



**ADVANCED**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**2017**

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**Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit A2 8**

*assessing*

**Islam: Law, Tradition and Practice**

**[AR281]**

**TUESDAY 27 JUNE, MORNING**

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**MARK  
SCHEME**

## GCE Religious Studies

### A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)

#### 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.

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.

- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

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.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a full and highly informed response to the task</li> <li>• demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge</li> <li>• a very high degree of relevant evidence and examples</li> <li>• a very sophisticated style of writing set within a clear and coherent structure</li> <li>• an extensive range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• an almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a reasonable and well informed response to the task</li> <li>• demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge</li> <li>• a very good range of relevant evidence and examples</li> <li>• a mature style of writing set within a mainly clear and coherent structure</li> <li>• a wide range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a good response to the task</li> <li>• demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge</li> <li>• a good range of relevant evidence and examples</li> <li>• a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident</li> <li>• a good range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a limited response to the task</li> <li>• demonstrates some knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• a basic range of evidence and/or examples</li> <li>• style of writing is just appropriate</li> <li>• structure is disorganised in places</li> <li>• limited range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a very basic response to the task</li> <li>• demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples</li> <li>• inappropriate style of writing within a poor structure</li> <li>• a very basic range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• very poor use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis, supported by a high awareness of scholarly views</li> <li>• very good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a highly developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience</li> <li>• an extensive range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• an almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis, supported by a good awareness of scholarly views</li> <li>• good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience</li> <li>• a wide range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis, supported by an awareness of the views of some scholars</li> <li>• some personal insight and independent thought expressed through reasonable argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience</li> <li>• a good range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis, with limited awareness of scholarly views</li> <li>• limited personal insight and independent thought expressed through some argument</li> <li>• a good range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a very basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis, with minimal awareness of scholarly views</li> <li>• poor personal insight and/or independent thought</li> <li>• shallow argument</li> <li>• limited range of technical language and terminology</li> <li>• limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- 1 (a) An examination of the teaching of the Qur'an on War, with reference to the quotation, could include, e.g.:
- Definition of 'Jihad', to struggle or strive
  - The distinction between Greater and Lesser Jihad
  - The encouragement to fight for Allah
  - The reward of paradise if one fights for Allah
  - The strength and victory which Allah provides
  - The spoils of war, which are to be enjoyed
  - Those who are excused from fighting and exempt from any judgement because of it
  - The punishment for those who refuse to fight
  - Consideration of passages which seem to encourage extreme aggression
  - Consideration of passages which indicate limitations in that war should only be a response to aggression
  - The consistency or otherwise of the teaching of the Qur'an
  - The historical context in which these texts were produced
  - Specific reference should be made to the Qur'an. [30]
- (b) A critical assessment of the view could include, e.g.:
- Consideration of the passages in the Qur'an which indicate that any violence should be a response to aggression and not instigated by Muslims
  - Consideration of the Islamic idea that the final aim of any aggression is to bring peace
  - Consideration of the example of the prophet Muhammad who was responding to a very violent society in Arabia and ultimately established peace
  - Consideration of how Islam celebrates and protects life
  - Consideration of how Islam views killing, the killing of one person is like killing all people
  - Consideration of very clear guidelines which are in place if a Jihad is to be declared, and the aim is to prevent war and violence
  - Consideration of passages in religious writings which seem to encourage violence
  - Consideration of the role of violence in the expansion of Islam
  - Consideration of Muhammad's willingness to use violence and his treatment of the Jewish community in Medina
  - Consideration of how certain passages of the Qur'an are being used and abused to defend violent acts of terrorism
  - Consideration of other religious views, e.g. Christian ideas on Pacifism, Just War. [20]

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2 (a) An analysis of the contribution of the Law Schools in defining Sharia could include, e.g.:

- A definition of Sharia – a clear straight path
- The four Law Schools: Hanifite, Shafiite, Malikite, Hanbalite
- The differences in opinion held by the four Law Schools, as to which sources are acceptable and which are not
- Consideration of the value or otherwise of the contribution of the Law Schools
- An examination of the possible sources of Sharia
- Qur'an: the final, uncorrupted revelation of Allah
- Sunnah: the written record of Muhammad's actions, the perfect example,
- Hadith: the written record of Muhammad's teachings,
- Custom: the earliest Islamic customs as found in Medina the first Muslim community,
- Opinion: the opinions of one Muslim lawyer,
- Consensus: the agreed opinion of a group of Muslim lawyers,
- Analogy: using an Islamic teaching to draw a parallel with another situation
- The locations in the world where Sharia law is followed today, which Law School is adhered to
- The challenge of these different opinions for the Muslim community. [30]

(b) A critical evaluation of the view that Sharia had more relevance to the time in which it was written could include, e.g.:

