



Mark Scheme (Pre-stand)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Religious Studies (9RS0)
Paper 4F: Sikhism

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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.

Paper 4F: Sikhism– Mark scheme

Question number	Answer
1	8 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following. • The Sikh Gurdwaras Act was introduced by the British Punjab government. • The Act aimed to reduce conflict around the control of gurdwaras. • Sir Malcolm Hailey, the British governor organised an elected Sikh committee to oversee the control of gurdwaras. • The government introduced the act to ensure any gurdwara was run by 'recognised' Sikhs. • Gurdwara reform meant that any gurdwaras which did not meet the requirements to be designated as a gurdwara could be sold and redesignated for other uses.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Answer
2	4 marks AO1, 8 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • After the River Experience Guru Nanak declared there are no differences in religions. • Guru Nanak recognised that all religions suffer from intolerance. • Guru Nanak reprimanded the yogis because they abandoned the world rather than helping those within it. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • Guru Nanak rejected the rituals used by Hindus and Muslims. However, rather than this leading to conflict he used events such as his visit to Mecca to teach about holiness and worship. • Guru Nanak showed that the actions of Hindus such as wearing a sacred thread were not needed as they made no change to the person. Thus, rejecting both ritual and the acceptance in society that some people are higher ranking than others. • Guru Nanak instituted the langar and taught that it should be available to all people not just Sikhs. Therefore, showing that 'the Light of God is in all hearts' (Guru Granth Sahib 282) encouraging interfaith harmony. • The teachings of Guru Nanak encouraged interfaith harmony and inclusivity as he focused on the spiritual. Therefore, it is significant that Guru Nanak spent years studying with Muslims and yet remained separate in his teachings. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1. Candidates who do not refer to Hindus, Muslims and the yogis cannot go beyond Level 2.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).

Level 2	5–8	- A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). - Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
		Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).
Level 3	9–12	- A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). - Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). - Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content
3(a)	10 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following. - It is clear that non-Sikh culture has impact on Sikhism within the diaspora. - Sikhs who are trying to maintain Punjabi values are trying to reject the values in the West. - Many educated Sikh women have chosen to incorporate the values of the West into their actions. - Feminist values of the West are particularly relevant to some Sikh women, who perceive that actions such as exclusion from seva in the Darbar Sahib are unfair. - Many Sikh women feel that the understanding of the roles of women is limited by cultural values and are protesting against Sikh roles in places of worship that have been instituted by men.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	- A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). - Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is superficial (AO1). - Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies that are not directly linked to the extract (AO1).

Level 2	4–6	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed, however it is not fully developed (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are linked in most cases to reference from the extract (AO1).
Level 3	7–10	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed and fully developed (AO1).
		• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are fully linked to references from the extract (AO1).

Question number	Indicative content
3(b)	5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • Sikh teaching maintains that women are equal to men. • Sikh scriptures indicate men and women are made of the same 'essence'. • Some women may argue that as the majority of Sikh Gurdwara management is male their role is not equal. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • The teachings of Guru Nanak are used to support the idea that men and women have equal roles, maintaining that 'without women, there would be no one at all.' (Guru Granth Sahib 473). However, some would argue that today's patriarchal societies ignore this. • Sikh morality is based on the understanding that women have a valuable role in Sikhism. Guru Angad encouraged the education of women. However, the education received by Sikh women is not always equal in quality and does not affect the roles that women can assume after they are educated. • Some Sikh women would raise questions about the roles that are allowed in worship. Western Sikh women have begun to protest about their lack to rights within traditional gurdwaras. Other Sikhs may argue that women have not been concerned with these roles until recently. • Sikhs believe that equality is a key principle. Men and women are regarded as holy, as such they should have roles that are indicative of gender equality. • Some Sikh women have written academically about the role of Sikh women today. They have raised that most writers about the role of women are men and that their understanding is limited. Therefore, the true understanding of women's role in Sikhism is not widely understood or accepted. • Jakobsh discusses the role Sikh women play and acknowledges that more women should be involved Sikh practice. However, in the West there is an increased interest about feminist ideas in mainstream Sikhism and an understanding that the role of Sikh women has been dictated by cultural norms. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are selected (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2).
Level 2	5–8	• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	9–12	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made, which are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	13–16	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question, which are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2).
Level 5	17–20	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question, which are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content
4	5 marks AO1, 25 marks AO2 AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • The teaching of miri-piri has been part of Sikh belief since it was introduced by Guru Hargobind in the 17th Century. • The teaching was introduced to support the concept that Sikhs may be needed to fight to protect the faith or weaker people. • Miri-piri explains that there should not be a difference between spiritual and temporal responsibilities. AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • Sikhs are taught to recognise that they have a duty to act spiritually within the non-spiritual world, especially by helping those who have little, therefore they will perform seva through dhan. • Sikhs believe that within the doctrine of miri-piri the concept of miri means they should make use of political and military power. As a result, some Sikhs believe that armed fighting is acceptable, while other Sikhs regard this as not relevant today. • Sikhs today may argue that the injustice in today's world is why the doctrine of miri-piri is more important than in the past. Therefore, they argue the fighting is not military, but it is fighting against political systems. • Some Sikhs may argue that the concept of miri-piri has always been linked to power, the power of God in Sikhs. However, some would argue that if this power is used purely in this way it is wrong, it should be used in a spiritual way. • Sikhs work for justice and equality for all. They argue that miripiri should support this. Therefore they may refer to deg and teg which explicitly bring justice rather than miri-piri. • The challenge posed to religious belief about the existence of evil and suffering and how to respond to it underpins the doctrine of miri-piri. This links to whether the existence of God is questioned by having to fight for good in the world. (This shows links to Philosophy of Religion). • The concept of miri-piri has been used to justify participation in conflict. The ethics of war and peace could be linked to this topic. (This shows links to Religion and Ethics). • The development of the doctrine of miri-piri, as a reflection of the religious and political situation at the time, could be linked to the change in laws Jesus later brought about because of the context he lived in. (This shows links to New Testament Studies).

	Candidates who do not show links with another area of their course of study will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 4.
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–6	• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided but are simplistic and/or generic (AO2).
Level 2	7–12	• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided, which loosely draw together ideas but with little or no attempt to justify (AO2).
Level 3	13–18	• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of some of the elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided, which logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).
Level 4	19–24	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2). • Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).

Level 5	25–30	• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).
		• Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are fully justified (AO2).