



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES A 8062/13

Paper 1 Christianity

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Mark Schemes for GCSE Religious Studies

This paper requires expert markers who have wide knowledge and understanding of the particular subject content of the Specification. With the exception of the multiple-choice question, many of the questions asked have many different credible answers and students are able to bring to their answers their own knowledge, understanding and background. They will offer details, arguments and evidence which the examiner, with the help of the mark scheme, will need to judge as credible or not. It is therefore important that the examiner has a good understanding of the principles and spirit of the mark scheme in order to be fair and consistent when marking students' answers. The Content included is designed to be as helpful as possible but in many cases is not exhaustive. So Content sections are introduced by the sentence:

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

this is to remind examiners that there may well be additional correct answers which, with their expertise, they will be able to allow. With all questions if an examiner has any doubt about answers being creditworthy they should consult their team leader.

Structure

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the question; Each question is printed in full before its target and mark scheme. It is always important that examiners remind themselves of the exact question being asked. In particular, they will need to do this in instances where the answer appears to be 'straying' from the question set or perhaps offers a valid alternative not included in the mark scheme
- target; The target provides the specific assessment objective which the question is testing. It reminds examiners of the skills the question is designed to test, eg knowledge and understanding, evaluation
- the total marks available for the question and if Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is assessed
- the typical answer(s) or content which are expected
- generic instructions related to the question target of how to award marks (ie levels of response grid).

Themes papers guidance (Specification A and Short Course)

In questions where students may choose religions from which to illustrate their answer, there may be some general Content, ie credible comments which students will make which could be applied to any religion or perhaps to a secular viewpoint as well. Where these are appropriate they are usually given first. The mark scheme will also include, under separate headings, Content sections for each of the six religions allowed within the Specifications.

General Guidance

.../. means that these are acceptable alternative answers in the mark scheme, eg Guru Har Krishan / Guru Tegh Bahadur / Guru Gobind Singh.

Answers may include specialist terms, in Hebrew or Arabic for example. If this is the case, the mark scheme will usually indicate this by providing in brackets the English as well, eg 'Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)'. In such questions, answers will be credited whether provided in the original language or in English.

Some mark schemes use bullet points to separate content. Each bullet point refers to a different possible 'belief' or 'teaching' or 'way', depending on the question. Obliques (.../...) used within the bullet point indicate different ways in which the point may be expressed and points which may be made to give the further detail or development needed for the second mark.

Where a student has crossed out a complete answer, it should be marked if it remains legible, unless an alternative is provided in which case only the alternative should be marked. When part of an answer is crossed out, then only what remains should be considered.

In questions where credit can be given to the development of a point, those developments can take the form of:

- example or evidence
- reference to different views
- detailed information.

1-mark multiple-choice questions

Such questions have four alternatives and the one correct answer will be given together with the correct letter, eg 'Answer: D Trinity'.

2-mark short-answer questions

The principle here is provided in the mark scheme: 'One mark for each of two correct points.' Students may give **more than** the two answers required by the question. In such instances:

- **award for the first two answers only, wherever they appear**
- if a student gives more than one answer on the first line and another answer/other answers on the second line, the 'first two answers' will be the **first two** on the first line and **only these two** should be considered for marks. Other answers must be ignored
- if on the first line the first two answers given are correct, award two marks, regardless of what is written elsewhere in the answer
- if the first two answers can only be awarded one mark yet there is a third answer that is correct, this correct third answer must be ignored and no mark given for it
- however, if the student gives some **elaboration after the first answer**, which is clearly developing their first answer, (which they are not required to do), do not consider this elaboration to be their second answer (unless the elaboration happens to contain a second correct answer to the question asked), regardless of whether there are other answers provided. In this case, the second answer also, if correct, may be credited for the second mark.

4 and 5-mark answer questions

Examiners should take care to note the target of the question. Clear information is provided for these types of question on how to award marking points. Examiners should carefully read the additional instructions provided for each type of question (eg for influence questions the final sentence in the general guidance box reminds the examiner that the second mark (detailed explanation) awarded in each case must show clear 'influence').

12-mark answer questions

The 12-mark questions test Evaluation skills (AO2). The mark scheme for these answers is based on Levels of Response marking in which the examiner is required to make a judgement on the completed answer taken as a whole.

Level of response marking instructions

In GCSE Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, level of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Level of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Level of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. If examiners have any doubt about what level to award a response, they should consult their team leader.

