



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies B

Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Religion, Philosophy
and Social Justice

Option 3C – Islam

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Summer 2025

Question Paper Log Number P78632A

Publications Code 1RB0_3C_2506_MS

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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 3: Religion, Philosophy and Social Justice 3C - 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 marks. - The Qur'an describes paradise as a beautiful garden (1) - There will be no hatred or anger in paradise (1) - Paradise will be a place of peace (1) - Paradise is eternal (1) - In paradise Muslims will recline on thrones (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 way. Award a second mark for development of the way up to a maximum of four marks. - Belief in predestination may make the believer courageous (1) because he knows that the span of his lifetime is predestined by Allah (1) - It makes Muslims responsible for their actions (1). This inspires Muslims to strive to please Allah in every word and action (1) - Muslims will trust in Allah (1). Predestination means that everything happens according to the wisdom of Allah (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
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each way. Award further marks for each development of the way up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Muslim communities can show their shared belief in the Six Beliefs when they meet together at the mosque (1), acknowledging that Allah is the one, true God (1). 'Say, "He is Allah, [who is] One"' (Surah 112:1) (1) • Muslims are taught to read and understand the Qur'an (1). The community have a responsibility to send their children to the madrassah (1). '...A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them.' (Sahih Al-Bukhari 7138) (1) • Muslims can work to demonstrate the love of Allah in the community (1). They believe that how they live together acts as a witness to Allah (1). 'And whoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day has certainly gone far astray.' (Surah 4:136) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated way/ development • Development that does not relate both to the way given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the way 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 Qur'an is the divine word of Allah, revealed to Prophet Muhammad by the angel Jibril. As such every aspect of the Qur'an reveals the nature of Allah • The Qur'an shows the mercy of Allah. "If Allah had willed, we would not have worshipped anything other than Him, neither we nor our fathers," (Surah 16:35). Allah has the power to do this but, in his mercy, chose to give mankind the choice to worship him • Allah is shown as always just. Allah will reward evil with evil and righteousness with righteousness, teaching Muslims the benefits of behaving as Allah requires. Arguments against the statement: • Muslims believe Allah is transcendent, he stands outside his creation and is therefore ultimately unknowable by his creation. The Qur'an may suggest his nature but it is beyond understanding • There are other ways that the nature of Allah is revealed, for example through following the Six Beliefs and praying daily, a Muslim becomes more knowledgeable and grows in understanding of the nature of Allah • During a Muslim upbringing the example of the parents reveals the nature of Allah, as does the example of the Prophet. Muslims first come to know Allah as he is revealed through those who worship him.	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. • Muslims may believe the Qur'an is a miracle because it is the word of Allah (1) • The Qur'an reveals Allah's will (1) • It was delivered to Muhammad by Jibril (1) • It has remained unaltered since it was first recorded (1) • It contains scientific references unknown at the time of revelation (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 reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. • Visions provide direct evidence of the existence of Allah for those who receive them (1). Only Allah has the power to cause visions (1) • Visions are important to Muslims because Maryam was gifted visions concerning the birth of her child (1). Jibril reassured Maryam that the birth of Isa to a virgin mother was easy for Allah (1) • Visions are shown as important in the Qur'an (1). The Qur'an tells the story of Yusuf interpreting the dreams of Pharoah showing the omniscience of 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
2(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. • Muslims may suggest that suffering in life is a test from Allah (1). Giving charity is encouraged to remove suffering (1). 'And be patient, for indeed, Allah does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.' (Surah 11:115) (1) • They believe that Allah allows some people to suffer to increase their steadfastness (1). Those who stay true to Allah learn from the experience (1). 'Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account [i.e., limit]' (Surah 39:10) (1) • They point to the belief that suffering is part of Allah's plan (1). For example, Allah allowed the Prophet Ayub to be subjected to suffering, and rewarded him for his patience (1). 'So We responded to him and removed what afflicted him of adversity.' (Surah 21:84) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated response/ development • Development that does not relate both to the response given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the response 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 A02 descriptors. A02 Arguments for the statement: • Muslims believe religious experiences are real because a numinous experience may be felt very deeply on a spiritual level. This may not be understood by those who are not believers • Those Muslims who have religious experiences are filled with new understanding of Allah. Only Allah could have given them this experience • For people who experience a religious experience it often profoundly affects their faith. For example, Cat Stevens, when miraculously saved from drowning, converted to Islam and became a devout Muslim. Arguments against the statement: • Non-religious people may suggest that religious experiences could be due to many things, such as drugs or mental illness. Whilst the experience may feel real it is a physical rather than a spiritual experience • Non-religious people may point to psychology which shows that many humans can be easily persuaded to believe things that have no proof. This may apply to religious experiences such as group accounts of religious experiences • Many Sunni and Shi'a Muslims (those who are not Sufi) are suspicious of claims of personal religious experiences. They consider Allah as God and therefore remote. They believe they will experience Allah in Akhirah. 