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Introduction

These exemplar answers have been chosen from the summer 2018 examination series.

OCR is open to a wide variety of approaches and all answers are considered on their merits. These exemplars, therefore, should not be seen as the only way to answer questions but do illustrate how the mark scheme has been applied.

Please always refer to the specification [http://www OCR.org.uk/Images/242913-specification-accredited-a-level-gce-religious-studies-h573.pdf](http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/242913-specification-accredited-a-level-gce-religious-studies-h573.pdf) for full details of the assessment for this qualification. These exemplar answers should also be read in conjunction with the sample assessment materials and the June 2018 Examiners’ report or Report to Centres available from Interchange [https://interchange.ocr.org.uk/Home.mvc/Index](https://interchange.ocr.org.uk/Home.mvc/Index).

The question paper, mark scheme and any resource booklet(s) will be available on the OCR website from summer 2019. Until then, they are available on OCR Interchange (school exams officers will have a login for this and are able to set up teachers with specific logins – see the following link for further information [http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/support-and-tools/interchange/managing-user-accounts/](http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/support-and-tools/interchange/managing-user-accounts/)).

It is important to note that approaches to question setting and marking will remain consistent. At the same time OCR reviews all its qualifications annually and may make small adjustments to improve the performance of its assessments. We will let you know of any substantive changes.
Exemplar 1

AO1 Level 6, 15 marks  AO2 Level 6, 22 marks  
Total 37 marks

1. ‘For an inclusive Judaism, Brit Ahuvim is not just a desire but a necessity.’ Discuss.

Exemplar Candidate Work

Adler would argue that the marriage ceremony in Judaism must be reviewed and altered in order for a more egalitarian and just marriage to take place. This is what the Brit Ahuvim aims to achieve. An inclusive Judaism involves men and women being on an equal footing with one another and that they accept and respect each other as equals. Adler would argue that Brit Ahuvim is not just a necessity, but that it creates a more harmonious and equal relationship between a husband and wife which could bring them closer together and enable them to respect each other more, despite this ceremony not being a halakhic one. However, feminists would argue that many women have simply taken in traditional marriages for centuries, and to reform the marriage ceremony now is to remove tradition from an old, Abrahamic religion. Overall, it can be argued that Brit Ahuvim is a necessity and will give voice to women’s empowerment in the modern age, not only in society, but also in religion as well. This is necessary in order for the traditional religion to evolve with the changing times, and embed itself within the modern era.

Adler would argue that the Brit Ahuvim is not just a necessity as it involves various changes to the marriage ceremony of tradition, which enable women to have a more active role within marriage. Adler has altered the norm in which the bride is brought to the chuppah, as beforehand, she would have been led to the chuppah by her father, almost like a possession or animal. Furthermore, only the

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women tend to wear a ring which emphasized her being pleased.

However, Rashi added a further stage of the ceremony in order to enable both the man and woman to be regarded as the betrothed to have a bond with each "other" which was not only a legalistic marriage, the women were not just to attain "ge", but to be called "iglu" (shared) if the man decided her own. Adler encouraged the idea of a "shabtai" (partnership) in order for the men and women to be equal in terms. This is important in the ceremony and issue of marriage. Theoretically, vi a necessity an Act a woman needs to be equal to the man in order to be on an equal footing with a man and promote the idea of marriage equal in terms upon which they can base their marriage.

However, this original marriage ceremony has occurred in certain and has been the belief of how many women have played a part in it and been involved in terms of marriage ceremony, the women have been able to lead their happy lives with their husbands, and able to feel as equal to their male counterparts. Thus, the traditional marriage ceremony should not be overlooked. If it is true that some men believe the responsibility of satisfying their wife's sexual needs and looking after her and providing for her financially. This is responsibility, and the woman is seen to be held in high esteem. This is shown when it is written: "A man leaves his mother and his father and cleaves to his wife" which is incomplete without his wife. Thus, the wife is held in high esteem and this marriage ceremony does not need to be altered as the woman is given equal opportunities in the marriage. Thus, the contract is a reality of the traditional marriage. Some even give equal rights to the female.

However, the Palestinian Talmud, which was compiled in 200-400 CE, which is not the Babylonian
Exemplar Candidate Work

Talmud (which is used today), does promote more
feminist arguments. Women were enabled to be
present and leaders in the synagogue and could participate
in reading during Shabbat and other festivals. Their
role in society was a lot more elevated and they
were permitted to do many other more influential
things, just as a male could. However, after the
Barbarian Talmud was accepted, a more
medieval and conservative approach was preferred,
which opposed the more feminist approach in the
Palestinian Talmud. Therefore, if the Talmud was
kept today, it would have promoted the feminist
views more strongly. This could have applied to
marriage as well. However, as the Talmud is
not used today, Adler should promote the views of
the Jewish Talmud in order to give women more
equality. It is very important for women to
have been permitted and encouraged in the past, but
these views are forgotten today. Thus, the Rosh HaShanah is
a necessary role which provides the opportunity to be,
on equal terms with men and to also
to enter into a relationship which is equal and just.

