

Study of Religion marking guide and response

External assessment 2025

Short response (58 marks)

Assessment objectives

This assessment instrument is used to determine student achievement in the following objectives:

1. describe the distinguishing features of religious traditions that shape views on human rights
2. demonstrate understanding of the ways in which religious traditions inform understandings of human rights
3. differentiate between perspectives of religious traditions on human rights
4. analyse perspectives on human rights within and across religious traditions
6. evaluate and draw conclusions about the influence of religion on human rights
7. create responses that communicate ideas or arguments related to religion and human rights, within sentences and short paragraphs

Note: Unit objective 5 is not assessed in this assessment instrument.

Purpose

This document consists of a marking guide and a sample response.

The marking guide:

- provides a tool for calibrating external assessment markers to ensure reliability of results
- indicates the correlation, for each question, between mark allocation and qualities at each level of the mark range
- informs schools and students about how marks are matched to qualities in student responses.

The sample response demonstrates the qualities of a high-level response.

Mark allocation

Where a response does not meet any of the descriptors for a question or a criterion, a mark of '0' will be recorded.

Marking guide

Short response

Q	Sample response	The response:
1	A Jewish adherent has an obligation to save a life even if it requires breaking a mitzvot, or 'statute', as commanded by God (Stimulus 1). This is evident in the principle of pikuach nefesh, whereby human life must come first and is more important than other commandments, 'not that he should die by them' (Stimulus 1). All life is sacred because humans are made in the image of God; therefore, pikuach nefesh underpins a Jewish understanding of the sacredness of human life, highlighting its precedence over other ordinances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifies one relevant Jewish belief [1 mark]• provides an accurate description of how the belief informs a Jewish understanding of human life [1 mark]• uses stimulus effectively [1 mark]

Q	Sample response	The response:
2a)	Justice in Islam requires adherents to submit to the will of Allah as revealed through the <i>Qur'an</i> . Acting according to Allah's will, doing what is right and fair, following the Greater Jihad and avoiding 'immorality, and injustice, and oppression' (Stimulus 2) are challenges that require Muslims to consciously live according to their faith and struggle against what is unjust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurately describes the concept of justice [1 mark] • identifies an Islamic teaching [1 mark] • describes how justice aligns with the teaching [1 mark] • links to Stimulus 2 [1 mark]
2b)	Islam teaches that Allah created everyone and therefore people are of equal value, and no one receives more favourable treatment over another. Therefore, all individuals have a responsibility to abide by Allah's teachings, as revealed in the <i>Qur'an</i> , and will obtain 'an immense reward' (Stimulus 3). Muslims believe, as per their linear world view, that they have one opportunity to be 'truthful', 'patient' and 'humble' (Stimulus 3). This opportunity enables them to safeguard people's 'fundamental rights and freedoms' (Preamble, CDHRI), thereby reaping the reward on the Day of Judgment, when their individual actions will be weighed to determine their destiny in the afterlife, reinforcing a linear world view.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies a linear world view [1 mark] • explains how this world view aligns with safeguarding 'fundamental rights and freedoms' [1 mark] • uses another Islamic teaching [1 mark] • uses Stimulus 3 [1 mark]

Q	Sample response	The response:
3a)	<p>Stimulus 4 provides an example of Special Revelation of God in the Jewish tradition. Through Special Revelation, God establishes a lasting covenantal relationship with Abram, '[making] nations of [him]' (Stimulus 4). The covenantal relationship is the catalyst in binding God's people together 'throughout the ages' (Stimulus 4) and requires them to uphold the relationship through the generations. This requires them to come together in a 'spirit of brotherhood' (Article 1, UDHR) to maintain the covenant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides an accurate description of the Jewish concept of Revelation [1 mark] • explains how Revelation informs how a Jewish adherent 'should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood' [1 mark] • identifies another relevant Jewish teaching [1 mark] • uses stimulus effectively [1 mark]
3b)	<p>Christians believe that God's immanence is revealed through the human person of Jesus, 'the glory as of a father's only son' (Stimulus 5). As Jesus is God on Earth, and all people are made in the image and likeness of God, 'all members of the human family' therefore have inherent 'dignity' and 'equal and inalienable rights' (Preamble, UDHR).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides an accurate description of the Christian concept of Revelation [1 mark] • explains the role of Revelation in understanding how the Christian tradition aligns with the dignity and rights of all [1 mark] • identifies another relevant Christian teaching [1 mark] • uses stimulus effectively [1 mark]