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. • Muslims believe greater Jihad is the struggle to live the best possible Muslim life (1) • The greater Jihad is the struggle to purify one's heart (1) • It requires Muslims to follow Allah's rules (1) • It encourages Muslims to be better people (1) • It is a daily requirement for all Muslims (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 challenge. Award a second mark for development of the challenge up to a maximum of four marks. • Hajj can be financially challenging for Muslims living abroad (1). The Qur'an commands Muslims to attend Hajj (1) • Hajj is physically challenging for Muslims (1), some rely on crutches or wheelchairs to complete the pilgrimage (1) • Some of the ritual practices themselves are dangerous (1), for example, Muslims throw rocks at three pillars representing Shaytan (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated challenge/development • Development that does not relate both to the challenge given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each way. Award further marks for each development of the way up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Muslims can fulfil the Ten Obligatory Acts by encouraging each other in the faith (1). 'They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong' (Surah 9:71) (1). This builds the ummah (1) • Muslims are required to fulfil the fast (1). '...decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you.' (Surah 2:183) (1). This promotes righteous behaviour (1) • Muslims attend the daily prayers (1). 'So exalt [Allah] with praise of your Lord and be of those who prostrate [to Him].' (Surah 15:98) (1). This brings Allah constantly to mind (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated way/development • Development that does not relate both to the way given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the way 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: • When Muslims recite the Shahadah they are declaring there is only one God. This is the fundamental belief of Islam. This, with the acknowledgement of Muhammad as the Prophet, are the requirements for Muslim life • By saying this a person is declaring themselves a Muslim. This is unique to Islam, separating them from other religions. 'Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam.' (Surah 3:19) • It is the first of the Five Pillars of Islam. By saying the Shahadah Muslims submit to Allah's will. The Qur'an teaches 'And if they submit [in Islam], they are rightly guided.' (Surah 3:20). Arguments against the statement: • Islam teaches that faith requires both inner belief and outward action. As such Shahadah, by itself, cannot be more important than the other commands of Allah since all are necessary • The Qur'an teaches that 'Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds [that] for them there is forgiveness and great reward.' (Surah 5:9). The statement of faith cannot be all that is required without action since both are required for paradise. • The Hadith teaches that 'Actions are judged by their intentions', if the intention is to show devotion to Allah then good works become part of faith and complement belief, meaning that no one attribute of Muslim life can be considered as of supreme importance. 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. • Muslims believe Allah's will supercedes that of humanity (1) • Muslims support freedom in religion (1) • All of humanity is equal before Allah (1) • Muslims should work to increase social justice (1) • The lack of social justice may distract people from Allah (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 problem. Award a second mark for development of the problem up to a maximum of four marks. • One problem discrimination may cause for Muslims is inequality of opportunity (1). The Qur'an promotes equality. 'Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you.' (Surah 3:195) (1) • Discrimination may lead to bias in the application of the law (1). Muslims believe all are equal before the law (1) • Discrimination may reduce woman's access to education (1). Every Muslim is required to seek knowledge, regardless of gender (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated problem/development • Development that does not relate both to the problem given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(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. - Islam teaches that faith should be freely embraced (1). No-one should have the right to force others to convert to their faith (1). The Qur'an teaches 'There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.' (Surah 2:256) (1) - Muslims teach that Allah gives everyone the opportunity to choose the truth (1). 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills – let him believe: and whoever wills – let him disbelieve.' (Surah 18:29) (1). Religious freedom enables a person to believe in a false religion (1) - The Qur'an teaches 'Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion] (Surah 5:48) (1). It is Allah's choice to allow other religions to exist (1). Muslims respect Allah's will (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated response/ development - Development that does not relate both to the response given and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the response given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(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 A02 descriptors. A02 Arguments for the statement: • Prophet Muhammad taught that all mankind is from Adam and Eve and no-one is superior except in piety or good actions. Living in racial harmony enables Muslims to demonstrate to society that Allah does not judge a person by race • Muslims believe racial harmony is the most important in society since Muhammad's message was for all people. 'O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all' (Surah 7:158). Muslims can teach people of other races about the truth of Islam • Living in racial harmony enables Muslims to experience a diversity of cultures and increase their understanding of how other societies live and work. This enables friendships to develop and unites society. Arguments against the statement: • Situation ethics may suggest that there are more important priorities in society than racial harmony. Some point to life expectancy and the health provision for people as being more important • Some Muslim societies have a majority population from one racial background. As such racial harmony is not an issue so it cannot be assumed to be necessary for a civilised society • Muslims may believe the most important issue in society is whether people accept Allah. If everyone believed in Allah, the issues would disappear. Candidates who do not consider ethical arguments (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	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.
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