



A-level RELIGIOUS STUDIES 7062/2D

Paper 2D Study of Religion and Dialogues: Islam

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Methods of Marking

It is essential that, in fairness to students, all examiners use the same methods of marking. The advice given here may seem very obvious, but it is important that all examiners follow it as exactly as possible.

1. If you have any doubts about the mark to award, consult your Team Leader.
2. Refer constantly to the mark scheme throughout marking. It is extremely important that it is strictly adhered to.
3. Remember, you must **always** credit **accurate, relevant and appropriate** answers which are not given in the mark scheme.
4. Do **not** credit material that is irrelevant to the question or to the stated target, however impressive that material might be.
5. If a one-word answer is required and a list is given, take the first answer (unless this has been crossed out).
6. If you are wavering as to whether or not to award a mark, the criterion should be, 'Is the student nearer those who have given a correct answer or those who have little idea?'
7. Read the information below about using Levels of Response mark schemes.
8. Be prepared to award the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks when the answer merits full marks or to give no marks where there is nothing creditable in an answer.
9. No half marks or bonus marks are to be used under any circumstances.
10. Remember, the key to good and fair marking is **consistency**. Do **not** change the standard of your marking once you have started.

Levels of Response Marking

In A-level Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, levels of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Levels of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Levels are tied to specific skills. Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Levels of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully, responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. This should only be necessary occasionally and where this occurs examiners must indicate, by a brief written explanation, why their assessment does not conform to the levels of response laid down in the mark scheme. Such scripts should be referred to the Lead Examiner.

Assessment of Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives. Where students are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. The quality of written communication skills of the student will be one of the factors influencing the actual mark awarded within the level of response. In reading an extended response, the examiner will therefore consider if it is cogently and coherently written, ie decide whether the answer:

- presents relevant information in a form that suits its purposes
- is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- is suitably structured and that the style of writing is appropriate.

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Levels of Response: 10 marks A-level – AO1

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|-------------------------------|--|
| Level 5
9–10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate, relevant and fully developed in breadth and depth with very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate. • Where appropriate, good knowledge and understanding of the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion is demonstrated. • Clear and coherent presentation of ideas with precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary. |
| Level 4
7–8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate and mostly relevant with good development in breadth and depth shown through good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate. • Where appropriate, alternative views and/or scholarly opinion are explained. • Mostly clear and coherent presentation of ideas with good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary. |
| Level 3
5–6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and critical understanding is generally accurate and relevant with development in breadth and/or depth shown through some use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate. • Where appropriate, there is some familiarity with the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion. • Some organisation of ideas and coherence with reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary. |
| Level 2
3–4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and critical understanding is limited, with limited development in breadth and/or depth shown through limited use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate. • Where appropriate, limited reference may be made to alternative views and/or scholarly opinion. • Limited organisation of ideas and coherence and use of subject vocabulary. |
| Level 1
1–2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and critical understanding is basic with little or no development. • There may be a basic awareness of alternative views and/or scholarly opinion. • Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary. |
| 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No accurate or relevant material to credit. |

Levels of Response: 15 marks A-level – AO2

- Level 5**
13–15
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Perceptive discussion of different views, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought with critical analysis.
 - There is an appropriate evaluation fully supported by the reasoning.
 - Precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**
10–12
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought, with some critical analysis.
 - There is an appropriate evaluation supported by the reasoning.
 - Good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**
7–9
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought.
 - An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning.
 - Reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**
4–6
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Presentation of a point of view relevant to the issue with some supporting evidence and argument.
 - Limited attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**
1–3
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view is stated, with some evidence or reason(s) in support.
 - Some attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

0 1 . 1

Examine the meaning and significance of beliefs about the hand of God and the face of God.

[10 marks]

Target: AO1.1: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that meaning and significance may be treated discretely or together as one issue.

For the Mutazili, the hand of God and the face of God are significant because they allow Muslims to understand God in a way that they can relate to. The verses pertaining to the face of God and the hand of God should be interpreted metaphorically. This is important because if those verses of the Qur'an are understood literally, they attribute some similarities between God and God's creatures which constitutes shirk.

