



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2024**

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 2

assessing

An Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles

[SRE21]

THURSDAY 23 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

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answer **one** question from Section A

- 1 (a) With reference to the text, summarise the evidence that Luke wrote Acts to give a history of the early Church.

Answers may include, e.g.:

- Luke's role as an historian; Acts as an historical text.
- Luke's reliability as an author; his honesty in describing strengths and weaknesses of the Church.

Textual evidence:

- Prologue to Luke's Gospel 1:1–4; intention to be accurate.
- The accuracy of titles, names, customs, practices, events, geography, archaeological evidence.
- The detail provided on Peter, Paul, Stephen and Philip.
- Dedication to Theophilus.
- 'We' passages.
- Discrepancies within Acts; relationship with Paul's letters.
- Range of purposes of Acts, e.g. to show how the gospel reached Rome; an apology; universalism.
- Propaganda/biased agenda.
- Written to build up the Church.
- Ancient writers reliable and careful to present facts.
- Deliberately selective to focus on Church growth.
- Issues of historical accuracy with reference to date, authorship.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) “The emphasis on the Holy Spirit is the most striking characteristic of Acts”. Assess this claim. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include, e.g.:

- Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit Acts 1:8.
- Expansion of the Church; Acts 1:8; Spread of the gospel.
- Holy Spirit as the driving force of the Church’s mission, e.g. Pentecost.
- The role of the Holy Spirit in conversion, e.g. Cornelius.
- The Holy Spirit as a guide for the disciples, through prayer and decision-making, e.g. election of Matthias; appointment of the Seven.
- The Holy Spirit and prophecy, e.g. Agabus; inspired preaching by the Church, e.g. Peter speech to the Sanhedrin.
- In the work of mission – missionary journeys, e.g. Paul and Barnabas.
- The Holy Spirit as a disciplinarian, e.g. Ananias and Sapphira.
- Power to perform miracles, e.g. Lame man.

Other characteristics in Acts:

- Roles of Peter and Paul.
- Parallels drawn between Peter and Paul; both heal cripples, encounter sorcerers, miraculously released from prison.
- Connection between Luke’s Gospel and Acts; canonical order.
- Kerygma; speeches: example of primitive theology; kerygmatic pattern.
- Spread of Christianity; universalism; Jewish response to Gentile inclusion in the Church; geographical spread of the Gospel.
- Tracing the history of redemption; speeches of Peter, Stephen, Paul.
- Attitude to Roman Empire; threat of persecution.
- Church life and worship; communal lifestyle; unity; development of ministry.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

2 (a) Discuss Peter's role in spreading the Gospel message to the Jews.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include, e.g.:

- Peter's role in fulfilling Acts 1:8.
- Spokesperson for the apostolic community: "the rock".
- Speech at Pentecost; first proclamation of the Gospel in the new age; effect of the speech; conversion and expansion of the Church; Christ-centred witness.
- Possibility of a pattern to preaching the kerygma.
- Healing of the lame man; Peter's speech at Solomon's Colonnade; Messianic nature of Christ's mission.
- Miracles providing opportunity for evangelism to take place.
- Preaching and miracles lead to expansion.
- Peter before the Sanhedrin; evangelism in the face of opposition and persecution.
- Spread of the Gospel to the Jews; apostle to the Jews; impact of the healing of Aeneas and Dorcas.
- Peter and Cornelius; expansion of Christianity beyond narrow Jewish boundaries; universalism.
- Peter as evangelist in other roles, e.g. disciplinarian – Simon Magus: preserving the integrity of the Gospel.
- Peter as leader – development of ministry to assist apostolic preaching, e.g. the 7 deacons.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) Comment on the view that the martyrdom of Stephen was central to making the mission of the Church universal. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include, e.g.:

- Mission of the Church – the universal spread of the Gospel.
- Stephen's role as a deacon; impact of speech to Sanhedrin.
- The stoning of Stephen and its effects – the Church is scattered; introduction of Saul.
- Stephen as a type of Christ, e.g. full of grace; wonder worker; debate with opponents; arrested using false witnesses; executed outside the city; echo of Jesus on the cross in words of Stephen.
- Stephen as first Christian martyr.
- Impact of persecution and dispersion of Greek-speaking Jews.
- Universal spread of the gospel put into practice by evangelizing work of Philip; Samaria, Africa (Ethiopian official).
- Necessary and inevitable break with Judaism for the spread of the Gospel.
- The impact on the necessity of the Temple and the Law.
- Ongoing fulfilment of Acts 1:8.
- Stephen's death as example of ultimate devotion to God.
- God's will being done in the face of evil.
- The role of martyrdom in the spread of Christianity.
- Reference to other events of importance in making the mission of the church universal, e.g. Pentecost, Gentile conversions, Peter's encounter with Cornelius as a seminal moment, Paul's conversion, three missionary journeys.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

Section B

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Answer **one** question from Section B

- 3 (a)** “Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus changed both him and the early Church.” Give an account of the evidence to support this statement.