Q	Sample response	The response, for Judaism:	M	The response, for Christianity:	M	The response:	M
3c)	<p>Both Jews and Christians respect the 'human rights and fundamental freedoms' (Preamble, UDHR) of all people, and this respect manifests from their relationship with God.</p> <p>For Jews, this follows the Divine commands that require God's Divine justice based on the covenantal relationship and God's promise, 'I will be their God' (Stimulus 4). Following the mitzvot and observing the commandments requires Jews to keep God's Divine laws and observe human rights for all.</p> <p>Conversely, Christians follow the teachings and examples of Jesus the Incarnate, 'the Word [who] became flesh and lived among us' (Stimulus 5). Christians use Jesus's words and actions to emulate his practices and uphold 'human rights and fundamental freedoms' (Preamble, UDHR) for all of humanity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies one other relevant Jewish teaching that aligns with obligation to all people provides a clear and detailed explanation of the relationship between the teaching and the Preamble uses stimulus effectively 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies one other relevant Christian teaching that aligns with obligation to all people provides a clear and detailed explanation of the relationship between the teaching and the Preamble uses stimulus effectively 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies and explains the difference between Jewish and Christian obligations 	2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies one relevant Jewish teaching that aligns with obligation to all people explains characteristics of the teaching and the Preamble uses stimulus 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies one relevant Christian teaching that aligns with obligation to all people explains characteristics of the teaching and the Preamble uses stimulus 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies that Jewish and Christian obligations are different 	1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes a statement about a Jewish teaching and obligation to all people <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes an aspect of the Preamble related to Judaism 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes a statement about a Christian teaching and obligation to all people <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes an aspect of the Preamble related to Christianity 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0		

Q	The response:	M	The response:	M	The response:	M	The response:	M
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides detailed analysis of how a Hindu response to homelessness is informed by karma 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a discerning judgment about the alignment between karma and Article 3 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to one other Hindu teaching to support response effectively uses stimulus to support response 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organises paragraph/s to convey ideas succinctly, purposefully and fluently in relation to the question 	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides analysis of how a Hindu response to homelessness is informed by karma 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a judgment about the alignment between karma and Article 3 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to one other Hindu teaching uses stimulus 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses paragraph/s to convey ideas fluently in relation to the question 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a basic explanation of karma and homelessness 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a basic statement about karma and Article 3 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to another Hindu teaching <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to the stimulus 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses sentences to convey ideas in relation to the question 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a statement about karma <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a statement about homelessness 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a basic statement about Article 3 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates uneven spelling, grammar and/or punctuation that impedes meaning 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0

Sample response

Hindus are obliged to perform actions that lead to universal good, which informs their responses to human rights issues such as homelessness. When people are homeless, they lack 'control over access to space [and] security' (Stimulus 8), as well as 'security of person' (Article 3, UDHR). The '[lack] of social and affordable housing' that is essential for 'human survival with ... dignity' (Stimulus 8) denies people basic requirements to a life of 'liberty' (Article 3, UDHR).

For a Hindu, responding to homelessness by assisting 'individuals and families in dire need of financial help to meet their day-to-day needs' (Stimulus 6) results in actions that are 'good acts' (Stimulus 7) that lead to good and thus accrue positive karma, positively influencing samsara. The Hindu Benevolent Fund (Stimulus 6) demonstrates a communal response informed by dharma as Hindus seek to alleviate the distress of others due to inadequate or unaffordable accommodation. As the rate of homelessness increases in the community (Stimulus 8), the result is that not '[everyone] has the right to life, liberty and security of person' (Article 3, UDHR). Thus, by fulfilling their duty towards positive acts that counteract housing insecurity and lead to universal good, Hindus will accrue positive karma while supporting people's right to 'life, liberty and security' (Article 3, UDHR).