For the Asharites, the hand and face of God are qualities of God that are known and whose meaning is clear and must be accepted. However, they cannot be compared to the human like qualities because this would be considered blasphemy. The hand of God could be interpreted as God's generosity and the face of God interpreted as strength of God.

For the Hanbalis, the hands and face of God are to be taken literally. They do not negate the attributes which God rightfully claims, nor do they compare God's attributes with the attributes of the creation. They base this belief on the methodology of the predecessors, affirmation without assimilation, so they affirm God's transcendence without incapacitating God's attributes.

0	1	2
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‘Muslims can only rely on greater jihad to guide moral conduct.’

Evaluate this claim.

[15 marks]

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

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Good conduct: the importance of good moral conduct in Islam including reference to duty of obedience to the Prophet and God and to the greater jihad.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Some Muslims agree because each individual has the ability to judge what is right and wrong. Using greater jihad as a moral guide Muslims are able to judge the morality of any action. However, other Muslims would argue that the Qur'an is needed in order to guide Muslims when making moral decisions. This is because the Qur'an is the word of God and without its guidance a person may judge the morality of an action through their own desires.

Some Muslims argue that greater jihad is very personal and Muslims can rely on this because it understands the individual struggle. Every Muslim is different and what might be right for one Muslim may not be right for another. Greater jihad gives a very personal guide to moral decision making. However, other Muslims would argue that the hadiths are also required in order to judge the morality of actions. Greater jihad alone is not sufficient.

Some Muslims argue that greater jihad is something that the Prophet Muhammad emphasised, thus it is known as the 'greater' and sufficient when making moral decisions. However, other Muslims may argue that lesser jihad is needed in certain situations to make moral decisions. For example, during war Muslims would rely on the rules of lesser jihad to make a moral decision.

0 2 . 1

Examine the influence of inclusivism on Muslim relations with other faiths.

[10 marks]

Target: AO1.2: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Inclusivism and its basis in the Qur'an with reference to both Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic faiths.

Inclusivism within Islam has meant that Muslims are actively engaged in dialogue with people of other faiths. This may include interfaith dialogue and welcoming visitors to the mosque. For example, the London Central Mosque opens its doors to people of all faiths during interfaith week. This has led to more harmonious relations within multifaith communities and the breaking down of stereotypes.

Inclusivism has enabled Islam to work with other faith communities to provide social services and cultural activities in their locality. Inclusivism implies that Islam should accept people of all other faiths rather than competing with them. This leads to good will between members of different faith communities and encourages working for a common goal.

Some Muslims who cannot accept that Muslims should work with other faiths may be influenced to respond to inclusivism with exclusivism. This may lead some Muslims to withdraw from any engagement with other faiths to prevent their own doctrines being influenced by non-Muslim ideas. It may also encourage exclusivist Muslims to speak out against inclusivism, because they believe that Islam is the only truth.

0	2	.	2
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‘Islam is no longer a source of truth and moral values.’

Evaluate this claim.

[15 marks]

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

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Challenges of secularisation including: the replacement of religion as the source of truth and moral values; relegation of religion to the personal sphere; the rise of militant atheism: the view that religion is irrational.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Traditionally, Islam was observed and practised within communities. Often, this is no longer the case. In British society generally, religion may no longer be useful as a source of truth and moral values. Some Muslims may find their own source of truth and moral values, which may not have a religious basis. However, Muslim communities which offer a source of truth and moral values still play an important role in society. Many Muslim children attend mosque schools, which teach Islam. Further, all major religions are recognised in national occasions, for example the coronation of King Charles. This shows that Islam remains a source of truth and moral values.

In recent years militant atheists have gained attention by claiming that science and philosophy show religion to be a bad influence on society. They claim that religions are based on untruths and are the source of social unrest and conflict. They call for people to set religion aside in order to base moral values on secular ethical systems. However, Muslims still find inspiration in their religious texts and teachings, and see social unrest and conflict as human failures to live up to the ideals in the Qur'an. For Muslims, militant atheism is mistaken, and therefore Islam remains a source of truth and moral values.

