



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Religious Studies

RSS08

Religion and Contemporary Society

AS Unit H

Final

Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS08: Religion and Contemporary Society

Question 1 Changing patterns of religious practice in the UK during the 20th century

- 01 Outline the various ways in which religious practice can be measured, and examine the relative strengths of the religious groups found in the United Kingdom (UK) today.**

There are two tasks here:

Outline

This simply involves the most common indices which are identification, membership, participation and belief. Candidates may reasonably be expected to expand on these, and to look at their varying applicability in the context of different faith communities. May also consider comparative usefulness of different methods.

Examine

Detailed statistics are not required or expected, but candidates should have some ideas of the relative strengths.

Most basic statistics would be from 2001 census. These figures are based on identification only.

71%	Christianity
2.7%	Muslim
1.0%	Hindu
0.5%	Jewish
0.3%	Buddhist
0.3%	Sikh

Some may cite more detailed figures for practice from 'Religious Trends' or other sources.

Candidates may go on to 'unpack' these figures in some way, e.g. through sub groups within the religion or by talking about those groups which are growing most quickly. There may legitimately be local reference here.

If only summary of indices, and no reference to relative strengths, max top Level 4, however well done.

If only examination of strengths, max top Level 5, however well done.

(30 marks)

AO1

02 'Being a committed member of a religious group has lost its significance in the 21st century? Assess this claim.'

Agree

- If answering with reference to Christianity, may point to fall in number of confirmations, etc
- May argue that it is not what people belong to, but how they live their lives that counts
- Or what they believe in
- People tend to 'join' organisations less these days in any case
- 'Believing without belonging'

Disagree

- Membership is still important
- It is a reflection of commitment
- Organisations of all sorts need members rather than people who are vaguely associated
- Importance of 'group'

Better answers may be able to comment on the relative importance of 'membership' between different groups, but the highest levels can be gained without this.

Normally, needs to focus fully on 'committed member' for Level 6/7

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 2 Expressions of religion within society

03 Outline the meaning of the term 'faith school', and examine the role of these schools in the educational system of the United Kingdom (UK) today.

Outline

Definition of 'faith school' likely to depend on where in the UK candidates are coming from. Should be able to say something about the 'dual system' in England and Wales, and Voluntary Aided/ Voluntary Controlled, as well as more recent forms of faith schools, and religious involvement. May refer to independent schools which are faith based, including some small private schools of recent origin

Role

- About 7000 such schools (1/3 total), with a number of schools newly becoming faith schools.
- Majority RC or C of E, though some long standing Jewish schools, and recent Muslim and Sikh schools.
- Some may not have been founded as faith schools, but have recently come under Church 'sponsorship'.
- Particular case of faith sponsored academies, where the religious dimension is less strong. Role here to meet needs.
- To provide education, especially for those of that faith.
- Provision of education for those of that faith
- Admissions policy based on membership
- Selection of staff on religious grounds
- Ethos of the school – based on the faith
- Provision of RE based on that particular faith – though many take broader approach
- Allows for the practice of religion and religious identity within the school e.g. wearing of religious clothes
- To meet particular needs within the community
- Provides for extension of faith community into the educational sector
- Idea of 'nurture' within the faith
- Role of making significant contribution to whole pattern of provision

If only 'outline' maximum Level 3

If only 'role' maximum Level 5

(30 marks)

AO1

04 **'Religious groups should not be involved in the provision of education today.'**
Assess this view.

Agree

- They are likely to indoctrinate
- Or not to present a balanced view of all subjects
- May give unfair advantages to some
- And to encourage separatism
- Education should be left in the hands of the 'experts'
- May argue that the system should be open enough and tolerant enough so that there is no need for separate provision.

Disagree

- They make a valuable contribution to the provision as a whole
- Provide a useful alternative
- Enable parental choice
- Enable the expression and practice of religion.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 3 Issues of identity and belonging

05 Examine the concepts of 'identity' and 'assimilation' with reference to one or more religion(s).

Identity

- Ways in which people label themselves – forms of self definition
- May be purely nominal
- Defining those with whom they chose to associate
- And from whom they may wish to separate themselves
- Expressions of belonging through dress and symbols
- Identity may also be expressed through lifestyle
- and values
- Aspects of personal life
- And family life
- Individual and community identity
- Cultural aspects

Some may also consider dual identity such as British Muslim, etc ,and give examples of changing and evolving understandings

Assimilation

- Process of potentially losing identity through being absorbed into wider 'host' community
- May occur through intermarriage
- Or simply through acceptance of norms and customs of wider community
- Will often mean assimilation of values as well as practices
- Specific issues arising for Anglo Jewry
- Difference between assimilation and integration

May refer to 'denominational' identity and assimilation as well as religious/cultural aspects

For marks above top Level 5 both ideas need to be dealt with, but it is likely that many will write more about identity than assimilation.

Not above Level 4 if no definition but this may be implicit through understanding.

(30 marks) AO1

06 'In today's society, assimilation is essential.' How far do you agree?**Agree**

- People are more likely to integrate if they do not stand out as 'different'
- Would make life easier for the majority community
- Pluralism is about everyone making compromises.

Disagree

- Maintenance of identity is vitally important
- In secular life, too, people wish to express their distinctive identity in variety of ways
- For many, the practices which form part of the identity also reflect essential values
- Religion is about what is vitally important to people, so not like a passing fashion
- Reflects a basic human right
- Assimilation may be the beginning of the end.

(15 marks)**AO2****Question 4 An introduction to New Religious Movements (NRMs)****07 Examine the concept of millenarianism with reference to New Religious Movements.**

- Most likely to refer to background in Judaeo Christian tradition
- Background in apocalyptic, especially book of Revelation
- Cataclysmic end to and destruction of the world
- Belief in thousand year direct rule of Christ
- And a golden age
- Variations between pre- and post millenarianism
- Idea of the rapture
- Based on literalist reading of the Bible
- Belief in the elect- often a defined number
- Sometimes based on predestination
- Usually taking pessimistic view of humanity
- Often (though not always) associated with world rejecting movements
- Rewards in the afterlife rather than the present life
- Very strong belief in some form of divine justice
- Variety of views and interpretations
- Some views see Golden Age as coming gradually rather than cataclysmically

Examples may be drawn from a variety of movements including Adventists, Latter Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, Branch Davidians, Supreme Truth Movement and Peoples' Temple. There are many others which may be cited.

Reference to 21st May likely, even though not technically NRM. Focus needs to be millenarianism – watch general NRM material.

(30 marks)**AO1**

08 **‘Millenarian movements have little appeal to people in the 21st century.’
Assess this claim.**

Agree

- Many of their beliefs may seem incredible to outsiders
- Many people today are more concerned with putting things right in the world than in thinking so much about a potential afterlife
- They have little continuity with the views of mainstream religion
- Statistical evidence would suggest decline for some groups –e.g. LDS

Disagree

- Obviously some appeal, as they still exist!
- Some would argue that they have more appeal now than ever before
- Climate change, tornados, earthquakes, war, famine and pandemics are seen as ‘signs of the times’ and just the sort of things of which apocalyptic literature speaks therefore they have even greater appeal
- Breakdown of many traditional forms of religion
- Statistical evidence suggests increase for some groups – e.g. Jehovah’s Witnesses

May 21st could be used on either side of the argument.

The answer needs to focus on millenarian movements in particular, rather than NRMs in general.

(15 marks) AO2

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion