



# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2023**

**GCSE Religious Studies B 1RB0 1F**

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## Introduction

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall award.

The assessment consists of four questions and candidates must answer all questions. The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification.

This area of study comprises a study in-depth of Judaism as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are four sections:

- Jewish Beliefs
- Marriage and the family
- Living the Jewish Life
- Matters of Life and Death

Candidates had studied Judaism within the context of the wider British society.

## **Question 1 (a)**

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark.

Many candidates were awarded all 3 marks on this question.

Where candidates were not awarded all the marks, it was often because they had confused Abraham with Moses.

The question asks for 3 beliefs about Abraham's Covenant with the Almighty. Candidates could write about a variety of different beliefs and be credited with the marks.

1 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about Abraham's Covenant with the Almighty.

(3)

Jews believe men should be circumcised as a symbol of this covenant. Jews also believe God promised Abraham as many descendants as the stars. Jews lastly believe God promised them the Land of Canaan.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

Jews believe men should be circumcised as a symbol of this Covenant (1)

God promised Abraham as many descendants as stars (1)

God promised the land of Canaan (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Candidates should write three sentences containing one piece of information in each. There is no need for development: it will not receive credit.

Some candidates confused Abraham and Moses. Positive marking allows for the correct knowledge to be awarded while the incorrect knowledge is ignored.

1 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about Abraham's Covenant with the Almighty.

(3)

God gave Abraham the 10 commandments.  
God Promised Abraham descendants  
that would outnumber the stars in the sky.  
The Covenant ~~Hashem~~ sets out the  
basis of Jewish faith and how  
they should live their life.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate is awarded 1 mark.

God promised Abraham descendants (1)

The rest of this answer relates to the Covenant with Moses.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

The exam paper refers to the Almighty. Candidates are not penalised if they refer to God, or Hashem.

## Question 1 (b)

Many candidates approached this question knowledgeably and could write confidently about the Messiah.

Where candidates lost marks, it was often because they did not present their knowledge as two separate beliefs, but wrote a paragraph with many different beliefs about the Messiah. A number of candidates wrote about Jesus, and a number pointed out that Jews do not believe Jesus was the Messiah; neither were credited.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

(b) Explain **two** beliefs about the Messiah in Judaism.

(4)

In Judaism they believe the messiah will be a great political leader

They believe he will come down and bring world peace in which everyone will live in harmony



This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

They believe the Messiah will be a great political leader (1)

They believe he will bring world peace (1) in which everyone will live in harmony (1)



Candidates did best where they wrote a point, then an explanation or an example. Where candidates write in long paragraphs, it may be difficult to separate their points.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** beliefs about the Messiah in Judaism.

(4)

One belief about the Messiah is he ~~is~~ will come when the world ends and bring about the Messianic age. Therefore he is a saviour as will resurrect and save.

Another belief about the Messiah is he will raise everybody from the dead. So all Jews are not cremated to retain their body for resurrection. Therefore the Messiah is a bringer of life and a judge as to who he resurrects.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

He will come into the world when the world ends (1) and bring about the Messianic Age (1)

He will raise everyone from the dead (1) so Jews are not cremated and retain their body for resurrection (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Leaving a space between points makes it easier for the examiner to see the two beliefs.

## Question 1 (c)

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two beliefs are required for this question, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quote or examples. The development must be of the belief given and to the question asked. The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development, it does not gain a second mark for the source.

The majority of the candidates answered this well, referring to Genesis, the creation of Adam and Pikuach Nefesh. Some candidates confused the sanctity of life with Pikuach Nefesh and they often got 3 marks rather than 5.

This candidate was awarded 4 marks.

(c) Explain **two** Jewish beliefs about the sanctity of human life.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One belief about the sanctity of life is that life is God given. This means only God can create and destroy lives, which is seen in the Jewish teaching of ~~Pikuach~~ Pikuach Nefesh. Another belief is life is life is precious. This is because, "Mankind is made in the image of God". Jews believe everyone is equal as were perfect in Gods eyes.



This candidate was awarded 4 marks.

Life is God-given (1) This means only God can create and destroy life (1)

Life is precious (1) because mankind is made in the image of God (1)

The final sentence is another point.

Mankind being made in the image of God can count as development or as a source of wisdom. The candidate has used it as development here and has not added more, so it can only be counted once.



The candidates do not have to reference a quote or quote it word for word. They can paraphrase, or refer to a story from the Tenakh, but it must be in addition to the development.

