



*Rewarding Learning*

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

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## **Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit AS 5**

*assessing*

The Celtic Church in Ireland in the 5th, 6th and 7th Centuries

**[SRE51]**

**TUESDAY 28 MAY, MORNING**

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

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

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis</li> <li>• A basic attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• A basic answer with basic structure and coherence</li> <li>• A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar</li> </ul>	[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) “Brigit and Comgall made significant contributions to the development of Celtic Monasticism.” Give an account of the evidence to support this statement.

Answers may include:

- **Brigit of Kildare** – reference to the Life of Brigit by hagiographer Cogitosus who writes an account of Brigit of Kildare including her refusal to marry and having been converted by Bishop Mel, asked for land on the Curragh of Kildare where she built a church and a convent.
- Brigit was noted for her piety and generosity to the poor and marginalised and the impact this had on attracting people to the monastery.
- Reference to Bishop Conleth who came as the sacramental administrator and consequently a double monastery was founded, the first in Ireland. Men and women had separate quarters but worshipped in the same church.
- The legacy of Brigit to overcome male dominance in worship and religious life and the importance of this to the development of the role of women.
- **Comgall of Bangor** – possible reference to his background studying under Finnian of Clonard and Fintan of Clonenagh before establishing a monastery in Bangor in 555.
- His monastic school promoted a tradition of learning rather than asceticism, thus Bangor became an important site of classical learning which in later centuries was such an important influence on the whole of Europe during what was known as the Dark Ages when learning was in steep decline.
- Reference to the link with Columbanus who was educated in Bangor and then went on to lecture at the monastic school for some years.
- Possible discussion of the importance of the monasteries in general for the change from episcopal to monastic organisation.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) Comment on the claim that the main benefit of monasteries for wider Celtic society was as places of sanctuary. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Many monasteries provided sanctuary for wider Celtic society as the grounds of monastic enclosures were protected by Brehon law from violence.
- Many monasteries provided places for people to bring valuables in times of invasions by raiders or strife between warring tribes.
- Criminals also were known to have sought sanctuary in the grounds of monasteries and encouraged to complete penances.
- Penance were often carried out in monasteries with the presence of the anamchara or soulfriend. Adomnán tells of penitents visiting Iona.
- The monasteries also offered hospitality with guest houses and places for pilgrims to rest.
- Consideration of alternative benefits of the monasteries in terms of education, e.g. scriptural exegesis considered the highest form of learning.
- The important role the monasteries had in preserving various forms of literature; the influence of the copyists in producing copies of certain parts of the Bible as well as other works -prayers, hymns, martyrologies, penitentials and poetry.
- The economic strength of the monasteries offering places of employment and the effect this had on the community; they often gave a sense of community in the absence of towns.
- Some were located at pagan sites thus helping to eradicate the practice of paganism.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

- 2 (a) Explain how the references to Palladius demonstrate his significance in the Celtic Church.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Detail of the reference in Prosper of Aquitaine's Chronicon in 429 "The Pelagian...corrupts the churches of Britain by the propagation of his doctrine. But at the instigation of the deacon Palladius, Pope Celestine sends Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, in his stead, who overthrows the heretics..." this reference shows the influence of Palladius in the Church and hence his elevation to the role of Bishop and mission to Ireland.
- Detail of Prosper's reference to Palladius in 431 – "to the Irish believing in Christ, Palladius having been ordained by Pope Celestine, is sent as the first bishop", acknowledgement that this reference from a source outside Ireland makes it difficult to question its reliability.
- Discussion of the fact that Palladius was sent to minister to those already Christian in Ireland and was involved in the fight against heresy.
- Discussion of the suggested areas in which Palladius worked – possibly the east of Ireland. Fragments of topographical evidence attached to the name of Palladius in Leinster.
- Prosper's reference to Palladius in 434 "by ordaining a bishop for the Irish..." implies the mission was ongoing at the time of writing (434) and important enough to be mentioned by Prosper.
- Reference to the debate about the length and scope of the mission of Palladius in Ireland, e.g. some believe he laboured in Ireland for about thirty years; others believe that he was dead within a year.
- Possible discussion of the fact that the name of Palladius may have been intertwined with the work of Patrick and subsequently the mission of Palladius has been forgotten by most.
- Reference to the suggestion by some that he was sent to Scotland, not Ireland.
- The significance of his mission revealing the presence of Christians in Ireland before Patrick.
- Evidence from Muirchu and Tirechán but also awareness of the purpose of hagiographical writings.
- Awareness of the lack of explicit evidence from Patrick's Confessio to the work of Palladius.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) Consider how far the challenges in Patrick's life influenced his mission and contributed to its success. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Answers may include:

- The challenges that Patrick had to overcome in his life as a result of the political, social and religious nature of Celtic society could include imprisonment, rejection and challenge of paganism.
- Patrick's success in overcoming the challenges of his kidnap and slavery demonstrated by the number of people who converted to the faith, as outlined in the Confessio.
- The pain of his own kidnap and slavery possibly influencing his reaction to the raid by Coroticus on newly baptised Christians which is addressed in the Letter to Coroticus.
- The challenges and accusations experienced during his mission due to opposition from the British clergy and how Patrick addressed this, e.g. his unworthiness, simony.
- Patrick's success with the ordination of a local clergy to administer the sacraments.
- The success Patrick had overcoming challenges such as language, difficulties with the local terrain and pagan practices, e.g. sun worship.
- Patrick's success in working with Kings and their families in order to convert the people of a tuatha.
- Alternative view that Patrick struggled to overcome some personal issues that may have negatively affected his mission, e.g. homesickness, lack of education, feelings of inadequacy.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels  
(AO2)

[25]

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## Section B

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Answer **one** question from Section B

- 3 (a) With reference to relevant Celtic hagiographical writings, discuss their importance for the spiritual and devotional life of Celtic Christians.

