



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies B

Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Religion, Peace and
Conflict

Option 2C – Islam

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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 2: Religion, Peace and Conflict 2C - Islam 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. - Some Muslims believe hell is eternal (1) - Jahannam is a place of torment (1) - Hell is a punishment from Allah (1) - Hell is vast in size (1) - Hell is for those who do not believe in Allah (1). Accept any other valid response.	Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason. Up to a maximum of four marks. - Shi'a Muslims believe in the Five Roots of Usul ad-Din because the Roots identify the key beliefs of their faith (1). For example, they emphasise the importance of Tawhid (1) - The Five Roots confirm that Allah is always just (1). If Allah acts in a way that is difficult to understand Muslims should simply trust in him (1) - The Five Roots uphold the significance of the Day of Resurrection (1), when all Muslims will be resurrected and judged by Allah (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated reason/development - Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - It is important that Allah is merciful because everyone has done wrong (1), without Allah's mercy they could not go to paradise (1). 'In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.' (Surah 1:1) (1) - Through his mercy Allah has given Muslims all they require to pass the test of life (1). The Qur'an was provided by Allah to help Muslims live a good Muslim life (1), '... do not despair of the mercy of Allah.' (1) (Surah 39:53) (1) - The Qur'an teaches that 'Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity.' (Surah 2:286) (1). Even when life is difficult on earth Muslims believe that Allah in his mercy will repay their faithfulness (1). Their reward is in paradise (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated reason/development - Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason 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 holy books are Allah’s most important gift to humanity because they are the way in which Allah chooses to reveal himself to humanity. Without the holy books no-one, other than the prophets, would have the surety of Allah’s existence • The holy books make it clear what Allah expects from his creation. From the holy books Muslims can learn what is required to live a good Muslim life • The word of Allah is revealed in the holy books, as are the lives of the prophets. Without the holy books Muslims would not have the lessons they learn from the lives and mistakes of the prophets. Arguments against the statement: • Many of the holy books, other than the Qur’an, are believed to have been corrupted, both by mistranslation and the passage of time. Emphasis may be changed leading to changes in practice • Some Muslims believe the holy books need to be reinterpreted for a changing society. Some things which were acceptable when the holy books were written would be unacceptable now • Some may argue that without the gift of Prophet Muhammad, as the perfect exemplar, the Qur’an would be impossible for anyone to interpret leading to misconceptions and factions in the faith. Accept any other valid response.	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.

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 mark	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 marks. • Islam teaches all offenders should receive the same treatment (1) • Punishment should ensure human rights are protected (1) • The Qur'an teaches captives must be fed (1) • Criminals should be judged according to Shari'ah law (1) • The Qur'an teaches no-one can be tried without sufficient reliable evidence (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a teaching. Award a second mark for development of the teaching. Up to a maximum of four marks. • Muslims should abide by the law of the land (1) because crime is often an act against Allah's will (1) • Muslims will be judged on any criminal behaviour (1). Allah will judge everyone on the Day of Resurrection (1) • Criminal behaviour may bring shame on a family (1). Muslim parents are expected to teach their children right from wrong (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching/development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching 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 Hadith teaches that it is not permissible to take the life of a Muslim (1). There are three exceptions (1): 'the married adulterer, a life for a life and the deserter of his Din (Islam)' (Sahih Muslim 4152) (1) - Some believe capital punishment does not provide justice (1), since it is possible that the wrong person may be executed (1). 'And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden' (Surah 6:151) (1) - The principle of 'an eye for an eye' allows the death penalty (Surah 5:45) (1). The verse continues 'But whoever gives [up his right as] charity it is an expiation for him'. (1). Allah is honoured if murderers are forgiven rather than executed (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated teaching/development - Development that does not relate both to the teaching given 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)	A02 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. A02 Arguments for the statement: • Some may believe restorative justice benefits Muslim Society because it delivers justice. It is important for society that the criminal is quickly reintegrated to fulfil a useful role in the community • Some Muslims believe it provides a useful alternative to more punitive methods, lessening the trauma to families and society. It enables young people to see the error of their ways and reconcile with the victim • Some see it as the essence of the Islamic justice system. The Qur'an teaches 'Whoever pardons and makes reconciliation – his reward is [due] from Allah' (Surah 42:40). If both parties can reconcile then all of society benefits. Arguments against the statement: • There are some Muslims who believe restorative justice is a western concept and, if applied, would undermine the Qur'anic basis of the law. This would weaken Islamic society • Many suggest that the victim, by involvement in the sentencing, has the right under 'an eye for an eye' (Surah 5:45) to demand the death penalty. Since this is upheld by the Qur'an it must benefit society • Some may suggest that the payment of 'blood money' as a form of restorative justice could create more injustice in Islamic society. Often the criminals are poor and the victims rich, creating more inequality in society. Accept any other valid response.	12

