



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2024

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit A2 1

assessing

Themes in the Synoptic Gospels

[ARE11]

THURSDAY 30 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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[17]–[20]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[13]–[16]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[9]–[12]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[5]–[8]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[1]–[4]

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 to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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 vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis. • A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis. • A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis. • A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis. • A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[1]–[6]

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answer **two** questions from this section

1 (a) Clarify how the Synoptic Gospels are similar yet different.

Answers may include:

- Discussion of how Mark, Matthew and Luke share several traits and similar textual passages yet they are different in that they don't share some narratives, e.g. Infancy (Mt & Lk omitted from Mark); parables (e.g. Mt is the only Gospel to have the parable of the unforgiving servant) or miracles (e.g. Lk is the only Gospel to have the miracle of Jesus healing a crippled woman on the Sabbath).
- Consideration of the concept of harmonisation.
- Discussion of the Synoptic Problem which seeks to answer the question why are the Gospels similar yet different?
- Analysis of material shared by the three Synoptic evangelists, e.g. the parable of the mustard seed, healing of the paralysed man or payment of taxes to Caesar.
- Exploration of literary interdependence: Similarities in outline, order and wording with possible citation of examples such as the calming of the storm.
- Consideration of material unique to each evangelist ('M' & 'L') and the reasons for their inclusion or omission of such, for example, Luke's concern for his Gentile audience may have led him to omit the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter.
- Discussion of material shared by two evangelists, for example, Matthew and Luke both include the healing of the Centurion's Servant and the possible existence of the 'Q' source to explain such parallel material.
- Consideration of differences in parallel material such as Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and Luke's Sermon on the Plain – similar yet different.
- Reflection on the view of St. Augustine that any differences in the Gospel accounts could be explained by means of saying the evangelist was writing about a different albeit similar incident. For example, if two evangelists had the different version of a parable it may have been told on separate occasions or for different audiences.
- Exploration of Source Criticism and how it seeks to identify the sources used by each evangelist and its aim to provide a solution to the Synoptic Problem.
- Possible mention of the views of Guy, Reimarus, Lachmann, Stanton or any other relevant scholarship.
- Consideration of any other textual references in relation to the Synoptic Problem.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) "For scholars, not all solutions to the Synoptic Problem are equally valid." Critically assess this claim.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Discussion of the nature of the Synoptic Problem.
- Analysis of the view that divine inspiration provides one solution to the Synoptic Problem but that there are other possibly more valid solutions.
- Consideration of the view that ultimately it is not a decision for scholars but people of faith to choose.
- The Priority of Mark as the most commonly held solution to the Synoptic Problem as it successfully explains the similarities and differences in the Synoptic Gospels. Mark as the proposed basis for Matthew and Luke. Mark as the shorter Gospel. Improvements in language and grammar by Matthew and Luke. The textual history of the early Church – Mark's Gospel was used the least as the early Church used revised versions such as that of Matthew and Luke. Reverence and conciliation.
- The development of Holtzmann's two-source hypothesis and B.H. Streeter's four-source hypothesis.
- The existence of a primitive Gospel (Ur Marcus) which was used by all three synoptic evangelists.
- The Documentary theory of interdependence. The suggestion of the Priority of Matthew. The Augustinian hypothesis and the order of the New Testament canon of scripture. The Griesbach hypothesis (Two Gospel Hypothesis). The views of Farmer.
- Possible counter argument that divine inspiration is a very traditional solution to the Synoptic Problem. It is one of the earliest Church solutions. It purports ideas such as:
 - God inspired each evangelist and therefore they must agree whenever they recorded the actions and words of Jesus.
 - The evangelists are reduced to passive instruments. They were doing God's bidding and did not express their own views, opinions or contexts.
 - Literal interpretation that everything in the Gospel is true as it has been divinely revealed by God.
 - The theory does not allow for inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the human ability of the evangelists.
 - The main difficulty with divine inspiration is that it accounts for the similarities but not the differences and therefore, is not a fully convincing solution.
- The role of academic scholarship in profiling various solutions.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels
(AO2)

[30]

50

2 (a) Discuss the ethics of Jesus contained in the parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13–21).