(c) Explain **two** Jewish beliefs about the sanctity of human life.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

many Jews believe in the sanctity of life meaning they believe all life was made by God meaning it is important, to murder or take another life is against God's commandment "you shall not murder", however circumstances often make it hard to outline what is murder.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

This candidate has given one belief, developed it and added a source of wisdom

All life was made by God (1) To take life is against God's commandment (1) 'You shall not murder' (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Candidates do not need to reference quotes but if they do, they must be accurate; for example, if this candidate had written 'God told Abraham you shall not murder' then they would not have been given the mark.

## Question 1 (d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The candidates are assessed on AO2, Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion** – there must be some consideration of the arguments (appraise, judge the value of, the arguments to reach the higher levels).

Many candidates gave excellent answers citing reasons for and against but not considering the value of them or analysing/evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels. Good answers understood that this question was asking about whether the mitzvot and free will are contrary beliefs, or whether the choice to follow the mitzvot is, indeed, free will.

Many centres had attempted to introduce a writing frame to encouraged appraisal, but the candidates did not appear to understand the demands of the skill required. For example, some wrote 'this is a strong argument because...' and then gave a further reason.

This candidate was awarded 8 marks plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

\*(d) "Free will means that people can behave however they want."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

As a definition, yes, free will does mean that people can behave however they want. However for Jews, they still have laws, the mitzvot, to follow and having free will is an additional test to this.

Since God is omnibenevolent, he gave humans free will as demonstrated when Eve ate the forbidden fruit in Gan Eden, a story found in Genesis. This story taught us that humans do have a choice but will be punished if they misbehave. Some Jews take this as reality; they don't have free will, they must do whatever they can to please God by following the mitzvot, praying 3 times a day and adjusting their lives to centre around God otherwise on the day of judgment, Yom Kippur, God will be upset.

Other Jews will argue that saying although Jews must do these things, it's still a choice of free will which is in place to further test obedience and ability to 'deny themselves' as an act of love and devotion to God. That ultimately is a stronger argument as practising Judaism is something all Jews choose to do, no one is forcing them.

Some Jews may also argue that free will within his religion

is shown today by the spectrum of different Jews that there is. Some Jews choose to be more liberal and traditional (Orthodox) while others take it more metaphorically and have adjusted to modern times (Reform). This shows free will can live in harmony with Judaism which is a strong argument as both these groups of Jews live good lives, proving God is not upset with how they have used their free will. However, another strong argument is that in some aspects of Judaism, free will doesn't exist. For example, the 10 commandments are not negotiable such as ~~the 10~~ 'You must not murder' (Exodus) and these show the Jews can't behave however they want as they must obey these commandments.

In conclusion, the free argument is stronger. Jews can behave however they want, nothing is stopping them however they don't as the consequences are clear and why would <sup>any Jew</sup> ~~they~~ upset God and destroy their relationship?



The mark scheme gives detailed level descriptors and level 3 is about deconstructing religious issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning.

This candidate has opened really well – in the first short paragraph, they have answered the question and shown that they have understood the issues. They write knowledgeably, they point out that ultimately following Judaism is a choice. They have written about the difference between Orthodox and Reform Jews, and they point out that despite all this, there are some commandments which are non-negotiable, such as the commandment not to murder.

What stops this getting into level 4 is that although they have pointed this out, they then have not addressed this in relation to the question. Therefore, to use the level descriptors, it is not sustained, and neither are the judgements fully supported. The conclusion is quite weak, making this mid level 3.

The candidate is awarded all 3 spag marks.



Weaker candidates may benefit from writing frames or structures but often stronger candidates are hindered by them. Encourage candidates to answer the question, rather than write a for and against what some Jews believe or think.

This candidate is awarded level 3, 7 marks plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

\*d) "Free will means that people can behave however they want."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

This statement "Free will means that people can behave however they want" may be viewed as controversial, with strong argument for and against.

Some Jews would disagree with this statement, as they would argue that even though God gave humans free will, he also gave Moses the 10 commandments on Mt. Sinai. These laws mean that even though God gave humans free will, God expects humans to follow his guidelines and laws, so that they can lead a good and happy life, and make it to Gan-eden when they die, instead of having to be punished for bad deeds. They would also argue that even with the 10 commandments and 613 Mitzvot, free will can still be achieved, but humans should not just do whatever they feel like, and should follow the laws. This argument may be made by many Orthodox Jews, who follow the laws outlined in the Torah more closely.

