Cambridge International AS & A Level

SOCIOLOGY **9699/43**

Paper 4 Globalisation, Media, Religion **May/June 2025**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 70

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **19** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Social Science-Specific Marking Principles
(for point-based marking)

1   Components using point-based marking:
- Point marking is often used to reward knowledge, understanding and application of skills. We give credit where the candidate's answer shows relevant knowledge, understanding and application of skills in answering the question. We do not give credit where the answer shows confusion.

From this it follows that we:

a DO credit answers which are worded differently from the mark scheme if they clearly convey the same meaning (unless the mark scheme requires a specific term)
b DO credit alternative answers/examples which are not written in the mark scheme if they are correct
c DO credit answers where candidates give more than one correct answer in one prompt/numbered/scaffolded space where extended writing is required rather than list-type answers. For example, questions that require *n* reasons (e.g. State two reasons …).
d DO NOT credit answers simply for using a 'key term' unless that is all that is required. (Check for evidence it is understood and not used wrongly.)
e DO NOT credit answers which are obviously self-contradicting or trying to cover all possibilities
f DO NOT give further credit for what is effectively repetition of a correct point already credited unless the language itself is being tested. This applies equally to 'mirror statements' (i.e. polluted/not polluted).
g DO NOT require spellings to be correct, unless this is part of the test. However spellings of syllabus terms must allow for clear and unambiguous separation from other syllabus terms with which they may be confused (e.g. Corrasion/Corrosion)

2   Presentation of mark scheme:
- Slashes (/) or the word 'or' separate alternative ways of making the same point.
- Semi colons (;) bullet points (•) or figures in brackets (1) separate different points.
- Content in the answer column in brackets is for examiner information/context to clarify the marking but is not required to earn the mark (except Accounting syllabuses where they indicate negative numbers).

3   Calculation questions:
- The mark scheme will show the steps in the most likely correct method(s), the mark for each step, the correct answer(s) and the mark for each answer
- If working/explanation is considered essential for full credit, this will be indicated in the question paper and in the mark scheme. In all other instances, the correct answer to a calculation should be given full credit, even if no supporting working is shown.
- Where the candidate uses a valid method which is not covered by the mark scheme, award equivalent marks for reaching equivalent stages.
- Where an answer makes use of a candidate's own incorrect figure from previous working, the 'own figure rule' applies: full marks will be given if a correct and complete method is used. Further guidance will be included in the mark scheme where necessary and any exceptions to this general principle will be noted.

4	Annotation:
	• For point marking, ticks can be used to indicate correct answers and crosses can be used to indicate wrong answers. There is no direct relationship between ticks and marks. Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.
	• For levels of response marking, the level awarded should be annotated on the script.
	• Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.

Using the mark scheme

The questions are marked using a generic analytic mark scheme, which separates the marks for the different assessment objectives (AO). The work is marked for each AO using generic levels of response mark schemes. The marks awarded are usually based on a judgement of the overall quality of the response for that AO, rather than on awarding marks for specific points and accumulating a total mark by adding points.

Indicative content is provided as a guide. Inevitably, the mark scheme cannot cover all responses that candidates may make for all of the questions. In some cases candidates may make some responses which the mark scheme has not predicted. These answers should nevertheless be credited according to their quality.

Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
BOD	Benefit of the doubt given / the point is just about worthy of credit
EXP	Development / description of the point.
EVAL	Evaluation point
DEV	Developed point
GEN	General point using sociological material but not applied to the question
IR	Point is irrelevant to the question
J	Juxtaposition of point
M	Material used to support the point
NAQ	Not answered question
REP	Repetition
SEEN	This material receives no credit, additional points not required
TV	Too vague
✔	Point that has been credited
✖	Incorrect response
⌇	Irrelevant material
On page comment	On page comment

