

Religious Studies Spec A

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8062)

Paper 1: Judaism

Marked answers from students from the June 2022 exams.
Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the students.

4 mark question

Question 1.3

Explain two ways in which belief about God as Judge influences Jews today.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies.

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a 'detailed explanation' the 'influence' of the way must be included.

- God as Judge has given laws (mitzvot) for his people to obey and it is on their obedience to these laws that he will fairly judge them / this encourages Jews to obey God's laws / in order that God's fair judgement will be favourable to them.
- Jews can trust that God will judge them fairly / gives them confidence that they will be rewarded if they follow God's laws.
- God judges humans throughout their lifetime / Yom Kippur Jews are influenced and encouraged to repent and atone for any harm they may have caused others / in order to be judged favourably by God / and have a positive comment in their book of life.
- Some Jews believe that they will be judged at the end of their life as to how they have obeyed God / those God judges to be righteous will live on in Gan Eden (heaven) / as befits God's chosen people / souls are sent to Sheol to wait for judgement / this influences Jews to obey God in order to live on with God / some Jews believe that at the end of time God will judge the righteous from the wicked and those in between / regardless of which belief they follow, it means that they must obey his commandments and lead a life that pleases God, etc.

Student responses

Response A

Jews will see God as the Judge for Judgement Day so they have to follow the mitzvots and repent for any mistaken sins so they are closer to God and get to live in Gan Eden.

An unusual structure to the answer, however included are two 'influences', the first is to 'follow the mitzvots' and the second influence mark is for 'repent for any sins'. There is a single additional development mark attributed for 'Gan Eden'.

3 marks

Response B

One way in God being a Judge influences Jews today is through encouraging them to follow the Tanakh and get forgiven for sins if they commit them, e.g. 'shall not steal'. Jews believe that they can't judge anyone as it is God's decision to make. Jews should lead a meaningful life for example, by doing charity work so they can be accepted into heaven, a place where God is.

Three developed points, one more than necessary.

4 marks

5 mark question

Question 2.4

Explain two ways in which Shabbat is celebrated in Jewish homes.

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

[5 marks]

Mark scheme

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

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

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 writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited.

- The home is prepared for the celebration / at least two candles are placed on the table / to observe the commandments to remember and observe Shabbat / all the food is prepared before the celebration / all cooking is completed before the candles are lit.
- Shabbat prayers might be read at home instead of the synagogue.
- Two loaves of challah bread are placed on the table / to represent food provided by God before Shabbat whilst they were wandering in the wilderness.
- Wine or grape juice is placed on the table / drunk to represent joy and celebration.
- A female (or any) member of the family lights two candles / shortly before sunset / waves or beckons their arms around the candles / covers their eyes / as a blessing / prayer asking God to bless the family / although candles may be lit by any Jewish person.
- Children are blessed before the meal / head of household recites the Kiddush blessings / Kiddush cup held up / hands are washed to symbolise purification / and separation between ordinary and holy time / God is blessed for providing bread / it is passed round so everybody has a piece / meal is taken / family time to relax and enjoy the company / Torah stories may be told and Shabbat songs sung.
- Meal ends with a prayer and thanksgiving for food meal blessings called birkat ha-mazon.
- After Saturday morning synagogue service another meal is shared in the home / afternoon spent at home with the family, including children / Torah may be studied.

- The end of Shabbat is marked by the havdallah service / performed after the sun has set / blessings performed over wine / sweet smelling spices / to allow the sweetness of Shabbat to remain even after Shabbat ends / candle with several wicks / to bring light to the house.
- Concluding words / eg 'Elijah the prophet' / Shavua tov (have a good week).
- Candidates might include Shabbat prohibitions in the home / for instance not watching the TV / not operating electricity etc.

Student responses

Response A

One way in which Shabbat is celebrated in Jewish homes is that in Reform Judaism, Jews visit the synagogue and participate in a 2 hour service and they recite prayers. They then go home and participate in resting activities such as spending time with family – this is because Shabbat is the “Day of Rest”. Participants then say goodbye to Shabbat when stars appear.

Another way Orthodox Jews celebrate is by visiting the synagogue and the men stay for extra services. The family then have a meal and say prayers. They then go to an evening service. They then eat a special meal to finish the day.

Points made about visiting the synagogue are irrelevant as the question is asking for what happens at home, therefore this material does not attain any marks. Marks are awarded for the point about resting activities and spending time with the family is elaboration of that (2 marks).

A further mark given for family meal and prayers. (1 mark).

'Day of rest' does not relate clearly to a source of authority, and therefore does not gain a mark.

3 marks

Response B

Shabbat is symbolic of God's seventh day of rest during Genesis. In order to represent his rest, Jews all stop working for a day and celebrate. So Jews don't cook, clean or build. Others might go on a walk, play games with the family or stay inside. Some may also have a special meal.

This is a list like response, however there is some development. The first idea looks at the idea of a day of rest, they connect it to Genesis (source of authority mark) and elaborate with Shabbat prohibitions. The second part of the answer is about sharing quality time as a family, and what that might look like.

