



# **GCSE AQA Religious Studies A Practice Papers**

## **Component 1: Judaism**

Update v1.2, October 2025

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# Teacher's Introduction

This resource consists of a selection of practice exam-style questions and mark schemes for AQA Specification A.

The sample questions are numbered as per the specimen materials published by AQA, so that all three examples from within a religion have the same number. This is to help avoid confusion between these materials and a live paper numbered as the relevant section. This resource is focused on Judaism which is question 6 on a full paper 1, and so all three examples are numbered '6'.

## Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

There are similar resources available for other religions, making it possible to mix and match an entire exemplar paper 1 from these resources. Note that the cover of each paper assumes it is being sat as a standalone 50-minute exam on one religion, whereas the real exam is a 1 hour 45 minute exam on two religions.

The mark scheme content given is indicative, meaning that it includes a selection of material likely to appear across a range of candidate responses, but does not seek to exhaustively list all possible material.

July 2017

### Update v1.1, January 2020

SPaG marking has been removed from Question 10 Practices and applied to Question 5 Beliefs (12 mark questions) in all papers. SPaG marking has also been corrected to 3 marks.

### Update v1.2, October 2025

As per the exam board assessment updates, the following changes have been made to these papers:

- “contrasting” replaced with “different” in the 4 mark question
- 5-mark question replaced with a 6-mark question
- 2-mark question reduced to a 1-mark question

## Free Updates!

Register your email address to receive any future free updates\* made to this resource or other Religious Studies resources your school has purchased, and details of any promotions for your subject.

\* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

Go to [zzed.uk/freeupdates](https://zzed.uk/freeupdates)

## Schemes of Assessment

### Assessment Objectives

Assessment Objective 1 has three elements, which are assessed with different styles of question.

- 1(1) is assessed via questions 06.1, 06.2, 06.4, 06.6 and 06.7. Responses to these questions should demonstrate:
  - ✓ knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including practices and sources of authority
- 1(2) is assessed via questions 06.3 and 06.8. Responses to these questions should demonstrate:
  - ✓ knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and society
- 1(3) is assessed via question 06.9. Responses to these questions should demonstrate:
  - ✓ knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including differences and similarities between and within religions

Assessment Objective 2 is always assessed via the 12-mark questions, 06.5 and 06.10. The objective is to:

- ✓ analyse and evaluate aspects of religion, including their significance and influence

### Allocation of Marks

Questions assessing Assessment Objective 1(1) are awarded one mark for each correct point, up to the maximum marks available for the question.

Questions assessing Assessment Objective 1(2) and 1(3) are either 4- or 6-mark questions which ask for two separate points to be made. One mark is given for the point itself, and a second for appropriate development of that point. In the 6-mark question, the final two marks available are awarded for the reference and application to teachings required by the question. One mark is awarded for naming a relevant source of authority, and one mark for the application. Each mark can be awarded individually, and if the source is both named and applied, then two marks should be awarded.

Questions assessing Assessment Objective 2 are 12-mark questions. Marks are allocated according to the following levels of response:

• One point of view stated, with limited justification	1–3 marks	(12 marks) Plus a possible 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)
• Different arguments for and against, with justification OR Several linked and justified arguments supporting one position • This is the highest level which can be reached if only one point of view is considered or there is no mention of religion	4–6 marks	
• Good arguments on both sides of the issue, well justified and linked together • Clear reference to religion	7–9 marks	
• Very well argued. Arguments on both sides are linked together and fully justified, leading to a reasoned conclusion • Clear and appropriate reference to religion applied to the question	10–12 marks	

### Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Marks are awarded for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. These marks are awarded based on the candidates' responses to the 12-mark questions only.

• No response is given OR the response contains no material relevant to the question asked OR the spelling, punctuation and grammar demonstrated in the response do not meet threshold performance	0 marks	-
• Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate • Any errors in grammar do not hinder the overall communication of meaning • A limited range of appropriate specialist terms is used	1 mark	Threshold
• Spelling and punctuation are mainly accurate • The rules of grammar are used to give an overall clarity of meaning	2 marks	Intermediate
• Spelling and punctuation are consistently accurate • The rules of grammar are used effectively to control and communicate meaning • A wide range of specialist terms is used	3 marks	High

# Religious Studies

## Component 1: Judaism

### Practice Paper 1

<b>Name</b>	
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Question	Mark
06.1	
06.2	
06.3	
06.4	
06.5	
06.6	
06.7	
06.8	
06.9	
06.10	
Total	
SpaG	

**Time allowed**

50 minutes

**Instructions**

Answer **all** of the questions.

