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 Assessment Writer.

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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk
## Examination Levels of Response

### Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>AS Descriptor AO1</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>AS Descriptor AO2</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples.</td>
<td>28-30</td>
<td>A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s).</td>
<td>24-27</td>
<td>A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).</td>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.</td>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.</td>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nothing of relevance.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 1 How the synoptic gospels came into being

Examine how the theory of the priority of Mark explains the relationship between the synoptic gospels.

Synoptic problem: shared material but with differences. Mark is the shortest gospel and all but 31 verses are also in Matthew and/or Luke. Mark may be a source for both or draw on both, but evidence suggests the former.

Allow a variety of approaches, both traditional and contemporary.

Marcan Priority suggests Mark was written first, and Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source. Clement of Alexandria claims Mark's gospel is based on the testimony of Peter, which would make it earlier than Matthew or Luke. Students may refer to the two-source hypothesis (which posits Q) and/or the Farrer Theory (which does not). Marcan priority explains the following aspects of the relationship between the synoptic gospels:

- Mark's style is simple, suggesting Matthew and Luke improved his material.
- Matthew and Luke both contain material not found in Mark suggesting they also used other sources, but both contain much of Mark's material.
- Mark uses immediate language and the present tense suggesting a dependence on oral tradition: Matthew and Luke have more literary styles.
- Mark has no infancy narrative or Lord’s Prayer, suggesting the others added these from other sources. It is hard to explain why Mark might omit them.
- Material found only in Mark does not contribute to Matthew or Luke's purposes so it is easy to see why they omitted it. It is harder to explain why Mark should omit so much of Matthew and Luke’s material if he used them as sources.
- Mark’s extra details in narratives suggests eyewitness account but have little theological purpose, eg stilling of the storm, naming of minor characters.
- ‘Hard Readings’: Mark sometimes portrays Jesus in a negative way (eg two attempts to heal the blind man) and this is smoothed out by Matthew and Luke. Marcan priority is a better explanation for this than Marcan posteriority.
- The order of the pericopae suggests Mark was written first and that Matthew and Luke rearranged them in places.
- ‘Editorial fatigue’: Mark refers to Herod as ‘King’. Matthew starts out calling him ‘Tetrarch’ (14:1) but then reverts to ‘King’ later in the narrative (14:9).

Students do not have to cover all of these to access top levels.

[30 marks] AO1
‘The priority of Mark does not solve the synoptic problem.’

Assess this view.

In support

The synoptic problem is the focus of debate to which the theory of Marcan priority is one response. Other responses offer equally satisfactory responses.

Some scholars find it necessary to invent Q in order for Marcan priority to hold up. Even though Marcan priority explains most aspects of the synoptic problem, it does not account for all the differences between the gospels.

The Griesbach (two-gospel) hypothesis has more external evidence to support it. The traditional order suggests that Mathew was written first (Augustinian hypothesis).

Other views

The synoptic problem is a modern idea created by scholars, so does not need ‘solving’.

Both the Farrer and two-source hypotheses are based on evidence from the gospel texts themselves, so Marcan priority does not depend on unreliable external evidence. The Farrar hypothesis explains most aspects of the synoptic problem in the simplest way – Ockham’s razor.

The combination of Mark’s style and the tradition that Mark’s gospel is based on Peter’s testimony support the idea of Marcan priority over other explanations.

[15 marks] AO2
Question 2  Aspects of Jesus' teaching and action, parables and healings

With particular reference to the Parable of the Sower, examine the role and purpose of parables.

Role
Narrative devices which convey teaching (tale of a sower and what happens to the seed).
Show Jesus as an inspired teacher (well-structured story).
Shows Jesus as having insight (explanation of parable).
Provide social and historical context for teaching (sets teaching in 1st C farming context).
Accessible means of explaining the Kingdom of God (story rather than discourse).
They show Jesus developing the Jewish tradition of fables in midrash.

Purpose
Teaching about the Kingdom of God:
• the nature of the King (spreads the seed freely)
• how to enter (allows faith to grow slowly without being affected by wrong teaching)
• who enters (anyone whose life acts as 'good soil' for the teaching).
To make difficult theology accessible to uneducated people (agricultural imagery).
To challenge people who thought being a Jew was sufficient (the soil is what matters).
To provide a memorable form of teaching (simple narrative).
To draw people into thinking about faith (He who has ears…).
To exclude those who will not engage (Though seeing, they do not see…).

Maximum Level 5 for discussion about role and purpose of parables without clear reference to the Parable of the Sower.

Maximum Level 5 if only one of role or purpose is addressed.

[30 marks]  AO1
Assess the view that most people today cannot fully understand parables.

There may be some consideration of what constitutes ‘fully understand’.

In support

Jesus’ disciples had to ask him to explain, and his reply suggests that only those specially chosen by him would fully understand. Jesus’ parables are set in a time and context that is not accessible to most readers today, so scholars are needed to help interpret them. Scholars have many different views, so it is impossible for most people to fully understand. The ideas behind a parable (Kingdom of God etc) are too complicated for anyone to fully understand.

Other views

The whole point of parables was to make the teaching accessible to uneducated ordinary people of Jesus’ time, and most people now are much more educated. Ordinary people can read the work of scholars and then they can understand fully. The Holy Spirit gives people the means to full understanding. There is no such thing as a ‘full’ understanding of anything to do with God, but most people are just as capable of moving towards understanding as scholars are.

