

# Teaching guide: Guide to 5 mark questions

## GCSE Religious Studies (8061, 8062, 8063)

In **every** section of our GCSE Religious Studies examinations we will ask a 5 mark question which will always be **Question 4**.

### Assessment Objectives:

The Assessment Objectives for GCSE Religious Studies are:

- **AO1:** Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs including:
  - beliefs, practices and sources of authority
  - influence on individual, communities and societies
  - similarities and differences within an/or between religions and belief.
- **AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

The 5 mark question **will always assess AO1.1**, where knowledge of sources of authority is required (ie it will never ask for influences, contrasts, similarities).

### What do 5 mark questions look like?

For **Specification A** and **Short Course**, questions will include the instruction to 'refer to sacred writings':

01.4 Explain two beliefs of Pure Land Buddhism.

Refer to sacred writing or another source of Buddhist belief and teaching in your answer.

**[5 marks]**

For **Specification B** questions will include the instruction to 'refer to scripture':

01.4 Explain two Catholic beliefs about God shown in Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam*.

Refer to scripture or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

**[5 marks]**

## GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES – TEACHING GUIDE – GUIDE TO 5 MARK QUESTIONS

**Specification A** and **Short Course** mark schemes include ‘reference to sacred writing’ followed by the religion of study or ‘religious beliefs’ on Themes.

For example:

- Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Buddhist belief and teaching – 1 mark

**Specification B** mark schemes include, ‘reference to scripture’.

For example:

- Relevant and accurate reference to scripture or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

### What do students need to do?

**Students need to include a reference to a source of authority in their answer. They need to name the source.**

For example:

- “Some Christians would be against abortion because they believe that life is sacred. They believe this because **in the Bible** it says humans were made in God's image.”

The ‘relevant and accurate reference’ to teachings or writings **can either be paraphrased, or can be a direct quotation.**

Students **do not need to cite full references** (eg chapters and verses) in their answer.

So, for example, it would be acceptable to say “In the Bible it says that God created us in His image” or “The Bible says ‘let us make mankind in our image’ (Genesis 1:27)” or “The Buddha said that all life is suffering.”

One possible approach to answering these questions could be:

- Point, Explain, Reference.
- Point, Explain.

Students only need to include one reference in their answer in addition to two detailed points, but they need to be clear in acknowledging the source in order to fully meet the requirements of the question.

Note: These questions assess AO1.1 so will never ask for similarities or contrasts. Therefore, for Specification A and Short Course Themes, students can explain two beliefs about a topic that come from the same religious tradition, or they could use two religions.

## What counts as a 'source of wisdom and authority'?

Sources of authority are usually religious leaders, holy books or religious writings.

Religious leaders include for example:

- founders, such as Prophet Muhammad, the Buddha
- leaders of the faith, such as The Pope, Sri Swaminarayan
- believers whose words/teachings/interpretation of holy scripture have become famous, such as Martin Luther King, Rabbi Sachs.

Holy books are the books which enshrine the core beliefs and teachings, often believed to have been transmitted by God. They include for example:

- the Bible, Qur'an, Guru Granth Sahib etc
- sub-sets of these texts, such as Ten Commandments, Surah 96, Mool Mantra, Lotus Sutra etc.

Religious writings are the works of people in the religion, usually to interpret beliefs and teachings. They include:

- commentaries, eg the Mishnah
- law books, eg Shari'ah
- general writings, eg 'An Open Heart' by the Dalai Lama
- set prayers, eg Lord's Prayer.

## What not to do?

Common mistakes which would not allow students to achieve the 'source mark' (5<sup>th</sup> mark) for the reference include:

- **Including a quotation alone** – whilst it may be creditworthy as the point made, or the explanation, if the source of authority is not named then the 5<sup>th</sup> mark cannot be awarded.
- Referring to '**scriptures**' eg 'Hindu scriptures', 'Buddhist scriptures' – these are umbrella terms and are not sufficient for the source mark.
- **A named source which doesn't link to the point being made, or the wrong source** to go with a quote which is being used, eg 'Jesus said 'Go forth and multiply''.
- **A named source with a made-up quote.**

## Example 1

### Question 04.4

Explain two religious beliefs about justice.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

**[5 marks]**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

#### **First belief**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

#### **Second belief**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writings or another source of religious beliefs and teaching – 1 mark

### Student response

One religious belief about justice is one of Allahs characteristics is adaltd. This means he's fair as in the Quran it says Allah loves all people equally. Another Christian belief is the God is just and in the Bible it says on Judgement day your sins will be fairly measured to see if you'll enter heaven.

### Commentary

This answer was awarded 5 marks. It includes two detailed points and a relevant and accurate reference to a source of authority (the Qur'an).

## Example 2

### Question 2.4

Explain two reasons why many religious people protect the environment.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teachings in your answer.

**[5 marks]**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

#### **First belief**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

#### **Second belief**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writings or another source of religious beliefs and teaching – 1 mark

### Student response 1

One reason why many religious people protect the environment is due to the human's role of 'stewardship'. Meaning, that the role of humans is to protect what God has made, and if we don't it is immoral. Another religious belief is that God created this world and gifted it to humans, so we must be respectful and look after it.

### Commentary

This response was awarded 4 marks. The student included 2 detailed points but did not refer to a source of authority. They could, for example, have added 'in the Bible' to their second point and achieved the 5<sup>th</sup> mark (eg 'Another religious belief is that God created the world, as it says in the Bible, and gifted it to humans, so we must be respectful and look after it').

### Student response 2

One reason why Christians want to protect the environment is because it is God's creation. This means that they will want to keep it safe as a way to respect God. Another reason why Christians want to protect the environment is because Jesus said 'love thy neighbour.' This means that they will want to leave the environment in a good state for the future generations which are 'neighbours'.

### Commentary

This response was awarded 5 marks. It includes two detailed points, and refers clearly to Jesus as the source of authority within the second point.

### Further information and support:

There are a range of Answers and commentaries for all units available for [Specification A](#), [Specification B](#) and [Short Course](#).

For information on the requirements of all questions types see the Teaching Guides for [Specification A](#) , [Specification B](#) and [Short Course](#)

You can find further detail on marking in our [Supporting Marking Guidance](#) document.