Question	Answer	Marks
1	**'Developing countries remain poor due to the continuing impact of colonialism.' Evaluate this view.**	35
	Key focus of the question	
	With this question, candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of different explanations of global poverty, with reference to the impact of colonialism on developing countries. Good answers will be aware that Marxist theories of development view western colonialism as a key factor explaining the poverty and inequality experienced by developing societies. In this view, colonialism and neo-colonialism has been directly implicated in the creation of a range of structural constraints and asymmetrical power relations that allow rich countries to benefit from a system of global inequality which ensures less economically developed countries remain poor. Evaluation of this view is likely to be provided by considering alternative explanations of global poverty. Modernisation theory, for example, suggests that for poorer countries to develop economically they should adopt the values associated with democracy, private property, entrepreneurship, a rational approach to risk taking, and respect for human rights. Other sociologists have pointed to deficiencies with local elites (corruption, exploitation, ethnic divisions) as a key factor in explaining the poverty experienced by many developing countries. Climate change and the environmental crisis might also be cited as part of the reason why developing countries remain poor. Reward candidates who distinguish between different developing countries, noting that some were more exposed to colonialism/neo-colonialism than others, and that some developing countries have been more successful than others in combatting poverty and modernising their economies.	
	Indicative content	
	For: • Marxist sociologists argue that Western colonialism has had a destructive and exploitative impact on many poorer countries. Colonisation significantly undermined any opportunity poorer countries had to achieve rapid economic development and it has a legacy in ensuring these countries remain dependent on rich Western countries after the end of the colonial regime (a situation referred to as neo-colonialism). • Frank, an advocate of dependency theory, argues that global capitalism has systematically under-developed the economies of poorer countries to benefit the economies of the richer nations. This capitalist exploitation has left poorer countries unable to generate significant economic growth, no matter how hard they try or what value systems they adopt. Imperialism and colonialism are the main means through which capitalist exploitation of developing countries has been enacted, according to Frank. • Colonies were primarily exploited for their cheap food, raw materials, and labour. Local industries were either destroyed or undermined by cheap imported manufactured goods from the West. • New forms of colonialism (referred to as 'neo-colonialism') are more subtle but equally destructive as colonisation. These new forms include TNCs, aid programmes, global debt, and terms of world trade.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1	• Immanuel Wallerstein, an advocate of world systems theory, argues that the capitalist economic system is becoming increasingly global in its search for profit, using neo-colonialism as a tool in this process. In turn, this is leading to rich countries increasingly focusing on higher skill, capital intensive production, and the rest of the world focusing on low-skill, labour-intensive production and extraction of raw materials. This constantly reinforces the dominance of the rich countries and condemns workers in poorer countries to a life of exploitative, insecure low wage employment. Against: • It may be incorrect to assume that colonialism, TNCs and aid are simply exploitative and that they have brought no benefits to developing societies. • Modernisation theorists may have exaggerated the importance of Western neoliberal values for economic growth in the developing world, but a combination of Western ideas with some traditional values and religious influences has proved a potent mix in helping some poorer countries to advance, China, Singapore, and South Korea being examples. • Recognising the contribution of the cultural dimension in development is particularly important given that it is overlooked in many other theories; for example, Marxist sociologists focus almost entirely on economic factors in explaining the difficulties poorer countries face in escaping from global poverty. • Claims by Marxist sociologists that poorer countries find it almost impossible to escape the continuing impact of colonialism may be unjustified. There have been some improvements in the standard of living of the poor in many developing countries, whether through utilising capitalist mechanisms (South Korea, for example) or by establishing socialist regimes (Cuba, Tanzania). • Factors other than colonisation may be more important in explaining global poverty. For example, entrenched religious and military elites often operate in poorer countries and their interests are not necessarily aligned with efforts to eliminate poverty among their people or to modernise the economic base of the country. Likewise, wars and natural disasters can have a devastating effect in undermining the institutions in poorer countries that might otherwise be able to implement cultural and political reforms of the kind advocated by modernisation theory. • Criticism of the reductionism and determinism in theories that explain global poverty in terms of the impact of colonialism/neo-colonialism. • Difficulty in defining exactly what is meant by colonialism and neo-colonialism.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	**'Migrants from poor countries rarely gain any benefit from working in rich countries.' Evaluate this view.**	35
	Key focus of the question	
	The focus of this question is global migration and the opportunities it offers for people who migrate from developing countries to developed countries. Several arguments have been advanced that support the view that global migration has only negative consequences for migrant groups. Marxist sociologists are sceptical that migrants from poor countries benefit in any way from working in rich countries; these workers are often exploited and socially isolated, living in poverty and with little protection for their human rights. Feminist sociologists are concerned that global migration may have some adverse consequences that fall on women particularly; female migrants are especially vulnerable to sex trafficking, for example. Good evaluative responses will also consider opposite views that suggest migrant groups derive some benefits from global migration. For example, neoliberals argue that global migration contributes to economic growth for all, and therefore migrants from poor countries do derive benefits from working in rich countries. Assimilation theory sees cross-border migration as potentially a positive and beneficial experience for migrants who make a concerted effort to integrate in the culture and social practices of the receiving country.	
	Indicative content	
	For:	
	• Marxist sociologists claim that global migration provides low-cost, readily exploitable labour that enables the owners of capital to generate higher profits. In this view, very few global migrants derive any economic benefit from working in rich countries.	
	• Other sociologists have highlighted negative social and cultural consequences of global migration. For example, migrants may endure long periods of separation from relatives and friends who remain in the sending country. Cultural ties with the home country may be broken and language barriers could make assimilation in the receiving country difficult to achieve. Migrant workers may encounter discrimination, abuse of human rights, and aggression from local people who feel threatened by the arrival of immigrants.	
	• Global migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, as the examples of slave labour and sex trafficking illustrate. Women and children may be particularly vulnerable.	
	• Any chance of achieving a better standard of living as a migrant worker may be scuppered when considering the high costs of living and relatively low wages that migrants encounter in rich countries. Case studies of migrant workers often reveal a pitiful existence of poverty, exploitation, sub-standard housing, ill-health, and social isolation.	
	• Hopes of returning home with a financial cushion after a few years working in a rich country often prove unrealistic, particularly for migrants who are subject to exploitative control by people traffickers and slave traders.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	Against: • Wages and living conditions in rich countries are potentially much better than migrant workers from poor countries would find back home. • Workers with skills that are in high demand in Western countries, such as doctors and engineers, are particularly well placed to achieve a high standard of living and improve their life chances. • Migrants from areas where traditional values and religious beliefs dominate the local culture may find that life in Western countries offers greater freedom and more choice in lifestyle options, including the opportunity to combine aspects of traditional and modern culture. • Opportunities for upward social mobility may be higher in rich countries where there is a meritocratic ethos; there may also be more scope to set up successful businesses and become wealthy in time. • Functionalists argue that all can benefit from global migration if cultural barriers to assimilation are overcome. • Some countries provide more protection and support for migrant workers than others. This can be a key factor in determining whether migrants from developing countries derive benefit from working in a rich country.	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	**'The media is an instrument of ideological control.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** The question invites consideration of the Marxist view that the media helps to maintain social order by being an instrument of ideological control. Some feminist arguments also see the media as promoting patriarchy and this is another way in which the media may be viewed as an instrument of ideological control. Good answers will provide a clear account of arguments and evidence supporting the view on which the question is based. Concepts such as agenda setting, gatekeeping, propaganda, mass manipulation, and hegemony may be explored in well-informed responses. Good use might also be made of studies (such as those by the Glasgow Media Group and Philo and Berry) that illustrate the power of media to frame political debates and promote the values of the rich and powerful. High quality responses will also include an evaluation of the view that the media is an instrument of ideological control. This is likely to be delivered through considering contrasting theories, such as the pluralist view that the media serves the interests of a wide range of groups and is not slanted towards processes that help maintain the power of an elite(s). Evidence to show that the media often challenges the status quo and opposes powerful interests could also form part of a good evaluation. Debates between digital optimists and digital pessimists would be relevant to include in an analytical response looking at whether the new media has delivered greater opportunity for individuals to challenge dominant ideas and power structures. **Indicative content** For: • Marxist ideas about the media being part of the ideological superstructure supporting capitalist interests and relations of production. • Debates about mass manipulation and hegemony as different conceptions of how the media operates as an instrument of ideological control. • The cultural effects model as an illustration of how the media might contribute to a process of ideological control. • Arguments and evidence about the role of governments in using the media for propaganda purposes. • Evidence that global media companies are owned by wealthy individuals who appear to exercise close control over decisions that affect the content of the media they own. • Editors and journalists are forced to align themselves with the commercial interests of the owners or they will lose their jobs. • Owners of the traditional media have extended their power by acquiring control of many new digital media outlets in recent years. • Studies (Hall, Philo and Berry, Curtis, Jenkins) that illustrate how media content may be shaped to support the status quo and/or promote the interests of the rich and powerful. • The size and global reach of modern media conglomerates makes them difficult to control by national governments, thereby adding to the power of the owners of those media assets to exert control over media content. • Feminist arguments about the role of the media in promoting patriarchal values.	35

