



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Religious Studies (4RS1) Paper 2D

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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.

Marking guidance for levels-based mark schemes

How to award marks

The indicative content provides examples of how students will meet each skill assessed in the question. The levels descriptors and indicative content reflect the relative weighting of each skill within each mark band.

Finding the right level

The first stage is to decide which level the answer should be placed in. To do this, use a 'best-fit' approach, deciding which level most closely describes the quality of the answer. Answers can display characteristics from more than one level, and where this happens markers must use the guidance below and their professional judgement to decide which level is most appropriate.

Placing a mark within a level

After a level has been decided on, the next stage is to decide on the mark within the level. The instructions below tell you how to reward responses within a level. However, where a level has specific guidance about how to place an answer within a level, always follow that guidance. Statements relating to the treatment of students who do not fully meet the requirements of the question are also shown in the indicative content section of each levels based mark scheme. These statements should be considered alongside the levels descriptors.

Markers should be prepared to use the full range of marks available in a level and not restrict marks to the middle. Markers should start at the middle of the level (or the upper-middle mark if there is an even number of marks) and then move the mark up or down to find the best mark. To do this, they should take into account how far the answer meets the requirements of the level:

If it meets the requirements fully, markers should be prepared to award full marks within the level. The top mark in the level is used for answers that are as good as can realistically be expected within that level

If it only barely meets the requirements of the level, markers should consider awarding marks at the bottom of the level. The bottom mark in the level is used for answers that are the weakest that can be expected within that level. The middle marks of the level are used for answers that have a reasonable match to the descriptor. This might represent a balance between some characteristics of the level that are fully met and others that are only barely met.

Mark scheme

Islam

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(a)	Award one mark for providing a teaching. Award a second mark for development of the teaching. Up to a maximum of four marks. Imam Ali emphasised the importance of justice and equality among all individuals (1) irrespective of their background or status (1) Imam Ibn Hanbal taught the importance of adhering to the Qur'an and sunnah (1) and being faithful to the practices of the early Muslim community (1) The Sufi poet Rumi extols the power of divine love (1) which is a unifying force transcending religious and cultural boundaries (1). Accept any other valid response. Answers that refer to more than one significant Muslim can receive marks for only one of them.	Repeated teaching / development. Development that does not relate to both the teaching given and the question.	(4)

Question number	Answer	Mark
1(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Muslims believe that Muhammad is the last prophet sent by Allah to guide humanity. His prophethood marks the end of a long line of messengers who were sent to various communities throughout history With the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammad, Islam considers divine guidance and revelation to be fully	(6)

	conveyed to humanity. The Qur'an is regarded as the final, unaltered, and complete message from Allah. As the seal of the prophets, Muhammad's message is considered authoritative and authentic. Muslims believe that his teachings encompass all aspects of life, providing comprehensive guidance for personal conduct, morality, social interactions, and spirituality. Accept any other valid response.	
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Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1-3	Limited use of religious terms. Description of relevant religion, beliefs and values is mostly satisfactory. Gives a partial explanation of the significance and influence of beliefs and values.
4-6	Use of religious terms is appropriate and shows understanding. Explanation of relevant religion, beliefs and values is comprehensive. Explanation of significance and influence of beliefs and values is assured and comprehensive.

Question number	Indicative content
1(c)	The student must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. The student will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. The student will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Many verses in the Qur'an are concise and may not provide detailed explanations. The sunnah, through the actions, statements, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad, offers valuable context and insights to understand the intended meaning