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Discussion of the ethical teaching of Jesus in Luke's Gospel in relation to use of wealth in the parable. Luke's suggested own difficult presentation of wealth (as he came from a wealthy background) and therefore, use of wealth is an important message in his Gospel.
- Consideration of the ethical teaching presented in the parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:13–21).
- The context of the parable, human greed, the man asks Jesus to judge a case of inheritance, concerned with his own gain.
- The ethical teaching of Jesus concerns greed and materialism. Jesus warns the hearers to guard against greed and illustrates this through the parable. Jesus often elaborates on his ethical teachings with a parable to illustrate the point.
- Jesus is concerned with spiritual wealth rather than material wealth and inheritance.
- The parable's focus on 'eat, drink and be merry' – the man is selfish and does not use his wealth to help others. Jesus' ethical teaching is relevant to modern society, the issue of philanthropy. His hoarding and the abundance of crops speaks of how he had more than enough for himself. His alienation from others through possession of wealth as no one else is mentioned in the parable. The message of the parable to use riches wisely for the good of others.
- Judgement day came sooner than expected – judgement is based on actions and not on possessions. The folly of the accumulation of material goods – "you cannot take it with you when you go". Life is not measured by possessions.
- Wealth is not condemned in the parable – Jesus' ethical teaching is about the selfish use of wealth. Eternal life is not secured by possessions but our attitudes and actions.
- Consideration of the twofold ethical teaching – life should not be devoted to the accumulation of wealth and the duty to help others, if wealthy.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

(b) "No one Christological title can describe Jesus".

To what extent do you agree with this claim?

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the claim in relation to the titles of Jesus.
- Concurrence with the claim that no one title can satisfactorily describe the true nature of Jesus but a combination of many titles.
- Consideration of Christology and how it has developed throughout the history of the Church and the change in the meaning of titles. High Christology and low Christology; implicit and explicit Christology. Understanding Jesus has gone through a period of development and progression after the resurrection.
- Discussion of the question who is Jesus? Biblical scholars, Christians, the evangelists, his mother, have questioned the identity of Jesus showing his complex character that cannot be explained by one Christological title alone. Jesus was multifaceted and cannot be summed up in one title.
- Reflection on the fact some titles such as Son of God have been embedded in Church teaching and doctrine. Some titles have been influenced by the evangelists and some have been influenced by their Jewish background and context.
- Consideration of the fact through each title we glean some information about Jesus and therefore it is through exploration of a range of titles we learn about Jesus. For example, Son of Man teaches about the human and divine nature of Jesus which in turn is reflected in the title Son of God which expresses Jesus' divinity further as God's Son and heir.
- Possible counter claim that Son of God, Son of Man or Messiah alone best sums up the nature of Jesus and elaboration on why such as:
- Son of God fully describes the nature of Jesus as God's son which is the most important aspect of his life and teachings summed up in the Christian belief in the Trinity.
- Son of Man best describes Jesus as both human and divine which is the crux of his incarnational nature.
- Christ/Messiah reflects the true nature of Jesus as the promised one of Old Testament scripture.
- How various writers, for example, Martin Hengel and the Jewish academic, Géza Vermes, have offered insights into the Christological titles.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

50

3 (a) Examine Mark's account of the Empty Tomb with particular reference to its distinctive features (Mark 16:1–8).