Question	Answer	Marks
3	• Media corporations are under increasing commercial pressure to operate as multi-media providers, and this has led them to take a strong interest in controlling the development of the new media, thereby potentially extending their ideological control in society. • Some social media platforms have close links with government agencies, helping to bolster the power of those platforms e.g. the Chinese government and Alibaba, WeChat, Bilibili, TikTok. Likewise, supposed links between the Russian government and platforms such Moy Mir, Telegram and VKontakte. Against: • Pluralist theory states that power in relation to the media is fragmented with different groups in society each having some influence. Audiences, for example, must have their interests considered by media organisations to some extent or sales of media products will be adversely affected. Advertisers have some influence too, as they provide vital funding for media producers. Government is another social agency competing to exercise control of the media. • Pluralists would argue that the influences on media content are too diverse for the media to be regarded as an instrument of ideological control that serves the interests of the rich and powerful or is aligned with the status quo. • Evidence of where the media has expressed opposition to powerful interests and challenged the status quo. • Criticisms of the determinism/reductionism in Marxist accounts of the role of the media. • Discussions of the limitations that governments face in controlling the media and using it for propaganda purposes. • The new media has handed some control over media production to individual citizens and this may have lessened the role of owners, and other powerful interests, as gatekeepers of what is published and broadcast. • Post-feminist accounts of changes in the media that may have contributed to a weakening in the power of men within the media to promote patriarchal values through, for example, the use of sexist stereotypes and neglect of female interests and perspectives. • The new media can be used to monitor the illegal or immoral activities of big businesses and governments. Hacktivist networks can infiltrate corporate and government websites, potentially gaining access to information that would expose wrongdoing and injustice. This can be seen as a limitation on the power of media corporations to dominate the way digital assets are used for ideological control.	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	**'The new media has given citizens more power to influence politics.' Evaluate this view.**	**35**
	Key focus of the question	
	Arguably, the new media is more interactive than the traditional media, giving individual citizens more opportunity to shape media content, network with a wide base of like-minded people, and organise protest and/or resistance to government actions with which they disagree. Good answers to the question will consider how far people have been empowered by the emergence of the new media and whether claims about greater power to influence politics can be substantiated. Debates between digital optimists and digital pessimists may feature in well-informed responses. Digital optimists argue that digital activists have used the internet and social media to challenge power elites in many ways, including harnessing mass support for political campaigns, raising awareness of government malpractice and maladministration, and coordinating protests and activism. Digital pessimists argue that political protests organised through the new media have had relatively little success in achieving the aims of the activists. Authoritarian governments have been persistent in cracking down on internet use whenever opponents have any success in using the new media to advance their cause. Examples of political campaigns may be used in good answers as a way of debating the issues to which digital optimists and digital pessimists have drawn attention.	
	Indicative content	
	For:	
	• Arguments and evidence put forward by digital optimists to suggest that the new media has a positive impact in enhancing free speech, democratising society, and liberating individuals who now have greater freedom to challenge and influence government decision-making.	
	• The new media allows political activists to carry out the same activities as in the past, but more quickly, on a larger scale, and at lower cost.	
	• The new media allows people to organise themselves without formalised bureaucracies and central leaders; protest groups emerge in a more spontaneous fashion and can quickly generate sufficient support to catch political opponents off-guard, as in the case of the Arab-Spring anti-government movements which spread across the Middle East and North Africa between 2010 and 2012.	
	• The new media can be used to monitor the illegal or immoral activities of big businesses and governments. Hacktivist networks can infiltrate corporate and government websites, potentially gaining access to information that would expose wrongdoing and injustice.	
	• The digital revolution has enabled citizen journalism with civilians having access to the technology to send instant messages and pictures around the globe (including to international media outlets) to report on events affecting citizen protests and government attempts to repress opposition.	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	Against: • Digital pessimist views that the channels of communication associated with the new media are dominated by the owners of digital assets and are used primarily for commercial purposes in generating profit for the owners, rather than allowing greater freedom of expression and scrutiny of the dominant power structures in society. • There is little evidence that use of the new media has helped protest movements achieve their objectives. For example, in relation to the Arab Spring, only the uprising in Tunisia has resulted in a transition to constitutional democracy. In other countries, authoritarianism still prevails or civil wars continue. • Authoritarian governments increasingly seek to limit the liberating potential of the new media by deploying censorship, masked political control, and technology capture. • Examples of government interventions to limit the use of the new media for purposes that might threaten the status quo, for example the case of Russia in recent years. • Outside the wealthy, established democracies, large numbers of people still lack access to digital technologies. They are therefore reliant on government controlled traditional media. • Technology providers are under increasing pressure to exercise closer control over how their technology is used and by whom. For example, Facebook has recently banned a number of account users who were seen by the company to be posting socially undesirable content. While some will see this as responsible monitoring of media usage, others will view it as a potentially troubling development that places restrictions on how individuals use the new media and who is judged suitable to post messages and organise protests.	

