



ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2018

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 3

assessing

An Introduction to Themes in the Old Testament

[SRE31]

THURSDAY 17 MAY, MORNING

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 refer to different units of study in their AO1 response 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.

1 (a) Examine and discuss the situation Ezra and Nehemiah encountered in Jerusalem when they returned from exile, and how they responded to it.

Answers may include:

- The books of Ezra and Nehemiah represent one of the ways Israel attempted to reconstitute itself in the post-exilic context; the exile was religiously, socially and politically catastrophic for Judah; it represented God's worst punishment, including the termination of the covenant; thus the situation Ezra and Nehemiah encountered was very difficult.
- The context of return, including that Ezra and Nehemiah were supported by Persia, and that the returnees from exile thought themselves superior to those who had stayed.
- Discussion of the situation they encountered, including: Israelites had adopted the practices of neighbouring peoples, regarded as detestable (Ezra 9:1); a key issue was inter-marriage with foreigners, leading to what was considered the mingling of the holy race (Ezra 9:2); the breaking of the Sabbath, particularly with regard to commerce (Neh. 13:15–22); this led to a pervasive sense of impurity.
- Ezra's immediate reaction: he was so appalled he pulled out his own hair and beard (Ezra 9:3); led a personal and communal prayer of confession (Ezra 10:1–4); focussed on the idea of God working through a remnant; appealed to the Mosaic tradition of separation from foreigners (Ezra 9:10–12).
- Ezra and Nehemiah's strategic approach was to instigate reforms based on (i) stringent Mosaic covenant renewal; (ii) strict racial purity of the holy seed, including: the investigation of cases of inter-racial marriage by a panel; sending away foreign wives and children; the purification of the Temple and the reviving of worship practices (Neh. 13:6–14); the exclusion of foreigners, especially Ammonites and Moabites (Neh. 13:1–3; note how the book of Ruth may have been written to counter this).
- This resulted in a divided community; some opposed aspects of the reforms (Neh. 10:15); there was violence against those who had married foreigners and enforced oaths (Neh. 13:25); some Israelites joined the returnees and bound themselves to the law of God given through Moses (Neh. 10:28–29).

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) "The Bible often appears to contradict itself." Assess this claim with reference to relevant biblical passages. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- It is widely recognized that: the Bible is a collection of documents from different eras; composed of various sources (e.g. JEDP) and traditions; subject to editorial redaction; written for a range of purposes and from a range of perspectives; it is not surprising it often appears to contradict itself.
- There are occasions when contradictory approaches are taken to the same issues in the same historical period, e.g. the attitude to foreigners and issues of purity in the post-exilic period (Isa. 56:1–8; Neh. 13:23–31); the debate is between passages which are both in the Bible.
- An argument can be made that there is a contradiction between some of the commandments and other biblical texts: e.g. the commandment "you shall not kill" is clear, but elsewhere killing is sanctioned by God (Ex. 20: 12–17); the OT seems a very violent book with excessive killing (1st Kings 18:40); God commands "you shall not lie" but instigates lying (1st Kings 22:19–23).
- The issue of election insists only Israel is chosen by God; but Isa. 19:18–25 applies terms associated with Israel's election to Assyria and Egypt, Israel's enemies; Amos 9:7 envisages exodus for Philistines and Arameans; there was a minority in Israel willing to argue with, extend and contradict core beliefs and convictions.
- Contradictory attitudes are shown to the important institution of kingship in the Bible; it was opposed by those rooted in the egalitarian values of the conditional Mosaic covenant and supported by those primarily in favour of the unconditional Davidic covenant; but Psalm 89 contradicts and challenges the unconditional promise made to David.
- Hermeneutics are always used in interpreting the Bible, including concordism, literalist-fundamentalism, liberationist, historical-critical; some hermeneutic approaches want to deny, ignore or smooth over contradictions while others want to explore, explain and (perhaps) exploit them.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

2 (a) Explain and discuss the importance of the role that Nathan played in the story of David.