Some other Jews would agree with this statement,<sup>however,</sup> arguing that God ~~has~~ ~~thoughtfully~~ gave humans free will so that they can ~~live~~

lead their own lives, and be happy. They would argue that by God gave humans free will, then God should not expect them to follow all 613 Mitzvot or 10 commandments, as the nature of free will means that people are able to make their own decisions, which could include not following the laws God set out, which means that humans can behave however they want. They might say that people should use the laws in the Torah as a guide, but they need not follow them word-for-word, but instead interpret them as they see fit, as beings with free will should be able to do. This argument may be made by more reform Jews, who ~~in conclusion, I believe that~~ are open to interpreting the Torah, mitzvot, and 10 commandments as they want, and adapting what they mean over time.

In conclusion, I believe that the statement "Free will means that people can behave however they want" is a little bit grey, in the sense that both arguments are correct; God gave humans free will, and therefore should not expect humans to follow his laws exactly, as is human nature. But humans should also try and follow some of the laws, as they provide the structure and correct rules for someone to lead a good life. They are both correct, and saying "behaving however they want" can also be bad, as humans can damage God's creation; the world and each other, which is also not good. So a fine balance between the two would be best.



This candidate has addressed the question and written about free will and the 10 Commandments and the mitzvot. They have clearly understood the issues, but this is not as well written as the previous answer, the depth is not there. There are some sentences which do not get taken far enough, for example, that Orthodox Jews might believe this, but without saying why.

Until the conclusion, this candidate is still in level 2. What takes it to level 3 is where they explain that both arguments are correct, and why that is. This takes it from being superficial and limited to coherent and logical. The judgement is reasoned. It is at the bottom of level 3 because the previous paragraphs have less depth.

The candidate is awarded 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.



Candidates require the religious understanding of the diversity within the religious tradition, and the arguments for and against before they can begin to evaluate.

## Question 2 (a)

Many candidates answered this well, writing about passing down the faith and looking after the elderly. Where candidates did not do so well, it was often that they wrote about roles in the family rather than the purpose of it, or the reasons for marriage.

These bullet points are the basis of question setting.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

**2 (a) Outline three purposes of the family in Judaism.**

(3)

Family provide stability and a safe environment to raise children. Family pass down Jewish beliefs, traditions and values down generations. Family provide support for not only children but for the elderly, when they're most vulnerable.



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Examiner Comments

Family provide stability and a safe environment to raise children (1)

Family pass down Jewish beliefs and traditions (1)

Family provide support for the elderly (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Candidates who write their points on separate lines make it clear for the examiner to read their answers.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

2 (a) Outline **three** purposes of the family in Judaism.

(3)

One purpose is to pass down faith to the young generation.  
Another purpose is to have security and stability.  
Lastly another purpose is to expand the extended family of the Jewish community.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

To pass down faith to the young generation (1)

To have security and stability (1)

To expand the extended family of the Jewish community (1)

## Question 2 (b)

This was answered well by most candidates. Many candidates wrote about Jewish communities running food banks and for other charity work to help those in need. Others wrote about classes run by Synagogues for children to learn Hebrew. There were a wide variety of responses which were accepted.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** ways the Jewish community may help to support families.

(4)

One way the community helps families is ~~during~~ when they are mourning. During Shiva, local members of the community will cook and ~~clean~~ clean for them so the family can be together.

Another way the community supports families is through inviting each other over for Friday night Shabbat dinner. This dinner has a focus on community, and an invite shows love and compassion.



One way the community helps families is when they are mourning (1); during Shiva, local members will cook, clean for the family (1)

Another way is inviting each other over for Friday night Shabbat dinner (1) an invite shows love and compassion (1)



Candidates should be familiar with and prepare for all parts of the specification.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** ways the Jewish community may help to support families.

(4)

A synagogue will help families in a variety of ways. One way it helps is that it may offer lessons for children to learn how to read the Torah or participate in other Jewish customs.

Another way is that Rabbis may offer advice to people like couples seeking help in how to decide on what school to send their children to or even things like contraception.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

A synagogue...may offer lessons for children to learn how to read the Torah (1) or participate in other Jewish customs (1)

Rabbis may offer advice to couples (1) seeking help about schools or contraception (1)

## Question 2 (c)

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two beliefs are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must be of the belief given and to the question asked. The beliefs then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the belief given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development, it does not gain a second mark for the source.

