

**GCSE  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES A  
8062/13**

Paper 1: Christianity

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**Mark scheme**

June 2020

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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.

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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 credit worthy 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 (i.e. levels of response grid).

### Themes papers guidance (Specification A & 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:

<b>Level</b>	<b>Performance descriptor</b>	<b>Marks awarded</b>
<b>High performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	3
<b>Intermediate performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	2
<b>Threshold performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy</li> <li>• Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall</li> <li>• Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate</li> </ul>	1
<b>No marks awarded</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner writes nothing</li> <li>• The learner's response does not relate to the question</li> <li>• The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning</li> </ul>	0

**0 1** Christianity: Beliefs

**0 1 . 1** Which one of the following is not part of God's nature?

[1 mark]

- A Just
- B Limited
- C Loving
- D Oneness

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

Answer: B: Limited

**0 1 . 2** Give two Christian beliefs about God's creation of the world.

[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.**

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

- God made the world perfect/good.
- God's creation of the world teaches Christians that they have a responsibility for the world.
- God created the world from nothing / although some believe that he created from chaos.
- In the beginning, the earth was dark/void / there was darkness on the face of the deep.
- The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.
- Credit any correct and relevant material eg from the creation stories, eg that what God created was good / light was created first / day separated from night / morning and evening / separation of the waters / creation of dry land / seas / plants / sun & moon / birds & sea creatures / land animals / the Sabbath / details from the story of the creation and fall of humanity, so long as they are relevant to God's creation of the world / creation beliefs appear in other books, eg Psalm 75:3, that God maintains the created world in existence.
- Jesus (in John's Gospel) as the Word existed at the point of creation / he was in the beginning with God.
- All things were made by God/Jesus / in him was light / the light was the life of men, etc.

**0 1 . 3 Explain two ways in which belief in hell influences 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:**

- Many Christians are influenced by the belief that they will be judged when they die (eg as in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Matthew 25:31-46) / and that being sent to hell/eternal torment is a real possibility, so they may decide to follow Jesus' teachings.
- In both Christian literature and artwork, hell has been pictured as a place of punishment / a place of unquenchable fire and torment / so a big influence on Christians here is to make them scared of going there.
- Belief in hell as a place of suffering influences Christians to follow Christian beliefs and teachings so that they will not be sent there.
- Some Christians understand hell as a metaphor for separation from God / which again influences them to follow Jesus' teachings.
- Some see hell as a free choice to deliberately turn away from God / so most do not reject God.
- Some see the idea of hell as so horrible that they reject the idea of it / they are influenced to believe in universalism / that everybody will be saved / because God is a God of love, etc.



**0 1 . 4** Explain two Christian beliefs about the role of Jesus Christ in salvation.

**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:**

- Salvation means to be saved from sin and the consequences of sin.
- Some Christians believe that sin entered the world through the ‘original sin’ of Adam and Eve / when they ignored God’s command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil / the result of disobedience was separation from God, and death (Genesis 2 & 3).
- Christians believe that salvation from sin comes from the life and teachings of Jesus / St Paul explains this in Romans 6:23: ‘The wages of sin is death, but God’s free gift is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord’.
- Jesus was aware that his death was necessary in order to restore the right relationship between humans and God / to make forgiveness and eternal life possible for all people.
- Jesus allowed himself to be crucified by the Romans / even though he was innocent of the charges brought against him by the Romans and the Jews / so his crucifixion was the execution of an innocent man / Jesus was the Son of God, so he had miraculous powers / and could have escaped crucifixion / and some of those near him at the crucifixion urged him to do that (Matthew 27:42 – ‘He saved others, but he cannot save himself! Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him.’).
- After his death in this way, the Gospels record that Jesus rose from the dead / and that God accepted Jesus’s sacrifice as an ‘atonement’ for human sin / the idea of the Atonement therefore means that salvation became available for all humans / because Jesus’ suffering and death restored the right relationship between humans and God / so the author of 1 John says: ‘If anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ. He is the atoning sacrifice for sins’ / humans can return to paradise/live for ever in paradise / by believing in Jesus and following his teachings.
- Peter says (Acts 4:12) that salvation exists through Jesus and no one else: ‘there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.’
- St Paul summarises Jesus’ role in salvation by saying: ‘If you say with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.’ (Romans 10:9-10), etc.