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before examiners apply the mark scheme to a student's answer they should read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. They should then apply the mark scheme. It may be necessary to read the answer more than once to be sure of assigning the correct Level.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in 12-mark questions.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

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

Christianity: Beliefs

0 1 . 1 Which one of the following events refers to the death of Jesus?

[1 mark]

- A** Ascension
- B** Crucifixion
- C** Incarnation
- D** Resurrection

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

Answer: **B** Crucifixion

0 1 . 2 Give two Christian beliefs about hell.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Some Christians believe that there is hell / hell is a place of eternal separation from God / the opposite of heaven / the soul lives on in hell after death / that judgement from God decides your afterlife in hell / God sends sinners to hell / which can be depicted as a place of sulphur or fire / the place of the devil / sinners receive eternal suffering / eternal damnation where those who persist in their rejection of God will suffer forever in hell / some Christians do not believe hell exists, etc.

0 1 . 3 Explain two ways in which the Holy Spirit might influence Christians today. [4 marks]

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies.

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a 'detailed explanation' the 'influence' of the way must be included.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is the power of God remaining at work in the world / which influences Christians to believe that God is immanent through the Holy Spirit and able to enact divine events such as miracles today.
- Christians believe that the Holy Spirit is part of the oneness of God, and that it can provide them with guidance / this means that Christians are influenced to seek the Holy Spirit's wisdom when making important decisions in their lives / or considering questions of right and wrong / gives comfort through times of adversity.
- Christians believe that God sent down the Holy Spirit to the disciples at Pentecost as tongues of fire, empowering the Church to continue Jesus' ministry / this would influence Christians to respect the Church's leadership on religious matters / might influence some Christians to see the work of the Holy Spirit carried out through priests or church leaders, for example through sacramental worship / or present in Church meetings
- Some Christians believe the Holy Spirit produces the 'fruit of the Spirit' in Christians (Galatians 5:22-23) / so Christians are influenced to see qualities such as love, joy, and kindness as gifts from God.
- Many Christians believe that the Holy Spirit helps them understand and apply the teachings of the Bible / which will influence them to seek this guidance when reading or studying biblical texts / so that the meaning of the scripture can be illuminated and applied to their lives.
- Some Christians believe that the Holy Spirit empowers forms of Christian worship and preaching / and will be influenced to call on the Holy Spirit to speak in tongues / or perform healing on others.
- Other Christians believe that salvation occurs through the power of the Holy Spirit / and will therefore be influenced to show as much unconditional love to others / regardless of if others deserve that love (Matthew 5:43-48) due to the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation, etc.

0 1 . 4 Explain two beliefs about the role of Christ in salvation for Christians.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

First belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Second belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- The death of Jesus was central to God's plan of salvation / the disobedience of Adam and Eve led to all their descendants being tainted with original sin / God was able to deal with the barrier caused by sin through the incarnation of Jesus / and subsequently the death of Jesus / and subsequently the resurrection of Jesus.
- Christians see Jesus' death as an atonement / as on the cross Jesus bore the consequences of human sin / suffered pain as the price for salvation.
- Through Jesus, God is able to reconcile humanity to God / as Jesus, as God the Son, is God-incarnate / who lived and died among humankind so that Christians are able to relate to God and achieve salvation.
- Jesus is often referred to as the "Lamb of God" / who takes away the sins of the world / Christians believe that Jesus' death on the cross is seen as the ultimate sacrifice / that reconciles humanity with God / and therefore Jesus makes it possible for people to be forgiven / and to have a restored relationship with God.
- Central to the Christian understanding of salvation is the promise of eternal life / Christians trust that through faith in Jesus Christ, they will have eternal life with God / in heaven / after their earthly life ends.
- Some Christians believe that the role of Christ is to guide Christians towards the means of salvation / where Christ, through his teachings, can outline how salvation can come through adherence to God's law / and judge those who are deemed worthy of salvation / or by doing good deeds and loving your neighbour as yourself / or by having faith in Christ as the Incarnation of God and the way to the Father, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)

‘Father, if it is your will, take this cup away from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours, be done.’
(Luke 22:42)

‘Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”’ (John 14:6)

‘For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people.’ (1 Timothy 2:5-6)

‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ (Matthew 25:40)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

0 1 . 5 ‘The problem of evil and suffering means that God cannot be loving.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Christian teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

