily as part of the prayer ritual.
- It is a declaration of faith and if said before witnesses, is considered to show commitment to the Islamic faith.
- It declares the two key beliefs of Islam.
- There is one God in Islam, Allah, to add to Allah in any way is considered to be shirk, the unforgivable sin.
- No images are allowed as they imitate the creative nature of Allah and this is idolatry.
- The second statement reveals that Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets.
- He comes at the end of a long line of prophets but the revelations which came through him are perfect and found in the Qur'an.
- Through Muhammad humanity knows what is expected of them.
- Muhammad also provided the perfect example of a life lived for Allah and Muslims can imitate his way of life.
- Zakat is the third Pillar.
- It means 'purification'.
- Muslims give 2.5% of their earnings away.
- The belief is that if they give a portion of their money away, their remaining money is purified.
- It is also believed that if Zakat is given it shows that they are truly a Muslim.
- It is also believed that by giving Zakat their prayers will have greater effect.
- It is believed that by giving alms in this way it expresses submission to Allah and worship of him.
- The Pillar of Zakat shows the Muslim belief in the necessity to care for the vulnerable in the community (ummah) and in particular, the poor.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) “Muslims only keep the Five Pillars because of their desire to be rewarded by Allah.” Assess this claim. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of how Muslims have a sense of duty to keep the Pillars, their five key religious duties.
- Consideration of the Muslim desire to submit to Allah, the meaning of ‘Islam’.
- Consideration of ibadah, all of the Five Pillars are forms of worship.
- Consideration of the importance of correct motives.
- Consideration of the Muslim belief that each Muslim is responsible for themselves, their good and bad deeds will be weighed and their destiny of Paradise or Hell decided on that basis.
- Consideration of the inherent value of each of the Pillars, why they might be observed.
- The Shahada is an agreed creed, which states key beliefs and unites all Muslims.
- Salah is the daily prayer ritual which is a constant reminder of Allah and their submission to him.
- Zakat is an opportunity to realize that the origin of all things, including money is Allah, creates an attitude of gratitude and generosity.
- Sawm is valuable for understanding the suffering of the poor, a time to focus on reading the Qur’an the greatest gift and miracle, a time to share food and wealth with the community (ummah), a time of celebration at the end of a festival.
- Hajj is an opportunity to visit Mecca, a holy place, to share in the international community, to remember the past, to celebrate a festival.
- Consideration of the significance of having the correct intention within Islam, the outer deed is not enough, Allah knows the intention of the heart and that is where the true submission occurs.
- Consideration of other motivations which Muslims may have such as the desire to conform to the wishes of their family, local community, country, the possible fear of persecution or isolation.
- Adherence to the Pillars in order to imitate the actions of Muhammad.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

2 (a) Discuss Muhammad's leadership from the Hijra to his final sermon.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the latter part of Muhammad's life, from the move to Medina up until the final sermon.
- Evidence of focusing on the question and leadership in particular (possible reference to Muhammad as prophet, preacher and statesman).
- Consideration of different aspects of Muhammad's leadership.
- Consideration of Muhammad's desire to establish a theocracy in Medina.
- Consideration of Muhammad's spiritual leadership in Medina, establishing a mosque and religious rituals and teachings.
- Consideration of Muhammad's leadership in relation to the community and the Constitution of Medina.
- Consideration of Muhammad's leadership in relation to political alliances and dealing with those who did not support him.
- Consideration of Muhammad's desire to expand the faith and influence of Islam and how he showed leadership.
- Consideration of Muhammad's leadership in battle, such as the Battles of Badr, Uhud and the Trench.
- Consideration of Muhammad's leadership in relation to territorial expansion and the taking of Mecca.
- Consideration of the content of Muhammad's final sermon and how his final words offered leadership to the Muslim community on many topics, e.g. moral teaching, protect and respect the life and property of every Muslim, return borrowed items, do not take interest, each one will give an account to Allah, the treatment of women, keep the five Pillars, all Muslims are equal, there will be no further prophets, follow the Qur'an and Sunnah and pass on Muhammad's words to others.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels
(AO1)

[25]

(b) Evaluate the view that the Hadith and Sunnah offer the greatest support for Muslims in living out their faith. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the significance of the teachings of Muhammad found in the Hadith, how they add to the Qur'an, Muhammad is the perfect example so his teachings are invaluable.
- Consideration of issues relating to the transmission of the Hadith, their recording and reliability.
- Consideration of the significance and support of the example of Muhammad found in the Sunnah, how they add to the Qur'an, Muhammad lived the Qur'an, he was the perfect example.
- Consideration of issues relating to the transmission of the Sunnah, their recording and reliability.
- Consideration of the volume of material in the Hadith and Sunnah, the six collections and the challenge this may present.
- Consideration of how all the Law Schools consider the teachings and example of Muhammad found in the Hadith and Sunnah to have authority, in establishing Shariah Law.
- Consideration of other aspects of Islam which may be even more supportive.
- Consideration of the support found in the teachings of the Qur'an.
- Consideration of the significance of the mosque, on a daily or weekly basis, the importance of geographical location and access, the implications of gender.
- Consideration of the significance of the family in supporting faith, reinforcing ritual practices such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, festivals.
- Consideration of the significance of the Islamic community in supporting faith, values and traditions.
- Consideration of the accuracy of the word 'greatest'.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

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Section B

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Answer **one** question from Section B

3 (a) Explain how the Qur'an was revealed and why it is so valuable to Muslims.