**0 1 . 5** ‘The resurrection of the dead is the most important Christian belief.’

**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.**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
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. <b>References to religion applied to the issue.</b>	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. <b>Clear reference to religion.</b>	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. <b>Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.</b>	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**

**NB** Some candidates might take ‘resurrection of the dead’ to refer only to the resurrection of Jesus, or else to the resurrection of Christians, or they might take it to refer to both. Accept all reasoned arguments based on these understandings. Also, accept any reasonable argument concerning what might be the most important Christian belief other than in resurrection.

- For most Christians, suffering, and death are the worst things they have to deal with / so if they believe that the dead are resurrected, then they no longer have to fear suffering or death.
- Christians fear separation from their families at death / so belief in resurrection to heaven means that they will be reunited with those they love.

- Christians believe that after their resurrection they will live forever in God's kingdom / in a state of perfect happiness.
- Ideas such as these are the central claim of Christianity: that Jesus was God incarnate / crucified, resurrected and ascended / and is the means of salvation from sin, since Jesus' death and resurrection atone for human sin.
- St Paul states clearly that God raised Jesus from the dead / and if he had not done so, then the (human) dead are not raised either / in which case faith is futile, for Christians are still in their sins / and those who have already died will remain dead (1 Corinthians 15:15-19) / so Paul shows that the resurrection of Jesus and of Christians are the most important Christian beliefs: one follows from the other.
- There is so much evidence for the resurrection of Jesus that it must be true / the four Gospels all have an account of the resurrection of Jesus / so the resurrection of Christians must also be true / and must be the most important Christian belief.
- St Paul reached this conclusion at his trial described in Acts 24, where he says that he is on trial for his life because of his belief that the dead will be raised to life, etc.

### **Arguments in support of other views**

- Some might argue that belief in God as Creator is the most important Christian belief / since for resurrection to be important to believers, people have to be created first.
- In the same way, some might argue that the most important belief is that God is good / this is not obvious from all the evil in the world / but if God is not good then there will be probably be no resurrection.
- Equally, some might argue that the most important Christian belief is not just in the resurrection of the dead but in resurrection to judgement / this can be seen in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matthew 25) / which teaches that the dead will be resurrected to God's kingdom or else to eternal fire / so the most important belief must be to follow the teachings of God/Jesus to avoid being sent to hell.
- Some might argue that belief in resurrection of the body is more important than belief in resurrection of the soul / eg because Jesus' resurrection was bodily / or else that resurrection is a metaphor for being with God in some unknown way.
- Some might argue that all Christian beliefs are equally important / and that the incarnation / crucifixion / resurrection / ascension / Pentecost are all equally necessary for Christian belief / belief in human resurrection is just one part of a connected group of beliefs, etc.

**[Plus SPaG 3 marks]**

**0 2** Christianity: Practices

**0 2 . 1** Which one of the following is a name for a ceremony in which adults become members of the Christian Church?

[1 mark]

- A Believer's baptism
- B Infant baptism
- C Reconciliation
- D The Eucharist

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

Answer: A: Believer's baptism

**0 2 . 2** Give two types of Christian prayer.

[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.**

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

- Liturgical / non-liturgical.
- Public / private.
- Prayers of thanksgiving / confession / intercession / formal prayer / informal prayer / prayer which follows ritual formulae / spontaneous prayer / bidding prayers / prayers for specific occasions or people / communal prayer / silent prayer / spoken prayer / sung prayers, etc.

Allow reference to specific prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer / The Jesus Prayer, etc.

**0 2 . 3 Explain two contrasting ways in which pilgrimage is experienced at Lourdes. [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

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

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

- Some go to drink or bathe in the water of the spring in the hope of a miraculous cure / others go to be cleansed from sin / to confess their sins.
- Some bathe/submerge in the water to symbolise baptism / some will take holy water back for their families and loved ones who cannot make the journey.
- Some go to pray at a holy site / others go simply to feel the religious atmosphere.
- Some go to pray the rosary (Bernadette said that she had prayed the rosary) / others hope for a vision of ‘the Immaculate Conception’.
- Some go to Lourdes because of its dedication to Mary the mother of Jesus / others might go because the site is famous among Christians generally.
- Some go because they are Christians / others go from general curiosity about the place.
- Some go just to praise God / others hope for a vision or religious experience.
- Some go in order to experience the different things that Lourdes has to offer as a pilgrimage site / others experience pilgrimage through going to serve others, etc.