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- While David dominates the narrative, he is surrounded by a cast of other characters, all of whom are presented with vivid psychological depth; Nathan is a very important member of this group, introducing crucial OT themes.
- When Nathan first appears in the story, God is with David but David is wary of God's unpredictable power, Nathan acts in significant ways in his role as a court prophet and intermediary with God.
- Discussion of the role of Nathan in thwarting David's ambition to build God a temple ("house") but delivering God's promise to build David a "house" i.e., dynasty; the terms of this unconditional Davidic covenant; the message that while God will punish David and his successors, God's steadfast love will never be removed and the Davidic line will be established for ever (2nd Samuel 7:1–17); how this is one of the most important messages in the OT and a departure from strict conditionality of the Mosaic covenant and Deuteronomistic theology.
- Nathan's rebuke of David following his affair with Bathsheba and the subsequent murder of Uriah, including: Nathan's parable; the announcement that the illegitimate child will die; and that the "sword" (representing destructive violence) will now never depart from David's house (2nd Samuel 12:1–14); Nathan's role holding David's abuse of royal power to account.
- How Nathan's prophetic indictment is immediately enacted in David's family; the rape of Tamar by Amnon, her half-brother, and his murder by Absalom, her brother (2nd Samuel 13:1–38); this confirms the importance of Nathan's role in David's story.
- In long term perspective, it is Nathan who establishes the predominant theme in the history of the Davidic dynasty: the tension between God's love and the "sword"; discussion of how the termination of the Davidic throne creates a crisis in Israel; David's house does not endure for ever and the sword wins; this gives rise to messianic Davidic theology; traced back, Nathan plays a key role in this.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) Evaluate the claim that the Davidic narratives should be read as literature and not history. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- The Bible is composed of many different genre and therefore the Davidic narratives do not automatically need to be taken as history; note how fundamentalists tend to take everything in the Bible as historically accurate; and how earlier critical scholarship believed that the Davidic narratives represented the beginning of historically reliable writing.
- Discussion of how this is now much more disputed, including reference to: the debate between “minimalists” and “maximalists”; criticisms of these positions; the implications of the Tel Dan stela.
- Consideration that archaeology cannot prove or disprove what is written in the Davidic narratives, which are indisputably part of a literary work; the view that the narratives are a historically based memory of a tribal chieftain, now turned into literature by artistic imagination.
- Reference to the Deuteronomistic History hypothesis, including how it argues: that the Davidic narratives are part of a wider narrative designed to trace and explain the life of Israel in the promised land; that this is a literary work proposing an interpretation of history based on the theology of Deuteronomy to retrospectively explain the exile of 587 BCE; that Deuteronomistic thought does not completely dominate the story of David.
- Understanding of the proposal that: the Davidic narratives represent the combining of several independent sources, including pre-Davidic, the rise of David, the establishment of the state, and the succession narrative; that these have been edited and arranged as a literature to create a perspective on the transition from tribal society to the beginning of the monarchy.
- Concluding comments, including that: for some it is inconceivable that the Davidic narratives could be anything but history; for others, whatever the historical background, they are best understood as literature; for a minority, they are solely a work of literature and have no connection to history; whatever way they are conceived, they are not mere reportage but part of a crafted literary-theological work.
- Appreciation that the Davidic narratives continue to have value.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

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Section B**AVAILABLE
MARKS**Answer **one** question.

3 (a) Examine how wise Solomon was, as presented in the narratives about his reign.

Answers may include:

- The succession narrative sets the scene for Solomon's reign, including: how Solomon asks for and is granted wisdom by God; related to this is the promise of wealth and grandeur; but Solomon is also ruthless in eliminating rivals to secure his throne.
- Throughout the passages studied, Solomon is regularly designated as wise, including: in his proverbial wisdom and songs; in natural science; in diplomacy (1st Kings 5:12); in the visit of the Queen of Sheba; note how Solomon is regarded as the patron and originator of the wisdom tradition in Ancient Israel.
- Discussion of the concept of wisdom in Ancient Israel; how it is based on observation not belief; part of a common Ancient Near Eastern tradition and not distinctly Israelite; Solomon is presented as pre-eminent in this (1st Kings 4:30–31; 10:1–9) and created a Solomonic enlightenment divorced from covenantal faithfulness.
- Exploration of the implications of the wisdom tradition in Solomon's reign, including: becoming more like the surrounding nations; the creation of a ruling elite and exploitation (1st Kings 5:13–18); being led astray by foreign wives (1st Kings 11:1–8); allowing the worship of Gods alien to Israel (1st Kings 11:33).
- Note the influence of the Deuteronomistic History in the final redaction of the theme of wisdom, warning Solomon not to diverge from covenantal standards (1st Kings 6:11–13) and indicating the end of the kingdom when he does not act accordingly (1st Kings 11:9–13); this is reinforced by Jeroboam's rebellion, including the prophetic street-theatre indictment of Ahija (1st Kings 11:26–40, esp. 29–33).
- Concluding reflection, including: that at one level Solomon is presented as dazzlingly wise and successful; but he does not use his wisdom to create an enduring state based on the egalitarian standards of the Mosaic covenant and sows the seeds of the division of the kingdom; he is not the good king imagined by Psalm 72.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, evaluate the claim that religious leaders need to have moral integrity, but political leaders do not. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the claim in relation to other aspects of human experience.
- An open ended response citing relevant historical and/or contemporary examples.
- It may be argued that religious formation aims at moral perfection and transformation of life at all levels; therefore religious leaders ought to display moral integrity; the monastic movement as an attempt to withdraw from the world (including the world of politics) to achieve this.
- Politics deals with the art of the possible and this involves compromise, including perhaps compromising moral ideals in order to achieve the best outcome possible; the question of whether the private morality of politicians has any relevance to their role in public office, noting that in France it tends not to have but that in other countries it does, e.g. Bill Clinton, John Major, historically Charles Stewart Parnell.
- Religious leaders have the greatest impact, even on the secular world, when there is moral coherence between what is said and what is done, and examples of this, e.g. Pope Francis, Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu; religion is more easily dismissed when there is an obvious lack of moral integrity, e.g. clerical sexual abuse, an opulent church following a poor Jesus, religious leaders involved in politics preaching a message of division and hate.
- Alternatively, discuss that “all have sinned” including the argument that religious leaders will never achieve moral perfection and that people can relate better to religious leaders who are struggling like them.
- Consider the view that when political leaders clearly lack moral integrity this can damage confidence in the political process and have serious consequences for wider society, including a rise in cynicism, a feeling that politicians “are all the same” and that nothing can change.
- Explore that morality should mean more than sexual morality and that when politicians lose their moral compass with regard to, e.g. economic fairness, ecological awareness, international justice, treatment of asylum seekers and refugees, then they may increase the possibility of social unrest and potentially revolution; historical examples of this and different theologies as moral-political programmes, e.g. Socialism, Social Democracy, Liberation Theology.
- Reflect that: ideally religious and political leaders benefit from having a moral vision; for some political leaders ambivalence to aspects of morality is no disadvantage and might actually add to their appeal (e.g. JFK); moral short-comings in religious leaders may be used to undermine their otherwise impressive achievement and moral vision (e.g. MLK, Jr.).