Answers may include:

- The belief that the Qur'an existed in heaven.
- Revelation of the Qur'an began long before Muhammad, Allah had revealed it to many of the prophets before Muhammad but it had been corrupted by the hearers and the message lost.
- The revelation to Muhammad began on the Night of Power, it was pressed into Muhammad, he memorised the revelations and recited them to his followers.
- The revelations continued for 23 years, they were recited and memorised, recorded on scraps and kept in Hafsa's chest, and a final version was written under the reign of Uthman.
- Muslims believe the Qur'an is the final uncorrupted revelation of Allah and has absolute authority.
- It shows the mercy of Allah who wishes for humanity to submit to his will, it is his gift, he did not wish for humanity to be left alone.
- The Qur'an as containing key beliefs and practices, a source of guidance.
- The Qur'an as bringing unity to the Ummah (is read in Arabic).
- The Qur'an is Muhammad's miracle.
- The Qur'an is recited five times a day in prayer (Salah).
- The Qur'an is the basis for preaching during Friday prayers.
- The Qur'an is read throughout the year and all of it is read during Ramadan, especially on the 27th of the month which is when the Night of Power happened.
- The Qur'an allows Muslims to be as close to Allah as possible in this world.
- Possible reference to how Muslims show respect for the Qur'an.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b)** “Sacred texts should be the only source of authority for religious believers.”
With reference to other aspects of human experience, consider how far this statement is true. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Reference should be made to other aspects of human experience.
- Consideration of reasons why a sacred text is so important.
- Consideration of the view that a sacred text is the revealed word of God.
- Consideration of the view that the authority the sacred text holds is because of the divine origin.
- Consideration of how a sacred text guides in relation to key beliefs.
- Consideration of how a sacred text guides in relation to key duties or practices.
- Consideration of how a sacred text guides in relation to moral living.
- Consideration of how a sacred text brings strength and comfort to a believer.
- Consideration of the timeless relevance of a sacred text.
- Consideration of possible limitations in relation to a sacred text and the need for additional sources or authorities.
- Consideration of how a sacred text cannot cover everything and therefore additional sources are needed.
- Consideration of how sacred texts were revealed in a particular context.
- Consideration of other possible sources such as additional texts which help to explain or exemplify a sacred text.
- Consideration of the importance of religious leaders in explaining and applying sacred texts.
- Consideration of the importance of religious tradition, which has authority in its own right.
- Consideration of the influence of the family or community in interpreting and applying sacred texts.
- Consideration of how technology can interpret and apply sacred texts via social media, websites, podcasts, Zoom.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

50

AVAILABLE
MARKS

4 (a) Examine the role and importance of the Imam in Islamic life and worship.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Imam is a term which is applied to leaders of the Muslim community.
- The Imam leads prayer (Salah), the second Pillar of Islam, performs rakah, recites the Qur'an in Arabic.
- The Imam interprets the Qur'an for the community.
- The Imam leads Friday prayers – Salat-ul-Jamu'ah.
- The Imam stands at the mihrab and preaches two sermons on a Friday to guide and inspire the community.
- The Imam may coordinate special events or festival celebrations.
- The Imam acts as a figure head for a local Muslim community.
- The Imam teaches children Arabic to ensure the continuity of the faith, on a daily basis.
- The Imam may perform religious rituals connected to birth, marriage and death.
- Consideration of the Imam's role as someone who provides counselling to individuals, couples, families.
- Consideration of the Imam's role in offering advice on Islamic teaching and the application of Sharia Law.
- Consideration that anywhere can be a mosque and anyone can be an Imam or lead the prayer ritual.
- Consideration of the Islamic view that each person is their own representative before Allah, the Imam is not a priest or go-between.
- Consideration of the Islamic view that only a male can lead mixed prayers and the modern debate surrounding this.
- Consideration of how females may be an Imam, but only for other women.
- Consideration of how worship is valuable for the individual, e.g. draws them close to Allah, reminds them of their beliefs, devotion, responsibilities.
- Consideration of how worship is valuable to the Muslim community, draws them close to Allah and each other.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) “Faith and worship are meaningless without a personal religious experience.”
 With reference to other aspects of human experience, evaluate this view.
 Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Reference should be made to other aspects of human experience.
- Consideration of the significance of personal religious experience.
- Consideration of how a personal religious experience could be key to having faith.
- Consideration of how a personal religious experience could enhance worship.
- Consideration of the significance of a personal religious experience in the form of a conversion.
- Consideration of the transformative power of this for some.
- Consideration of the significance of personal religious experience in relation to miraculous events or healings.
- Consideration of the significance of personal religious experience in relation to spiritual gifts, e.g. speaking in tongues.
- Consideration of how a personal religious experience may not be dramatic.
- Consideration of how for some, their personal religious experience may be a gradual welcoming into a religious community.
- Consideration of how, for some, a personal religious experience leads to a gradual growing of faith and desire to worship or commitment to serving others.
- Consideration of the possibility that God can be experienced personally in a great variety of ways.
- Consideration of the subjective nature of personal religious experience.
- Consideration of how personal religious experience can be viewed with suspicion.
- Consideration of how fair it is to say that the faith or worship of another person is ‘meaningless’.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

50

Total

100

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**