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Exploration of Mark's account of the Empty Tomb – Mark 16:1–8.
- Analysis of the distinctive features of Mark's account such as:
- That the women go to the tomb on Sunday morning, the stone is rolled away, there is an angelic vision, the tomb is empty and the women leave the tomb.
- Mark states the women brought spices to complete the burial ritual. This emphasises the love of the women for Jesus and the completion of burial customs as a reason for returning to the tomb.
- Mark has the women in conversation over who would roll back the stone from the tomb but when they arrived it was already rolled away. It is probably a literary device of Mark's as the women could have managed the task.
- Mark has a young man dressed in white sitting on the right. The young man tells the women that he knows they are looking for the crucified Jesus.
- Mark reports "He is not here" to emphasise bodily resurrection – the corpse is no longer in the tomb.
- Mark ends with the women going to Galilee to deliver the message to the disciples and Peter. Peter is mentioned specifically possibly to show the forgiveness of Peter and his primacy.
- Galilee is seen by some scholars as symbolising the mission to the Gentiles.
- The women tell no one, possibly a continuation of the Messianic Secret in Mark. They must have told others logically as we know what happened.
- There is a continuity in the message 'He is risen'.
- Consideration of the difficulties associated with the ending of Mark's Gospel such as the abrupt ending is in line with Mark's literary style, most ancient manuscripts end at verse 8, the original ending may have been lost or destroyed or Mark may have died before completing the ending or may have deliberately ended here.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) “For Christians today, the resurrection is more about hope than historical fact.” Critically evaluate this statement.

Answers may include:

- Agreement with the statement that resurrection may not be taken as an historical fact but rather is an issue of hope, faith and belief of the individual.
- Consideration of the view that resurrection is the basis of the Christian faith and is an indisputable fact. St. Paul’s belief that without the resurrection, Christian belief is null and void.
- Significance of the view that for people of faith, no explanation for the resurrection is necessary.
- Exploration of the view that Jesus was the Son of God and therefore nothing is impossible for God. Resurrection was part of God’s plan and therefore a historical fact.
- Reflection on the fact that the resurrection accounts agree on the key historical point that Jesus was raised from the dead. Inconsistencies can be reduced to the different theological views held by the evangelists.
- Consideration of the views of modern psychology that brains process trauma differently and the women and the disciples were witnessing things that were beyond human understanding, and therefore could not fully put their experiences into words and that is why accounts differ. If the accounts all agreed it would appear suspicious and that the disciples and evangelists colluded.
- Possible disputing of the statement and consideration of the inconsistencies in the resurrection accounts, how these inconsistencies affect the historicity of the resurrection accounts such as Matthew has guards at the tomb while the other evangelists do not. Mark says the women told no one.
- Exploration of the view that resurrection goes against the laws of nature and in a modern, scientific world resurrection cannot be taken as factual, it can be seen as allegorical or theological but through modern scientific developments it is no longer seen to be factual.
- Contemplation of the view that resurrection belongs to an age of superstition and ignorance. The views of David Hume on miracles, if it does not happen now it did not happen in the past. Dead people do not rise to life.
- Examination of the stance of religious liberalism which attempts to reconcile tradition with modernity. The views of Bishop Spong.
- Consideration of the views of Barth who believed in resurrection but not as a historical fact or Bultmann who stated resurrection makes no sense to the modern mind.
- The controversial views of Bishop David Jenkins during the 1980s which caused consternation among Christians.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

Section A

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

100

Synoptic Bands

Total Marks: [20]

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent attempt at analysis with a full and highly informed response to the question. • Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very high degree of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • 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. 	[17]–[20]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good attempt at analysis with a well informed response to the question. • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • 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. 	[13]–[16]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good attempt at analysis with a reasonably well informed response to the question. • Demonstrates a good understanding and mainly accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • 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. 	[9]–[12]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited attempt at analysis with a limited response to the question. • Demonstrates a limited understanding and limited knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A limited range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • 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. 	[5]–[8]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic attempt at analysis with a basic response to the question. • Demonstrates a basic understanding and basic knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A basic range of evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • 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. 	[1]–[4]

Candidates must refer to at least one other unit of study in their AO1 response to access Bands 4–5.