Q	The response:	M	The response:	M	The response:	M	The response:	M
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a detailed explanation of a relevant Buddhist teaching successfully aligns the Buddhist teaching with Venerable Courtin's beliefs about compassion effectively uses the stimulus to support reasoning 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a detailed explanation of a second relevant Buddhist teaching successfully aligns the Buddhist teaching with Venerable Courtin's beliefs about compassion effectively uses the stimulus to support reasoning 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes an insightful and reasoned judgment about the extent to which Venerable Courtin's beliefs align with Article 10.1 supports the judgments with a valid argument 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organises paragraph/s to convey ideas succinctly, purposefully and fluently in relation to the question 	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides an explanation of a relevant Buddhist teaching aligns the teaching with Venerable Courtin's beliefs about compassion uses the stimulus to support reasoning 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides an explanation of a second relevant Buddhist teaching aligns the teaching with Venerable Courtin's beliefs about compassion uses the stimulus to support reasoning 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a reasoned judgment about the extent to which Venerable Courtin's beliefs align with Article 10.1 supports the judgments with a reasoned argument 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses paragraph/s to convey ideas fluently in relation to the question 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a basic explanation about a Buddhist teaching links the teaching to compassion uses the stimulus 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a basic explanation about a second Buddhist teaching links the teaching to compassion uses the stimulus 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a judgment about how Venerable Courtin's beliefs align with Article 10.1 supports judgment with a basic reason 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates uneven spelling, grammar and/or punctuation that impedes meaning 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes a Buddhist teaching or a link with compassion refers to stimulus 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes a second Buddhist teaching or a link with compassion refers to stimulus 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a statement about a Buddhist teaching or a link to compassion <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to stimulus 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a statement about a second Buddhist teaching or a link to compassion <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to another stimulus 	1				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not satisfy any of the descriptors above. 	0				

Sample response

Venerable Courtin's philosophy on compassion is based on metta and dharma. Defined as loving kindness, metta means adherents wish for the welfare of others based on altruism, not self-interest. In Buddhism, '[compassion] has to be equal for all beings' (Stimulus 9). Assisting prisoners in understanding their pain and anger enables them to let go of their suffering.

Courtin's philosophy is underpinned by dharma, the nature of reality as a universal truth taught by Buddha and detailing how to achieve enlightenment by overcoming suffering (duhkha) and escaping samsara. Although she cannot physically free prisoners, she helps them achieve inner peace, as 'when the mind is practicing Dharma it becomes the house for achieving ultimate real liberation from the real samsaric prison' (Stimulus 10).

In assisting others, Courtin has delayed nirvana to help them achieve enlightenment. Her philosophy of advocacy aligns with her Buddhist beliefs and demonstrates commitment to ending suffering and showing compassion for prisoners, treating them 'with humanity and with respect' (Article 10.1, ICCPR) because '[all] the joy the world contains/ Comes through wishing happiness for others./ All the misery the world contains/ Comes through wanting pleasure for oneself' (Stimulus 11). Guided by the teaching of dharma and supported by her loving kindness (metta) for others, Courtin has supported the spiritual practices of over 20 000 prisoners, showing that 'wisdom and compassion together' are important 'for our sake and the sake of others' (Stimulus 12). By living out her beliefs, Courtin helps to restore people's 'liberty [and] ... humanity' (Article 10.1, ICCPR).

References

Stimulus 9

Courtin R (2021, July 22). 'Compassion for everyone, not just the victims' *Robina's Blog* <https://robinacourtin.com/compassion-for-everyone-not-just-the-victims/>

Stimulus 10

The redacted quote from Lama Zopa Rinpoche can be found at the foot of pages of the *Liberation Prison Project* website <https://liberationprisonproject.org/about/>

Stimulus 11

Shantideva quoted in Michie, D 2017, *Buddhism for Busy People: Finding happiness in an uncertain world* p.128.

Stimulus 12

Redacted wording was the full article Robina Courtin: The Meaning of Life — A Bird Needs Two Wings' December 20, 2019 *Excellence Reporter*



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