	The sunnah helps in applying the principles and values outlined in the Qur'an to real-life situations. The Prophet's actions and teachings demonstrate how Qur'anic teachings can be practically lived out, guiding Muslims in their daily lives. The sunnah provides instructions for performing religious rituals and acts of worship, such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage. These details are often elaborated in the Hadith literature, helping Muslims perform these acts correctly and with proper intention. The Qur'an is considered a complete and self-sufficient scripture that provides guidance for all aspects of life. Some Muslims argue that it should be clear and comprehensible on its own, without the need for additional sources like the sunnah. Depending heavily on the sunnah for Qur'anic interpretation can lead to a risk of misinterpretation or manipulation of the text. The authenticity of some Hadiths is debated, and relying on them for understanding might result in misunderstandings. Although all Muslims believe the sunnah is a valuable source, it was recorded in a specific cultural and historical context. Applying these teachings without considering modern societal changes and advancements might lead to outdated or inappropriate interpretations. Accept any other valid response. (10 marks)
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Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1–3	Demonstrates isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Identifies information/issues and makes superficial connections between a limited range of elements within the question. Judgements are supported by generic arguments to produce a conclusion that is not fully justified.
4–6	Demonstrates limited understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, and makes superficial connections between many but not all of the elements in the question.

	Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made. Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence, much of which may be superficial leading to a conclusion that is not fully justified.
7-8	Demonstrates accurate understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between many but not all of the elements in the question. Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question. Judgements are supported by the appraisal of evidence, some of which may be superficial leading to a partially justified conclusion.
9-10	Demonstrates sustained accurate and thorough understanding of religion and belief. Critically deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between the full range of elements in the question. Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question. Judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence, leading to a fully justified conclusion.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(a)	Award one mark for providing a way. Award a second mark for development of the way. Up to a maximum of four marks. Makkah is the birthplace of Islam (1). The revelation of the Qur'an here marks the beginning of the Islamic faith (1) The Kaaba in Makkah is the holiest site in Islam (1). Muslims around the world face the Kaaba during their daily prayers (1) Makkah is home to several historical sites associated with Prophet	Repeated way / development. Development that does not relate to both the way given and the question.	(4)

	Muhammad's life (1), such as the cave of Hira where he received the first revelations (1).		
	Accept any other valid response.		

Question number	Answer	Mark
2(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Festivals provide moments of spiritual reflection, allowing Muslims to contemplate their faith, engage in acts of worship, and seek forgiveness for their sins. These occasions offer a chance for Muslims to strengthen their relationship with Allah and thereby deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings and renew their commitment to the principles of Islam. Many Islamic festivals commemorate important events in the life of Prophet Muhammad and other prophets. For example, Eid ul-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting and Eid ul-Adha commemorates the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son. Accept any other valid response.	(6)

Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1-3	Limited use of religious terms. Description of relevant religion, beliefs and values is mostly satisfactory. Gives a partial explanation of the significance and influence of beliefs and values.
4-6	Use of religious terms is appropriate and shows understanding. Explanation of relevant religion, beliefs and values is comprehensive. Explanation of significance and influence of beliefs and values is assured and comprehensive.

Question number	Indicative content
2(c)	The student must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. The student will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. The student will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Undertaking pilgrimage to Muslim sites can be physically demanding and financially burdensome for many Muslims. It involves travel, accommodation, and other expenses that not everyone can afford, and it is accepted that not everyone can make this commitment Islam places a strong emphasis on intention in worship. A person's sincere intention and devotion to Allah can be fulfilled through other acts of worship, even if they are unable to go on pilgrimage to Muslim sites Islam teaches that Allah is just and merciful. Muslims believe that those who are unable to undertake the hajj pilgrimage due to valid reasons will not be deprived of rewards, as their circumstances are taken into account by Allah Going on pilgrimage is believed to be a unique spiritual experience that can deeply transform a believer's life. The physical and emotional challenges faced during the journey are believed to be important in themselves because they help to purify the soul and draw one closer to Allah Muslims believe that performing the hajj pilgrimage cleanses them of past sins and provides a chance for spiritual renewal. The rituals of the hajj symbolise submission to Allah's will and the seeking of his forgiveness, which is the core of Islamic belief Travelling together on pilgrimage brings Muslims from all over the world together in a powerful demonstration of unity and equality. It is important because it is an opportunity for Muslims to connect with fellow believers and experience the global ummah. Accept any other valid response. (10 marks)

Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1-3	Demonstrates isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Identifies information/issues and makes superficial connections between a limited range of elements within the question. Judgements are supported by generic arguments to produce a conclusion that is not fully justified.
4-6	Demonstrates limited understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, and makes superficial connections between many but not all of the elements in the question. Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made. Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence, much of which may be superficial leading to a conclusion that is not fully justified.
7-8	Demonstrates accurate understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between many but not all of the elements in the question. Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question. Judgements are supported by the appraisal of evidence, some of which may be superficial leading to a partially justified conclusion.
9-10	Demonstrates sustained accurate and thorough understanding of religion and belief. Critically deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between the full range of elements in the question. Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question. Judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence, leading to a fully justified conclusion.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	Award one mark for providing a feature. Award a second mark for development of the feature. Up to a maximum of four marks. A minaret is often attached to or near the mosque (1). This is used for the call to prayer (1) There are basins or fountains (1) which are used for ritual purification before prayer (1) There is the qibla wall facing the direction of Makkah (1) marked on the inside by a mihrab (1). Accept any other valid response.	Repeated feature / development. Development that does not relate to both the feature given and the question.	(4)

Question number	Answer	Mark
3(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Birth ceremonies are occasions for expressing gratitude to Allah for the gift of a new life. Muslims believe that every child is a blessing and a sign of Allah's mercy and benevolence One of the significant aspects of a birth ceremony is naming the newborn. Muslims often choose names with positive meanings that reflect their faith and values During birth ceremonies, special prayers are recited for the health, happiness, and protection of the child. These prayers are an integral part of invoking Allah's blessings upon the newborn. Accept any other valid response.	(6)

Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1-3	Limited use of religious terms. Description of relevant religion, beliefs and values is mostly satisfactory. Gives a partial explanation of the significance and influence of beliefs and values.
4-6	Use of religious terms is appropriate and shows understanding. Explanation of relevant religion, beliefs and values is comprehensive. Explanation of significance and influence of beliefs and values is assured and comprehensive.

Question number	Indicative content
3(c)	The student must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. The student will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. The student will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Islam teaches that Allah is omnipresent and can be worshipped anywhere. Therefore, the physical location does not limit one's ability to connect with and worship him The Prophet Muhammad emphasised the ease and flexibility of the Islamic faith with regard to places of prayer. He said that Muslims are allowed to pray in various places to accommodate their circumstances, especially when traveling or facing challenges What matters most when praying is the intention and sincerity of the worshipper. Muslims are encouraged to pray with a focused heart and sincere devotion regardless of the location The Prophet Muhammad emphasised the significance of congregational prayers in mosques. His practice and teachings highlight the importance of praying in congregation and the spiritual benefits associated with it Mosques are often designed to create an atmosphere conducive to spiritual reflection and worship. It can be argued

	that the tranquility and solemnity of a mosque can enhance the quality of one's prayers Mosques are designed to facilitate the proper performance of Islamic rituals, with designated areas for prayer, ablution, and congregational activities, and where the prayer leader can ensure worship is properly performed. Accept any other valid response. (10 marks)
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Mark	Descriptor
0	No rewardable material.
1–3	Demonstrates isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Identifies information/issues and makes superficial connections between a limited range of elements within the question. Judgements are supported by generic arguments to produce a conclusion that is not fully justified.
4–6	Demonstrates limited understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, and makes superficial connections between many but not all of the elements in the question. Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made. Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence, much of which may be superficial leading to a conclusion that is not fully justified.
7–8	Demonstrates accurate understanding of religion and belief. Deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between many but not all of the elements in the question. Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question. Judgements are supported by the appraisal of evidence, some of which may be superficial leading to a partially justified conclusion.
9–10	Demonstrates sustained accurate and thorough understanding of religion and belief. Critically deconstructs religious information/issues, leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning that consider different viewpoints and that make connections between the full range of elements in the question.

	Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question. Judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence, leading to a fully justified conclusion.
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