



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies B

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

Option 2F – Judaism

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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 2F - Judaism 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 marks. - One time the divine presence is seen in the Torah is when Moses was given the Decalogue (1) - The divine presence is seen as a burning bush (1) - The divine presence is seen in the Garden of Eden (1) - The Shekhinah guided Moses through the desert (1) - The divine presence filled the tabernacle (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. - One reason why Abraham is important for Jews is that he made a covenant with the Almighty (1), where he promised to worship the One Almighty (1) - Abraham is important as he was told to circumcise all males (1), and this carries on today with Brit Milah (1) - The Almighty told Abraham he would be the father of a great nation (1). Jews believe they are the descendants of Abraham today (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 belief. Award further marks for each development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - Many Orthodox Jews believe they will be judged when they die (1) to see whether they are good enough to enter paradise (1). 'And the dust returns to the ground as it was, and the life breath returns to God who bestowed it.' (Ecclesiastes 12:7) (1) - One teaching about life after death for Orthodox Jews is the belief in Gan Eden (1), where Jews will go to be with the Almighty (1). 'Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life' (Daniel 12:2) (1) - Orthodox Jews believe life after death comes with the Messiah (1) and will be a time of peace (1). 'Nation shall not take up sword against nation; They shall never again know war' (Micah 4:3) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated belief / development - Development that does not relate both to the belief and to the question. - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief 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 mitzvot set the Jewish people apart, as the chosen ones of the Almighty, remembering the covenant made with Moses • Although some of the mitzvot may seem unnecessary in the modern world, Orthodox Jews believe that one cannot understand the mind of the Almighty, 'For My plans are not your plans, Nor are My ways your ways' (Isaiah 55:8) • The Torah commands the Jewish people to keep the mitzvot; 'See, this day I set before you blessing and curse: blessing, if you obey the commandments of your God' (Deuteronomy 11:26-27). Arguments against the statement: • The Jewish belief of Pikuach Nefesh states that the preservation of life is more important than keeping the mitzvot; therefore many of the mitzvot can be waived to save a life • For Reform Judaism, the mitzvot are seen as inspired by the Almighty but written by humans at a particular time in history, and therefore they are open to reinterpretation • Some Jews believe that the Jewishness of a person is seen to be passed on through blood; therefore a person has to be born Jewish. 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.
Level 4	10–12	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.

'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. • Most Jews believe criminals should be treated with mercy (1) • Jews believe criminals should be treated justly (1) • The Torah teaches that harsh punishments may be given to criminals (1) • Jews believe inhumane treatment of offenders is wrong (1) • Many Jews believe criminals should be helped to change their ways (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 belief. Award a second mark for development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. • Most Jews believe restorative justice works to reduce crime (1), which is the best way to help society (1) • Restorative justice is merciful (1), it recognises that some criminals are also victims of their own backgrounds (1) • Restorative justice aims to address a lack of understanding of Jewish teachings (1). Some Jews believe crime is a response to lack of faith in the Almighty (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
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. • According to the Torah, the Almighty will reward good actions (1), for example, in the Shema he tells them that they will be rewarded if they obey his commandments, (1) 'I will grant the rain for your land in season, the early rain and the late.' (Deuteronomy 11:14) (1) • The Decalogue tells Jews to honour their parents as a good action (1) and the Almighty will reward them for it (1). 'Honour your father and your mother, that you may long endure on the land that your God is assigning to you' (Exodus 20:12) (1) • Giving to charity is a good action (1) and Jews give tzedakah to help those in need (1). 'Give readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return your God will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings' (Deuteronomy 15:10) (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: • Jews may argue that there are some crimes which are so heinous that the death penalty is the only justice available; for example, many of the perpetrators of the Holocaust were put to death • The Torah has examples of the death penalty being used and there are quotes such as 'the penalty shall be life for life' (Exodus 21:23) and therefore Jews may support it • Some non-religious people might argue that the death penalty should be brought back for crimes such as murder, as to keep people in prison for life is expensive. Arguments against the statement: • Many Jews would argue that the death penalty goes against the commandment not to murder, and that therefore it is not right for a human to take the life of another human, regardless of the circumstances • Ezekiel said that the Almighty did not want the Israelites to put people to death. 'Say to them: As I live—declares the Sovereign God—it is not My desire that the wicked shall die, but that the wicked turn from their [evil] ways and live.' (Ezekiel 33:11) • Non-religious people might argue that countries with the death penalty have higher rates of murder, and that therefore it is not a deterrent to crime. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider non-religious points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