However, it can be argued that the Rosh
HaShanah is a chance, not a necessity, on the part of
women to do more. Many other Biblical scriptures are very much based on
androcentric thinking, and not much emphasis is put on women. For example, in
the Torah, there is a lot more emphasis on the man working in
the present time and there is evidence of such
desire being fulfilled. Thus, women are under
obligation to produce as many children as possible in
order to survive and enable the faith to be transmitted. In
addition, Cohen is a key figure in the
Torah which is extremely small and not very well
described. She was a young woman who was
advised to be a very stable husband in a precarious
situation, yet she managed to not occasion any odd
gladly in order to keep close to her family, to be able to return to her homeland. The security she felt in her community made her feel safe. Traditional rules governed her life, and she followed them without question. Despite the biographical details of her life, she remains a mysterious figure, shrouded in mystery. Exemplar Candidate Work

A Level Religious Studies

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Overall, it can be argued that, while mythology, despite being a source of inspiration, can lead to some new ideas, it is not always applicable to modern times. The context of the past is no more of a necessity than a desire. One cannot always rely on mythology to explain or understand the past. It is the role of the researcher to evolve and adapt with the times, to examine the marriage ceremony and the relationship between men and women. This is not necessarily going against the past or traditional mythology, but it is adapting it to modern times.

In ancient civilizations, women were seen as their most important weapon. They were either kept in the home or worked in the fields. They were not allowed to leave the house, and their lives were dictated by the expectations of society. In modern times, society has changed, and women are no longer dependent on men for support. Women have been given independence, and they are encouraged to pursue their own interests and careers. In ancient times, marriage was arranged by parents, and women were expected to obey their husbands. In modern times, marriage is a personal decision, and women have the right to choose whom they marry. It is not uncommon for women to marry for love or convenience, rather than necessity.

Historiography is necessary in research, and checking all of the historical facts critically is necessary to ensure accuracy.
Examiner commentary

The response has achieved almost full marks - 15/16 for AO1 and 22/24 for AO2. The response is an excellent demonstration of knowledge and understanding in examination conditions; the candidate focuses on the question throughout and uses a selection of relevant material with accurate and precise use of technical vocabulary. The candidate has engaged at a high level with the specification content; the answer presents a good overview of the wider views of Rachel Adler in relation to Rethinking Women including the nature of traditional Jewish marriage, agunah, the notion of acquisition and Brit Ahuvim as a partnership which rethinks and reinterprets the traditional view of marriage. This answer is not representative of the top answers seen for this question; there were some outstanding answers which went way beyond the expectations for A Level and showed outstanding knowledge, analysis and evaluation. This answer presented here demonstrates Level 6 knowledge and argument in examination conditions and is a good exemplar of a ‘standard’ Level 6 response.

The essay is clearly structured and remains focused on the question throughout; the candidate constantly refers to the question trigger words – inclusive and desire/necessity – in order to demonstrate high level and relevant AO2 analysis. The opening paragraph presents a general overview or ‘synopsis’ of i) key ideas within Adler’s argument and, ii) the AO2 ‘direction of travel’; this structure enables the candidate to engage with the question from the start and avoid superfluous and ‘off topic’ answer material. The candidate argues from the beginning of their answer that for women to have empowerment in the modern age, and for Judaism to be ‘inclusive’, then Brit Ahuvim is not just a desire but a necessity; the candidate remains focused on this conclusion throughout the essay but shows differing approaches to this stance. The opening paragraph establishes the candidates understanding of the question and sets the foundation for a discursive piece of writing. The answer throughout shows a focused writing style, an ability to make synoptic connections between knowledge and discursive interpretation, and the use of some key material to provide balanced argument.

The candidate presents good knowledge on the specification content of marriage. The answer could have been further improved in terms of AO1 and AO2 by a more focused description of, and analysis of the key terms such as agunah and/or some engagement with the idea that Adler’s approach is in tune with modern concerns such as same-sex relationships and civil partnerships.

The candidate presents in the second half of the essay a discussion on Talmud and marriage in Biblical Scripture – throughout these sections, the candidate is able to cite sources of wisdom and authority to support their argument and show an excellent understanding of knowledge. The answer as a whole is one that provides breadth of response and synoptic analysis.

Where there is scope for improvement, it is in relation to AO2. There is sufficient clear and successful argument and analysis within examination conditions to achieve the bottom of Level 6. The AO2 could have been further improved through engagement with “extensive range of scholarly views” required to achieve full marks within Level 6. This candidate has been able to skilfully construct a fluid argument which shows detailed and sophisticated understanding of the specification content. This is a new component of study for this specification and it is clear that this candidate has been able to engage at a high level with the specification and the primary suggested readings. Although the answer at times lacks some depth of analysis and sophistication in phrasing, the candidate has demonstrated in examination conditions an accurate and highly detailed knowledge and nuanced approach to the material used.
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1. Benjamin is a moderate document. Both Rachel Adler and Rehovot are two Jewish feminists who have both produced books and documents to make Judaism more female-oriented. In the Middle Ages, women were seen as equal between men and women.

   Firstly, I believe that for an inclusive Judaism, Ben Almow is not just acceptable, but it is a necessary reform as it reconstructs the traditional gender-structured gender roles, which exists. Adler wrote that the Torah explicitly identifies Judaism as the Jewish tradition founded by Abraham and not acceptable within a liberal pressure of equality and therefore, both Almow and Adler seeks to redefine gender roles.

| Exemplar would argue that men and women have important different roles in Judaism. While Rabbi Lord Kook and Dr. Shlomo Feigenblatt, believed a gender is absolute, Rabbi Natan Nechemia teaches that women should be seen as the midwives of the Torah. Both believe in gender roles of men and women are different but both feel equally. In short, one's standing could be seen as the ability to accept the roles of men and women, which is seen in the Jewish tradition. She finds that the modernist Jewish community is working to redefine gender roles in Judaism. According to Adler, in order to be fully and thoroughly understood, women need to be at the forefront of defining the male gender roles. She believes that the current gender roles need to be redefined to be more appropriate and present in the society. |

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Examiner commentary

The response has achieved a 'basic' Level of Response for AO1 (4 marks) and AO2 (7 marks). The candidate response is very short and views are asserted with limited/no analysis and evaluation; the answer has a structure and style more suitable to GCSE. There is some reference to the specification content and the answer does show some learning, however as this learning is asserted rather than developed, the answer can only demonstrate basic knowledge, understanding and evaluation.

