

Command words

Command words are intended to provide guidance as to what a student will be expected to do when these words are used in examinations. The exact response expected to a particular command word will be dependent on the context. At all times, we advise that students read the full question carefully to be sure of what they are being asked to do.

For 3 Mark questions

Name

This is used to direct a candidate to respond with the correct name of something. Nothing else is required in the response. This command word is often used when asking for knowledge of three things.

Name the three poisons. (J625/04)

State

This is used to indicate the response needs to be concise and unambiguous. This command word is often used when asking for knowledge of three things.

State three aspects of G-d's nature. (J625/03)

Give

This word is used in the same way as State when it is grammatically more correct. Single word or very short factual responses are required.

Give three different types of religious experience. (J625/06)

Describe

This is used to direct responses towards a concise account of the topic in the question. It may be used in the same way as Outline, to focus the question on one aspect of a topic.

Describe the role of Brahma in the Trimurti. (J625/05)

Outline

This is used to indicate that for 3 marks a brief but focused response is required which concentrates on the most significant aspects of a topic which could be considered more fully in an extended response. It can be used when the question asks for knowledge of one aspect of a topic.

Outline the meaning of the term 'cyclical universe'. (J625/05)

For the sake of clarity, readability and also to avoid over wordy questions, the command word may be omitted or replaced by a simple question.

Why do Jews observe Shavout? Rather than, Describe why Jews observe Shavout (J625/03)

For 6 Mark AO1 Questions**Describe**

This word indicates the response should be a detailed factual response showing knowledge and understanding of the topic in relation to the task required by the question.

Describe how prayer can benefit Christians. (J625/01)

Outline

This is used to indicate that the response should focus on key aspects of the topic in the question. The topic might be one which could be considered thoroughly in an extended response but for 6 marks all that is needed is knowledge and understanding of the salient points of the topic or issue, expressed concisely.

Outline the importance of the Hajj pilgrimage for Muslims. (J625/02)

For 6 Mark AO2 Questions**Explain**

This is used for questions which demand an examination of a topic in some depth and probably an analysis of different approaches to it.

Responses will unpack the topic of the question and will show understanding of it using analytical skills to explain reasons rather than just repeating knowledge of beliefs or attitudes.

Viewpoints about the topic of the question will need to be analysed, referring where appropriate, to sources of wisdom and authority which underpin the viewpoints.

Explain why Christians differ in their support for social justice. (J625/06)

Compare

This is used to direct responses to focus on reasons for differences about the topic of the question. Comparison requires analysis of the topic and an explanation of the reasons for differences referring where necessary to sources of wisdom and authority which underpin the viewpoints

Compare the attitude of different Christian groups towards religious experience. (J625/06)