Answers may include:

- Discussion of the purpose of hagiography to honour and promote a particular saint.
- Discussion of how the imagery used in hagiographical writings attempts to portray religious and spiritual truths.
- Examples of material from Cogitosus' Life of Brigit that may be of spiritual and devotional value, e.g. Brigit's care for the poor and marginalised.
- Examples of material from Muirchú's Life of Patrick that may be of spiritual and devotional value, e.g. Patrick's practice of ascetism.
- The fact that many hagiographical stories are based on gospel stories, in particular the miracles of Jesus, offer Christians a model for devotion.
- The emphasis placed on Christian values throughout both lives leading to a positive influence on the spiritual life of Christians.
- Consideration of scholars' views that the hagiographers use of mythology can lead to a deeper understanding of the nature of God, e.g. McMaster.
- Possible mention of how the writings are of limited spiritual and devotional value due to the use of secular story telling methods by the authors.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

**(b)** “The example shown in the lives of saints is always beyond the reach of religious believers.”  
With reference to other aspects of human experience, assess this claim.  
Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- References which are either historical or contemporaneous.
- Discussion of the extreme austerity and harshness of some religious practices by individual saints and examination of whether these practices can realistically be imitated today.
- Discussion of the life and inspiration of saints with particular relevance for believers today, e.g. caring for nature and the environment; caring for the poor and marginalised, e.g. St Francis of Assisi; St Martin de Porres; St John Bosco.
- Discussion of the moral example provided by the lives of saints and the extent to which modern believers follow their example.
- An understanding of the role of saints in different religious denominations.
- The debate concerning the moral standing of some saints amid recent revelations, e.g. St Teresa of Calcutta.
- Debate surrounding the lack of interest in the lives of the saints by modern believers.
- The view that people do not have to be declared saints in order for them to be examples of holiness and thus inspirational for believers.
- The moral and spiritual example provided by those who are not named saints but are held in high esteem in other Christian denominations and world religions, e.g. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

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

(AO2)

[25]

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AVAILABLE  
MARKS

4 (a) Summarise the understanding of sin and forgiveness in the Celtic Church.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Reference to the insights the Penitentials offer into the concept of sin in Celtic Christianity.
- The belief that sin is a part of the human condition, a sickness of the soul that can be cured and forgiven.
- The fact that there are different levels of sin and sins committed by those in religious authority are more serious than those committed by the laity.
- The cause of the sin must be discovered and addressed and then a particular remedy could be assigned.
- The belief that sins originate in the heart and sins of thought were equally as destructive as sins of action and so must be confessed.
- Penance was seen as a medicine for the soul and the cure for the sickness of sin.
- Discussion of the influence of John Cassian's Colloquies viewing sin as a vice which can be cured by employing its contrary virtue.
- Compensation was seen as a way of turning the vice of sin into a virtue.
- Commutation was also employed when offering penance.
- The important role of the anamchara in overcoming sin in a penitent's life.
- The concept of forgiveness sought to break the cycle of sin and encourage reconciliation in society.
- Cummean's Penitential emphasises the importance of prayers of intercession offered by the community for the penitent, through which forgiveness could be attained.
- The concept of forgiveness offered hope for the penitent.
- Forgiveness was made up of four components – contrition, confession, satisfaction, absolution.
- A sinner could redeem their sins by acts of charity to the poor and strangers, an element of reparation, which was essential for healing.
- Absolution offered the penitent total forgiveness and readmittance to the sacraments.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

**(b)** “Forgiveness is the most important feature of religious faith.” With reference to other aspects of human experience, evaluate this view. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- References which are either historical or contemporaneous.
- Reference to the fact that forgiveness has an important place in all world religions, e.g. in Islam and in Judaism.
- Discussion on the nature of forgiveness and possible reference to Christian teaching on forgiveness, Jesus’ teaching that forgiveness should know no limits.
- Forgiveness is part of God’s plan for humans.
- Forgiveness requires repentance which may be difficult and may impact on a person’s faith.
- How some people struggle to forgive others and/or themselves and the effect this has on their lives and their own faith, e.g. Rev. Julie Nicholson.
- Examples of people who have shown forgiveness due to their faith, e.g. Gordon Wilson.
- Examples of organisations that work to bring about reconciliation in society, e.g. Corrymeela, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- The link between forgiveness, justice and a person’s faith.
- Alternative view that forgiveness is not the most important feature, rather love of God and love of neighbour is more important.
- Awareness that forgiveness is not just a religious concept.

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**