



**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
2016**

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## **Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit AS 3**

*assessing*

**An Introduction to Old Testament  
Covenant and Prophecy**

**[AR131]**

**WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE, MORNING**

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**MARK  
SCHEME**

## Part 1: Levels of Response

The specification requires that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the learning outcomes and skills set out in the specification.

- Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.
- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.

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

## **(AO1) Knowledge and Understanding**

### **Band 5 ([29]–[35])**

- a full response to the task.
- demonstrates a high level of accurate knowledge and comprehensive understanding
- uses a very good range of relevant evidence and examples
- a mature style of writing demonstrating a clear and coherent structure
- almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 4 ([22]–[28])**

- a reasonably full response to the task
- demonstrates a very good level of accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a good range of relevant evidence and examples
- a reasonably mature style of writing demonstrating a clear and coherent structure
- mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 3 ([15]–[21])**

- a good response to the task.
- demonstrates a good level of accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a range of relevant evidence and examples
- an appropriate and reasonably coherent style of writing
- reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 2 ([8]–[14])**

- a limited response to the task
- demonstrates little accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a limited range of evidence and examples
- style of writing is just appropriate to the task and may lack coherence in places
- limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- evidence of some technical language and terminology.

### **Band 1 ([0]–[7])**

- a very basic response to the task
- demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding
- very little use of evidence or examples
- style of writing is such that there is very little coherence or structure
- very poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- little or no use of technical language and terminology.

## **(AO2) Critical Line of Argument**

### **Band 5 ([13]–[15])**

- a full and coherent response.
- demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis.
- very good reference to other points of view.
- highly accurate and fluent.
- very good evidence of sustained and informed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a very wide range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 4 ([10]–[12])**

- a reasonably full response.
- demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis.
- good reference to other points of view.
- accurate and fluent.
- good evidence of sustained and reasoned argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 3 ([7]–[9])**

- a reasonable response.
- demonstrating some attempt at critical analysis.
- some reference to other points of view.
- reasonably accurate and fluent.
- some evidence of sustained argument, which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a range of technical language and terminology.

### **Band 2 ([4]–[6])**

- a limited response.
- demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis, although references to other points of view are limited.
- some inaccuracy in places.
- a limited argument which struggles to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience.
- limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- evidence of some technical language and terminology.

### **Band 1 ([0]–[3])**

- a simplistic response.
- demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis.
- practically no reference to other points of view.
- minimal argument which fails to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience.
- very poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- little or no use of technical language and terminology.

## **Quality of Written Communication**

All questions require candidates to answer in continuous prose in English. Quality of written communication is incorporated within the assessment objectives and reflected in the above assessment bands. Assistant examiners are instructed to take this criterion into account when allocating marks to candidates' responses.

## **Part 2: Contextual Reference Points**

The generic level of response mark scheme set out above is elucidated in this part of the mark scheme through the provision of contextual reference points in terms of the content appropriate to the particular question under consideration.

## Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKSAnswer **one** question from Section A.

- 1 (a) An explanation of the challenges that God put before Abraham may include some of the following, e.g.:
- God initiated the call and covenant relationship, and as the dominant party could set terms that were going to be challenging.
  - Theological understanding is always expressed through culture; challenges could arise from cultural factors in Abraham's background such as local or household Gods, henotheism and polytheism.
  - The significance of Abraham's journey as a response of faith and trust is that it indicates that he was prepared to face the challenge of breaking with the past, including received theological wisdom.
  - This may be related to the challenges of beginning what became a new religion and moving through the new land, which was promised but not yet given.
  - At a deep and significant level, Abraham was prepared to face the challenge of obedience to God and the human observance required by the covenant.
  - The change of names implied a new destiny and mission, with a new beginning for Abraham and the potential for great opportunities ahead (Gen.17:5,15); but there is also a significant challenge in risking what you have in order to gain something greater.
  - The idea of the election of a "chosen people" to serve God's purposes and the challenges associated with being designated "elect".
  - The election of Isaac over Ishmael, with particular reference to how Abraham pleads with God (Gen.17:18–21); the challenge of sticking to God's way rather than seeking human solutions to apparently impossible problems. [35]
- (b) A comment that God's covenants made impossible demands on His people may include some of the following, e.g.:
- The election of a people specifically chosen by God to fulfil His will required significant faith and trust; as expressed through allegiance to the covenants there was the sense that while difficult and demanding, this was not impossible.
  - God's election of the people meant they were expected to be different from others; but there is the question of whether this is possible as it can be argued that it is impossible not to be influenced by the surrounding culture.
  - Ultimately, the covenants established the Hebrew faith as monotheistic while their neighbours were henotheistic or polytheistic; the fact that the Hebrews were able to conclude in favour of monotheism indicates that the covenants eventually played their part in successfully teaching this concept.
  - While covenants made difficult demands, there was the promise of significant rewards and blessings; this implied encouragement to strive for what was possible.
  - Also consider the unconditional and promissory covenants, which implied that even if the people failed to meet their covenantal requirements God would not completely abandon them; the issue

is therefore not whether the covenants made impossible demands but the trustworthiness of God.