- Consideration why Sharia was more relevant at the time in which it was written, relevant to the historical, cultural and theological context
- Consideration of how one Law School may have reacted to other Law Schools
- Consideration of the extent to which Sharia has an ongoing relevance
- Consideration of how helpful Sharia is for Muslims of all generations to determine 'the clear straight path'
- Sharia is still used today on a personal level for many Muslims living in non-Muslim societies
- Sharia is the basis of legal systems in many Muslim countries today
- Consideration of difficulties with Sharia, even from the outset, as there were different interpretations and schools of thought, hard to apply universally
- In the modern world different forms of Sharia dominate in particular countries, so even if it is relevant, there is no consistency across the Muslim world
- Consideration of problems raised by 'the closing of the gate', which meant Sharia could not be added to
- Consideration of the necessity of conscience as Sharia cannot cover all issues
- Consideration of how relevant Sharia is when it comes to modern technological or scientific advances, and evolving moral issues. [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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3 (a) An analysis and discussion of the key Islamic teachings on the nature of Tawhid (the nature of Allah) could include, e.g.:

- Allah, the Arabic word for God, no plural
- The oneness of God, the strict monotheism of Islam
- No images or representations are permitted
- The sin of shirk
- The qualities of Allah, as found in the 99 names
- Allah as creator
- Allah as judge at the end of time, individual responsibility before Allah
- Allah as all-powerful, predetermining all things, issues related to free will
- Allah is all-knowing
- Allah is all-present
- Allah as self-subsistent
- Allah as infinite
- Allah is transcendent and immanent
- Allah's graciousness in revealing the Qur'an to humanity and his previous revelations which were corrupted. [30]

(b) A critical assessment of the view that all Muslims are in agreement on the teaching of Akirah (Last Days and Afterlife) could include, e.g.:

- Consideration of aspects of these beliefs which seem to be agreed upon, e.g. an individual will be judged on the basis of their deeds and their destiny determined by this
- Allah is the judge of all people, all are brought to the plain of judgement, stand naked before God, book of life read out
- There are two destinies, heaven and hell, book of life which records all good and bad deeds will be handed into left (hell) or right hand (heaven)
- Consideration of complexities which lie beneath the apparent simplicity
- Three key beliefs and all are potentially controversial: Akirah: includes Last Days, Final Judgement, Eternal Destiny
- Questions relating to what happens to the soul after death
- Questions relating to bodily resurrection
- Differing understandings as to who the Mahdi will be: Isa/Jesus will return to the Damascus mosque, a trumpet will sound, or Ismail or Muhammad al Muntazar
- Heaven is called al'Jannah a place of pleasure
- Hell is called Jahannan a place of fire and torment
- How literally should the graphic descriptions found in the Qur'an be taken, Surah 56
- The role of free will in relation to Allah's predetermination of all things
- The apparent paradox of personal responsibility and the belief in Allah predetermining/ predestining everything
- Awareness of more progressive interpretations within the Islamic community. [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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- 4 (a) An outline and examination of the distinctive teachings and practices of Sufism could include, e.g.:
- A definition of Sufism/Sufi – ‘wool’
  - Sufism arose out of a fear that the essence of Islamic faith was being lost
  - The desire to have an intense mystical experience of Allah, the belief that this was possible
  - The key beliefs related to this:
    - The need to deny self, and achieve annihilation of the self
    - The need for purification,
    - The reported experience of closeness and a sense of unity with Allah, the involvement of emotions, a state of ecstasy
  - The inferiority of religious rituals or legalism, unless they assisted in leading to a mystical experience
  - Practices employed by Sufis, e.g.
    - Denial of self: fasting, silence, celibacy
    - Dhikr: remembrance, chanting, breathing, dancing, poetry,
  - The role of others: the role of a shaykh or pir, brotherhoods, the example of Muhammad himself
  - Key mystics who defended Sufi beliefs and practices: reference to al – Hallaj (a Sufi who was crucified for blasphemy) or al – Ghazzali (an academic who became convinced of Sufism and wrote in defence of Sufism), Rumi (founder of whirling dervishes and poet)
  - Controversy caused by Sufism within the Muslim community
  - Consideration of the origins of Sufism, asceticism
  - Sufism was a reaction against Muslim leadership under the Umayyads, luxurious living, corruption,
  - Sufism was a reaction to the development of detailed analysis of Muslim documents, legalism emerging. [30]
- (b) A critical evaluation of the claim that Sufism has been the most serious cause of division in the Islamic faith could include, e.g.:
- Consideration of the divisive impact of the development of Sufism on the wider Muslim community
  - Consideration of aspects of Sufism which were challenging to mainstream Islam
  - Consideration of the controversial nature of claiming to have direct knowledge and experience of Allah, accusations of shirk
  - Divisive due to attitudes to the unnecessary observance of religious rituals
  - The Sufi view of intellectual study of faith of little value
  - The Sufi use of music and dance which was controversial
  - Criticism as Sufism seemed individualistic, with little focus on the ummah or community
  - Consideration of how Sufism added to the Muslim community in positive ways, e.g. understanding of Allah as loving, renewal of arts, simple living
  - Consideration of the impact of the Sunni Shia split and its significance past and present
  - Consideration of different interpretations of Shariah Law and geographical/cultural differences
  - Divisions and frustrations within the Islamic community due to attitudes, e.g. to women, terrorism, politics. [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

Section A

100

## GCE Religious Studies

### A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)

#### Synoptic Assessment

#### 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. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.
- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

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.

