



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE In Religious Studies
(8RS0)

PAPER 4: Study of Religion Option 4E:
Judaism

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Question number	Indicative Content Explore the distinctive practices of Orthodox Judaism.	Mark
1	8 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following: • There are different traditions within Orthodox Judaism such as Ashkenazi. • Orthodox practices are based on Halakhah, especially the Responsa literature. • Orthodox Jews may be identified by dress and food codes. • Both sexes practise the laws of negiah. • The Halakhah is an ever-expanding discourse whose interpretation and application are determined by rabbis.	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Indicative Content Assess the authority associated with the Torah.	Mark
2	3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting the AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1: • The authority of the Torah can be traced back to the origin of Judaism. • Its authority is the belief that it is divinely revealed. • Some believe that the Torah was composed by Moses which gives it authority. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2: • Various meanings can be associated with 'Torah' because these have a bearing on its authority, which as a consequence has lasting influence. • Maimonides emphasised the view that the Torah was the unique prophecy of Moses and therefore has authority because it is a direct revelation from God to Moses. • Because the giving of the Torah is celebrated prominently in Jewish worship, this emphasises its position of authority. • Different Jewish groups distinguish between the written and oral law and this distinction has implications for the authority of the written law only. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.	(9)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	4–6	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).

Level 3	7–9	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2)
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Question number	Indicative content Assess the significance of Reform Judaism for an understanding of Jewish identity
3	3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1: • Reform Judaism aims to change historic beliefs and practices in light of the modern context. • A dominant feature of Reform is its emphasis on ethics and reason. • There are implications for followers of Reform in terms of practices in the synagogue. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2: • The changing prominent features of Reform over time and in different contexts indicate the diverse influence of Reform on Judaism, for example the role of women. • A discussion of some case studies within Reform highlight an understanding of Jewish identity, such as in relation to gender roles. • Significant Reform thinkers have made a mark on the public understanding of Jewish identity, such as the popular appeal of Rabbi Hugo Gryn and Lionel Blue. • Reform Judaism could be seen to have limited influence because the largest tradition within Judaism is Orthodoxy; there are ongoing critical debates within Reform because of its lack of progress. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).

Level 2	4–6	- A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). - Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). - Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	- A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). - Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). - Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content Explore ideas about rewards and punishments in Jewish beliefs about God.
4(a)	8 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following. - The Jewish belief in a God who is just. - Some aspects of rewards and punishments may relate to this life and this world with evidence of their consequences. - There is a tendency, however, to think of their consequences in terms of life after death. - Punishment in the context of She'ol is not thought of as infinite nor a place of torment but rather for the benefit of the individual. - Key texts such as Job elaborate the complexities of these beliefs about rewards and punishments.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	- A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). - Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). - Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	- A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). - Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). - Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	- A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). - Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). - Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Indicative content Analyse interpretations about ethical monotheism across different Jewish traditions.
4(b)	5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1: • 'Shema Yisrael' as a way of approaching Jewish views about monotheism. • This is fundamental to Judaism including Maimonides 2nd Principle. • Ethical monotheism may be effectively illustrated by the structure of the Decalogue. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2: • Orthodox Judaism is a tradition that affirms the basis and centrality of ethical monotheism because it holds fast to age old values. • Reform Judaism may accentuate the ethical dimension because some Reform rabbis focus on the 'Mission of Israel' as a means of spreading the ethical message of Judaism worldwide. • Kabbalah has a basic belief in the unity of God but it refines the notion of ethical monotheism because of the belief of tzimtzum and the hiddenness of God. • The centrality of ethical monotheism is understood by Jews in its distinctive contribution given its universal appeal and relevance. • The effects of ethical monotheism underpin much of the thinking of Rabbinic Judaism but there is a greater emphasis on the correct interpretation of Jewish scriptures and their authority. • Some may argue for the limitations of ethical monotheism because of the greater importance of the social and ethical context of religion. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues may be selected (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).

Level 2	6–10	• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	11–15	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	16–20	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).