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

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- The argument from moral evil which suggests that a loving God would not allow moral evil (the evil that humans do to each other) to exist / especially as God is believed to be all-powerful so is able to prevent this type of evil / or could have created humans without the capacity to commit evil to one another.
- The argument from natural evil, that evil is not caused by humans but part of the created world / which suggests that the existence of natural disasters, diseases, or other forms of suffering not caused by human action means God cannot be loving / as a loving God would prevent these from occurring or intervene to stop them / because a loving God would not create a world where such things could occur.
- Some might argue that evil and suffering are God's judgement on the world or on humans / due to the choices made by humans against God's will / and this punishment is an act of God's power, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- The argument from free will / which suggests that the existence of evil and suffering is a necessary aspect of God's loving gift to humankind of free-will / as if humans are truly free to make their own choices then some will inevitably choose to do evil / which therefore shows that the loving creation of free will for humans comes with the consequence of evil and suffering being possible.
- Some Christians will believe that the existence of evil and suffering is a mystery / which cannot be fully understood as humans do not have the knowledge of God / and that although the existence of evil and suffering may be difficult for humans to reconcile with God being loving it does not necessarily mean that both cannot be concurrently true, as with God all things are possible.
- Some Christians may refer to the account of Adam and Eve from the Book of Genesis / where evil and suffering enter into creation due to the fall of Adam / after Adam and Eve disobeyed God's commandments to not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil / making evil and

suffering due to human sin / and due to the temptations of the Devil / and not due to a lack of God being loving.

- Some Christians may refer to the concept of evil and suffering being necessary for spiritual development / also referred to as 'soul-making' / as humans need to experience evil and suffering in order to learn and develop / as such growth in goodness is not possible in a perfect world without trials and tribulation, etc.

Christianity: Practices

0 2 . 1

Which one of the following describes the Christian practice of spreading Christian beliefs?

[1 mark]

- A Evangelism**
- B Persecution**
- C Reconciliation**
- D Sacrament**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

Answer: **A Evangelism**

0 2 . 2

Give two purposes of baptism.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Baptism is a form of initiation into the Christian church / it replicates Jesus' own baptism / it cleanses from original sin / it allows a Christian to receive other sacraments / it allows a Christian to put their former life behind them / it is required for eternal life / it unites the Christian with Christ as a child of God / it allows the person to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit / it symbolises Christian belief in the Trinity / it shows dedication to Christianity / it is in line with the Great Commission / it allows for a child to be named in front of God and others / it allows godparents to feel part of a child's Christian upbringing / it maintains a Christian family's tradition to have their children baptised / it allows an adult to show their independence of faith / it confirms someone's acceptance of the Christian faith / some Christians believe it is necessary to achieve eternal life, etc.

0 2 . 3 Explain two contrasting ways in which Christians practise private worship. [4 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

First contrasting way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Contrast may mean opposing or mean different reasons.

If similar ways are given, only **one** of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Some Christians, such as Roman Catholics and some Anglicans, might recite the Rosary in private / which is a string of beads with a crucifix attached / to encourage them to focus on different aspects of Jesus' life and passion / and to have a set routine for certain prayers to be recited quietly.
- Some Christians might start and end each day with private prayer / for example by starting each morning with Morning Prayer / ending each evening with Evening Prayer / or saying privately the rite of Compline or Night Prayer before they go to bed.
- Other Christians might use meditation / focusing on a set stimulus as a starting point to their private meditative prayer / such as meditating by focusing on a lighted candle / and how this represents their belief that Jesus is the light of the world.
- Other Christians might worship God privately through Bible study / and reading stories from the Bible / as a focus to their silent worship of God / as worshipping alone like this allows Christians to feel close to God as an individual.
- Christians might spend a short time sitting quietly in a church / or a silent private space / contemplating Jesus' life and spending time silently praying to God / outside of the set structures of liturgical public worship / so that they can be alone with God and their thoughts, etc.