**Information**

The total marks available for each religion is **51**. The number of marks available for each question is shown in brackets.

Marks are available in the 12-mark question of the Beliefs section for using good spelling, punctuation and grammar.

## Question 6: Judaism

### Beliefs

- 06.1 Which **one** of the following describes a situation when Shabbat laws are broken?
- A) Pikuach Nefesh      B) Shekinah      C) Covenant
- 06.2 Give **one** Jewish belief about the nature of God.
- 06.3 Explain the ways the **two** kinds of mitzvot might influence individual behaviour.
- 06.4 Explain **two** views about the significance of the Messiah. Refer to scripture or sacred writings in your answer.
- 06.5 'Everyone will be judged when they die.' Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:
- Refer to Jewish teaching
  - Give developed arguments to support this statement
  - Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
  - Reach a justified conclusion

### Practices

- 06.6 Which **one** of the following is a Jewish place of worship?
- A) Church      B) Gurdwara      C) Synagogue
- 06.7 Give **one** feature of a synagogue.
- 06.8 Explain **two** different views about the significance of Shabbat.
- 06.9 Explain **two** different Jewish views about the use of the Talmud. Refer to Jewish teaching in your answer.
- 06.10 'Milk and meat must always be kept separate.' Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:
- Refer to Jewish teaching
  - Give developed arguments to support this statement
  - Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
  - Reach a justified conclusion

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## Question 6: Judaism

### Beliefs

06.1 Which **one** of the following describes a situation when Shabbat laws

☐ A) Pikuach Nefesh

☐ B) Shekinah

☐ C) Covenant

06.2 Give **one** Jewish belief about the nature of God.

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06.3 Explain the way the two kinds of mitzvot might influence individuals.

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06.4 Explain **two** views about the importance of the Messiah.

Refer to scripture or sacred writings in your answer.

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## 06.5 'Everyone will be judged when they die.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- Refer to Jewish teaching
- Give developed arguments to support this statement
- Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
- Reach a justified conclusion

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06.6 Which **one** of the following is a Jewish place of worship?

☐ A) Church

☐ B) Gurdwara

☐ C) Synagogue

06.7 Give **one** feature of a synagogue.

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06.8 Explain **two** different views about the significance of Shabbat.

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06.9 Explain **two** different Jewish views about the use of the Talmud.  
Refer to Jewish teaching in your answer.

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**06.10** 'Milk and meat must always be kept separate.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- Refer to Jewish teaching
- Give developed arguments to support this statement
- Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
- Reach a justified conclusion

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## **Preview of Questions Ends Here**

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# Mark Scheme

## Question 6: Judaism

### Beliefs

06.1 Which one of the following is not dealt with in the Ten Commandments?

A) Murder

B) Blasphemy

C) Adultery

Correct response: D) Charity

06.2 Give one example of a situation where the principle of Pikuach Nefesh overrides religious concerns.

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be accepted:

- Shabbat rules
- Breaking fasts
- Eating non-kosher food

06.3 Explain two ways in which the Covenant with Abraham influences Judaism.

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be accepted:

- The Covenant with Abraham is the covenant which commenced the Jewish people; Brit Milah is performed today on most male babies born to Jewish parents.
- The Covenant promised to give Abraham's descendants a land of their own. The land of Israel is important to many Jews as this is the land which was promised to them.
- The idea of the Jews as a Chosen people and/or a light unto the nations is derived from the idea that God chose Abraham and his descendants to make a covenant with him.

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- 06.4 Explain the moral principles of justice and healing the world. Refer to scripture or sacred writings in your answer.