Some people claim that Islam is not based on reason, and is therefore irrational, so cannot act as a source of truth and moral values. People today should instead look to science and secular philosophy to make sense of the world, and to determine how to live well. However, Islam has a long history of using reason in the development of teachings about the world and moral values, for example in philosophical and ethical debates in the Qur'an and other Islamic writings. Some strands of Islam today continue to evolve using reason, and therefore Islam continues to be a rational source of truth and moral values.

0 3 . 1

‘Philosophy cannot support belief in religious sources of authority.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Islam and philosophy.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1.4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

AO1

Islam

There are a range of Muslim views about religious sources of authority. These may focus on the authority of the Qur'an, the hadiths, the Prophet, the Imams and / or the Shari'ah law. They may consider God's authority as controller of all things and ultimate guide.

Philosophy

This can be approached in a variety of ways. For example, philosophy may challenge belief in the existence of God as a source of authority with reference to the weaknesses of arguments for the existence of God, and to the problem of evil. It may also question the role of religious experiences, miracles and the use of religious language in and by sources of authority.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Islam and philosophy.

AO2

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Philosophers may argue that religious sources of authority depend on belief in God who is creator of all things and therefore the source of all authority. Arguments for the existence of God cannot prove the existence of God. The logical and evidential problems of evil further suggest that the God of Islam does not exist. However, Muslims may argue that although arguments for the existence of God do not constitute proof, they allow that belief in God, and therefore God's authority, is rational. Theodicies and the free will defence also defend belief in God. Therefore, philosophy can support Muslim belief in God as a source of authority.

Philosophy may argue that Islamic religious texts have no foundation, because they are based on spiritual revelation which is rooted in religious experiences, for example, the revelation on Mount Hira by the angel Jibril, which cannot be verified. Science has demonstrated that religious experiences may have physical or emotional causes. However, Muslims may agree with Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony, which suggest that religious experiences can be accepted as a basis for faith, and thus to confirm faith for Muslims. Therefore, philosophy can support belief in the Islamic religious texts as a source of authority.

Philosophy may argue that Muslim belief in the written sources of authority is unsustainable because religious language is largely meaningless. Since much religious language is neither verifiable nor falsifiable, it cannot convey meaning about the world, and therefore cannot have authority. However, philosophers such as Hare and Wittgenstein have shown that non-cognitive language may be meaningful, or it may be seen as symbolic, as discussed by Tillich, or analogical, as shown by Aquinas. Therefore, philosophy can support belief in written language as sources of authority for Muslims.

0 4 . 1

‘Islam should reject the truth claims of other religions.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Islam and philosophy.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

AO1

Islam

Muslim attitudes to other faiths generally may be informed by inclusivism, exclusivism or pluralism, and by the diversity of faiths in Britain today. Truth claims of other faiths may contradict or challenge Muslim beliefs, including those about the authority of the Qur’an and the hadiths.

Philosophy

Philosophy may challenge any religious truth claims by considering the challenges of the verification and falsification principles to the meaningfulness of religious language. Religious truth claims based on religious experiences may be challenged by science or because they cannot be verified. Students may also consider the value of miracles and claims about life after death.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Islam and philosophy.

AO2

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Some Muslims may take an exclusivist position based on verses from the Qur'an and the teachings of Islam which, such Muslims believe, are the only way to connect with God. Any truth claims which contradict this view must therefore be rejected. However, some may argue using Wittgenstein, that most religious truth claims are better understood as context-specific language games which are meaningful within each religious faith community, and cannot be rejected or accepted outside the context.

Some Muslims may argue that there are core fundamental differences between Islam and other faiths. The Qur'an makes it clear that all other religions are not accepted by God and therefore their truth claims must be rejected. However, other Muslims may take an inclusivist position and argue that those of other faiths may still be united with God. For example, the Prophet Muhammad worked alongside Jews and Christians and talked about the commonalities between each of the faiths. The common belief in one God means that Muslims should not reject all the truth claims of other faiths.

