



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies A

Paper 4: Area of Study 4 – Textual Studies

Option 4A – Mark's Gospel

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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 4: Textual Studies 4A – Mark’s Gospel Mark Scheme

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • The transfiguration took place on a mountain (1) • Jesus’ clothes ‘became dazzling white...’ (Mark 9:3) (1) • Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus (1) • A voice from a cloud said, ‘This is my Son...’ (Mark 9:7) (1) • Jesus told the disciples not to tell anyone about what they had seen (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
1(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a belief. Award a second mark for development of the belief. Up to a maximum of four. • The Jews expected a king-like Messiah (1), who would be a descendant of David (1) • The Messiah would be a suffering servant (1). Isaiah describes a messiah who would take on the sins of the People (1) • Some people expected a warrior-like leader (1) who would free the country from the Romans (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief/development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each response. Award further marks for each development of the response up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - Some Christians would respond by saying that nature miracles do not need a scientific explanation (1), as Jesus, the Son of God could defy the laws of nature (1) 'even the wind and waves obeyed him' (Mark 4:41) (1) - Christians may say such events as Jesus walking on water was not just a coincidence (1), as the disciples who were in the middle of the lake witnessed Jesus walking on the water (1) and, 'they were completely amazed...' (Mark 6:51) (1) - Most Christians would reject the idea that they are exaggerated stories made up by the disciples (1). It is more likely that Jesus' power was from God (1); as in the feeding of the five thousand he looked to heaven when blessing the five loaves and two fish (Mark 6:41) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated response/development - Development that does not relate both to the response and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the response given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
1(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • The finding of the empty tomb is the most significant event, as it shows the power of Jesus over death, 'He has risen! He is not here' (Mark 16:6). This is the final proof of Jesus' divinity, as only God can conquer death • For Catholics today it shows that death is not the end. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, through Jesus' resurrection, 'he opens for us the way to a new life' (654), making eternal life with God possible • For many Christians the women finding the empty tomb is an important message that the Gospel is for all people. It was women who were not only witnesses to the resurrection but were instructed to share the good news with the disciples (Mark 16:6-7) Arguments against the statement: • For some Christians the crucifixion is the most significant event; the cross upon which he died (Mark 15:3-38) is a symbol for all Christians, as it was through Jesus' death that salvation was made possible • For some Christians today the Last Supper is the most significant event as this is where Jesus gave the bread and wine saying 'this is my body', 'this is my blood' (Mark 14:22-24). It is through the Eucharist, that Jesus' death and resurrection is a present reality • All the events of the last days of Jesus' life are equally important as Mark used each of the events to help his readers understand 'the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God' (Mark 1:1); therefore, no one event should be singled out. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different Christian points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

'Understanding of religion and belief' includes Mark's Gospel.

SPaG

Marks		Descriptors
0 marks	No marks awarded	• The candidate writes nothing • The candidate's response does not relate to the question. • The candidate's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.
1 marks	Threshold performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Candidates use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.
2 marks	Intermediate performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.
3 marks	High performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • A woman at Bethany poured expensive perfume on Jesus' head (1) • Some people were annoyed at the waste of money (1) • Jesus said that she had done a beautiful thing for him (1) • The anointing was a preparation for Jesus' burial to come (1) • Some see it as a sign that Jesus was the Messiah (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a point. Award a second mark for development of the point. Up to a maximum of four. • The call to discipleship needs to be answered without hesitation (1). When Jesus called the fishermen, 'at once they left their nets and followed him' (Mark 1:18) (1) • That all people can be disciples (1). Jesus called Levi, a tax collector, to be a disciple (Mark 2:14) (1) • That discipleship involves sacrifice (1). The first disciples left their jobs and families to follow Jesus (Mark 1:19) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated point/ development • Development that does not relate both to the point given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each teaching. Award further marks for each development of the teaching up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - The parable teaches the different responses people may have to hearing the good news about the Kingdom of God (1). For example, some seeds fell amongst the rocks, sprang up quickly but withered as they had no roots (Mark 4:5-6) (1). Jesus explained that this represents people who hear the message at first but when faced with trouble they fall away (Mark 4:16-17) (1). - People need to hear and accept the message about the Kingdom of God for it to grow and flourish. (1) In the parable, it is through the people, represented by the good soil, that the Kingdom grows (1), as they 'hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop-some thirty, some sixty, some hundred times what was sown.' (Mark 4:20) (1) - Some people will hear and at first they accept the Gospel but they become choked by worldly concerns (1), 'the worries of this life ... making it unfruitful' (Mark 4:19) (1); for example their initial enthusiasm is overcome by the desire for wealth (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated teaching/development - Development that does not relate both to the teaching and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the teaching given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2(d)	AO2 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • The command to serve involves sacrifices that may ask too much of people. Jesus' disciples gave up their jobs, families, and wealth to serve, this may not be possible in today's world for many people • Christians today may find it hard to understand Jesus' teachings about service, even Jesus' disciples found it hard to grasp what was meant by; 'whoever wants to be first must be a slave to all' (Mark 10:44) • Serving others may lead to suffering, persecution even death. Bonhoeffer in the Cost of Discipleship said, 'When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die'; to face death is asking too much of most people. Arguments against the statement: • Christians believe that the command to serve is something all people can do. This may involve helping the poor, or supporting the work of charities, all this can be done as part of everyday life • Being a Christian is not always easy, but all should try to follow Jesus' example. Therefore, just as Jesus came to serve, 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve ...' (Mark 10:45); Christians should try to do likewise • Jesus made it clear that serving others is an important part of Christian life. It is through service to others that the rewards of the Kingdom of God come; 'whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant ...' (Mark 10:43). Accept any other valid response.	12

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