



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

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

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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

Judaism

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(a)	Award one mark for providing a way. Award a second mark for development of the way. Up to a maximum of four marks. Moses is considered one of the greatest prophets in Judaism (1) receiving direct communication from the Almighty through revelation (1) Moses played a pivotal role in the Exodus (1), leading the Israelites on their journey to freedom from Egyptian bondage (1) Moses is regarded as a lawgiver (1) who conveyed the Almighty's commandments to the Israelites (1). Accept any other valid response.	Repeated way/ development. Reject development that does not relate to both the way given and the question.	(4)

Question number	Answer	Mark
1(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Jewish law covers a wide range of situations and scenarios. Responsa provide guidance on how to apply laws to complex circumstances that may not have been explicitly addressed in ancient texts Responsa showcase the flexibility of Jewish law to adapt to changing times while remaining rooted in tradition. Rabbis use their expertise to find creative and thoughtful solutions to new challenges while maintaining the integrity of Halakhah Responsa are a means of preserving and transmitting Jewish tradition. They ensure that the wisdom of	(6)

	previous generations remains relevant and accessible to current and future generations. 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: Jews may say they do not need to refer to authority figures because they can derive ethical principles directly from foundational texts like the Torah, Talmud, and other writings. These texts provide moral guidance that can be directly applied to various situations The complexities of the modern world may not always have direct precedents in rabbinical sources. Relying on personal judgment enables individuals to navigate contemporary challenges that might not have been addressed in the past

	Individual Jews have the capacity to make informed decisions based on their own understanding of ethics and values. They can rely on their own conscience and reasoning to guide their actions Written sources of authority, such as rabbinical writings, serve as guides that have been refined over centuries. They provide a sense of continuity and ensure that the wisdom of past generations is not lost Sources of authority provide a balance between personal interpretation and tradition. They offer insights from generations of scholars, which can enrich an individual's own ethical reasoning Rabbis and scholars possess deep knowledge of Jewish texts, law, and ethics. Relying on their expertise provides access to a wealth of wisdom that might be overlooked through personal interpretation. 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 feature. Award a second mark for development of the feature. Up to a maximum of four marks. Jews will eat apples and honey at Rosh Hashanah (1). These sweet foods are eaten to symbolise a desire for a sweet and fruitful year ahead (1) In the synagogue the shofar is blown (1) as a wake-up call to repentance (1) Some Jews will throw crumbs into a river or lake (1) as a symbol of casting off one's sins (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
2(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: Jewish festivals are rooted in historical events and stories that are central to Jewish identity. Celebrating these festivals helps pass down the legacy and teachings of Judaism from one generation to the next. Festivals provide opportunities for self-reflection, introspection, and spiritual growth. They encourage Jews to evaluate their actions, seek forgiveness for their shortcomings, and make positive changes in their lives. Festivals encourage Jews to strengthen their relationship with the Almighty by engaging in acts of worship, prayer, and rituals specific to each festival. These acts reinforce faith and devotion. 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: Visiting Yad Vashem is important because it serves as a powerful memorial to the Holocaust, ensuring that the memory of the millions of Jewish victims is preserved for future generations Visiting Yad Vashem is an act of respect for those who suffered and perished during the Holocaust. It is a way to honour their memory and pay tribute to the resilience and strength of the survivors and their descendants Visiting Yad Vashem often has the important aim of preventing the recurrence of the horrors of the Shoah by raising awareness and promoting tolerance, understanding, and empathy among the visitors The Western Wall is a remnant of the ancient Second Temple in Jerusalem and holds deep historical and spiritual significance for Jews. Some Jews will say that going there provides a tangible link to the history of Jewish worship and the centrality of Jerusalem in Jewish tradition The Western Wall is important as a unifying symbol for Jews, representing a shared heritage and identity. It is a place where Jews can come together, regardless of their background, to pray and connect with their faith It can be argued that they have equal importance because both Yad Vashem and the Western Wall have their distinct importance in Jewish heritage and identity. While their purposes differ, they both contribute to the understanding, memory, and ongoing legacy of the Jewish people. 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 way. Award a second mark for development of the way. Up to a maximum of four marks. After death the body is prepared for burial through a ritual purification (1). This cleansing of the body symbolises the respect with which the deceased is treated (1) Mourners observe a seven-day period of mourning, known as shivah (1), during which they reflect on their loss (1) Saying Kaddish honours the memory of the deceased (1) and reinforces the belief in the Almighty's sovereignty (1) Accept any other valid response.	Repeated way/ development. Development that does not relate to both the way given and the question.	(4)

Question number	Answer	Mark
3(b)	Students will develop responses using ideas/reasoning/arguments such as: The design elements within a synagogue often include symbols, motifs, and artwork that reflect Jewish identity, history, and values. These elements serve as reminders of the Jewish heritage and contribute to a sense of belonging for worshippers The Ark, which houses the Torah scrolls, is typically the central focal point of a synagogue's design. Its prominent placement signifies the centrality of the Torah in Jewish life and worship The raised platform, known as the bimah, is where the Torah is read and important announcements are made. It symbolises the centrality of learning and spiritual leadership within the community. 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: Prayer is important in Jewish life because it is a direct means of connecting with the Almighty, fostering a personal relationship with the Divine Creator. This connection provides spiritual nourishment and guidance Prayer encourages self-reflection and self-improvement. The act of prayer provides an opportunity to assess one's actions, intentions, and behaviour, aligning oneself with the moral and ethical values of the Almighty Prayer is the primary way Jews express devotion and worship to the Almighty. It allows individuals to express gratitude, seek forgiveness, and offer supplications It can be argued that Judaism places a strong emphasis on ethical behavior and righteous actions. Some Jews might argue that living a life aligned with ethical principles is as important as, if not more important than, prayer Engaging in acts of charity and social justice is a central tenet of Judaism. These actions reflect tikkun olam, a commitment to making the world a better place and helping those in need Many Jews will argue that prayer and living a good life are intrinsically linked. By establishing a relationship with the Almighty in prayer, Jews are reinforced in their commitment to live according to his laws and values. 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.