It is important that in the marking of the synoptic assessment unit, assistant examiners take account of the candidate's abilities in drawing together strands of knowledge and understanding from at least two different content areas.

Using the chosen theme, candidates will be expected to explore connections between elements of the selected areas of study. They should make appropriate use of the content as set out in the subject content for each module.

The five strands of knowledge and understanding act as a common and unifying structure for the specification. These are:

- the key concepts within the chosen areas of study, (e.g. religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories) and how these are expressed in texts, writings and/or practices
- the contribution of significant people, tradition or movements to the areas studied
- religious language and terminology
- major issues and questions arising from the chosen areas of study
- the relationship between the chosen areas of study and other specified aspects of human experience.

In particular candidates should demonstrate the ability to relate such connections to other aspects of human experience.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a full and comprehensive understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme</li> <li>• well integrated response</li> <li>• clear and critical analysis</li> <li>• highly accurate use of evidence and examples</li> <li>• sophisticated style of writing. Very well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a high degree of understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme</li> <li>• a well integrated response</li> <li>• some very good critical analysis</li> <li>• mainly accurate use of evidence and examples</li> <li>• mature style of writing</li> <li>• well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a good understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme</li> <li>• for the most part an integrated response</li> <li>• reasonable degree of critical analysis</li> <li>• a good degree of accurate evidence and examples</li> <li>• reasonably mature style of writing</li> <li>• some evidence of good structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a limited understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme</li> <li>• mere juxtaposition of the two areas of study, perhaps emphasising one content area at the expense of another</li> <li>• a limited attempt at critical analysis</li> <li>• insufficient use of accurate evidence and examples</li> <li>• immature style of writing</li> <li>• lacking in structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a basic understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme</li> <li>• demonstrating only partially accurate knowledge of the different content areas studied</li> <li>• little attempt, if any, at critical analysis</li> <li>• inappropriate style of writing with a very basic structure.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a comprehensive analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience</li> <li>• very effective comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints</li> <li>• mature personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• a very well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately and fluently with considerable sophistication using a wide range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a good analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience</li> <li>• very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints</li> <li>• good personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• a well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a reasonable analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience</li> <li>• very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints</li> <li>• some evidence of personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• a line of argument, expressed accurately and using some relevant terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a limited analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience</li> <li>• some comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints</li> <li>• limited personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• little evidence of critical argument</li> <li>• inaccuracies evident.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a basic analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience</li> <li>• little, if any, comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints</li> <li>• minimal personal insight and independent thought</li> <li>• a basic attempt to follow a line of argument</li> <li>• imprecisely expressed.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section B

5 (a) In examining some key ideas which relate to orthodoxy candidates should refer to at least two different areas of study and could consider the following, e.g.:

- Reference to ideas which have been foundational in establishing orthodoxy
- Reference to ideas which have defended orthodoxy
- Reference to ideas which have challenged orthodoxy
- The significance of key people in promoting ideas
- The debates regarding the sources of orthodox ideas
- The way/s in which orthodoxy/ orthodoxies develop
- The consequences of debates over orthodox ideas
- The long-term legacy of religious orthodox ideas. [30]

(b) In critically assessing the view that religious orthodoxy is impossible to achieve, candidates should refer to other aspects of human experience and could consider the following, e.g.:

- Consideration of the challenge of trying to establish an agreed religious orthodoxy
- Consideration of the appropriateness of 'impossible'
- Consideration of the contribution or significance of sacred texts, the challenge of their interpretation and application in orthodoxy debates, other possible sources of orthodox ideas
- Consideration of the contribution or significance of religious creeds
- Consideration of the significance of religious establishments in trying to establish an agreed religious orthodoxy or being progressive and revising orthodoxy
- Consideration of the significance of religious leaders in trying to establish an agreed orthodoxy or being progressive and revising orthodoxy
- Consideration of whether it is religious orthodoxy which is impossible or establishing religious orthodoxy, due to the changing nature of society, changing values, the impact of scientific and technological developments, increasing secularism, religious pluralism
- Consideration of the inevitability of conflict over orthodoxy
- Consideration of orthodoxy, historical or contemporary. [20]

Section B

Total

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

50

150