Question	Answer	Marks
5	**'Women have complete equality with men in religious organisations today.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** The question invites consideration of the relationship between religion and gender equality, with particular focus on the position of women in religious organisations today. Feminist sociologists claim to have identified close links between religion and patriarchy, with religious teachings representing females in a negative way and emphasising their subordination to male figures, such as fathers and husbands. However, this view has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, partly because of many religious organisations adopting new policies that are more favourable to female members. Good evaluative responses will consider the possible sources of gender inequality/patriarchy in religious organisations and enquire how far recent changes in these organisations have reduced or removed these sources of inequality. Responses that challenge the feminist view of religion in a broader sense should also be credited. This might include, for example, consideration of the functionalist view that women perform different but equal roles within many religious organisations, and the interactionist view that only detailed study of what women think and feel about their experience of religion will shed light on whether they find religion oppressive and patriarchal. **Indicative content** For: • Arguments and evidence supporting the view that many religious organisations have changed in recent years to embrace gender equality and challenge patriarchy. • Women have greater opportunity to access positions of authority within many religious organisations today, including through ordination. • Women are now the largest worship group in many religions. • Religious organisations have had to adapt to wider social changes, such as the move towards gender equality, to remain relevant and attract members. • The extent of patriarchy in religion can be questioned. For example, many women with religious affiliations may support some or all of the religious values that feminists see as patriarchal. • Many religious organisations have made a concerted effort in recent years to explain and justify aspects of their beliefs and practices that feminist critics have criticised as patriarchal. This has perhaps contributed to a more nuanced debate about the relationship between religion and patriarchy, highlighting new avenues for discussing what equality means in the context of gender relations. • Some religions have always been further forward than others in supporting gender equality; for example, Sikhism and Quakerism. Likewise, some NRMs and New Age movements may have more progressive attitudes to gender equality among their followers. • Some religions are generally patriarchal, but aspects of them can still provide significant opportunities for women. Hence, there is a danger of over-generalising as the position of women in religion varies greatly between different religious organisations.	35