- An assessment of how difficult it was for God's people to live differently from their neighbours in terms of both theology and ethics; Sabbath and food laws; the need for obedience and the use of sanctions when this did not occur.
- To follow God's covenants was challenging, but when they were adhered to this led to a closer community and a more integrated society. [15]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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**2 (a)** An account of Amos' teaching on judgment with reference to his visions may include some of the following, e.g.:

- Amos is regarded as primarily a prophet of judgment and doom and the socio-historical context to this.
- An exploration of the judgment on the surrounding nations (Amos 1:3–2:3) for their behaviour and the purpose of this: to initially make Israel and Judah feel secure.
- The concluding focus on Judah and Israel in these oracles against the nations to underline that Judah and Israel saw the faults of their neighbours but did not recognise their own; note the point that Israel and Judah will be judged just like the nations and do not have a special status due to their election.
- This may be related to the concept of the Day of the Lord, which was viewed by the people as hopeful and positive; but Amos subverts this understanding and insists it will be a day of judgment (Amos 5:16–20).
- The worship of Baal, including fertility cults, association with temple prostitutes, sacrifice and idolatry formed part of the basis for judgment in terms of the Mosaic covenant.
- The heart of Amos' judgment was rooted in the prevalence of social injustice, including exploitation of the poor, excessive luxury for some at the expense of grinding poverty for others, bloodshed, violence and a lack of trust in Yahweh.
- The visions of Amos concerning locusts, fire and plumb line indicate that the slim opportunity for repentance has passed and that judgment is inevitable on account of departure from the Covenant (Amos 7:1–9).
- Discussion of how the visions of ripe fruit and destruction of the Temple showed the nature and depth of divine judgment: God would dissolve the Covenant made with the people (Amos 8:1; 9:1).
- Exile was the punishment the people would receive after judgment but attention should also be given to the oracles of hope at the end of the book; these finally place judgment in the context of restoration. [35]

**(b)** A comment on the view that the role of a prophet was always far from comfortable and could even be personally dangerous may include, e.g.:

- With reference to Amos, it may be argued that initially there was a positive response to the prophetic message of judgment against the nations; but when the full prophecy was understood there was conflict and difficulty.
- Reference may be made to the treatment of Amos and his exclusion from Bethel, where he earned some of his living, as an indication that the prophetic calling involved discomfort and the threat of personal danger.

- Amos was ignored by Jeroboam; while this lack of response involved no danger to the prophet, it could have made him feel uncomfortable and disappointed as his prophetic mandate was having no effect.
- The flight of Elijah when under threat from Jezebel engendered a deep sense of failure in the prophet.
- Alternatively, however, note the acceptance by Ahab of the prophetic word when he was confronted by Elijah over Naboth's vineyard; but note also that this was dangerous for Elijah.
- Similarly, David responded positively to Nathan; but Nathan's strategy for confronting David with his guilt implies the situation was potentially dangerous.
- Attention may be given to the particular personal difficulties faced by Hosea in his marriage, and how those difficulties came to symbolise Hosea's difficulties with the people in relation to his prophetic message.
- The activities of false prophets and their counter-message could result in punishment or suffering for prophets like Micaiah.
- Apathy to the prophetic message may have diminished danger and discomfort for the prophets, but contributed to a sense of failure.
- The central role of the prophet was to bring God's message to the people, and when they failed to have an impact they perhaps felt anger and frustration: Micah was sorrowful over Israel's sins (Micah 7:1); Isaiah had difficulty getting Ahaz to listen (Isaiah 7:12).
- Attention may also be drawn to how God provided for the prophets despite the dangers, disappointments and challenges they faced. [15]

**Section A**AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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## Section B

AVAILABLE  
MARKSAnswer **one** question from Section B.

- 3 (a)** An explanation of the nature of Isaiah's call and as to how it prepared him for his mission may include some of the following, e.g.:
- Reference to the context of Isaiah's call, including that Isaiah was a court prophet and insider at a time of transition (it was the year King Uzziah dies), political uncertainty, social exploitation and instability on the international scene.
  - An account of Isaiah's call (Isa. 6:1–13), with reference to his conviction that he was "a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5), his subsequent cleansing in preparation for his mission (Isa. 6:7), his willingness to be sent (Isa. 6:8) and his commissioning to a recalcitrant people (Isa. 6:9).
  - Discussion of the nature of God, especially as holy and sovereign, and how these qualities prepared him for his call; God was in control and required holiness.
  - A consideration of the themes of sin, divine judgment and redemption as found in Isaiah's call, related to how Isaiah was then prepared to take these issues into wider society.
  - Isaiah was warned that his calling was to failure: people would keep on hearing his message but would not understand it (Isa. 6:9); this was evidenced as he carried out his mission.
  - Isaiah's call demonstrates that God is not confined to the Temple but is interested in the world: related to this, Judah's political weakness and various crises gave Isaiah the opportunity to offer advice, which was not always accepted by the kings.
  - The prophetic message of Isaiah may be linked to his call in the way he challenged sin and complacency but found it difficult to address. [35]
- (b)** An exploration of the claim that the moral standards of the religious believer often leave a lot to be desired in relation to other aspects of human experience may include some of the following, e.g.:
- An open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples.
  - While the ideal may be to obey God's law as illustrated in both the Old and New Testaments, and set an example to others, often religious believers fall short.
  - Connected to this, it may be argued that there is a need to recognise that all are human and fallible, including religious believers.
  - This said, there have been many high profile scandals involving religious believers that strain generous interpretation and involve systemic abuse of power; e.g. sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, the Kincora Boys Home scandal and the Jimmy Saville case.
  - In general, it may be argued that there is a failure of many religious people to set a high moral example.
  - It may also be observed that the materialism of many religious groups highlights a focus on temporal rather than spiritual matters; this may be related to the "prosperity gospel" and the ornate institutional wealth of some denominations.