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • An excellent attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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 vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis which struggles to relate to other aspects of human experience. • A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis which fails to relate to other aspects of human experience. • A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • 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. 	[1]–[6]

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

Section B

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Synoptic Assessment

Theme: Religious Texts, Authority and Interpretation

You **must** answer this question.

- 4 (a) “Religious texts can be used to condemn or condone.”
With reference to **one** example, present a case for this statement. You must support your answer with reference to at least **one** other unit of study.

Answers may include:

- Definition of a religious text with possible examples from various world religions – Old Testament/Torah in Judaism, Bible in Christianity, Qur’an in Islam.
- Exploration of the teachings contained in various religious texts and how they may be interpreted to condemn or condone issues. For example:
- In relation to the issue of slavery, St. Paul beseeches Philemon to receive Onesimus, his slave back as “a beloved brother” implying freedom from slavery while other letters instruct slaves to obey their masters (1Tim 6:1–2, 1Pet 2:18) suggesting slavery is acceptable if slaves are treated well.
- In relation to Abortion in Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church does not support abortion in any circumstances though it accepts the doctrine of double effect whereas other Christian denominations such as the Methodist Church condone abortion in the cases of risk to the mother’s life or extreme foetal abnormality; how biblical teaching can be used to justify positions.
- The Qur’an states that whoever kills themselves will be punished on the day of judgment, however some interpret other texts to support the use of suicide bombing as a method of attack during war.
- In relation to the issue of homosexuality, some Muslims interpret the Qur’an to condemn homosexuality which is punishable by the death penalty in Brunei, Iran and Yemen under Sharia Law.
- Discussion of literal, fundamental and liberal interpretation of religious texts. Within Judaism, believers interpret the text in different ways, for example, Orthodox Jews interpret their text to be applicable to modern life in the same way as when it was handed down to Moses. They take the commandments literally. Whereas, Reformed Jews consider the Torah to be sacred, but God’s laws are not in their final form and can be adapted to changing circumstances and modern culture.
- Exploration of the rise of secularism and alternative ideologies that are not necessarily based on a religious text but on a philosophy or way of thinking such as Wicca, Zen Buddhism or humanist belief.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

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

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, critically assess how far religious leaders can effectively influence wider society.

Answers may include:

- Candidates must refer to other aspects of human experience.
- Reflection on the opinion that religious leaders had significant influence over wider society in the past but that their influence has faded and is no longer seen to be as influential or as significant as in the past.
- Exploration of examples such as Archbishop Justin Welby and his remarks about the Rwanda migrant plan in the UK and how he has sought to influence wider society or Pope Francis and his views on climate change and how religious leaders can effectively influence wider society as it is an intrinsic part of their leadership role.
- Consideration of the role of modern religious leaders as figureheads with ceremonial and state duties but no actual influential voice in secular matters.
- Exploration of the views of society about the role of religious leadership and reflection on how their influence has decreased due to the rising trend towards secularism and how their contribution has been undermined due to the negative actions of a minority of their contemporaries.
- Consideration of the role of religious leadership in moral issues in the past, for example, the role played in the treatment of unmarried mothers, adoption and abortion in the Republic of Ireland and how their influence is no longer as strong in modern society.
- Examples of how secular laws have been shaped by religious leaders, e.g. Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement in America and the continuing influence of such leadership in the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Possible reflection that the views of religious leaders are still important and influential in both wider society and the communities they lead.
- Consideration of the role of religious leaders in politics, for example, bishops of the Church of England sit in the House of Lords, as Spiritual Lords. This ensures that religious leaders views and beliefs are still considered important in the affairs of secular society.
- Discussion of the continuing role of religious leaders in making pronouncements on various issues, e.g. the Dalai Lama on human rights.
- Reference to the role of religious leaders in a range of world faiths.
- References to historical and/or contemporaneous examples to support claims.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

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

(AO2)

[30]

Section B

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

50

150