



GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES B

8063/2Y Paper 2 Section Y : Perspectives on faith (Judaism)
Report on the Examination

8063
June 2022

Version: 1.0

Further copies of this Report are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2022 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.
AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

General comments

Despite the pandemic, centres had clearly prepared their students with care for the examination. There were many more unattempted questions than in the past, but there was plenty of evidence of sound understanding of Jewish beliefs and practice. Most students attempted to give more than one viewpoint in answer to the AO2 questions.

There were no questions that proved to be problematic for students as a whole. Marks were lost where questions were not read carefully, eg question 01.3 or where there was no attribution to sources of authority, eg question 01.4 and particularly question 02.4.

The inclusion of material relating to Jesus and to Christianity was an issue. This was seen particularly in the question on the Messiah, but on some scripts Christian terms occurred throughout the paper, eg referring to synagogue services as the Mass. Centres might wish to emphasise to their students the inappropriateness of reference to Jesus, the New Testament and Christianity.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar were for the most part reasonable, most students gaining two or three marks. Handwriting, however, continues to be a problem.

Question One Judaism: Beliefs

01.1 was answered correctly by most, though a significant number of students ticked monotheism or covenant.

01.2 was also answered well, most students gaining two marks. Answers to beliefs about sanctity of life frequently consisted of being made in God's image, the holiness of life and the principle of pikuach nefesh, though some students incorrectly stated that to save life, all mitzvot might be broken. Those relating to idolatry, adultery, incest and murder may never be broken. The most common errors were answers relating to equality or to the wrongness of abortion. Centres might wish to explain briefly to their students the Jewish position on abortion.

01.3 those who did not note the instructions following the question and who failed to name Christianity as the main religious tradition of Great Britain had their answers capped at two marks as the maximum available. Other students lost marks through failing to develop their answers or through not linking attributes of God to his role as Creator. 80% of students, however, were awarded at least two marks for their responses.

01.4 was one of the best answered questions on the paper. Many students were awarded full marks for attribution of one of their points to a source of authority. Very often they made a developed point that included reference to the Ten Commandments, and then quoted one of them, referring to the Decalogue as the source. A range of reasons were given for the importance of Moses, eg the liberation of the slaves from Egypt, the Exodus and the covenant on Sinai. A minority of students confused the covenant made on Sinai with the Abrahamic covenant or with Moses' vision of the burning bush.

01.5 proved to be a good differentiator. To achieve Level 4, students needed to use their often extensive knowledge of Orthodox Jewish beliefs about the Messiah to evaluate the significance of this belief as a whole. Many tended to write AO1 style answers, so could not be awarded Level 4. They also needed to explain why Reform and many other Jews hold different beliefs and to be able

to assess their importance. This tended to have better application. Many students explained and assessed reasons for the belief that the Messianic Age would be brought by collective action on the part of the Jewish people, often with an emphasis on the moral principles. There were also arguments relating to the experience of the Holocaust on both sides of the discussion. Almost 43% of students gained Levels 3 or 4. Weaker responses often considered Jewish attitudes to Jesus.

This question lent itself to the use of specialist terms, and this helped almost half of students gain full marks for SPaG. Those who were awarded one mark or no marks had often written too little for a reliable assessment of standard to be made.

Question Two Judaism: Practices

02.1 was answered correctly by both. Almost 74% of students identified Brit Milah with birth.

02.2 almost 74% of students gained at least one mark. The best answers gave points such as the Mishnah and Gemara, rabbinical interpretation or guidance on daily life, eg on food laws. Some answers repeated the first point in the second and there were many students who did not know what the oral law referred to.

02.3. was one of the most straightforward questions on the paper, yet almost 12% of students did not attempt it, and of those who did, a further 8% gained no marks, often confusing Rosh Hashanah with Yom Kippur, Pesach or Sukkot. Perhaps this can be accounted for by disruption to lessons during the pandemic. Jewish festivals are the final topics on the specification. Those who did know about Rosh Hashanah usually referred to it as the new year and as a time of judgement, though the nature of the Rosh Hashanah judgement was sometimes confused with the final judgement. Those who were awarded four marks successfully pointed to the influence of the belief on Jewish lives.

02.4 was well answered, with over half of the students being awarded four or five marks. Most explained, often in considerable detail, the importance of the aron hakodesh, the bimah or the ner tamid. Students struggled, however, to refer to a source of authority. Had those who linked their chosen feature to the practices of ancient Israel referred to the Bible as their source of information, they would have gained the extra mark. Centres might wish to train their students in answering the five mark questions.

02.5 differentiated well. Those who gained Level 4 combined detailed understanding of the mourning rituals with perceptive application to the mourners and the deceased. Evaluative judgements were made throughout these responses. At the lower end of the mark range, there were many very general answers, some not focused on the question and many not showing much knowledge of mourning rituals. Over 11% of students did not attempt the question.

Most students gained two or three marks for SPaG. Where less was awarded, as with 1.5, this was often because the student had written too little for a reliable assessment to be made.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.