- Some people may want to suggest that while the moral standards of religious believers often leave a lot to be desired ultimately they are accountable to God.
- Related to this, religious believers may be watched more keenly by their peers for signs of hypocrisy and not living up to their standards.
- Alternatively, many religious believers in society hold positions of responsibility in business, government and other sectors, and often act as role models.
- Many ordinary believers take the opportunity to witness to their faith through their activities and actions, including commitment to work, diligence and honesty.
- There are also high profile role models of religious believers who have exemplified the best of aspects of morality, e.g. Mother Teresa, Gordon Wilson, Pope Francis, Desmond Tutu.
- But religious believers do not have a monopoly on morality, and religious fanaticism can cause many problems through fundamentalist views based on a narrow interpretation of scripture. [15]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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4 (a) An explanation of Micah's message on what God expects of His people may include some of the following, e.g.:

- Historical and political factors that existed at the time of Micah during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, including the Assyrian dominance (Micah 5:5) and the standards God still required.
- The social and religious context to the prophecy of Micah, with coveting and oppression, lying prophets and corrupt rulers (Micah 2:1–11) as the basis of social injustice and thus a departure from what God expected.
- Discussion of God's case against Israel (Micah 6:1–5), including reference to the leadership of Moses, trust in God's guiding presence and the "righteous acts of the Lord" (Micah 6:5) as the basis for what God expects from His people; but this was met with ingratitude.
- Classically, what God expects of His people finds expression in Micah 6:8; an exploration of what it might mean to "do justice, show constant love" and walk humbly with God.
- Reference to the requirements of Yahweh for "justice and righteousness" and the importance of this word pair across the prophetic corpus, including Micah, as central to what God wants.
- Consideration of the message of judgment on Israel and Judah (Micah 1:2–7) when they do not adhere to what God expects.
- In Micah 3:1–12, note should be taken that God expects good leaders of the people, who ground their actions in justice, seek the welfare of all, administer the courts fairly, and in all things are aware of the presence of the Lord and the obligations this places on them.
- Characteristic of the pattern of much of prophetic literature, Micah offers future hope and salvation from a forgiving God (Micah 7:14–18); it may be inferred from this that forgiveness and creating the possibility of a new start are qualities valued and expected by God in His people. [35]

(b) An explanation of the view that Liberation Theology is a genuine expression of prophetic teaching may include some of the following, e.g.:

- An open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples.
- A discussion of the social and historical context in which Liberation Theology arose, including poverty and social injustice throughout Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s as a result of policies imposed by the United States through client regimes.
- Faced with this situation of underdevelopment and inappropriate development, Liberation Theology represented a moral response, initially within the Catholic Church; but note that the movement became ecumenical.
- Reference may be made to key documents developing Liberation Theology: Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979); key thinkers such as Gustavo Gutiérrez; and key books such as *A Theology of Liberation* (Gutiérrez) to show this was a serious theological movement with a prophetic edge.
- Liberation Theology took the story of the Exodus, the prophetic tradition of confronting the abuse of royal power, and Jesus' programmatic sermon in Luke 4, especially verses 18–19 as key texts; thus Liberation may be viewed as a genuine expression of prophetic teaching.
- It demanded liberation from unjust economic, political and social conditions, developing the idea of structural, systemic or institutionalised sin; generally the church had ignored these dimensions of the concept of sin, but they are included in the Biblical and prophetic perspectives.
- Note that the church hierarchy were criticised as being too closely aligned with ruling elites and the privileged class responsible for the oppression of the poor; reference may be made to how, for example, Oscar Romero moved to be a liberationist and was martyred for his prophetic voice.
- Alternatively some argue that the church should not have such an explicit focus on and involvement in politics.
- In particular, attention may be given to critiques of Liberation Theology, including its apparent alignment with Marxism and its use of Marxist analysis, and by extension therefore its association with atheism, in perceived opposition to Christianity.
- While there is a need for greater justice and equality, the use of revolutionary violence to achieve these aims may be difficult to justify. [15]

AVAILABLE MARKS	
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<b>Section B</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>