Most candidates responded well to this question and were able to answer confidently. The source of wisdom was often the story of Onan, which the candidates know well. Where some struggled, was where there was confusion between contraception and abortion.

This candidate was awarded 4 marks.

(c) Explain **two** different Jewish beliefs about contraception.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

Jews believe that contraception may only be used within married couples. This is because they do not believe in sex before marriage. They believe that the most safest contraception is the Pill as it will not do harm to semen as they believe the semen cannot be damaged as it is essential to creating new lives. Whereas other contraception such as condoms damage the semen and doesn't let it do its natural purpose.



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Examiner Comments

Jews believe contraception may only be used within married couples (1) because they do not believe in sex before marriage (1)

Contraception such as condoms damage semen (1) and doesn't let it do its natural purpose (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

There are examples of sources of wisdom in the specification for each bullet point.

This candidate was awarded 3 marks.

(c) Explain **two** different Jewish beliefs about contraception.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One Jewish belief about contraception is it is only allowed if it endangers the mother or unborn baby to if pregnant. Also, if the child is 'severely disabled' you can use contraception but only with a rabbi's approval. Another Jewish belief about contraception is it should not be used at all as it is God's will if the parents are to have a baby or not as families are "made in God's image" and if God believes it allowed it must be. For if a spermicide is used or ~~put~~ it kills potential life previously in God's control.



This candidate has confused contraception with abortion. Marks have been given for:

It is only allowed if it (pregnancy is assumed here) endangers the mother (1)

It shouldn't be used at all (1) as it is God's will if the parents have a baby (1)

## Question 2 (d)

This question engaged candidates of all abilities and produced a wide range of marks. All candidates should be encouraged to answer every question because every mark is important. Many candidates did not gain more than level two because they did not consider the value of the arguments given in answering the question and often candidates either wrote generic arguments, or they incorrectly argued that Orthodox Jews do not allow women to work outside the home. The best answers used religious knowledge and were specific in their arguments.

This candidate was awarded level 2, 6 marks.

(d) "Men and women can never be equal within the family."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- refer to different Jewish points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

There are a multitude of ways in which the idea that men and women can never be equal within the family can be argued:

~~One Jewish teaching is that men and women were both made ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~image~~ ~~and~~ ~~like~~~~

One Jewish teaching is that women were only created to subdue to the needs of men - that, in essence, men hold superiority over women as a woman's sole means of creation was to serve the ~~male~~ ~~species~~ men: "So God created a helper for man" - the Creation story of Genesis supporting this notion. This means that it is taught that Jewish men and women are not equal within the family, as it is commonly upheld (in a traditional manner) that a woman's role within the family is ~~to~~ restricted to the domestic duties of cooking, cleaning and raising children, whilst men hold the ~~primary~~ <sup>more important</sup> role.

Alternatively, it is also taught that whilst women are typically made to maintain ~~an~~ <sup>a more domesticated</sup> ~~standard~~

role, it is believed to hold greater significance within the family. ~~Moreover~~ following the covenant at Mount Sinai, the men found solace in a different idol - a "Golden Calf" - ~~while~~ the women did not partake in this. As such, it is mentioned that women have a greater sense of Binah, therefore their role of intuitive spirituality is seen as much more important within the family - making men and women unequal.

To conclude, I believe that while it is clear men and women have different roles within the family, it does not make them inherently unequal. Men presume the more active role of providing material comfort for the family; women (whilst restricted from seeking both higher intellectual and religious education) can do so ~~as~~ as well, or stick to providing spiritual abundance within the family. This means that whilst men and women have different roles, they are both equally important within the family.



This candidate has written a mixture of superficial knowledge which is not well explained, some detailed biblical knowledge and only fully addresses the question in the conclusion. It cannot get to level 3 as the judgements made are not reasoned accurately and although there are elements of coherent reasoning, it is not a chain because some of it is inaccurate. Other candidates made the distinction between what was Jewish teaching about women, and sociological beliefs about women's roles and this took them further.



Candidates should be directed to read the bullet points in the (d) question and understand that they guide them to which viewpoints they should be providing. Centres may wish to consider identifying on the specification the different traditions/viewpoints within Judaism identified that could be used to answer these questions. The diversity within the religion is the key factor in appraising the arguments. Why do they not all agree?