The opening paragraph shows a very basic understanding of Adler; there is no use of key terminology or context setting. The second paragraph offers an explanation of marriage however, there is limited engagement with the key specification content and key terminology. The candidate clearly has some basic knowledge however, views are asserted rather than developed and analysed.

The third paragraph shows again that the candidate has some awareness of, and understanding of, opposing views to Adler but this information is asserted and not developed; just mentioning the names of scholars or thinkers does not equate to engagement with scholarship which is required for the higher Levels of Response. The candidate continues to discuss Plaskow; while this is not specifically required for this answer, this knowledge presented has enabled the candidate to move to Level 2, as the information presented has been relevant to the question, even if only in a basic way. The answer as a whole is not developed and lacks sophistication due to a lack of critical engagement; the discussion is limited and based on general knowledge rather than engagement with sources, scholarship and text.
## Question 2

Evaluate the extent to which covenants are promises on the part of God and not two-way agreements.

### Exemplar 1

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A covenant is a one-way, unidirectional promise. In Judaism, there are three covenants: Abraham's, Moses's, and Noah's covenants. It can be argued that the Abraham's covenant is a promise given by God to His chosen covenant people. However, it can be argued that in the Abraham's covenant, God did expect something back in return for the unconditional promises. In addition, the Moses's covenant is a two-way agreement on the part of the Israelites. In return, God will take the Israelites to the promised land of milk and honey. Overall, it can be argued that the covenants, although varied, demanded something from the Jews as well as God's provision for the Jews to prosper, hence they are both ways agreements.

The Abraham's covenant began with being simply between Abraham and God. Abraham was called to leave his family, city, and motherland as a means of proving his loyalty to God. Abraham was called by the name of his father, and after this, he was called the father of the nations. He told Abraham to move from Ur to Canaan where there will be a new land and the chosen people can prosper and survive there. Thus, the Abraham's covenant began as a
uncovinal promise from God to Abraham. Therefore,
this covenant can be seen as a promise from God to
and descendents
Abraham as God provided a new land and protection to
Abraham and expected nothing in return.

However, the Abrahamic covenant later became
uncovinal to God, found in Genesis 17:9-14, that the men
within Judah must mark themselves to show their
entry and acceptance into the covenant. This was the
inclusion of the circumcision of 'brit milah' which is
written of all males inJudah. Furthermore,
their existence in itself that God did promise
Abraham, who was incredibly old at that point,
descendants. The one thing Abraham and Sarah yearned
for, in their lives, was descendants. Therefore, God provided
them with a son, Isaac, when Abraham had bought the
place to Gerar. However as a test of Abraham's faith, God
told Abraham to sacrifice his only son. This is clearly a
two-way agreement as God had promised the land to
new homeland which was incredibly generous, but now
required the King in return: circumcision as a mark of
a monarchical attitude.

This covenant, seek for Abraham to satisfy his only desire.
Thus the Abrahamic covenant can be seen to be a two-
way agreement between God and the man of Judah.

Furthermore, the Abrahamic covenant is seen as
a two-way agreement between God and the Jews: God
gave Moses the Decalogue (ten commandments), and
Israel and Miriam on Mount Sinai; God promised
the Jews that they would be able to reach the land of
"milk and honey" where their minds would flow from the
mountains and this would be a safe haven for the Jews.
However, in return, the Jews must abide by and observe
all of these laws and not ever commit idolatry again,
and they had previously sworn in the desert with the
rejection of the Golden Calf. This, therefore, is also a
two-way agreement between God and His chosen
people as He demanded that they abide by the laws and
practise and incorporate them into their everyday lives and
they were promised the "promised land" where they would
be able to live, free from persecution and discrimination.

Overall, it can be seen that these covenants are not the same agreements, despite the beginning of the Abrahamite covenant being a conditional promise from God, as an unconditional promise, the Jews of Judaism later held a responsibility to

contribute to the furtherance of religious beliefs. An individual had to be seen to be worthy of receiving these agreements. However, this is not the case for the covenants. The covenants are two-way agreements between God and the people, to which they are bound upon the agreement. God and the people have an equal responsibility within this agreement.

Therefore, these can be seen to be a pact, a treaty, as people would agree that they agreed equal terms from both

governments and do not exclude a simple promise from God,

despite God being so much more superior than the Jewish people as he is ontologically different as has

perfect attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence

and moral perfections).

Agreements can either be pacts or treaties. These are examples of the ancient Near

Eastern Treaties, upon which these covenants can be said to be based. These were many covenants in the

gold, like in Egypt, where there were different types of agreement. For example, a suzerainty treaty

involved a vassal state and a suzerain. The suzerain had the superior power in this treaty and dominated

the vassal state. This therefore is not a true covenant agreement, and does rely on the dominant party and are

more subordinated party. This can draw parallels with

God and the Jewish people, especially in the Abrahamite

covenant, as God can be said to be the suzerain and

the Jewish people can be said to be the vassal state.