Question	Answer	Marks
5	• The secularisation thesis suggests that religion has little social significance today and so the influence of religion in contributing to patriarchy and the oppression of women may be very limited for much of the female population. • Functionalist arguments that women perform different but equal roles within many religious organisations. • Only detailed study of what females think and feel about their experience of religion will shed light on whether they find religion oppressive. Against: • Arguments and evidence from traditional feminist accounts supporting the idea that religious organisations are patriarchal. • Feminist responses to those who argue that many religious organisations have changed and are now much less patriarchal or not patriarchal at all. • The promotion of some women within religious organisations may be a form of tokenism that conceals ongoing underlying patriarchy in the hierarchy of these organisations. • Upsurge in support for fundamentalism in religion may in part be a reaction against attempts to liberalise some religious organisations away from patriarchal power structures and ways of thinking. • While some religions have embraced changes that are more favourable to women, others have not. • Examples of religious teachings that support a patriarchal worldview and represent women in an inferior or prejudicial way. • Evidence to show that women are often lowly represented in positions of authority within religious organisations. • Women are encouraged to follow traditional gender roles in society in many religions. • Reports from women that involvement in religion has damaged their self-esteem and sense of freedom; they feel oppressed by the exercise of religious authority. • Examples that suggest some religions may remain patriarchal because of their opposition to causes that feminists might have campaigned for, such as fertility rights, access to contraception, cohabitation, and freedom from arranged marriages.	