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

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

(AO2)

[25]

50

4 (a) "Conflict is the keynote of the book of Amos." With particular reference to the confrontation between Amaziah and Amos, discuss this statement.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Conflict is a helpful category by which to understand the book of Amos; it is possible to identify different aspects of conflict within the book, understanding it primarily as a prophecy of doom and condemnation.
- Details of the conflict between Amaziah and Amos, including: the attitude of Amaziah, torn between fear of the king and caution at Amos' prophetic words, and his instruction for Amos to leave; the response of Amos, with his claim to be an independent prophet free of the court system, and his severe oracle against Amaziah and his family.
- Note the placement of the conflict, including: how it comes immediately after the visions of locusts, fire and plumb-line; how the Lord relents in the first two but not in the third, which is a highly seditious attack on Jeroboam and shows the depth of the conflict; how the fourth vision of ripe fruit follows immediately after it and confirms the condemnation.
- Exploration of the importance of Bethel, including how: it was where Jacob was promised the land (Gen. 28:13); but is now completely opposed to God (Amos 5:4–7); the conflict between God and people is so intense they will be exiled from the land.
- Discussion of Amos' opposition to Israel's abandonment of its traditional faith and examples of the social injustice that ensued as a result; Bethel linked to oracles condemning injustice (Amos 3:14–15).
- The theme of Israel's complacency and the conflict around this, related to the Day of the Lord and resulting in Israel being treated like one of the nations without any privileges of election.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, comment on the view that the true prophetic voice in any age creates opposition and helps the marginalised. Justify your answer.

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the claim in relation to other aspects of human experience.
- An open ended response citing relevant historical and/or contemporary examples.
- In biblical perspective the prophets often created extensive opposition and spoke out for the marginalised, and examples of this.
- Modern prophetic voices regularly follow this pattern; e.g. MLK Jr. went to prison and was ultimately assassinated for championing the rights of exploited and disenfranchised blacks in the United States; similarly, Oscar Romero, termed the voice for the voiceless, spoke for the poor, generated bitter opposition and was murdered while leading Mass.
- Exploration of reasons for this, including: vested interests; the violent reaction generated by scandalous systems being exposed to analysis and truth; Father Daniel Berrigan's comment that we hide the poor because they tell us who we are and we kill the prophets because they challenge us about who we could be.
- Alternatively, consider that in the Bible the true prophetic voice is often of doom and condemnation for everyone, including the marginalised; opposition is created but little is done to assist the poor.
- Discussion of the term "prophetic voice" including how it can now refer to secular as well as religious activity; can be applied to someone speaking out ahead of their time about a particular issue but with no connection to the marginalised; can be self-consciously adopted by a person involved in public life, who has demagogic tendencies and actually acts against the interests of the marginalised.
- Reflection on how the term "prophetic voice" is used in different ways in different settings both religious and secular; there are varieties of religious experience related to the term prophetic (e.g. in the charismatic movement) but those which create opposition while seeking to transform society for all, especially the poor, are closest to the biblical vision and the model of Jesus.

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