



ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2019

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit A2 6

assessing

Islam in a Contemporary Context

[ARE61]

TUESDAY 11 JUNE, 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 support their answer with reference to at least one other unit of study to access Bands 4–5.

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.
- Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material lacks clarity and coherence. There is little or no use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are basic and the intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate makes a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is limited use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Very Good): The candidate makes a very good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with clarity and coherence. There is very good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a very good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 5 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

A2 BANDS

Total Marks: [20]

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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[17]–[20]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[13]–[16]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[9]–[12]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[5]–[8]
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, examples and scholarship. • 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. 	[1]–[4]

A2 BANDS

Total Marks: [30]

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 to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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 vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis. A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis. A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis. A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis. A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[1]–[6]

Section A

Answer **two** questions from this section

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 1 (a) Examine what the Qur'an teaches about the afterlife (Akirah).

Answers may include:

- Human beings are Allah's vice regents on earth.
- This life is a preparation for the life to come.
- This life is a test.
- Muslims believe that there will be a physical resurrection.
- There are different views on what happens between death and the resurrection.
- All humanity are gathered to the Plain of Judgement.
- The good and bad deeds of humanity have been recorded by recording angels, these will be read out.
- If good deeds outweigh bad, paradise is granted.
- If bad deeds outweigh good, hell is granted.
- The Qur'an's graphic descriptions of both paradise and hell.
- Alternative views held within Islam, Allah's ability to be gracious or to punish with hell for a short time.
- Possible specific reference to the Qur'an

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) “One Islamic view suggests that every human action is willed by Allah and the opposite view is that humans are in control of their actions.”
With reference to this quotation, critically assess the Muslim belief in predestination.

Answers may include:

- Specific reference to the prefacing quotation.
- Consideration of the traditional Islamic understanding of al Qadr or predestination, Allah wills everything, ‘It is the will of Allah’.
- Consideration of the challenge of believing that Allah wills both good and evil.
- Consideration of the significance of human free will, or otherwise.
- Consideration of the significance of good and bad deeds, final judgment, if destiny is predetermined.
- Consideration of the challenge to be motivated to do good, if fate is already decided.
- Consideration of how different groups and people tried to resolve this.
- The Mutazalites stressed human free will and rejected predestination, declared heretics.
- Al Ashari combined free will and predestination, Allah knows what people will do before they do it, it is up to humans to decide if they submit to Allah’s will.
- In the Middle Ages strict predestination was the view taken, Inshallah.
- A modern approach, humans decide what they will do but this does not conflict with the foreknowledge of Allah.
- If we cannot understand the mystery of Allah and the apparent paradox of predestination and free will it is because we, as human beings, have a limited understanding.
- Consideration of how Muslims are to respond to destructive events in the world today, e.g. natural disasters, acts of violence.
- Consideration of other beliefs or aspects of the faith or religious divisions or contemporary world, which would be more challenging.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

50

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 2 (a) "The Sunni/Shia split began with the death of Muhammad."
Present a case for this statement.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Specific reference to a case for the statement.
- Consideration of the two views on leadership which were in existence when Muhammad died: a leader should inherit the role, or a leader should be elected.
- The preference of Ali from the outset by a minority group.
- Consideration of why Muhammad's death was a crisis point for the Muslim community.
- Consideration of the significance of the fact that Muhammad had not left a clear indication as to who his successor should be.
- Consideration of Muhammad's personality and charismatic nature, impossible to replace, his strong leadership.
- Consideration of the appointment of the first four caliphs, their contribution.
- Consideration of the role of Ali and his sons.
- Consideration of the role of Mu'awiya, his corruption and ambition, his selection of Yazid instead of Husayn.
- The formation of the Shia, the point of the split in the community.
- The significance of the Battle of Karbala, Husayn's death/martyrdom, death of baby Ali Ashgar.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) Critically evaluate the suggestion that succession and leadership in Islam are as contentious today as they were in the past.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the contentious nature of selecting a successor for Muhammad.
- Consideration of different views regarding leadership, blood line inheritance and democratic election.
- Consideration of how this debate led to sectarian disputes and violence and still does, e.g. sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia in Iraq, Iran.
- Consideration of contentious aspects of the careers of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, their strengths and weaknesses.
- Consideration of the challenge of maintaining unity in the early centuries of the Muslim community, achieved in a rapidly expanding empire, taxation system, appointment of governors, the completion of the Qur'an.
- The ongoing challenge of having leadership within the Muslim community which brings agreement and unity, especially when many communities are autonomous.
- Consideration of how from the outset Islamic leadership may have gone hand in hand with political leadership, and the challenges of this.
- Consideration of how political and religious leadership may still be contentious as in Iran and the leadership of the Ayatollahs.
- Consideration of disputes relating to allowing Muslim women to lead not only women in prayer but also mixed groups.
- Consideration of the views of extremists who wish for the caliphate to be restored, e.g. ISIS.
- Consideration of the extent to which both succession and leadership are equally challenging or contentious.
- Consideration of the extent to which the disputes today are as challenging as in the past.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