However, a pact treaty involves both parties being equally involved and it being a two-way
Examiner commentary

This question was popular and produced answers across the Levels of Response. There were some ‘excellent’ and ‘very good’ responses for AO1 and AO2, which engaged critically with the question, textual exegesis and scholarship. There were some answers that received nearly full marks however, some answers were only able to show weak or basic demonstration of knowledge and understanding as they lacked detailed awareness of the specification content.

This response achieves Level 6 for AO1 (15 marks) and Level 5 for AO2 (20 marks). The answer as a whole demonstrates relevant, correct and carefully selected knowledge that is skillfully used. While the answer is slightly shorter than some high level answers seen, and there is no reference to some of the indicative content outlined in the mark scheme (i.e. signs of the covenant, comparison to Ancient Near-eastern treaties), the response remains focused throughout on the set question and demonstrates an excellent knowledge and very good analysis of the question in examination conditions.

The question required knowledge of the set texts (Genesis 12:1–3, 7; 15:1–21; 17:1–21 and Exodus 19:1–20:20) alongside a balanced, critical and careful consideration of covenants as either promises on the part of G-d or two-way agreements. The opening paragraph allows the candidate to engage straight away with the question and presents an overview of their argument; the answer could have been developed further by specific reference to where these covenants are found within the Tenakh and/or a historical-critical contextualisation.

The candidate outlines the Abrahamic covenant and throughout their discussion of key features of the covenant links knowledge to analysis i.e. through discussion of conditional and unconditional actions. Rather than ‘story-telling’ the candidate has ‘honed in’ on key events in the narrative of Abraham and used these to formulate an argument as to whether these events show a promise or a two-way agreement. The candidate next discusses, albeit briefly, the Mosaic covenant; again, the answer is short but is focused on analysis of learning in light of the set question rather than presenting surplus story-telling. The conclusion to the essay shows clear and focused engagement with the set question and some high level thinking is hinted at through the description of G-d as ontologically different; if the conclusion had been developed further, rather than stated, this could have helped push the answer to a higher Level of Response. The answer also lacked an extensive range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to move the answer to Level 6 for AO2.
The covenants contained within the Torah are fundamental for the foundations of Judaism. A covenant is where there is a contract between two parties and obligations on both sides. Covenants could be seen as promises on the part of God and not two-way agreements. However, in my opinion, they are two-way agreements.

The covenant with Abraham consisted of two-way agreements because Abraham was promised land, descendants, and blessings in return for making promises to God that he had to keep. God tested Abraham's faith on multiple occasions such as the sacrifice of his son. Abraham remained faithful to an unknown God even though he could not have known the outcome of trusting in this unknown God with abilities unknown to man, including the promises of land. God promised Abraham land if Abraham fulfilled his obligations according to the covenant. Therefore, covenants are two-way agreements because both God and Abraham make promises to each other.

On the other hand, covenants are promises on the part of God and not two-way agreements since the covenant with Abraham had to be fulfilled according to God's terms and not man's. Abraham had to accept what God wanted him to do and had no ability to question God's wishes. Also, the origins of covenants in the Torah are based on Near Eastern treaties that were often made between a powerful country and a weaker country. This suggests that covenants are on the part of God and not two-way agreements since the origins of the covenants indicate that covenants are only an agreement between a
powerful slave and a weak slave meaning that God could be seen as being the powerful partner in the agreement whilst the Abraham is only a weak partner. Therefore, covenants are promises on the part of God and not two-way agreements because if Abraham was weaker than God he could not have had a say in what promises the covenant entailed.

However, based on the covenant at Sinai made between Moses and God, covenants are two-way agreements. For example, on Mount Sinai, Moses received the oral and written Torah from God. This included the 613 mitzvot and the 10 commandments which set out what God wanted Jews to do. God also promised Moses the Promised Land which would provide a refuge for the Jews. Therefore, covenants are not promises on the part of God and they were in fact two-way agreements. God gives Moses his clearest revelation of himself which highlights that covenants are two-way agreements. Jews need to promise to follow the G13 mitzvot and in return God will look after them and protect.

Furthermore, it could be seen that covenants are promises on the part of God and not two-way agreement since God is transcendent and human are finite meaning that we will never be able to fully understand God; this limitation may be used to suggest that covenants are not two-way agreements. God also requires many promises from Jews that can be seen as a burden because they are often very difficult to fulfill. However, for God, his promises are easier for him to achieve since he is considered as being omnipotent. As a result, covenants are promises on the part of God and not two-way agreements.
However, based on the concept of chosenness which links greatly with the covenants, it is clear that covenants are two-way agreements. Chosenness is at the heart of covenant because it highlights the way in which Jews were chosen by God and according to Deuteronomy are his greatest possession. Jews have the responsibility to fulfil the covenant and fulfil the mission of striving to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. God provides their laws with specificity based on these commandments being fulfilled. If Jews do not fulfil their obligation to the covenants they could be abandoned by God. This shows the importance of the promises made between God and the Jews. In addition, Dan Cone Sherlock supports the idea that the concept of chosenness means that Jews need to respond by fulfilling God’s wishes. Therefore, covenants are two-way agreements.

In addition, by following the laws given to the Jews, Jews are set apart, sanctified, and made holy. This clearly indicates that covenants are two-way agreements. Since through the covenants, the lives of Jewish people are transformed which allows them to walk in the path set out by God. Through the observation of the 613 mitzvot, Jews can turn their lives into an act of worship. Therefore, they can gain a closer relationship with God. Which support that covenants are two-way agreements because Jews observe the laws to fulfill God’s wishes and in return, God sanctifies them and sets them apart from other people.