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.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three marks. • One object which may be used in a synagogue is a yad (1) • One object used in a synagogue may be a menorah (1) • One object used in a synagogue may be a ner tamid (1) • One object used in a synagogue may be a Torah Scroll (1) • One object may be a yarmulka (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 feature. Award a second mark for development of the feature up to a maximum of four marks. • One feature of a birth ceremony is circumcision (1) when a baby boy is eight days old (1) • One feature is to be blessed in the synagogue (1) on the first Shabbat after the birth (1) • Some Jews give money thirty-one days after the birth of the first son (1) to 'redeem' him from his Temple service (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated feature / development • Development that does not relate both to the feature 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 Amidah forms the core of all Jewish prayer services (1) and is often prayed in silence facing Jerusalem (1). 'My Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Your praise' (The Amidah) (1) • The first three blessings praise the Almighty (1) and inspire the worshipper to ask for his mercy (1). 'Blessed are You, Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob, the great, mighty and awesome God, exalted God, who bestows bountiful kindness' (The Amidah) (1) • The Amidah allows Jews to communicate with the Almighty (1), to pray for peace (1). 'Bestow peace, goodness and blessing, life, graciousness, kindness and mercy, upon us and upon all Your people Israel' (The Amidah) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/ development • Development that does not relate both to the reason 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: • Shavuot remembers the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai and therefore this is the most important festival, as the Torah is central to the Jewish faith • Shavuot allows Jews to renew their commitment to the Covenant with Moses, making it a time of personal faith and reflection for them • Shavuot remembers the day when the Almighty swore his eternal oath to the Jewish people for all time, and Jews in turn pledged, and continue to pledge, their everlasting loyalty to him. Arguments against the statement: • Yom Kippur is more important as a festival; it is the holiest and most important day in the Jewish calendar, as it is the Day of Atonement, when sins may be forgiven • Rosh Hashanah is more important than Shavuot as it remembers the creation of the world from the book of Genesis, when the Almighty created humans as his most loving creation • Pesach has most importance from a historical perspective as it remembers the Almighty saving his people from slavery, the birth of the Jewish nation and entering the Promised Land. Nothing has had more impact on the Jews than this. Accept any other valid response.	15

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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
4(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three marks. - One belief about reconciliation in peacemaking is that it should follow conflict (1) - Jews believe peace and reconciliation go together (1) - Jews believe that reconciliation provides justice (1) - In Judaism, only the victim can offer reconciliation (1) - The Almighty provides reconciliation and brings peace (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 each way. Award a second mark for development of the way up to a maximum of four marks. - Some Jews work as peacemakers (1), they believe that peace is better than war (1) - Some Jews work for charities (1) who are trying to help those in conflict situations (1) - Rabbis may offer guidance to political leaders (1) to bring about the end of political conflict (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 belief. Award further marks for each development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - One Jewish belief about war is that some wars are obligatory (1) if the Almighty has commanded Jews to fight (1) for example, the conquest of Canaan under Joshua could be seen as an obligatory war (1) - Some Jews believe in defensive wars (1), where they are obliged to fight back if attacked (1). 'Whoever sheds human blood, by human [hands] shall that one's blood be shed' (Genesis 9:6) (1) - Maimonides taught that spiritual matters were more important than wars (1) because the Torah says, 'You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against members of your people. Love your fellow [Israelite] as yourself: I am Lord' (Leviticus 19:18) (1). Peace should be aimed for (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated belief /development. - Development that does not relate both to the belief and to the question. - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief 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: • Many of the wars in the Torah were obligatory, in that they were commanded by the Almighty, but some were to gain territory which is not a just cause • Some Jews would use situation ethics and argue that war is never just, in that those who fight are sent to their deaths which can never be the most loving action • Some Jewish pacifists would argue that no war can be just, as there have been no wars in history where civilians have not suffered in some way. Arguments against the statement: • Although there is no specific Just War teaching in Judaism, most Jews believe that everything possible must be done to make peace, and that war must be the last choice • According to Just War theory, war must be to defeat wrongdoing and promote good, and many Jews believe this criterion can be found in the Torah, where the Jews fought against those who sought to kill them • The methods of war should be appropriate, and many Jews would argue that just war is possible; however, using WMD would not be justified in a Just War, as many innocent people are killed. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider ethical arguments (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

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