50

3 (a) Examine why the family is important in Islam.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Within Islamic thinking the family is the fundamental unit of society.
- The ideal is that each member of the family protects each other.
- The family is a small unit of the larger Islamic ummah.
- There is an expectation that everyone will marry, they have completed half their faith in this way.
- Marriage is central to family life, polygamy allowed, monogamy preferred, adultery is unacceptable, divorce allowed but undesirable.
- The role and purpose of the husband and father is to deal with the public domain, provide for the family and protect the family.
- The role of the wife and mother is to manage the home, raise the children, protect the children, educate the children in religious and moral life.
- Children are a gift and a joy, there is the ideal of mutual respect.
- There is a duty to care for orphaned children within the wider family, although they do not enjoy equal rights to natural children.
- Children are to care for their ageing parents.
- Reference may be made to relevant Surahs of the Qur'an or Hadith.
- Consideration of the role of geographical context and cultural norms.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) "It is for good reason that euthanasia and suicide are strictly forbidden in Islam."

To what extent is this statement true?

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the Islamic view that life is granted by Allah, it is his gift
- Consideration of the view that the soul is Allah's loan to the body, in a sense it is a visitor.
- Consideration of the teaching that the length of one's life is at Allah's discretion.
- Allah knows the length of life even before conception.
- Consideration of the Muslim belief that it is a great presumption for any human to try to interfere with Allah's will regarding the length of one's life.
- Consideration of how Muslims should be grateful for their life and acknowledge that it is God's gift.
- Consideration of how Muslims should seek to live every day in submission to Allah.
- When facing death Muslims should have a sense of peace, acceptance and hope.
- In the light of all of these views Muslims are opposed to euthanasia, a logical and consistent view.
- Consideration of how Muslims believe that the reasons why someone is disabled or suffering is known to Allah.
- Consideration of the view that while the suffering in our lives may seem unfair, humans do not know the will of Allah and must trust that Allah is never unfair.
- Consideration of the human responsibility which is to respond in a loving, supportive and caring way for those who are suffering or dying.
- Consideration of how killing another human being is unlawful in Islam.
- Consideration of the view that suicide is forbidden in Islam and punishment in the afterlife is promised because of it.
- Consideration of how Muslims are encouraged to embrace their hardships.
- Consideration of the view that for those who resort to suicide it is assumed that it is due to poor mental health and Allah will be compassionate.
- Consideration of the challenges presented by modern medicine which sometimes blurs the lines between life and death, clash of Muslim views and secular views.
- Consideration of the challenges presented by those who are suicide bombers, in the name of Islam.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

100

Synoptic Bands

Total Marks: [20]

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excellent attempt at analysis with a full and highly informed response to the question. Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. A very high degree of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. 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. 	[17]–[20]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very good attempt at analysis with a well informed response to the question. Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. A very good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. 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. 	[13]–[16]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good attempt at analysis with a reasonably well informed response to the question. Demonstrates a good understanding and mainly accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. A good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. 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. 	[9]–[12]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited attempt at analysis with a limited response to the question. Demonstrates a limited understanding and limited knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. A limited range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. 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. 	[5]–[8]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic attempt at analysis with a basic response to the question. Demonstrates a basic understanding and basic knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. A basic range of evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. 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. 	[1]–[4]

Candidates must refer to at least one other unit of study in their AO1 response to access Bands 4–5.

Synoptic Bands

Total Marks: [30]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. An excellent attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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 vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis which struggles to relate to other aspects of human experience. A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis which fails to relate to other aspects of human experience. A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. 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. 	[1]–[6]

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Section B

You **must** answer this question

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 4 (a) With reference to one example, discuss how a religious community can maintain faith. You must support your answer with reference to at least one other unit of study.

Answers may include:

- Specific reference to one example.
- Consideration of the significance of the religious community in maintaining faith within church or other religious or philosophical groups, past or present.
- Consideration of the role of key people within religious communities in maintaining faith.
- Consideration of community worship and its role in maintaining faith.
- Consideration of the significance of religious rituals which are celebrated by religious communities in maintaining faith.
- Consideration of the significance of sacred texts which are central to religious communities in maintaining faith.
- Consideration of the impact of differing opinions, beliefs, interpretations, divisions within religious communities on their ability to maintain faith.
- Consideration of the impact of change on religious communities and their willingness to adapt or change, remain relevant, tolerant, able to grow, survive and maintain faith.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must support their answer with reference to at least one other unit of study to access Bands 4–5

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) 'Freedom of belief is impossible within religious communities.' Critically assess this claim. You must refer to other aspects of human experience in your answer.

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the impact of having to conform to theological ideas within a religious community.
- Consideration of the impact of having to conform to moral ideals within a religious community.
- Consideration of the significance of sacred texts, their interpretation, their application and the impact of this on religious freedom.
- Consideration of the possibility of freedom of conscience in relation to religious freedom.
- Consideration of the possibility or otherwise of being able to change one's religious beliefs and perhaps even change faith.
- Consideration of the significance of the geographical context in relation to religious freedom.
- Consideration of the majority religious view in relation to religious freedom.
- Consideration of the impact of the culture on the possibility of religious freedom.
- Consideration of how the political situation could impact religious freedom.
- Consideration of the role of key people or groups who have shown religious intolerance or who have struggled to bring religious freedom, or support for those enduring persecution.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access

Bands 3–5

(AO2)

[30]

Section B

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

50

150