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# **GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2024**

**A LEVEL  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1  
OPTION C: A STUDY OF JUDAISM**

**A120UC0-1**

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### **About this marking scheme**

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

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## **Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:**

### **Positive marking**

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

### **Rules for Marking**

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

### **Banded mark schemes**

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two stage process.

## **Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band**

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content. Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

## **Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark**

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

## **Awarding no marks to a response**

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

## A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions [20 marks]</b></p> <p><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i></li> <li>- <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i></li> <li>- <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i></li> <li>- <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i></li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>17-20 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-16 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5-8 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-4 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</b></p>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

Band	<b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions [30 marks]</b>  <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>25-30 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>19-24 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed.</li> <li>• The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-18 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed.</li> <li>• Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence.</li> <li>• Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

## **EDUQAS GCE A LEVEL – COMPONENT 1**

### **OPTION C: A STUDY OF JUDAISM**

#### **SUMMER 2024 MARK SCHEME**

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

#### **Section A**

1. (a) **Examine the nature and significance of the Mosaic covenant at the time of Moses.**

**[AO1 20]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- The Mosaic covenant is the confirmation of the relationship between God and the Israelites represented by Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19-20). It is seen as one of the most important aspects of Judaism because it is from this point that we see in Judaism a development and formalisation of Jewish belief and practice, and a clear identity for the Israelites in terms of religion.
- The Mosaic covenant is conditional: God promised to be God of the Israelites only if they obey the divine laws included in the covenant. As a result of entering into this covenant, the Israelites will receive the blessings of God. It was a covenant that reinforced the covenant that God had given to Abraham; however, the Jews were now told what they were required to do as their side of the agreement.
- Scholars have found that the Mosaic covenant displays many of the characteristics of a suzerain treaty/covenant, which is one made between a great king and his subordinate. In this particular relationship it is the suzerain who 'gives' the covenant, and within its terms the subordinate party receives his protection. Indeed, the Mosaic covenant was not a relationship between equals, but in return for dedication to serve the Lord forever, God promised to stay with the Jews and never abandon them because they were now a divinely chosen people (Exodus 19:5).
- The Ten Commandments were received and written by Moses (Exodus 34:27-28), and in keeping these commandments the Jews believe that they will always have God's presence. The Ten Commandments are often viewed as representative of all mitzvot given by God. The nature of this can be seen in rabbinic literature that uses each of the Ten Commandments to categorise and discuss the mitzvot as a whole.
- The Mosaic covenant is further significant as it was made with a whole nation rather than an individual (as in the case of Abraham).
- At the time of Moses the covenant helped to organise and bring order to a group of people who lacked coherence at that time. They were a people who had been enslaved and lost as a nation. It was the Mosaic covenant that was central in establishing them as a nation once more.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

1. (b) 'The Mosaic covenant has no legal value within Judaism today.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- One line of argument could refer to the fact that as the word 'covenant' is a legal term denoting a binding contract, then it follows that the covenant made with Moses is a legal contract in which two parties have responsibilities towards each other. For many Jews today, the terms of that covenant retain their relevance. As a result of this, the Torah has been described as the 'eternal law', and it is possible to obtain guidance from it even in modern-day society.
- Some however, might argue that the laws set down in the Mosaic covenant were of legal value only for a particular group of people at a particular time: it was important during the wilderness years following the Exodus from Egypt as it gave the community a structure upon which to build a community as the chosen people of God. At that particular time in history, the laws were important in that they covered all aspects of their lives. This, it could be argued means that the laws might not be relevant for Judaism today.
- However, Orthodox Jews would argue that when properly and devoutly observed, the mitzvot serve to enhance the spiritual element of a person's life by turning everyday routines into acts that have religious significance: keeping kashrut, for example. This is especially evident within the Hasidic movement as the Hasidim believe that the laws for life were presented to Moses by God on Mount Sinai, and they hold that all of the mitzvot are relevant, and their understanding of them is such that they should never let the opportunity to keep a mitzvah be lost.
- Another line of argument is to draw attention to the fact that many of the laws are out-dated and are no longer representative of the majority of issues that are faced in modern-day life. Medical issues such as fertility treatment and organ transplantation, for example, were not evident at the time of the making of the original covenant. Nevertheless, it could be argued that rabbis have faced these challenges by applying wisdom in order to respond to contemporary problems by making connections between the unchanging covenant and the realities of a changing world.
- Reform Jews would say that revelation is a continuous process, and they have a different approach to the content of the Mosaic covenant. They would argue that the laws, although inspired by God, were written by fallible humans. They therefore argue that every generation has an obligation to adapt the laws so that they are relevant for modern-day society. It therefore follows that, for Reform Jews, not all of the laws set down in the Mosaic covenant remain relevant. Examples for this stance can be offered as evidence: many Reform Jews do not keep kashrut at all; many consider the prohibition regarding work on Shabbat as relating to the job that they do throughout the week.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**



2. (a) Examine the use and treatment of the Torah.

[AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- The Sefer Torah is the holiest item in a synagogue, containing as it does the Five Books of Moses. The Torah scrolls are kept in the Aron Kodesh at the synagogue, from which they are taken out for portions to be read in the synagogue three times a week. The Sefer Torah is only used in the synagogue, and there is a schedule for the year. Small sections are read on Mondays and Thursdays with the main reading on the morning of Shabbat. Most observant Jews own a printed version of the Torah which is known as Chumash, and this can be made use of at home.
- The Torah is used as the foundation for study as denoted in Deuteronomy 6:7: 'And you shall teach it to your children.' Study of the Torah is important for two main reasons: without studying the Torah one cannot know how to fulfil the mitzvot; and secondly, it enables a person to gain an insight into the spiritual significance of the mitzvot. Torah is studied extensively at yeshivot and seminaries. This allows rabbis to develop their understanding of the Talmud and Halakhah and enables them to advise Jews on matters of religion and day to day life.
- Orthodox Jews believe that in addition to the written Torah, Moses also received the oral Torah. The purpose of the oral Torah is to explain in greater detail how to keep the commandments of the written Torah when a fuller explanation was needed. For example, the written Torah says that Jews should 'honour the Sabbath' but doesn't explain how this should be done. Therefore, the oral Torah provides the interpretation.
- The Torah is treated with utmost care and respect. Its place of safekeeping, the Aron Kodesh, represents the golden box which contained the Ten Commandments in the original Temple in Jerusalem.
- The Sefer Torah is dressed in a beautifully decorated mantle which protects it whilst it is carried from the Aron Kodesh around the synagogue to the bimah. On its journey, all will stand, and prayer shawls will be kissed before being used to touch the outer cover of the scroll as it passes. The scrolls are not touched directly when being read due to their sanctity, and therefore a yad is used. It is an honour to be called to read the portion for the day.
- A Sefer Torah must be written by hand and copied letter by letter from an original by a sofer. Great care must be taken in its writing, and if a mistake is made, the sofer has to rectify it by scratching the ink off the parchment. If the mistake cannot be corrected completely then the whole page must be removed. However, it cannot be destroyed due to the fact that it contains the word of God and must therefore be buried.
- Likewise, when a scroll is worn out, beyond repair and cannot be used any longer it cannot be thrown away but is placed in a protective container and buried in a Jewish cemetery in accordance with Jeremiah 32:14 and a midrash on Deuteronomy 12:4.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

2. (b) 'The Torah has become a religious icon.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- One line of argument could be to point out that the Torah itself, in the Ten Commandments, prohibits Jews from creating icons which could lead to idolatrous practices: 'You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in Heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below' (Exodus 20:4). This includes representation of God. This prohibition has led to aniconism: opposition to the use of idols, images and the worship of objects which are symbolic of a deity within Judaism.
- Nevertheless, the way in which the Torah is stored and used in the synagogue could lead some to suggest that it *has* become an icon: e.g. the way in which it is protected, paraded around and touched with prayer shawls could in some eyes lead to the conclusion that it is the object rather than what it contains which has become important.
- If veneration of the physical Torah, and the ritual which surrounds its use were to become the main focus of attention, rather than the spiritual and moral guidance which it contains, then it could well be classed as no more than a religious icon.
- However, this perception could be countered by arguing that the Torah is not acting as a physical representation of God; rather the treatment of it shows the respect that Jews have for it as the word of God which has provided guidance for life.
- Consideration could be given to the fact that for some groups within Judaism believe that its content is open to interpretation. For example, Reform Jews would say that revelation is a continuous process, and they therefore have a different approach to the laws of God which are contained within the Torah from those within the Orthodox tradition. Reform Jews would argue that the laws, although inspired by God, were written by fallible humans. They therefore argue that every generation has an obligation to adapt the laws so that they are relevant for modern-day society.
- The term 'icon' is also open to interpretation, and therefore one's view on the issue would be dependent upon an individual's understanding of the word; and it might not always have negative overtones.
- It could be argued that the Torah as a religious icon needs to be distinguished from that understanding of an icon as something that leads to a form of worship. It clearly has 'iconic' status in the way in which it is used and treated, but this does not mean that it is worshipped. For many it does have iconic status, but that means nothing more than it being a tool for aiding focus during worship and directing one beyond the physical to the metaphysical reality of God's presence in the synagogue.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