### Question 3 (a)

Candidates answered this confidently and most knew the different mourning rituals.

This candidate was awarded 2 marks.

3 (a) Outline **three** mourning rituals in Judaism.

(3)

One mourning ritual in Judaism is ripping your clothes like Jacob. Another mourning ritual in Judaism is the Shiva.



One mourning ritual is ripping your clothes like Jacob (1)

Another mourning ritual is Shiva (1)



If candidates write a list, or one sentence with three rituals in it, they can only be awarded 1 mark.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

3 (a) Outline **three** mourning rituals in Judaism.

(3)

One ritual is where the family of the deceased go into intense mourning for seven days.

Another mourning ritual in Judaism is that of preparing the body for burial or cremation.

A third belief about mourning rituals in Judaism is that of ~~at~~ Praying for the deceased.



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Examiner Comments

The family go into mourning for seven days (1)

Preparing the body for burial (1)

Praying for the deceased (1)

### **Question 3 (b)**

This question was answered well by many candidates. Where it was not, it was because they had not read the question correctly, and had given answers to features of a synagogue. This is from a different bullet point. Some candidates did manage to get marks nevertheless, if they wrote about the Torah Scrolls being read at the Bimah, for example.

This candidate has been awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** features of synagogue worship.

(4)  
One feature of Synagogue worship is parading the Torah scriptures around the Synagogue. The Torah scrolls are taken from the Aron Hakodesh (Chest) and are dressed in gold. They are then paraded around the Synagogue & many will touch the tzitzit of their Tallit's against the Torah & then touch their mouths, to remind themselves that God's words are sweet like honey.

Another feature of Synagogue worship is ~~at~~ having a Rabbi stand on a Bimah & reciting from the Siddur (prayer book).



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Examiner Comments

One feature is parading the Torah around the Synagogue (1) ...many will touch the tzitzit of their tallits against it (1)

The Rabbi stands at the Bimah (1) reciting from the Siddur (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Encourage candidates to write a feature (or belief, reason etc) and an explanation or example. Some candidates write too much and need extra paper, which is unnecessary.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** features of synagogue worship.

(4)

One feature is the Shema prayer being read at the start of every ceremony. This acknowledges gratitude for God.

Another feature is the requirement of a minyan. This is at least 10 people and this is the minimum needed for God to be present.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

One feature is the Shema prayer being read (1) showing gratitude to God (1)

Another is the requirement of a minyan (1) at least 10 people needed for God to be present (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

The exam specification uses the word Almighty but candidates are not penalised for using other names, such as God or Hashem.

### **Question 3 (c)**

Many candidates answered this with confidence and could easily explain two of the kashrut laws and gave examples. Where candidates did not do well, it was mostly because they did not know the key term.

This candidate was awarded 5 marks.

This candidate has written a lot of knowledge here and it is quite muddled, but there are 5 marks identified.

(c) Explain **two** of the kashrut laws in Judaism.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One law is that Jews are only allowed to eat certain types of animals, ones that chew the cud and have split hooves. This therefore means that ~~it is not permissible~~ it is not permissible for them to eat animals like hogs or pigs. Jews are also forbidden from eating from fish without fins or scales, so fish like salmon would be kosher but crab or shellfish would be ~~kosher~~ <sup>Treifah</sup> (not allowed).

Another Jewish kashrut law forbids the <sup>mixing</sup> of milk and meat. In the Deuteronomy, it says 'do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk'. This has led to the complete separation of <sup>dairy</sup> dairy and meat products, and Jews will <sup>often</sup> have two separate kitchens with separate utensils for each.



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Examiner Comments

They are allowed to eat animals which chew the cud and have split hooves (1) so it is not permissible to eat animals such as pigs (1)

Kashrut law forbids mixing meat and milk (1) 'Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk' (1) They often have separate kitchens (1)



Encourage candidates to write two clearly separate points.

This candidate was awarded 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** of the kashrut laws in Judaism.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One of the kashrut laws is that you should never eat dairy and meat together, 'do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk' (Torah). This is a chukim rule as it has no apparent explanation, however Jews still follow it to show their obedience to God.

Another kashrut law is to always drain the blood from an animal's meat because in Leviticus it says that 'its life is in its blood'. Jews have special rituals that have to be carried out in order to do this properly, <sup>by a trained person,</sup> like bathing it in water and salt multiple times to ensure the blood is fully gone.