Overall, in my opinion, covenants are two-way agreements between God and the Jews because they both make promises that they need to keep. Both God and the Jews agree to certain promises which shows that covenants are not promises on the part of God but rather two-way agreements.
Examiner commentary

This response achieved a mid Level 4 for AO1 (9 marks) and the bottom of Level 5 for AO2 (17 marks); this answer therefore represents a good example of the way in which an average candidate dealt with this question. The answer presented is very similar to Q2 above in terms of its structure however; the answer has achieved a lower Level of Response for both AO1 and AO2. Although this candidate presents more ‘information’ in the answer and the answer is longer than the example above, the information is presented in a less sophisticated way, and knowledge and argument is less detailed in terms of answering the set question.

The first five paragraphs of the answer demonstrate AO1 knowledge, the final paragraphs, which focus on ‘choseness, Law and conclusion’, enable the candidate to move to a higher AO2 Level of Response. The analysis presented in the final section of the essay is accurate but it is not grounded enough in the specification sets texts of Abraham and Moses to enable the candidate to move to a higher AO1; the information presented in these paragraphs is done for analysis and evaluation. The answer as a whole is able to show reasonable breadth, and mostly accurate knowledge, however, the answer needed further evidence of knowledge and understanding of the set texts to move to a higher AO1 Level of Response.

In the opening paragraph the candidate offers a brief introduction, the use of ‘however, in my opinion’ adds a less sophisticated tone to the argument and feels more GCSE rather than A Level. Paragraphs two and three demonstrate clearly that the candidate has some knowledge of the set texts and is able to communicate this well to answer the question; however, this is done in a less sophisticated manner to Exemplar 1 above. The answer lacks detail and explicit reference to the set text and/or scholarship to move beyond Level 4. As above the final paragraphs allow the candidate to engage in a more detailed AO2 analysis and this enables the answer to just move into Level 5 “clear argument which is mostly successful”.
Question 3

3* ‘The process of conversion to Judaism is too complex.’ Discuss. 

Exemplar 1

AO1 Level 6, 14 marks  AO2 Level 6, 22 marks
Total 36 marks

The process of conversion to Judaism is carried down in the Shulchan Aruch. It states that there are several stages to becoming a Jew. Firstly, the proselyte is questioned. They are asked why they want to convert, knowing all the suffering and oppression that Jews face. If the proselyte answers that they are aware of this and still do not believe that they are worthy of conversion, they are immediately rejected. But the conversion process itself is kept track of their intentions are pure, that they are connecting for the right reasons. Next, they are taught the principles of faith, the respons mizvah, the lighter mizvah, the punishments, and the rewards for observing the mizvah. They must then appear in front of a Bet Din to ensure they have all the knowledge they need to become Jewish. Then, if they are a male, they can be circumcised. If they are already circumcised, they will draw blood from themselves as a sign of the covenant. After this, they will go through immersion in the mikveh, and this will occur in front of a Bet Din (they stand outside if the proselyte is female). Here they are offered the opportunity again to withdraw. Finally, the proselyte is a convert and it is said, “Behold he is an Isroelite.”

It can be argued that the conversion process is too complex to Judaism because there
The process of conversion can appear too complex for those with the weaker intentions. For example, if a woman wants to convert to marry her Jewish husband to have Jewish children together (as it is the rule of matrimonial descent that Judaism is passed on), then they are not fully considering the act of being a Jew just the title of being Jewish. People like this may not even see the point in going through the whole conversion process as it is so complex but instead prefer to live as a “righteous gentile.” This was, they will at least still be accepted in certain

3 Synagogues.

Leading on from this, the process can definitely be seen as far too complex, considering it will not give you full access everywhere under your new Jewish title for
Example, conversion performed by Reform Rabbis will not be accepted under one of an orthodox synagogue. This is due to the fact that orthodox are less accepting of converts and their conversion process is even more difficult. For example, despite the lack of bar mitzvah, you can gain the knowledge required in regards to Jewish study. The same study can be much more advanced. Thus, the complexity of conversion to Reform is not worth the outcome, but the added complexity of the orthodox conversion process is not worth the outcome.

Technically, if you were initially converting to Reform, the orthodox lifestyle is not what you want.

However, some processes of the conversion can be seen as completely necessary. For example, the circumcision symbolises the everlasting covenant that God made with Abraham, which is obviously what to be a part of if you are joining the Jewish community to receive a circumcision is to become a part of God’s elect people. To become one of Abraham’s descendants, and to be truly part of the covenant.

By doing this, the male will receive their part in the promised land and be able to live peacefully in eternity with God. Therefore it can be argued that the conversion process is not too complex, as in fact it is the base minimum that one needs to do to be a part of the Jewish community as a whole. (and the covenant).

In conclusion, I believe that the conversion process to Judaism is the complex.

As the main purpose for accepting to convert is to become a member of the Jewish community and show the love of God. Thus, it should not be for a rabbi.
Examiner commentary

This response achieves Level 6 for AO1 (14 marks) and Level 6 for AO2 (22 marks). The answer as a whole demonstrates relevant, correct and carefully selected knowledge that is skilfully used. This answer is the final question which the candidate has attempted and compared to the rest of their script this answer is not as sophisticated or well written; however, the response remains focused throughout on the set question and demonstrates an excellent knowledge and analysis of the question in examination conditions.