## Section B

### 3. (a) Explain Jewish beliefs about absolute monotheism.

[AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- For Jews, the belief in absolute monotheism/the Oneness of God is at the foundation of their faith – some may explore the Abrahamic covenant. They are reminded of this every day when they recite the Shema with its opening line 'Hear O Israel; the Lord our God is One Lord' (Deuteronomy 6:4). The first of the Ten Commandments also forbids the worship of any other gods.
- Reform Judaism believes in one living God as set down in the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885, as well as in subsequent Platforms: 'We affirm the reality and oneness of God ...' (Pittsburgh Platform 1999)
- Beliefs about God as Creator; incorporeal; neither male nor female; eternal could be explained with accurate reference being made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom.
- The characteristics of God could also be covered: e.g. omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, Holy, Just, Perfect and Merciful.
- Jews believe that God can be experienced through kavod and shekinah. Kavod is a word used for the energy that is encountered in moments of awe, such as at the revelation on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:16). The prophets also made many references to visions in the presence of God, particularly connected with the Temple. For example, the prophet Isaiah when he said, 'I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple' (Isaiah 6:1).
- Jews believe that the presence of God can be experienced, and shekinah, meaning 'dwelling' or 'settling' denotes the divine presence of God in the world. An example of shekinah is to be found in the narrative of the Exodus from Egypt, when God's presence was evident in guiding the exiles as a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21). The shekinah is also present in acts of public prayer, and the Amidah for example, contains a blessing that says: 'Blessed are you, God, who returns his presence (shekinah) to Zion.'
- Maimonides discussed the nature of God in his work 'The Thirteen Principles of Faith' and contested that study of the Torah is one way of coming to a greater understanding of the nature of the divine. However, he was unhappy about describing God using the positive attributes that are to be found within it, reasoning that the attributes are spoken of in this manner because 'The Torah speaks in the language of man' and should not be taken literally. Maimonides insisted that only God's actions can be known, and even these only tell us what God is *not* like, not what God *is* like. An example of Maimonides' line of reasoning can be included: It is possible to describe what God is *not*. God is not corporeal, does not occupy space, experiences neither generation nor corruption. God is not bound by the physical world in any shape or form; this means that the divine being is not restricted to a particular place or time.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

3. (b) 'Jewish beliefs about the characteristics of God are no longer meaningful.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- It could be argued that this statement is not valid, as the majority of Jews continue to hold fast to their belief in an eternal God who has remained constant throughout human history. Jews still maintain that God's power has no limits at all, and that God is still in control of the universe. This includes all the activities both in nature and also those of humans. God's characteristics set God apart from humankind and continue to enable Jews to know God in a personal and spiritual way.
- There is also evidence that the holiness of God is still relevant for Jews today, as can be seen in their reverence towards the use of the name of God. The third of the Ten Commandments forbids Jews to use God's name in the wrong way. Jews therefore regard the name of God as being so holy that it should not even be spoken. Instead the name Adonai is used, meaning 'Lord.'
- Some of the characteristics attributed to God within Judaism could be said to be easier to grasp than others because they relate to things that humans are able to understand. For example, the notions of justice and mercy are evident within society and remain the premise upon which a fair and equal society is created. Thus, the characteristics of God as just and merciful remain meaningful. Also, many of the laws that are found in the Torah show concern for emulating God in doing that which is right and treating others fairly. For example, one of the most important commandments for Jews is 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' This remains meaningful in modern-day society.
- However, another line of argument might suggest that acts of evil and suffering in the world highlight a contradiction between the contention that God is both omnipotent *and* omnibenevolent. If this is the case, then how can God be both all-powerful as well as possessing absolute goodness when there are so many acts of evil and suffering in the world? If the characteristics of God cannot be comprehended fully, then they cannot be meaningful for Jews today.
- Our understanding of the world is now totally different from that which it was in the early days of the Jewish religion. We now have a greater knowledge and understanding of the way in which the universe came into being that is based upon scientific discovery and evidence. This might cause some to question the characteristic of God as being omnipotent for example. Whereas it was once a logical description in the past when it was the only way of explaining how everything came into existence, now it is no longer relevant, and therefore no longer meaningful.
- It could be concluded that it is not the characteristics of God that Jews put their faith in. Rather it is the reality of God in their lives that is of the utmost importance.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

4. (a) Examine different Jewish responses to the creation event.

[AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- The Book of Genesis begins with the word 'bereshit' meaning 'In the beginning', and states that '...God created the Heaven and the Earth'. However, analysis of Genesis 1:1 presents us with two ways of interpreting the act of creation: on the one hand, as an act that establishes the first instant of time, and on the other, an act in which God shapes the world from a pre-existent and formless matter.
- Rashi and Maimonides can be cited as examples in order to illustrate differences in response to the creation event. Rashi's understanding of the text suggests creation 'de novo' (creation from pre-existing matter). The world was already a formless void, lying in readiness for God to speak and to breathe life into it.
- In The Guide for the Perplexed, Maimonides undertakes an investigation based upon philosophical argument, although never doubting that the creation event depended upon God. He suggests three ways, based upon the theories of Moses: God created the world out of nothing – creation 'ex nihilo' and creation 'de novo'; Plato: the world was created 'de novo' from pre-existing matter; Aristotle: creation is neither 'de novo' nor 'ex nihilo' but is best understood as an eternal emanation.
- Kabbalist theology on the matter suggests that God created the universe 'ex nihilo' although in the special sense of the creation of the universe out of God who is understood as the Divine Nothing.
- A discussion of the creation event might also be centred upon differing Jewish denominational responses with an examination of the science versus religion debate. For example, many ultra-Orthodox Jews reject scientific theories regarding creation because they accept the Bible as embodying eternal truths. And, as such, they are unwilling to reinterpret scripture in order to bring about a reconciliation with scientific theory.
- Another approach within Orthodox Judaism is to seek to integrate the biblical account with modern scientific theory by arguing that they both describe the same process using different language.
- Some Jewish thinkers reject literal understandings of the Bible in favour of metaphorical or allegorical readings arguing that the Bible offers a spiritual rather than a scientific description of how the world originated.
- For the majority of Conservative and Reform Jews, the creation event is a scientific fact, and science is the means by which to understand the world.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

**4. (b) 'Science does not pose any challenges to Judaism at all.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- It could be argued that scientific discoveries have changed the way in which people have come to understand the world, and that it is now possible to accept certain principles without reference to God. It could therefore be asserted that one of the most basic principles of Judaism, that God created the universe and everything in it, has been challenged by scientific principles.
- However, even within Judaism, there is speculation about the nature of the act of creation, and reference could be made to views found within rabbinic literature to further the contention that Judaism does not hold a strong position that could be used successfully as a response to the challenges posed by science.
- A line of argument that could be used to illustrate support for the statement is to refer to evolutionary theory. At first it might appear that scientific theory presents a major challenge to the biblical account of creation. However, some assert that it is possible that God used scientific laws to create material reality. This position is held by the majority of Conservative and Reform Jews and is based upon the notion of 'theistic evolution': that there is room for belief in a creator, God, who set everything into motion.
- However, it is evident that many ultra-Orthodox Jews reject scientific theory relating to the theory of evolution. This is because there remains an unwillingness to re-interpret scripture in order to bring about a reconciliation with scientific discoveries as it is believed that the Bible contains eternal truth. As a result of this, it could be argued that, for this denomination within Judaism, science has not posed any challenges at all, as it does not have a place within their worldview.
- Candidates might also approach this statement from the standpoint of Jewish responses to specific advances in medical science which have occurred over the last half a century; with reference being made to Jewish medical ethics where decisions are made based upon Halakhic tradition.
- The challenges that arise concerning the interpretation of scripture in relation to issues such as embryo research could be used to illustrate the dilemmas that emerge when trying to stay true to the responsibilities of the covenant.
- The Jewish principle of pikuach nefesh could also be cited in order to illustrate that the saving, protecting, and preservation of life is of utmost importance, and that it has its basis in the Torah (Leviticus 19:16). Thus, any new medical procedures which can bring about improvement to life, or even to save a life, should be accepted.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

5. (a) **Examine challenges for Jewish communities in Britain in relation to kashrut (purity) and dress.**

[AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

**Kashrut**

- British society doesn't cater for the requirements of kashrut, and it is a challenge for many Jews to get access to a wide range of kosher food products if they live in a non-Jewish area.
- For Orthodox Jews who keep kosher, all foods must be approved and certified by a rabbi. The Kashrut Division of the London Beth Din (KLBD) has to supervise the manufacturing process before awarding certification. Not all food products in Britain have undergone this rigorous process and although some supermarkets in areas where there is a Jewish community might carry a limited line of kosher products, the options are limited.
- It is difficult, if not impossible, for Orthodox Jews to eat out in non-Jewish homes and restaurants due to the rules found in Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14 and Exodus 23:19 for example.
- Even though the KLBD offers the services of a shomer whose job it is to supervise the kitchen of non-Jewish establishments in order to ensure that all ingredients and methods of cooking are in accordance with the laws of kashrut, a great deal of time, care and attention is needed, and this is not always appropriate for the circumstances.
- There is a lack of kosher butchers, many of whom are now only found within close-knit Jewish communities. Such butchers have to be licensed by a rabbinic board which ensures that the animals have been slaughtered and the meat prepared in the required way.
- Keeping kashrut can put pressure upon Jewish children who attend non-Jewish schools, and who have non-Jewish friends. It can also bring about challenges in the workplace.

**Dress**

- One particular group within Judaism, Hasidic Jews, are immediately recognisable by their appearance and style of dress. As a result of their distinctive appearance, they stand out in a crowd, and their instant visibility has made them a source of ridicule and, in many cases, the victims of discriminatory, anti-Semitic action.
- The requirement for modest dress amongst Hasidic women has also been criticised as being out of line concerning attitudes to women in general in contemporary British society.
- Keeping kashrut and insisting upon a strict dress code has the potential to isolate and separate Jews from wider secular society and thus assimilation becomes a challenge; leading to some Jewish groups withdrawing into close-knit communities, and consequently being unable to adapt to the changes in modern British society.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

5. (b) 'It is possible for Jews in Britain to assimilate fully into a secular society.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Examples for arguments may be drawn from kashrut, dress, education and religious worship, etc.
- Many Orthodox Jews wish to follow the laws of kashrut in their entirety. Food has to be produced, prepared and eaten in a certain way as set down in the Torah and rabbinic tradition. Likewise, animals have to be slaughtered in the correct way but this method of slaughter has caused concern amongst animal welfare groups and serves to show just how different some Jewish practices are from mainstream society. Some supermarkets might sell kosher food, but only in limited amounts, and so there would be a problem for a Jewish individual or family if they live in a non-Jewish area. It is also impossible for Orthodox Jews to eat in non-Jewish restaurants or in the homes of non-Jewish people.
- Jewish education is another area which, it could be argued, promotes segregation rather than assimilation. On the one hand, it is perhaps understandable that Orthodox Jews make the choice to send their children to a faith school based upon the belief that by doing so they will be protecting their son or daughter from the materialist values of the secular world. However, on the other hand, Jewish faith schools can generate their own problems since they can increase the sense of alienation felt by the Jewish child by continually making them aware that they are culturally different from the wider society in which they live.
- There are also problems reconciling the rituals and requirements of certain Jewish rites of passage with the law of the land. Judaism prescribes that following a death the burial of the body should take place as soon as possible; however, this practice is not always possible when an autopsy, requested by a coroner, has to be carried out.
- Religious dress also marks a person out as different, which can also act as a barrier to assimilation. One particular group within Judaism, Hasidic Jews, are immediately recognisable by their appearance and style of dress. Hasidic men always have a beard and side curls, wear black suits, white shirts and a large black hat. Hasidic women also stand out as different as they wear modest clothing which does not reveal their neckline, arms or legs. This does not help assimilation.
- It is important to note, however, that Reform Jews have always been of the opinion that it is important to be assimilated fully into the wider society in which one lives, and they have shown that it is possible. For example, many Reform Jews do not keep kashrut at all, based upon a rejection of laws that are considered to have a ritual rather than a moral basis.
- Another argument is the fact that the need to assimilate into secular society is not seen as a goal for some members of the Jewish faith at all. Hoffman points out, in reference to the laws of kashrut, that for Orthodox Jews the traditional halakhah is binding and non-negotiable.
- Hasidic Jews have not tried to assimilate, and live in closed communities, in many cases they have become victims of discrimination as a result.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**