Note that the experience of pilgrimage varies greatly, so the contrasts given in the mark scheme are only for illustration, and may be paired with any other suitable contrast such as: those who go to walk the Stations of the Cross / those who light candles for those at home / those who go to get closer to God / to learn about God / to find forgiveness and reconciliation with God / to meditate on Jesus’ life and death / to visit the basilica of the Immaculate Conception in the chapel over the grotto / those who wish to satisfy general interest / to learn more about the history of the site generally / those who go for the sake of the attractions of Lourdes as a tourist site near the Pyrenees, to have an unusual holiday (Lourdes has more hotels per square km than anywhere in France save Paris), etc.

**0 2 . 4** Explain two reasons why evangelism is important for the Christian Church.

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:**

- The mission of the Church is to evangelise / this is clear from Matthew 28:19-20 where, having appeared to the 11 disciples after his death, Jesus commissions them: ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you ...’
- So as a command from Jesus / the mission of the Church is to evangelise – to spread the gospel of Christ by public preaching, teaching and healing, and/or by personal witness testimony.
- Similarly in Matthew 4:19, Jesus told Simon Peter and Andrew to follow him / and then he would make them ‘fish for people’.
- Many Christians therefore feel that it is important to use their skills to spread the good news about Jesus / and this might be done by preaching / teaching / healing / or any other particular skill that they feel called to use.
- For some, this leads them to undertake missionary work / at home or abroad / in order to ‘save’ those who do not know Christ.
- Paul took his evangelical mission to the Gentiles (non-Jews) / so that ‘they may be saved’ (Romans 10:1).
- It is important, therefore, for the mission of the Church, for all people to accept Christ and to be saved, etc.

**0 2 . 5** ‘Christmas is the most important Christian celebration.’

**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.**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
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. <b>References to religion applied to the issue.</b>	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. <b>Clear reference to religion.</b>	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. <b>Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.</b>	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**

- Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, the Saviour and Founder of the Faith / without Jesus’ birth there would be no Christian faith, so Christmas is the most important Christian celebration.
- ‘Christmas’ is ‘Christ Mass’, Mass being the Eucharist/Holy Communion where Christians remember that Christ died for the sins of humanity and was resurrected by God / so Christmas includes the main theme of Easter – resurrection – so it is the most important celebration.
- Christmas celebrates the birth of the Messiah, believed by Christians to be the ‘Prince of Peace’ prophesied by Isaiah, so it celebrates the fulfilment of prophecy / it also celebrates the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, believed by Christians to be prophesied in Micah 5:2.
- Christmas also celebrates the incarnation of God / this has deep meaning for Christians because Jesus was born as a human, by which God understands what it is like to have human needs and human frailties / what it is like to suffer and die.

- Without Christmas there would be no Easter / Jesus had to be born as a human otherwise he could not have been resurrected from death.
- Christmas brings with it many good things / such as the uniting of families and the giving of gifts / help for the poor and homeless / the Christian spirit of charity and kindness, etc.
- The Midnight Mass and the Christmas Day services are especially joyful celebrations / and are attended by many who would not otherwise go to church, etc.

#### **Arguments in support of other views**

- Easter is a more important celebration than any other Christian festival because it focuses on the whole point of the Christian message / the love of God and resurrection after death.
- Holy Week celebrates the anticipation of Easter / it begins with Palm Sunday, which celebrates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem / it continues with Maundy Thursday, where the mood changes to reflect the Last Supper and Jesus' arrest / Good Friday marks the crucifixion and death of Jesus and the seeming hopelessness of his death / Easter Sunday then celebrates the major triumph of the Christian message with the resurrection and all this entails / ie sacrifice to bring about reconciliation between God and humanity / there is a great emphasis on the real human suffering undergone by Jesus and his obedience to God's will / all these celebrations depend on each other / together they show Christians the importance of Easter.
- Easter marks what Christians believe is anticipated in the Book of Jeremiah – the new covenant between God and humanity / so it is the result of something anticipated for many centuries.
- Easter is celebrated by the gift of chocolate eggs, for example / symbolising the gift of new life through Jesus.
- Like Christmas, Easter is also celebrated as a secular festival, since the giving of eggs and other gifts is common among non-Christians.
- Some will argue that neither celebration is more important than the other / Christmas anticipates and is perfected by Easter / Easter is the fulfilment of the promise of Christmas, etc.