Answers may include, e.g.:

- The context and purpose of the account; spread of the Church to the Gentiles; Acts 1:8; God’s purpose fulfilled; universalism.
- Saul’s presence at martyrdom of Stephen; sent by High Priest to Damascus; Saul’s role as persecutor of the followers of the “Way’.
- Consideration of Saul’s conversion (Acts 9:1–9).
- Transformation from persecutor to proclaimer; metanoia.
- Church as the body of Christ.
- Significance of blindness.
- Importance of the story for Luke; told three times (Ch 9, 22, 26).
- The aftermath of Paul’s conversion – suspicion from the church; development of the Church at Antioch.
- How the church accepted Paul’s conversion.
- Paul and Barnabas commissioned by the Antioch Church (Acts 13); team ministry.
- Paul’s contribution as an evangelist; three missionary journeys across Roman Empire to Jews and Gentiles.
- Paul responsive to the promptings of the Spirit, e.g. Paul’s vision on second missionary journey (16:8).
- Paul as leader; sets good example; took every opportunity to evangelise, e.g. Lystra.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) "In religious belief, sudden and dramatic conversion should always be treated with suspicion." With reference to other aspects of human experience, evaluate this view. Justify your answer.

Answers may include, e.g.:

- An open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples.
- Types of religious conversion, e.g. prison; Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults; revivals; Pentecostal meetings, conversion as renewal of faith, e.g. Mark Wahlberg.
- Reasons for conversion, e.g. life-changing experience; political ambition, e.g. Constantine.
- Examples of conversion, e.g. Jackie Burke; Nicky Cruz; Scott Hahn.
- 'Celebrity' conversion, e.g. Tom Cruise, Kanye West.
- Impact of conversion on behaviour, e.g. living like a believer.
- Conversion to faiths other than Christianity, e.g. Islam.
- Suspicion of sudden conversion, e.g. expedience; lenient sentence of prisoners; marriage; cultural necessity.
- Problems caused by religious conversion, e.g. difficulties in families and relationships; accusations of being delusional.
- Response of Christians to sudden conversion, e.g. converting to other Christian denominations.
- How acceptance of sudden and dramatic religious conversion can be seen both positively and negatively by the secular mindset.
- Religious conversion as being if common elements are apparent, the strength of the testimony of the person.
- How, perhaps, in the modern age there is a basis for being suspicious, rather than in the biblical world when it might not have been treated as such.
- Reference to the Great Revival in the 19th century within Presbyterianism and how it led to church growth.

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) With particular reference to the Simon Magus incident, discuss the role and importance of Philip in Acts.

Answers may include, e.g.:

- One of the seven helpers; role in the distribution of aid; qualities required; co-worker with Stephen.
- Development of ministry within the Church; mission and maintenance.
- Philip's work in Samaria; history of the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans; persecution leads to expansion; further fulfilment of Acts 1:8; universalism.
- Philip's ministry of preaching and miracles.

Simon Magus incident:

- Arrival of Peter and John; possible reasons for arrival – satisfying the Jerusalem Church of genuine conversion; intrigued; confirming Philip's ministry of evangelism as a Hellenistic Christian.
- Protecting the integrity of the Church's ministry.
- Response of the Samaritans to Philip.
- Philip and the Ethiopian.
- Responses to divine command.
- Gospel spread to Africa; gospel spreads to Gentiles.
- Philip preaches on his way home.
- Influence on his four daughters.
- Philip as an itinerant, mass and personal evangelist.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

(b) “Secularisation has been more negative than positive for religious believers.”
With reference to other aspects of human experience, comment on this claim. Justify your answer.

Answers may include, e.g.:

- An open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples.
- Negative impact on religious belief and practice from atheism and secularism; rise of individualism; loss of community and the common good.
- Religion becoming less influential in certain countries, e.g. UK census results.
- Positive influence of science and technology on modern religious thinking.
- Negativity between Christianity and politics, e.g. polarisation of public opinion; Supreme Court decisions in USA.
- Challenges to religious belief in law, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, marriage.
- Challenges to perceived human rights issues in religion, e.g. Islam and the treatment of women and LGBTQ community.
- Marginalization of religious belief in secular society, e.g. ‘Winterval’.
- Decline in church attendance; religious apathy.
- Positive responses to decline, e.g. Synodality, Gospel Revivals.
- Christian churches articulating belief in new ways, e.g. use of social media for evangelization and catechesis.
- Historical and modern examples of challenges to religious practice and belief, e.g. heresy, persecution, schism.
- Central importance of personal faith and practice for religious believer.
- Benefits of religious practice for the world, e.g. charitable giving, protection of vulnerable.
- Benefits of institutional religion for the world, e.g. hospitals, education, alleviation of poverty.
- Global influence of religious faith, e.g. Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby’s joint initiative on migration; reconciliation.
- Importance of religion in the modern world, e.g. religious voice on issues of conservation and climate change; religious voice on issues of social justice.
- Believers sense of duty to practice faith to maintain beliefs.
- Possible positives for religious believers, e.g. the opportunity for dialogue where faith and life meet; how secularisation has forced religious believers to take modern thought seriously, e.g. demythologising.
- Secularisation as a variation of the truth that the church has always faced challenges from wider society.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

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

(AO2)

[25]

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

100