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	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.
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'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.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. - Shahadah is important to Muslims because it confirms the significance of Allah as the only God (1) - It assures Muhammad's status as the Prophet of Allah (1) - They are the first words a Muslim baby hears (1) - It is recited before death (1) - Sincere repetition before two Muslims enables anyone to become a Muslim (1). Accept any other valid response.	Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason. Up to a maximum of four marks. - All Muslims are expected to attend the Hajj at least once in their lifetime (1). 'And proclaim to the people the ḥajj [pilgrimage].' (Surah 22:27) (1) - The Qur'an promises blessings to those believers who go on the Hajj pilgrimage (1). 'That they may witness [i.e., attend] benefits for themselves' (Surah 22:28) (1) - Attending Hajj fulfils one of the Five Pillars (1). On completion, a pilgrim's sins are forgiven (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated reason/development - Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • The Night of Power is important to Muslims because it is when the Qur'an was sent down (1). The Qur'an teaches 'The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months'. (Surah 97:3) (1). Prayer on the Night of Power is heard by Allah (1) • Muslims believe that on that night Allah draws close to them (1). 'The angels and the Spirit [i.e. Gabriel] descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter.' (Surah 97:4) (1) The angels protect them as they pray (1) • Without Laylat al-Qadr Islam would not exist as it does today (1). It began Allah's final revelation to humanity (1). 'Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night. Indeed, We were to warn [mankind]' (Surah 44:3) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/ development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(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: • Giving Zakah is a religious duty. It is commanded in the Qur'an: 'And establish prayer and give Zakah' (Surah 2:43). It benefits both the individual and the community therefore it must be the most important of the Ten Obligatory Acts • Zakah is used to help those who are most needy in the community. In some richer countries Zakah money is sent to support mosques in other parts of the world, showing it is of value to the whole ummah • Many aspects of Islam are designed to redistribute wealth from those who have been given much to those who have little, e.g., Zakah monies were used by Mr Abdul Edhi in Pakistan to establish an ambulance service to bring medicines to the poor. Arguments against the statement: • The benefits of fulfilling the Ten Obligatory Acts depend on the intention as well as the act. If a person pays Zakah grudgingly then it is of no benefit to them • Some may argue that a small annual donation does not go far enough to support the needy. Showing love for Allah and the people may prove more important • Zakah is only one of the Ten Obligatory Acts. Shi'a Muslims believe all ten are both compulsory and necessary for a healthy functioning community, no single one is of more value to the ummah in isolation. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different points of view within the religion (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	15

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Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three marks. • Muslims believe a Just War is ordained by Allah (1) • Fighting in the way of Allah brings great reward (1) • A Just War must have a just cause (1) • A Just War should avoid injuring non-combatants (1) • A Just War should be fought with the minimum necessary force (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a way. Award a second mark for development of the way. Up to a maximum of four marks. • Muslims may respond to the problems conflict causes by acting to restore peace (1). This reduces suffering (1) • If one group of Muslims are acting against Islam within a society they should be brought back under Allah's rule (1). This reunites the ummah (1) • Muslims should work for the improvement of society to reduce conflict (1). Their actions should help to promote peaceful co-existence (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated way/development • Development that does not relate both to the way given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(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. • Living peacefully with others avoids conflict and violence (1). 'Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.' (Surah 41:34) (1). The Qur'an encourages Muslims to make peace by finding a peaceful way to move forward (1) • The Hadith teaches that Allah is a peaceful God (1). Muslims should follow his example and make peace (1). '...whoever pardons and makes reconciliation – his reward is [due] from Allah.' (Surah 42: 40) (1) • 'Perhaps Allah will put, between you and those to whom you have been enemies among them, affection.' (Surah 60:7) (1). This teaches Muslims the importance of making peace with everyone (1), even those with whom you disagree (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching/development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the teaching given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(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: • Muhammad's example suggests passive resistance rather than conflict is the best way to change society. Muhammad used violence as a last resort, preferring to bring about change through negotiation • Most Muslims believe Islam is primarily a religion of peace. Violence should be a last resort and only happen when all alternative methods have failed • Peaceful protests have been shown to effect political change. Pro-democracy protests in Muslim Tunisia and Egypt toppled their authoritarian regimes, resulting in stable Muslim societies. Arguments against the statement: • Passive resistance may fail to effect the desired change, especially when Muslims are in the minority. Many Arab Spring demonstrations were met with violent opposition from the authorities, increasing violence in the community • In some circumstances, for example, if a group of Muslims are suffering oppression, there are Muslims who believe that going to war in their defence produces quicker results. This may result in less suffering than a protracted pro-democracy movement employing passive resistance • There have been many attempts in Muslim countries to use passive resistance to change society. Few have succeeded and, in some cases, the action has led to an ongoing civil war. This suggests that passive resistance may not be the best way to change society. Accept any other valid response.	12

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