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be

- Healing the world (Tikkun Olam) describes many different ways to make the world a better place; it includes donating time and money to charity and justice
- As the Chosen People of God, Jews believe they are held to a higher standard than other people; justice is, therefore, not an abstract ideal but a practical reality which all Jews should act upon
- Many instructions about justice in the legal sense are given in the Torah (Deuteronomy 16:20; NB 'tzedek' can be translated in different ways)



Tikkun Olam emerges as a concept in the Talmud

- 06.5 'All mitzvot are equally important.'  
Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- Refer to Jewish teaching
- Give developed arguments to support this statement
- Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
- Reach a justified conclusion

Responses may include some of the following evidence and arguments which will be credited:

**Arguments in support of the question:**

- All the mitzvot are given by God for all Jews and so they are all of equal value to God's will for the Chosen People
- The mitzvot are intended to make sure every part of life is covered by God's law so even if some seem trivial in isolation they need to be understood as part of a whole made up of many equal parts
- Human beings cannot know the value individual mitzvot have; therefore seemingly minor ones should be considered as important as the major ones

**Arguments in support of other views:**

- Some of the mitzvot can be set aside in pursuit of Pikuach Nefesh (saving a life) which is a higher law; that suggests that while some mitzvot are of less importance than others are of more importance
- Some of the mitzvot, especially some of the specific prohibitions, no longer fulfil their original purpose; things that were once hard work for ancient people and it is more laborious for modern people to do without them. For example, keeping to the spirit of Shabbat requires setting aside those mitzvot which cannot be followed. There are some mitzvot, relating to worship and sacrifice in the Temple, which cannot follow as the Temple no longer exists; since this does not mean no worship or to cut Jews off from their religion it could be said that these commandments are no longer relevant.

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06.6 Which one of the following is not kosher?

A) Lobster

B) Salmon

C) Chicken

Correct response: A) Lobster

06.7 Give one reasons why Shabbat is important

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be accepted. It fulfils a mitzvah

- it allows for a rest from worldly concerns
- it is a time to focus on the spiritual; it commemorates the creation of the world
- it reminds Jews that they were freed from slavery

06.8 Explain two things that happen during a Brit Milah ceremony.

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be accepted.

- The baby is placed on a chair designated as the Chair of Elijah during a time when the prayers of the Prophet Elijah during a time when circumcision was rewarded his zeal in keeping the Covenant by decreeing that every future circumcision.
- The mother brings the child and hands him to a couple who are the messengers; they carry him to the mohel and return him afterwards.
- The mohel blesses the child in the name of God and reminds him of the Covenant and the requirement for circumcision and every child is being brought into the Covenant

06.9 Explain two different customs Jews carry out at Pesach.

Refer to Jewish teaching in your answer.

Responses may include the following, but any relevant point will be accepted.

- Pesach is an important festival for most Jews, and there is a custom observed by Orthodox and Reform communities; most will abstain from eating chametz (leavened bread) for seven days. They will go to synagogue and have the seder meal
- The seder meal is the central event of Pesach; during it food is eaten which commemorates the events of the exodus from Egypt and the asking of ritual questions about the food which results in the telling of the story of the exodus
- Before the festival begins all traces of leaven must be removed from the house. The process is called b'iyur chametz. In some families finding and removing chametz is turned into a game for the children.

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06.10 'All Jews should study the Tenakh.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- Refer to Jewish teaching
- Give developed arguments to support this statement
- Give developed arguments to support a different point of view
- Reach a justified conclusion

Responses may include some of the following evidence and arguments that will be credited:

**Arguments in support of the statement:**

- The Tenakh is the most important Jewish text, containing the commandments revealed by God, as well as the history of the Jewish people. To practise their religion properly a Jew should be familiar with the Tenakh. Discussion and active engagement are important within Judaism. Reflecting on the scriptures religious practice would only be enhanced.
- Study of the Torah is described in Rabbinic writings as a more important one than any other.

**Arguments in support of other views:**

- The Torah is read during worship in the synagogue so there is no need to study it separately. Rabbis carry out in-depth study so that they can teach others who do not have the time, ability or inclination to do so.
- Among Orthodox Jews this kind of study is a matter for men. For women it is not important for them it does not apply to everyone.
- Judaism can be understood as a religion with practice as its focus. Learning according to the mitzvot and these can be learned in other ways where they originate for oneself.

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## **Preview of Answers Ends Here**

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