0 2 . 4 Explain two reasons why Christians might go on pilgrimage.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Pilgrimage allows Christians to undergo a period of spiritual renewal and to deepen their faith / as visiting holy sites that are linked with the lives of saints (such as Lourdes) can provide spiritual experiences for Christians.
- Pilgrimage could be undertaken alone to provide a space for personal reflection / or to discern guidance from God / such as a pilgrimage to Iona.
- Going on pilgrimage to Lourdes could be in order to pray for healing for a Christian / and spiritual healing for those who care for them.
- Pilgrimage allows Christians to connect with certain historical events from their faith / and to commemorate important milestones from Christianity.
- Pilgrimage might encourage Christians to seek reconciliation and forgiveness / as it provides a chance for Christians to seek forgiveness and repent of their sins / and to seek spiritual renewal and atonement.
- Pilgrimage could be undertaken as a group of Christians / who can share a sense of community and faith among fellow pilgrims sharing a common cause.
- Pilgrimage could be embarked upon by someone as a way to assist another Christian to go on pilgrimage / in order to help them travel to the place of pilgrimage and accompany them on the pilgrimage / for example if they need physical assistance or companionship in order to go on pilgrimage.

N.B. Credit reference to other recognised places of pilgrimage for Christians, such as to the Holy Land, Rome / the Vatican, the Camino de Santiago, the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

‘Then he said to them all: ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’ (Luke 9:23)

‘Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.’ (Psalm 84:5-7)

‘In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.’ (Luke 14:33)

‘Three times a year all your men must appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose.’ (Deuteronomy 16:16)

‘And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.’ (Luke 14:27)

‘But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.’ (Galatians 4:4-5)

‘Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.’ (Luke 2:11)

‘Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.’ (Matthew 7:13-14)

‘Pilgrimage is a symbol of life, it makes us think of life as walking, as a path. If a person does not walk, but instead stays still, this is not useful; it accomplishes nothing. Think of water: when water is not in the river, it does not course, but instead it remains still and stagnates.’ (Pope Francis, 6 June 2015)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

0 2 . 5 ‘Helping in the local community is the most important role of the Church.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Christian teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- Helping in the local community follows Jesus’ example / as Jesus spent much of his ministry helping people who were marginalised, sick, or in need / Christians believe that following Jesus means following his example and caring for those who are suffering / for example by volunteering for local charities, food banks, etc
- This also fulfils the Great Commandment / as Jesus said that the greatest commandment was to love God and love your neighbour as yourself / and helping in the local community is a practical way to show love and care for one’s neighbours.
- Acts of helping within local community work show that Christians are ‘salt and light’ / as Christians are called to be salt and light in the world, bringing healing, hope, and a positive influence to their communities / and helping in the community can be a way to demonstrate the positive impact of Christian values.

- Acts of philanthropy in the local community help with evangelism for Christians / and help Christians be a witness of the impact of their faith in Jesus / as helping in the community can also be a way to share the love of Christ / as when Christians serve their communities with kindness and compassion, it can be a powerful witness to the gospel.
- Local community engagement also helps build relationships between the church and the local community / as helping in the community can provide opportunities to build relationships with people from different backgrounds / and demonstrate the love of Christ in practical ways.
- Working as a volunteer in one's local community helps Christians to address social issues / as Christians believe in the value of human life and the importance of addressing issues like poverty, homelessness, and injustice / and helping in the community can be a way to address these issues and work towards a more just and compassionate society, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- The most important role of the Church is to provide opportunities for Christians to worship God / to come together as a community / through prayer, singing, and hearing the word of God preached / and is an important way for Christians to have their faith nurtured / and to be part of a supportive community.
- Worshipping at church provides a community of like-minded believers / who can support each other, pray for one another, and encourage each other in their faith.
- The role of the church should be to combat societal challenges / such as discrimination and injustice through political engagement.
- The role of the church should focus on worldwide development not on the local community / as the need of communities in other countries may be greater.
- Evangelism through spreading the word of the gospel / sharing one's faith could be seen as more important acts than helping in the local community / as this follows the Great Commission to evangelise.
- The role of the church as a place of community allows Christians to demonstrate the importance of faith for a Christian / as being part of a church community can provide accountability for their spiritual growth / and helps to ensure that one is living in a way that is in line with Christian teaching / as these are regularly explained by church leaders as part of worship.
- Christians also attend church and worship God in order to receive teaching about their faith / and it can provide opportunities for learning and growth through Bible study, small groups, and discipleship programmes.
- Some Christians believe that there is no single role that is the most important for the Church to have / that the Church should fulfil both sacramental and secular community roles as part of its discipleship and mission / in the same way that Jesus' own ministry featured different roles.
- Some Christians focus on Holy Communion as the most important role of the church / which is a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice and a symbol of the unity of the body of Christ.
- All roles which the Church takes on are seen to be of equal importance as being part of whole witness, etc.