You should never eat dairy and meat together (1) 'Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk' (1) This is a chukim rule (1)

Always drain the blood from an animal (1) because in Leviticus it says that its life is in its blood (1)

### **Question 3 (d)**

Many candidates wrote extended for and against answers where they demonstrated good knowledge of how Shabbat is worshipped both in the home and in the synagogue, but they often did not answer the question about whether one was more important than the other. Where they did, they mainly just gave further reasons why it was important, rather than why it could be considered more important. This restricted many candidates to level 2.

This candidate was awarded level 2, 6 marks plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

\* (d) "Celebrating Shabbat at home is more important than celebrating it in the synagogue."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

agree: home is where religion is created  
disagree: Synagogue is God's holy place - beautiful company.  
agree: grow with whole family separated.  
disagree: feel closer to God what he wanted with community (15) ~~celebrate~~

Some Jews would agree with the statement that celebrating at home is more ~~the~~ important than celebrating in the synagogue because for children their home is the central place in which they have come to understand Jewish religion and culture. Mums teach children their faith from a young age - through traditions and festivals. Even the shema <sup>in Deuteronomy 6: 4</sup> "Hear O Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one" is inscribed ~~on each~~ in a Mezuzah on each door. Children come to associate the Jewish faith with their home and Shabbat, a weekly reminder of God's strength and love would be best appreciated in somewhere with emotional significance. This argument is strong, as it may help children to feel rest and safety - rest being the key principle of Shabbat, but on the other hand it is weaker as they may not understand the importance. As the home is where ~~the~~ most people spend the majority of their time, the shabbat-dinner and proceedings may not feel special. However, the Synagogue gives God's holy place and he is present there. This ~~is~~ is important company on the

day that is all about showing gratitude to God - and is best done in a place important to God. "the spirit of the lord filled the temple" is an example of a special moment for God's presence - through sheminah is found in the temple. this argument is strong, as without going to the synagogue on shabbat it may lose its meaning.

however, in a synagogue men and women are separated. this does not promote key ideas in shabbat or family time. At home, in a comfortable environment shabbat may be better understood as the whole family is together. typically on shabbat families tell stories from the Torah and enjoy their company. however, shabbat is not just focused on family but also the wider community at which all gather at the synagogue to be together. this is the key Jewish idea of community.

However  
- this argument is weak, as the family unit is more important, and <sup>the</sup> wider community can also enjoy family time.

Overall, some Jews would argue that synagogue is more relevant to shabbat as it is God's holy place but key ideas in shabbat are rest and family time - so home is more important to appreciate this.



This candidate has tried very hard to give reasons why the synagogue or the home may be considered more important but the reasons they have given are superficial – they have said that Shabbat is for family and rest against the synagogue being a holy place. To get to level 3, the candidate could have written about the necessity of a minyan for some prayers, making the synagogue more important as there are more members of the community there, or that many of the rituals surrounding Shabbat are home based and cannot be done in a synagogue, such as the lighting of the candles, the prayers for the children, and the Hamotzi. This candidate wrote well, but lacked the depth of knowledge that is expected to go beyond level 2.



Encourage candidates to answer the question before they start adding reasons. Candidates who write 'some Jews believe this...because...' are unlikely to get past level 2, even if their knowledge is good.

This candidate is awarded level 2, 6 marks plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

\* (d) "Celebrating Shabbat at home is more important than celebrating it in the synagogue."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Jews may agree with this statement because the festival is welcomed into the home. Traditionally, this is done by the woman of the house, who lights two candles to welcome Shabbat into the home. The man of the house recites blessings for his children and then recites Kiddush over a cup of wine. Jews may say that this is an important part of their week as they spend time with their family. However, some Jews may disagree with this and say that going to the synagogue service on Shabbat is more important. This is because most Jews will not own a Torah scroll at home, so synagogue is their opportunity to hear the Torah being recited.

Out of the two arguments, I think the second is more convincing as the Torah is central to Judaism. Jews believe it was given to Moses directly from God, so must be more important.

Some Jews may agree with the statement because Shabbat is meant to be a day of rest. This can be

spent at home, with family, praying. They may argue that the commandment "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (Exodus) can be fulfilled at home, and going to the synagogue is not obligatory. This is a strong argument because for many Jews, <sup>not working</sup> ~~resting~~ on Shabbat <sup>includes</sup> ~~means~~ not driving. If they live far away ~~off~~ from a synagogue, it may not be possible for them to go. Therefore, on ~~the~~ Shabbath, celebrating in the home is more important to them.