Firstly, the candidate is able to offer detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of conversion as outlined in the *Shulkhan Arukh* and shows clear engagement with the specification content. The candidate then engages in some high level analysis on issues of complexity and is able to bring in a range of points to support their argument. The points about conversion steps and processes distracting from the real point of conversion ‘the relationship with G-d’ is well handled and shows “confident and insightful critical analysis and detailed evaluation of the issue”. The remainder of the answer shows a weaving together of knowledge and analysis on issues such as marriage, matrilineal descent and differing views on conversion within the Jewish faith; this is undertaken in a way that shows synopticity between the AO1 and AO2 Levels of Response.

Exemplar 2

AO1 Level 5, 13 marks  AO2 Level 4, 15 marks
Total 28 marks
Exemplar Candidate Work

A Level Religious Studies

Of what sets Jews apart from other nations. The Orthodox process of conversion to Judaism requires that converts are fully committed and aware of the challenges that they are likely to face while being a Jew. This suggests that the process of conversion to Judaism is too complex because it is necessary that converts know everything about what it entails to be a Jew and they need to follow a strict process.

On the other hand, for Reform Jews, their approach towards the process of conversion to Judaism is less strict. This allows people to become a Jew more easily without placing restrictions on converts.

For example, for Reform Jews, it is not necessary that a convert is circumcised and the importance of the process of conversion is that a convert embrace every aspect of Judaism and be willing to show that they are prepared to demonstrate what is meant to be a Jew by following the path set out by God through the observance of the 613 commandments.

Therefore, the process of conversion to Judaism is not too complex because the emphasis is placed on what converts do by showing the Jewish community that they truly want to convert to Judaism.

The milvien is a very important aspect of the process of conversion. In the Torah, on several occasions there are commands for Jews to build a mikvah and it is considered to be more important than other mitvah. People are supposed to be clean before entering the mikvah since it is not for bathing or cleansing. For Orthodox Jews, the process of conversion involves immersion in the mikvah which includes the reciting of prayers. Orthodox Jews believe that the conversion process must be followed strictly which means that it could be too complex because there are many stages in order to ensure that a convert is truly ready to commit to Judaism.
Examiner commentary

This response achieved a Level 5 for AO1 (13 marks) and Level 4 for AO2 (15 marks); this answer represents a good example of the way in which an average candidate dealt with this question. The candidate starts with a very basic introduction, which does not really add anything to the answer. This could have been improved by being more focused on the trigger word of the question - ‘complex’ - in order to engage more explicitly with the AO2 Levels of Response.

In the second paragraph, the candidate explores Orthodox views and shows some awareness of the specification content including the set sources of wisdom and authority, the Shulkhan Arukh. The candidate continues in the next paragraph to outline the ‘on the other hand view’ of Reform Judaism; again the answer is starting to show a good understanding of the specification content.
however, the rather simplistic argument approach limits the quality of analysis. The answer continues with a discussion of the mikveh; the answer presents accurate knowledge and understanding and there is some attempt to link this to the set question. The candidate next mentions the process of conversion for a proselyte and again, presents accurate knowledge and understanding however, again the information lacks depth of analysis and critical engagement. The conclusion offered is sound and demonstrates a generally successful and clear argument.

The answer demonstrates Level 5 ‘very good’ knowledge and understanding, albeit at the bottom end of the level; the answer shows accurate, and detailed knowledge which demonstrates very good understanding and accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. The answer is not as strong in terms of its analysis and the candidate does not deconstruct or engage at a high level with the focus of the question, the complexity of conversion. The candidate does not explore the personal motivations and reasons behind conversion such as marriage or faith nor do they evaluate what ‘complex’ can actually mean; complex in what way, and for whom? This answer therefore shows a clear structure and the candidate has worked through the specification content in a logical manner, demonstrating good subject knowledge and understanding. However, the answer lacks critical engagement with the question focus and this has limited the Level of Response achieved for AO2.
Question 4

‘The refutation of God is the only acceptable response to the Holocaust.’ Discuss. [40]

Exemplar 1

AO1 Level 6, 16 marks  AO2 Level 6, 24 marks  Total 40 marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AO1 Level 6, 16 marks</th>
<th>AO2 Level 6, 24 marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order for a response to be acceptable, it must...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinister and catastrophic in nature, the Holocaust is...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The response must make sense; it must be logical; it must...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take into account people’s emotions and view of...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreover, be empathetic towards them and it must be...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic. Because God is the act of denying there is a...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of classical theology, this is an omnibenevolent, omnipotent, omniscient and morally perfect God, as such...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God would be thought to have intervened to save his chosen covenant people. Many would argue like...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furthermore, Elie Wiesel, that God should be credited as...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to Lichtenstein, He is a ‘Holy Nothingness’...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, Eichmann would argue that faith must be...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintained in order to transmit the faith and ensure survival of the faith, thus he introduced the G-14 th...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Mayhem argues that the Holocaust can...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As another function or catastrophe, and can be overcome...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just as other catastrophes have been overcome in the past...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, it can be argued that God should not be accused...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because He is all knowing, all powerful and all loving...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And despite the horrors of the Holocaust, the Jewish...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have learnt and become stronger as a result of it...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudonic believed that after such atrocities in the Holocaust where six million Jews perished, one and a half million of these...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews being children, God could not exist. How could any omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent God allow such terrible things to occur on his chosen people...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He preferred his people, the Jews, and created covenants with them to protect them and set them apart from humanity...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, despite this, he still allowed this people to perish and be held captive in...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
such horrible and inhumane conditions such as Auschwitz-Birkenau. This is surely not the act of an all-loving God. Peres-rentz however did not fully reject God, he simply said that God was a 'Holy
No-thinker'. Thus rejecting God as he could not have done in the past, like when Moses saved the Jews, with God’s help, in Egypt (as shown in the Bible). Then God should be reheded and
this should be the only acceptable response to the
Holocaust as he watched this people suffer and did
nothing. He allowed Hitler to become chancellor in 1933
and allow the concentration camps to be built and
still did nothing.