Question	Answer	Marks
6	**'Religion has little influence in Western societies today.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** This question can be answered by considering the secularisation thesis which claims that support for religion has declined, and religious organisations have accordingly lost much of their influence in Western societies today. Evidence that is used to support the view on which the question is based includes: declining membership of many established religions; decline in religiously blessed marriages and rise in divorce; growing support for alternative belief systems, including humanism and atheism; the challenges to spiritual belief posed by science. However, the extent of the decline can be debated and arguments against the secularisation thesis are likely to feature in good evaluative responses to the question. Another line of analysis a candidate might take would be to consider whether the view expressed in the question is true of all religions today, as some may be more successful in attracting and retaining members than others. Difficulties of defining and measuring religiosity and/or religious influence would be another relevant area of debate to explore for this question. Candidates might also consider differences between individual Western societies in relation to the question. **Indicative content** For: • Arguments and evidence for the secularisation thesis. • Reduced role of religion in public life. • Modernist theories of the decline in spiritual belief (Comte, Weber, Marx). • Falling membership of religious organisations and competition from other belief systems would indicate a decline in religiosity. • Fewer people are participating in religious ceremonies. • People are more likely to challenge the authority of established religions to decide key issues of morality in society. • There is more profanity and possible greater acceptance of heresy and blasphemy today. • Some studies suggest people of faith devote less time to religious activities today than in the past and some have become more questioning of their faith. Against: • Arguments and evidence against the secularisation thesis. • Religion retains some role in public institutions, and this is particularly so in the case of countries such as Italy and Spain. Similarly, in the US there appears to be increasing religious influence in political life today. • Religion in some societies is strongly embedded in the civic culture and through that can also be an influence in shaping government e.g. citizens saluting the American flag and singing the national anthem ('God bless America'). • In some Western societies and communities, there are strong pressures on people to participate in religious practice and maintain their faith, at least outwardly.	35

Question	Answer	Marks
6	• Some religious organisations appear to be attracting more followers (the Evangelical movement in the US, for example) • Claims that people are less religious than in the past can be questioned, not least because evidence about people's religious beliefs in the past may be unreliable. • Rather than becoming less religious, people may have changed the ways they practice religion, for example, an increase in privatised worship and the use of social media for religious engagement. • Arguments and evidence supporting the idea of a religious revival. • Growth in membership of new religious movements and in certain forms of spirituality that might be regarded as similarly too or broadly the same as religious belief (New Age ideas, for example). • Many recent migrant groups entering western societies bring strong religious beliefs and commitment to religious worship. • Religiosity is difficult to measure so any empirical evidence about the strength of people's religious belief today has to be treated sceptically.	

Generic levels of response

Level	AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	Marks
3	• Good knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based. • The response contains a range of detailed points with good use of concepts and theory/research evidence.	**7–9**
2	• Reasonable knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based. • The response contains either a narrow range of detailed points or a wider range of underdeveloped points, with some use of concepts and references to theory or research evidence	**4–6**
1	• Basic knowledge and understanding of the view on which the question is based. • The response contains a narrow range of underdeveloped points with some references to concepts or theory or research evidence.	**1–3**
0	• No knowledge and understanding worthy of credit.	**0**

Level	AO2: Interpretation and Application	Marks
4	• Very good interpretation and application of relevant sociological material. • The material selected will be accurately interpreted and consistently applied to the question in a logical and well-informed way.	**10–11**
3	• Good interpretation and application of sociological material. • The material selected will be accurate and relevant but not always • consistently applied to the question in a way that is logical and clear	**7–9**
2	• Reasonable interpretation and application of sociological material. • The material selected will be mainly accurate but its relevance to the question may be confused or unclear at times.	**4–6**
1	• Limited interpretation and application of sociological material. • The material selected is relevant to the topic but lacks focus on or relevance to the specific question.	**1–3**
0	• No interpretation and application worthy of credit.	**0**

Level	AO3: Analysis and Evaluation	Marks
4	• Very good analysis and evaluation. • Clear and sustained analysis of the view on which the question is based, with detailed and explicit evaluation. • There is also likely to be a range of contrasting views and/or evidence discussed, demonstrating good understanding of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.	**12–15**
3	• Good analysis and evaluation. • The evaluation may be explicit and direct but not sustained, or it will rely on a good outline of contrasting views and/or evidence, clearly focussed on evaluating the view in the question. • The response demonstrates some understanding of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.	**8–11**
2	• Reasonable analysis and evaluation. • There is a description of some relevant contrasting views and/or evidence but these are only implicitly focussed on evaluating the view in the question. • The response demonstrates some awareness of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.	**4–7**
1	• Limited analysis and evaluation. • There are a few simple points of implicit or tangential evaluation. • The response demonstrates little awareness of the complexity of the issues raised by the question.	**1–3**
0	• No analysis and evaluation worthy of credit.	**0**