In conclusion, I think that it is up to Jews to decide whether they think celebrating in the synagogue or home is more important to them. This is because Shabbat celebrates freedom from slavery. As slaves cannot choose when to rest, Shabbat is a sign of freedom. Jews should have the freedom to spend Shabbat where they want to.



This candidate has made an attempt to explain why Shabbat at home is important and also why Shabbat at the synagogue is important but it is mostly superficial. They have explained the welcoming of the Sabbath into the home, and said this is an important part of the week, but not explained why is more important than the synagogue. Their argument that the synagogue is more important as the Torah is read could hold some merit but they have not explained why this would be more important than the blessings recited at home. The conclusion is good, but it is not enough to get this to level 3.



**Examiner advice:** Candidates should be reminded that the question gives all the information to answer the question. Which viewpoints are needed and if it is only Jewish teachings, it is directing them to the diversity in the interpretation of scriptures.

## Question 4 (a)

There are a wide variety of beliefs about abortion in Judaism so most candidates were awarded the marks on this question. It was not necessary to indicate whether these were Orthodox or Reform views. Some candidates wrote detailed reasons for Jewish beliefs.

This candidate was awarded 2 marks.

4 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about abortion in Judaism.

(3)

One Jewish belief about abortion is that it should only be done if it endangers the life of the mother as they must always save a life and they would choose the mother.

Another belief is that you cannot use abortion as a form of birth control.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate has only given two beliefs so is unable to get the third mark.

It should only be done if it endangers the mother's life (1)

It cannot be used as birth control (1)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Candidates should write each sentence on a separate line as this will encourage them not to write more than is necessary.

This candidate was awarded 3 marks.

4 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about abortion in Judaism.

(3)

one belief about abortion in Judaism is that it is ethically wrong.

another belief is that amongst people of the mother's life is in danger during pregnancy the fetus can be aborted.

another belief is that all life is sacred therefore a fetus is to be a life.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

One belief is that it is ethically wrong (1)

If the mother's life is in danger the foetus can be aborted (1)

All life is sacred...a foetus is a life (1)

## Question 4 (b)

The majority of candidates answered this well, often writing about the Genesis account being seen as literal or metaphorical and the implications of this for the theory of evolution. Some candidates wrote about design and cosmology, and these were awarded marks if they applied these to the question asked.

This candidate was awarded 2 marks.

(b) Explain **two** Jewish responses to evolution as an explanation for the origins of human life.

(4)

Species couldn't have evolved if God made mankind in his image and immediately. There wasn't time for evolution: noted in the creation story in Genesis. Also, if evolution is true, how are apes still around today? God ~~must~~ must have created them separately.



Species could not have evolved if God made mankind in his image and immediately.(1) There was not time for evolution in the Creation story in Genesis (1)

The rest of this answer does not address the question of a Jewish response to evolution.



Encourage candidates to use the wording of the question as this will help them to answer the question. For example, 'One Jewish response to evolution is that it is wrong, as Genesis says God created man in his image and immediately. A second Jewish response to evolution is that they agree with it, as many Jews do not believe the Creation story in Genesis to be literally true and so agree with scientists.'

This candidate was awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain two Jewish responses to evolution as an explanation for the origins of human life.

(4)

Some Jews may believe in evolution ~~but~~ but believe God was the cause of evolution meaning they do not take the creation story literally.

Other Jews might believe evolution is not real because Jewish scriptures state the story of Adam and Eve which does not uphold the theory of evolution. These are usually people who interpret the creation story literally.



Some Jews believe God was the cause of evolution (1) meaning they do not take the Creation story literally (1)

Other Jews believe evolution is not real (1) because Jewish scriptures state the story of Adam and Eve (1)

### **Question 4 (c)**

Many candidates answered this well and made the distinction between active and passive euthanasia. Where candidates did not get the marks, it was because they wrote that some Jews accept euthanasia because of situation ethics, and this is incorrect.

This candidate was awarded 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** different Jewish teachings about euthanasia.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One Jewish teaching about euthanasia is that it is absolutely not allowed. This is because it directly disobeys ~~to~~ one of the 10 commandments 'thou shalt not kill'. In Judaism human life is sacred in each stage - including death, so to change the ~~actual~~ way a death should naturally occur is to break God's ~~wishes~~ commandment.