However, it can be argued that God is not to
blame for the Holocaust. God is no omniscient,
omnipotent, omnipresent being, and will remain a
mystic mystery as humans will never understand Him or
His attributes fully. Therefore, God is not to blame for the
Holocaust as we as humans, do not fully understand Him. It can be argued that He was
permanently limited Himself or ‘held His peace’
(Hebrew phrase) when such events took place during
the Holocaust. Peres-rentz would argue this. Despite
this, Peres-rentz argued that the Jews must
maintain their faith in order to be able move
forward and be prophetic about the aftermath
of such a terrible event. Peres-rentz argued that to
do otherwise was to give Hitler a ‘passionate victory’.
He argued that to enable Hitler to win and to break
the spirit of the Jews so much so that they lose
their faith is as bad a crime as participating in
idolatry in ancient times. Thus, Peres-rentz
invented his Easter-ist which was to maintain faith
in a state of hardship, like the Holocaust, in order to
maintain resilience and the Jews’ relationship with
God. A parallel is shown here with the Book of Job
in the testing, as this is a perfect example of how
to live righteously when suffering. Thus, God would not
The forced relocation of Jews under a totalitarian regime and the faith in some response to Judaism must not be forgotten or rejected. The Jews must have faith that God is ontologically different and that they will never truly understand His nature.

Contrary to it, it can be argued that Raskin's argument is too reductionist and simplistic as it relies on the Nazi regime about to remove their emaciated to quickly after such a traumatic event, without questioning God's presence or motives, and running personal with their lives. Many have found it difficult to do so, and even today, many Holocaust survivors or people with relatives who were in the Holocaust, find it troubling and somewhat disturbing to talk about or to move on. It is not as simple as it may seem, thus Raskin's view made an assumption that all Jews will be able to maintain their faith no matter what their circumstances were or their emotional attachment to the situation. Elsewhere work that the child was able to recall all of the Hasidic's thirteen principles of faith and was found to do so, but now, the cantor recited them or celebrated Purim and Passover, as He would have thought what God would have intervened just as He did in Egypt with Moses. Therefore, the remembrance of God is acceptable as many had it difficult not to question God's existence or motives as such an ordeal has left many Jews feeling hopeless and extreme sense of loss and bereavement as the Holocaust was such an enormous war genocide that cannot be taken lightly.

However, Mayhew argued that the Holocaust was another challenge which Talmud can move on from and overcome, just as they overcome the other two challenges in history. The first challenge was the first destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar. This resulted in the Hasidic renewal of the Temple in various other countries in the world, like the USA and UK. The second destruction was the second destruction of the temple under...
Exemplar Candidate Work

A Level Religious Studies

Such an occurrence does not happen again. This is the most important lesson we learn - Holocaust theology, it can be argued, is the flowering of perseverance and resilience. Thus, God should not be blamed at this horrific event. In this way, the Jews close together, as a people, and maintain their faith in God. We can see an example of this in the Holocaust, where the Jews maintained their faith in God even when the camps were established and they were subjected to incredible suffering. Overall, it can be argued that despite Hitler having the power to erase such horrendous acts of terror, the Jews were able to maintain their faith in God and maintain a relationship with Him and be encouraged in order to continue. God is the God of resilience and should not be limited. Faith can strengthen a Jew’s faith and relationship with God and must be encouraged in order for the Jew to remain God’s chosen people and in order for transmission of the faith to occur. This will enable the Jew to be set apart from the rest of humanity and they will show true resilience and true faith. They have encountered and experienced such evil, yet still maintain their faith and belong to such a God.
Examiner commentary

This response achieved full marks – Level 6 for AO1 and AO2. The answer is an excellent demonstration of knowledge, understanding and evaluation in examination conditions; the answer is well structured, shows relevant, correct and carefully selected knowledge, which is used skilfully to evaluate the set question.

Question 4 was the most popular question and in the main, was answered very well. Most answer - as this response - were detailed, focused and showed clear engagement with the specification content being able to cite the arguments of Rubenstein, Fackenheim, Berkovitz and Maybaum in order to support AO1 knowledge and AO2 analysis. This answer shows a skilful manipulation of learning to construct a very high level and detailed response to the question. This answer draws upon wider theological and philosophical learning; discussions of how the Holocaust can be seen as an example of the evidential problem of evil and the logical problem of evil, and as such how this historical event may challenge, and ‘refute,’ the G-d of classical theism is skilful presented. This synoptic argument is not necessary for the top of Level 6, but the candidate has been able to use their wider Religious Studies learning to engage at a very high level with the question and post-Holocaust theology.

This response starts with clear AO2 engagement at a high level; the answer outlines the logical and evidential problem of evil and how this links to the Holocaust, post-Holocaust theology and understanding of G-d of classical theism. The candidate links the question focus – refutation - with Rubenstein and the concept of ‘holy nothingness’ as outlined in the specification. The opening paragraph of the essay is very high level, focused and presents a ‘conclusion’ to the question before the candidate then expounds this in the remainder of the essay.