[15 marks]  AO2
Question 3  
The arrest, trial and death of Jesus

05 Examine differences between the accounts of Matthew and Luke which describe the arrest, trials and death of Jesus.

Arrest

Matthew uses triads a lot, eg Sermon on the Mount. In Luke, Jesus has to wake the disciples once, in Matthew three times.


There are elements which are intended to teach Christians in Matthew’s audience. In Luke, Jesus heals the slave’s ear, in Matthew he also says ‘all who take the sword will perish by the sword.’

Matthew often shows Jesus as fulfilling prophecy and as Messiah. In Luke there is no reference to legions of angels or the fulfilment of scriptures as there are in Matthew.

Trials

Matthew has trial before Caiaphas during the night, Luke’s trial is before assembly of the elders and in the morning.

Matthew is writing for ex-Jews, so his account of the trial focuses on blasphemy, Luke’s is less explicit.

Luke focuses on Jesus’ innocence. In Matthew’s account, Jesus is tormented after his trial, in Luke’s account it is before.

The accounts reflect the evangelists’ separate agendas. Matthew’s trial before Pilate focuses on Jesus’ messianic claim, Luke’s on political charges.

Matthew includes supernatural elements. He includes Pilate’s wife’s dream.

Luke has trial before Herod – even Herod can find no guilt.

Luke’s focus on Jesus as innocent: in Matthew, Pilate is convinced of Jesus’ innocence by his wife, but in Luke, he finds him not guilty himself.

Matthew’s account reflects his ex-Jewish readers, so includes Pilate’s handwashing and Jewish blood-guilt.

Matthew’s agenda includes the fulfilment of prophecy. In Matthew, the soldiers mock Jesus, fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah 50:6.
Crucifixion

Luke is writing for Christians facing persecution. Both refer to Simon of Cyrene, but only Luke has the ‘Daughters of Jerusalem’ speech. Matthew uses ‘Golgotha’ while Luke only refers to the place of the skull – reflects understanding of different readership.

Luke’s Jesus is in control of his fate. In Luke, Jesus forgives his executioners. Luke teaches about the Kingdom and shows Jesus in control. In Luke, Jesus converses with the two criminals and forgives the penitent one. In Matthew, Jesus quotes Psalm 22, reflecting the Jewish agenda. In Luke Jesus’ last words are ‘Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!’ showing his control to the last. Matthew includes supernatural elements. Matthew has an earthquake, a typically Matthean supernatural event. Luke’s focus on Jesus as innocent: Luke has the centurion declaring Jesus innocent. Matthew names the women who were present.

Full credit may be gained for only a selection of points.

Maximum Level 5 if all three of arrest, trial and death are not addressed.

[30 marks] AO1
‘Differences between the synoptic gospel accounts make it impossible to work out why Jesus was crucified.’

How far do you agree?

In support

The different agendas of the gospel writers distort the details which would make clear why Jesus was crucified.
The gospel writers were writing for theological and political, not forensic, purposes.
Inconsistencies in the accounts mean that even the sequence of events and the people involved cannot be clearly identified.

Other views

Because the writers’ agendas are quite clear, we can strip out the biases and look at the common material.
Mark’s gospel is earlier than Luke and Matthew so can provide the basis for deciding why Jesus was crucified.
Scholars can show that, for example, Jesus had committed no crime against the Roman law, but was crucified to appease the Jewish leaders who wanted him dead.
The crucifixion was part of God’s plan, so that was the reason Jesus was crucified.
There is a benefit in having a number of different sources which together add to the perspectives on why Jesus was crucified.

[15 marks]     AO2
Question 4  The resurrection of Jesus

0 7 Examine the similarities between the accounts of the resurrection in the synoptic gospels.

Some students may discuss the authenticity of Mark’s variant endings. They may answer the question with reference to the short, longer or long ending of Mark. Any of these should be credited.

In all three gospels, it is very early on the first day of the week (Matthew and Mark refer to the Sabbath).
In all three gospels, the people who discover the empty tomb are women, and all three include Mary Magdalene and another Mary. (Mark also has Salome and Luke has Joanna and other women).
In all three gospels, the women have a conversation with a supernatural being or beings who explains that Jesus has risen. (Matthew has a full-blown angel, Mark has a young man dressed in a white robe, and Luke has two men in dazzling apparel).
Mark and Matthew have a direction to go to Galilee.
Luke and the long ending of Mark refer to the appearance on the road to Emmaus (Mark in very abbreviated form) and to an appearance at a meal.
Matthew and the long ending of Mark include the Great Commission.

Maximum Level 4 if only listing similarities. [30 marks] AO1

0 8 ‘Christian faith in the resurrection depends on the gospels all telling the same story.’

Assess this claim.

In support

If there are inconsistencies people cannot discern what to believe about the resurrection, so different people will believe different things. This means that they do not share the same faith in the resurrection.
The core of the resurrection story needs to be the same, and the synoptics are similar enough that Christians can and do share faith in the resurrection
The fact that the stories are inconsistent, and that some Christians do not believe in a physical resurrection proves this statement to be true.
The gospels do all tell the same story but from different perspectives, and this is why Christians have faith in the resurrection.

Other views

Christians believe in the resurrection in different ways because the accounts differ, but they all share a faith in the resurrection as a theological event.
The resurrection is a core belief for all Christians (cf the creeds), but the exact details are not, so different stories do not undermine faith.
A range of perspectives on the resurrection authenticates it as a real event. If the stories were all the same, it would suggest the evangelists all depended on a single source.
Christian faith in anything does not depend on a narrative, it is always given by God/ the Holy Spirit.

[15 marks] AO2