5 marks

Please note that due to a lack of available student work to demonstrate Level 4 responses from the 8062/16 Judaism paper, we have used a question and example answers from the 8063/2Y Judaism paper.

These questions and answers are created and marked at the same standard as any other GCSE Religious Studies paper.

12 mark question

Question 2.5

'Jewish mourning rituals (customs) are more about helping those who have lost a loved one than about the person who has died.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Jewish teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[SPaG 3 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10-12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7-9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4-6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1-3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited.

Arguments in support

From the moment of death until the burial, the bereaved are exempt from all religious duties (such as saying the Shema) / words of condolence at the end of the burial service / meal of condolence provided by relatives and friends after the burial / during the seven days of Shiva, friends and neighbours come to make up the minyan for prayer services / meals brought in / comfort given / at end of Shiva friends and family take mourners for a short walk to symbolise re-entry into the world / some Jews do not believe in life after death, so the rituals have no concern with the dead person, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

Respect for the dead person central throughout the period of mourning / the washing of the body to purify it / a short burial service in which the rabbi speaks about the dead person / the 'God full of compassion' prayer asks for mercy for the dead person / special service at the end of the 30 days' mourning period in which people speak about the dead person / ceremony to place the gravestone for the dead person to be remembered / on anniversary of death and during High Holidays, visits made to the grave / Yahrzeit candle lit on anniversary of death, etc.

NB: This is a question about the purpose of mourning rituals. References to life after death must be focused on the question if they are to be given credit. This relates 'to the person who has died', so material relating to the care of the dying is irrelevant and may not receive credit

Student responses

Response A

Some people may agree with the statement. This may be because Jews tear a small hole in their clothing to show their sadness to show respect to the dead person's loved ones. People may also agree with the statement as when someone has lost someone, their friends and family come to their house to make them feel better about their loss. Jews also do not party for a year and do not drink alcohol or shower in a month to show they are mourning which shows respect to those who have lost the person however, it can also be seen as a time to think about the person you have lost.

On the other hand other people may disagree with the statement and argue that Jewish mourning rituals are more about the person who has died than helping the people who have lost the person. This is because Jews mourn for a year, this shows respect for the dead and their grief showing how much they miss the person and are saddened by their death. The body of the dead person is cleaned and wrapped which shows lots of care to the dead person as they are taking care of the body.

Overall, I disagree with the statement as although some Jews may take part in the mourning rituals to show respect to those who have lost a loved one, it also shows their respect to the person and the year of mourning allows them time to think about that person and slowly recover from their tragic loss.

This is a Level 3 response

Both sides of the argument show reasoned consideration but the answer requires a greater depth of knowledge to attain a level 4.

8 marks + 3 SPaG

Response B

Jewish mourning rituals begin as soon as Jews hear about the death, they rip a hole in the sleeve of what they are wearing and remain with the body. They remain with the body as they believe that they need to comfort the soul and if possible the body must be buried within 24 hours. For seven days after the death or Shiva the family remains at home and cover the mirrors so that they can focus on who died instead of their appearance. Preventing any distractions from the person who has died means that the mourning rituals are centred on the person who has died.

However the mourning rituals also help the mourners as they are given time to rest and accept the death in order to recover. During Shiva, Jews remain at home and focus on the person who has died to allow them to process the death, for 30 days after the death they are not allowed to cut their hair, shave or go to parties, this can also be seen as a way to help with grief instead of being entirely focused on the death.

I think that the mourning rituals are a mixture of both, they show respect for the dead and help the mourners.

This is a Level 4 response

A series of developed arguments with sufficient application for level 4. To attain a higher level 4 mark, the answer could include a greater range of arguments.

10 marks + 3 SPaG

Response C

In support of this statement, the mourning is especially designed to help mourners get over a death with varying levels of grieving. The first seven days are very intense where the family does not leave the house. This is followed by a period of lesser mourning of 30 days. There is a period of milder mourning of 11 months. This shows how it gradually moves the grieving, and helps mourners to show acceptance of a death.

However, Jews believe that the soul of the dead person remains in the body until buried. There is a ritual of having a family member stay with the body until the funeral to keep the soul comforted and appreciated. This is about helping the person who died before their burial, usually within 24 hours of their death.

To make sure the focus remains on the death of the loved one, mourners cover mirrors so they don't get distracted with their appearance as they are not allowed to bathe, shave or cut their hair. This shows that the rituals focus on the dead person and not with the mourners.

Although, many rituals seem to be purely for the comfort of the mourners. For example, they say the Kaddish prayer many times for themselves to feel more hopeful. They also do not work or attend parties out of respect for the dead, however this could just be to help the grieving feel like they are honouring the dead person's memory.

In conclusion, I think that the main purpose of the rituals is to respect and honour the dead person, as the mourners must make sacrifices of their time to sit on low stool or the floor of their homes to show acceptance. The rituals help the soul feel comforted and may, as a benefit, guide mourners on how long they grieve.

This is a Level 4 response

A detailed response, including a wide variety of detailed arguments from different points of view. The first paragraph of the answer is a particularly good example of how it is possible to build an argument and consistently include 'new' pieces of specific religious knowledge whilst doing so.

12 marks + 3 SPaG

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/8062

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