The candidate is able to present the arguments of other post-Holocaust scholars they have studied; however, they use their learning to develop a sophisticated AO2 analysis and evaluation rather than listing viewpoints one after the other. The approach the candidate takes is mature and insightful, and demonstrates excellent knowledge. This answer engages at a high level with the specification content, it goes above a basic description of Rubenstein and discusses doubt of G-d and G-d as the Ultimate Nothing, and how Rubenstein presents a demythologising of the Jewish traditions by rejecting the traditional image of G-d of the Hebrew Bible.

Exemplar 2

AO1 Level 3, 5 marks  AO2 Level 2, 8 marks
Total 13 marks
In this first meeting as the Nazi party leader, he set out his plan to exterminate a Jew, disabled, old and anyone else regarded not human—what they could be perfect race and didn't want to be contaminated by Jews. He started this plan by making everyone wear badges to signify who they were. All the Jews were taken to ghettos where they were grouped together and was a perfect and easy way to start the extermination. After Jews were deported to six concentration camps, where they were made to slave and work terrible hard. Children were split up and life seemed to be no world they ever been.

The Jews were killed mostly—using gas chambers since it spared the feelings of the Germans who was done at it not in the public eye.

Previously just after Hitler was appointed the Olympic Games were held. The Nazi wanted the Jews during that time in order not to receive any international criticism. Posters were taken down that said in certain places Jews cannot enter, etc.

After the holocaust, 2 out of 3. Women and died and even of those who survived, they were completely different and had had her new lives totally spun around.

The famous question in response to the Holocaust was were was a God? How could he have let this happen and why didn't he stop the Nazis?

The question Hitler asks states that he
Exemplar Candidate Work
A Level Religious Studies

4

Example Candidate Work:

Response to the Holocaust. However, there are many who disagree with
this view. Some view the Holocaust as God's will, some view it
as an act of revenge. Some view it as a punishment for
wrongdoing.

Firstly, Richard Rubenstein states in his death of
God. God had died and life was totally left
forth lost. Many could say that the
Nazi plan was a part of God's plan.
Richard Rubenstein talks of these services.
This is how the Jewish community
came to life in order to repent. Therefore
doing all they wrong the Nazis had done, the Jews
were then 'sacrificed' and they offered the 6
million Jews up to repair and exclaim that
they would change their ways.

Emlen Focke-Bernheim goes on to say that
spare of the
7th Commandment, we cannot let
ourselves or others say to be ground
be wiped out; we cannot let Hitler leave
victorious. By saying yes to Hitler, we are
saying no to God. And vice versa by saying
yes to God, we are saying no to Hitler. The
Jews must therefore see above all, their
suffering and persecution in God. They need to
do this in order to show Hitler that he cannot
be Jews as that he Jews are strong up and
eighting.

Moreover, I disagree with this view.
This is the idea that the Holocaust
was in order to bring about a modern
Judaism. Judaism ad a fresh start to Jewish
life if we take the church of the past
temple we can see it was destroyed.
and our times started to spread out
over the world. This way we are a diverse
people. This was so that the word of God can be taught to many all over
the world and advance ethical monotheism.

The answer here was clearly part of pe
lly or God for a reason which we cannot
have a good outcome. If we then look at
the second temple which turned destroyed we
see that here the destruction was to bring and
private prayer in the synagogues and home of
many faiths were built. All this resulted
in new era for the Jews. All these destruction
were for a creative purpose. Therefore
we must assume that this is the same than
for the Holocaust in order to bring馍馍
Judaism.

In my view the idea that a characteristic of God is being hidden as said
Hebrew by Moshe Parnas. God remains hidden
in our lives and we can find our see turn
we may think he's gone or lost but he
most definitely wasn't. He if if even if the
Holocaust looked like God had died. He
hadn't and it was all part of his will which we can better understand. Some
say that the Holocaust was because of our sins, but since man is united we
will never know we just have to put
end put our full belief in God.

The Holocaust was a terrible part of
dewish history but less than 100 years
later those who few who did survive built
it up again to where we are today. This
ultimately shows the backbone of Judaism
and how the Jews go never be fully destroyed
The repetition of is clearly not the only
Examiner commentary

This response achieved the bottom of Level 3 for AO1 (5 marks) and the top of Level 2 for AO2 (8 marks). The answer content demonstrates that the candidate has engaged with, and learnt some of the specification content, however, the lower Levels of Response credited are a result of the candidate not focusing specifically on the set question. This response “generally addresses the question” with a “mostly sound selection of mostly relevant material” rather than the detailed and skilful use of selected material necessary for the higher levels.

The first page and a half of this answer is background information about the Holocaust; although correct this is not credit worthy. The candidate only starts to engage with the question halfway down the second page “The famous quote in response to the Holocaust was were was G-d”; however, the candidate does not unpack the trigger word of the question ‘refutation’. Throughout the answer the candidate does not deconstruct the question focus of ‘refutation’ (which is specification wording) or be able to link this term explicitly to Rubenstein; as such the AO2 Level of Response achieved can only be ‘basic’ as there is “little successful analysis and evaluation”.

The candidate presents an overview of each of the main post-Holocaust theologians as outlined in the specification; again, the candidate demonstrates enough learning to be tipped into Level 3 for AO1 however, this knowledge is not linked explicitly to the question focus and as such, the AO2 Level of Response is not aided by this discussion. This answer is representative of the lower marked answers to this question which often spent too long giving a historical overview to the Holocaust which is superfluous for this set question and/or which did not appear to be able to discuss with confidence the notion of refutation.'
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