A second Jewish teaching on euthanasia is that whilst active euthanasia is strictly forbidden, ~~whereas~~ passive euthanasia (through withdrawal of treatment or painkillers) is permitted as it (in itself) also disrupts the natural ways of death.



One Jewish belief about euthanasia is that it is absolutely not allowed (1) because it goes against the commandment 'thou shalt not kill' (1) In Judaism, human life is sacred (1)

A second Jewish teaching is passive euthanasia is permitted (1) through withdrawal of treatment which in itself disrupts natural ways of death (1)

## Question 4 (d)

This was from the bullet point which asks candidates to consider the Jewish responses to non-religious arguments against life after death, and as such it asked candidates to refer to non-religious viewpoints as well as Jewish teachings. Many candidates were able to write knowledgably about Jewish teachings, although a number wrongly attributed teachings to the Torah. Some candidates missed out non-Jewish points of view and this limited their marks.

This candidate was awarded level 2, 6 marks.

(d) "Everyone should have a belief in an afterlife."

- Isaiah (comes with rise) new.  
- Maimonides  
- messiah - good will be resurrected + bad won't be  
god's reign on earth

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- refer to non-religious points of view → NO bc they don't believe in God but yes sometimes bc might explain suffering in world (12)
- reach a justified conclusion.

Many non-religious people ~~would~~ and Humanists would disagree with the statement that everyone should believe in the afterlife because since they do not believe have faith in God themselves they don't believe in life after death. However, some non-religious people ~~can~~ would agree with the statement because they believe in an afterlife due to things such as psychic mediums, ghost sightings and near death experiences. Additionally, they may believe in an afterlife because it could explain suffering and inequality in the world as they know the bad will be punished and it may help them come to terms with the loss of a loved one.

Many Orthodox and Hasidic Jews would agree with the statement that everyone should have belief in an afterlife because of the belief in the messiah. During the messianic Age, many Jews believe that he will bring about God's reign on earth where the righteous will be resurrected and the wicked will not be, therefore showing there is an afterlife. Furthermore, ~~the~~ many prophets refer to an afterlife many times in the Torah for example in Isaiah

It explicitly states that there will be a resurrection when it says 'their bodies will rise'. This is an extremely convincing argument because the Torah is the direct word of God, meaning everything in it is true and must be believed by all Jews.

Many Reform and Liberal Jews would also believe in the afterlife because of their belief in Heaven and Hell, where the good will go to Gan Eden and the bad will have their souls purified in Gehenna. This belief <sup>is a convincing argument</sup> encourages Jews to be better people as they know they <sup>because it</sup> will be judged accordingly for their actions.

In Conclusion, I believe everyone should have a belief in the afterlife because it has been explicitly proven and mentioned in the Torah many times which shows that it is true. As well as this, Maimonides <sup>himself</sup> states that he believes 'with perfect faith there will be a resurrection of the dead'. Maimonides is an extremely important figure in Judaism meaning his words have authority and are likely to be believed by most Jews.



This candidate has written a response which is knowledgeable and shows understanding. They have pointed out that while many non-religious people will not believe in the afterlife as they do not believe in God, there are many who do, because of psychic readings and ghosts. Their Jewish teachings are mostly accurate and they have included teachings about the Messiah. However, they have not answered the question about whether everyone should believe in an afterlife, as their conclusion is only relevant to Jewish people and so this remains in level 2.



Remind candidates to read the bullet points and to tick them off as they answer them; this way they will not miss out on marks.

## Paper Summary

### Key advice from examiner.

- Candidates should be familiar with all parts of the specification including all parts of the bullet points.
- For (a) questions, candidates should write three sentences containing one piece of information in each. There is no need for development: it will not receive credit.
- The explain questions require two developed points, however, students should also be prepared to describe where indicated on the specification.
- The (d) items need an understanding of religion and belief, as well as the ability to evaluate the arguments to reach a conclusion. To get a level 4, candidates need to have a wide range of teachings and beliefs to be able to analyse, appraise and evaluate.
- Candidates should be directed to read the bullet points in the (d) question and understand that they guide them to which viewpoints they should be providing. Centres may wish to consider identifying on the specification the different traditions/viewpoints within Judaism identified that could be used to answer these questions. The diversity within the religion is the key factor in appraising the arguments. Why do they not all agree?

Centres are advised to refer to the specification, SAMS materials and online support given by the senior examination team.

## **Grade boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