The Prophet lived alongside people of other faiths until the Ummah was established. Some Muslims may argue that because the Ummah exists, Muslims should now reject the truth claims of other faiths. However, others may recognise the diversity of faiths in society and religious pluralism as a feature of modern secular states. Because of this, Muslims may live alongside other faiths, as the Prophet did, without needing to reject or accept their truth claims.

0 5 . 1

‘The conscience is the best guide for Muslims to make decisions about embryo research.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Islam and ethical studies.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

AO1

Islam

Islamic responses to issues raised by science with reference to genetic engineering may be considered. There may be reference to Muslim teaching about the sanctity of life and its application to issues concerning the embryo and unborn child.

Ethics

Answers may focus on the value of the conscience as a moral guide, and may refer to differing ideas about the nature of conscience. There may be some consideration of Divine Command Theory. They may also consider normative ethical theories and how they may be applied to embryo research.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Islam and ethical studies.

AO2

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Some Muslims may take the view that the conscience is the God-given faculty of reason, and therefore is the best guide to any decision making on any subject, including embryo research. In doing so, they may agree with some aspects of the primary precepts of Natural Moral Law. However, other Muslims may prefer to base decisions on the teachings of the Qur'an or the hadiths, seeing them as divine commands from God to be obeyed, and therefore as the best guide for such decisions.

Some Muslims may apply aspects of Situation Ethics, and view the conscience as the choice to do what love demands in a particular situation. This would make it the best guide because it produces the most loving outcome for decisions about embryo research. However, other Muslims may consider that Muslim teaching about the sanctity of life means that any outcome which involves the death of an embryo is unethical, so the conscience may be a poor guide for decisions about embryo research.

Some Muslims may see the conscience as the innate understanding of right and wrong, so it must be the best guide to decision making about embryo research because it cannot lead a person to do something morally wrong. However, other Muslims may argue that scientific research which interferes with something God has created, for example altering the DNA of an embryo, is putting human choices above God's will for that person. If the conscience appears to allow that, it is mistaken, and cannot be a good guide for decisions about embryo research.

0	6	.	1
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‘Neither Islam nor ethical theories deal effectively with issues of animal life and death.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Islam and ethical studies.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

AO1

Islam

There may be consideration of Muslim beliefs about stewardship. Muslim responses to issues of animal life and death may be discussed, and there may be reference to teachings about animals from the Qur'an and the hadiths.

Ethics

There may be consideration of the application of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Virtue Ethics to issues of non-human life and death.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Muslim and ethical studies.

AO2

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Islam and Natural Moral Law see animals as a lower order of creation than humans. As a result, humans have authority over animals, so animals may be used to benefit humans. This implies that animals may be used in any way to benefit humans, which is contrary to modern attitudes to animals. However, many Muslims today see their role as one of stewardship, and Natural Moral Law may see the harming of animals as morally wrong. Thus both may be in tune with modern attitudes, and deal effectively with the issue of animal life and death.

Both Islam and Situation Ethics fail to deal effectively with the use of the animals in scientific procedures. Both may see scientific procedures on animals as a way to maximise love by saving human lives. This may not reflect contemporary views about animal welfare because it may suggest that God's love does not extend to the animals that God created. However, if the concept of God's love is applied to animals, both Situation Ethics and Muslims may consider the most loving outcome of scientific procedures for both animals and humans, so they may deal effectively with this issue.

Neither Islam nor Virtue Ethics deals effectively with intensive farming. Islam and Virtue Ethics appear to allow it, despite its apparent disregard for animal welfare. Muslim superiority over animals may allow the use of animals as food, and Aristotle's Virtue Ethics applies only to humans, because animals are lower on the hierarchy of souls. However, many Muslims today see kindness to animals as important and treat food animals well. More modern approaches to Virtue Ethics consider humane treatment of animals to be virtuous. Therefore both Islam and Virtue Ethics do deal effectively with intensive farming.