Questions matter

Summary of changes

Introduction

We are making light but meaningful changes to GCSE Religious Studies A (8062) and Short Course (8061) for exams from June 2026 onwards. The changes will increase the clarity of our exam papers by simplifying language and will help to maintain the validity of the assessment going forward. We are also updating the mark schemes to add extra clarity for teachers and examiners

What will the assessment look like?

- .1 questions remain 1-mark multiple choice across papers.
- **2-mark question will be replaced by a 1-mark 'give/name' question**. It will be a short response question, where a single word or short phrase will be required. Students could be asked to give/name an example of a belief, practice, key term/religious concept as per the specification. They could also be asked for a brief definition.
- **The 4-mark 'contrasting' questions will now use the word 'different'** (Religious Practices and Themes). 4-mark influences questions (Beliefs sections) and similarities questions on Themes remain unchanged.
- **The 5-mark questions have become 6-mark questions.** They will still ask students to 'Explain two beliefs…' with reference to a source of religious authority. There will be up to 4 marks for explaining the two points (as previously), 1 mark for a relevant named source of authority, and 1 mark for applying the source of authority to the question.
- 12-mark AO2 questions on all sections remain unchanged.

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Question types and assessment objectives

Each section of the exam papers will now take the format **1, 1, 4, 6 ,12 marks.** The tables below break this down further into the strands of AO1 that will be tested in each instance.

Specification A (8062)			
	Question type	**AO**	**Section**
Paper 1: Religions	1-mark multiple choice	AO1.1	All sections
	1-mark short response	AO1.1	All sections
	4-mark influences	AO1.2	Beliefs
	4-mark differences	AO1.3	Practices
	6-mark sources of authority	AO1.1	All sections
	12-mark evaluation	AO2	All sections
Paper 2: Themes	1-mark multiple choice	AO1.1	All sections
	1-mark short response	AO1.1	All sections
	4-mark differences or similarities	AO1.3	All sections
	6-mark sources of authority	AO1.1	All sections
	12-mark evaluation	AO2	All sections

Short course (8061)		
	Question type	**AO**
Section A: Religions	1-mark multiple choice	AO1.1
	1-mark short response	AO1.1
	4-mark influences	AO1.2
	6-mark sources of authority	AO1.1
	12-mark evaluation	AO2
Section B: Themes	1-mark multiple choice	AO1.1
	1-mark short response	AO1.1
	4-mark differences or similarities	AO1.3
	6-mark sources of authority	AO1.1
	12-mark evaluation	AO2

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