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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

SOCIOLOGY **9699/42**

Paper 4 Globalisation, Media, Religion **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 70

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Social Sciences-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.

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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.

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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

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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.

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	**'Poverty in developing societies is a result of colonialism.' Evaluate this view.** **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 the past and today. 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 global system which ensures less economically developed countries remain poor. Candidates may also be aware of the impact of non-Western colonialism in the past and neo-colonial exploitation by, for example, China and Russia more recently. Evaluation 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. Colonialism 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). • Marxist sociologist Frank 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.	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
1	• Wallerstein 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. • Arguments and evidence about new forms of colonial or neo-colonial influence, such as that associated with Russian and Chinese influence in developing countries. Against: • It may be incorrect to assume that colonialism and neo-colonialism are simply exploitative and that they have brought no benefits to developing societies. • Modernisation theorists argue that adoption of Western neoliberal values is important in overcoming poverty in the developing world. • Factors other than colonialism 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. • Evidence that 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 and power relations 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). • 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.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	**'Global migration has only positive consequences for migrant groups.' Evaluate this view.** **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 positive consequences for migrant groups. For example, neoliberals argue that global migration contributes to economic growth and benefits both the sending and the receiving 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. Good evaluative responses will also consider opposite views that suggest migrant groups derive few or no benefits from global migration. 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. **Indicative content** For: • Functionalists argue that all can benefit from global migration if cultural barriers to assimilation are overcome. 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. • 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. • Age may be a factor in determining the experience of migrant groups; younger migrants may find it easier to adapt and succeed in the host country. • The experience of migration may vary depending on ethnicity; for example, if an ethnic group is already well established in the host country, this may make life easier for migrants of that ethnicity to integrate and succeed.	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
2	Against: • 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 spoilt 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.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	**'Media representations negatively stereotype some social groups more than others.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** The question invites discussion of whether the media negatively stereotypes some social groups more than others. Support for the view on which the question is based might include discussion of groups who may be negatively stereotyped by the media, such as women, the working class, the underclass, and ethnic minority groups. Examples of groups who may be positively stereotyped by the media might also be used to draw appropriate contracts with other groups who are negatively stereotypes. A good evaluative response will consider possible counter arguments to the view expressed in the question. This might include a discussion of changes in the media in recent years and how this has affected media representations of groups who previously have been heavily stereotyped in a negative frame. For example, some blatant forms of sexism have largely been expunged from the media in the UK and many other countries, and images of the working class have become more favourable to that group in some media in recent years. Candidates might also refer to the new media arguably offering more opportunities for audiences to challenge negative stereotypes and to participate in the production of content that represents less advantaged groups with greater fairness. Overall, researchers disagree about the extent to which media representations continue to negatively stereotype some groups and the difficulty of drawing firm conclusions on this subject is likely to form the basis of good analytical answers. **Indicative content** For: • Marxist and feminist views that media representations reinforce class and gender inequality. • The media often use gender stereotypes that present women in a negative light and reflect patriarchal ideas about the appropriate role of women in society. • Some media outlets still use objectified and sexualised images of women to advertise products and attract interest from male audiences. • Studies have shown that media content often defines key concerns for women as beauty, appearance, family, relationships, and childcare. This fits with a patriarchal view of women as conforming to traditional female roles. • Studies of how the working class is presented in media content and links to negative stereotypes – GUMG, Owen Jones. • Negative stereotypes of the poor/underclass – McKendrick et al. • Media representation of youth and the elderly. • Research on moral panics and folk devils • Media representations of race and ethnicity. • Underrepresentation and stereotyping of ethnic minorities in the media. • Labelling of migrant groups in the media.	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
3	Against: • There have been changes in the way males and females are presented in the media in recent years to reflect opposition to sexism and gender stereotyping. • The increasing economic power of women and some ethnic minorities in many societies has encouraged some media outlets to avoid alienating female and ethnic minority audiences (targets of potential advertisers) with the use of derogatory or patronising stereotypes. • It depends on the type of media; some media are more progressive in their representations of less advantaged groups than other media. For example, formerly broadsheet newspapers versus tabloid newspapers. • Some media outlets are committed to combatting inequality in the media. • People working within the media have been effective in challenging negative stereotypes in media content. • The new media have provided opportunities for many less advantaged groups to create media content (Facebook and YouTube, for example) and to challenge negative stereotypes and in the media. • Increasing regulatory constraints on the production of media content; for example, through equal rights legislation and other measures to promote equality in society. • Postmodernist ideas about the fluidity in media representations and the scope for individuals and groups to transform negative stereotypes creatively.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
4	**'Studies show that the media has a direct influence on human behaviour.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** The question invites consideration of how far the media influences human behaviour and the *evidence* on this subject. Good answers will discuss a range of arguments **and** evidence supporting the view on which the question is based. Studies supporting the idea of the media having a direct influence will feature in sound accounts of the view on which the question is based. Responses might also include a review of various models of media effects that see the media as having a direct influence on behaviour. The hypodermic syringe and mass manipulation models both suggest that the media can have an immediate and controlling influence on behaviour, for example. An evaluative response is likely to reflect on possible limitations in the study evidence supporting the case for a direct influence. Candidates might also consider alternative models of media effects that reject the idea of a direct and controlling influence on behaviour. The uses and gratification model, for example, suggests that people are not passive consumers of the media but make choices about how to use the media to satisfy personal needs. Other models of media effects (reception analysis model and cultural effects model) suggest that the influence of the media varies between groups and may be subtle and indirect. Distinguishing between different types of media (new media and traditional media, for example) could provide a further angle for the analysis of media effects. **Indicative content** For: • Some studies have claimed to show that the media has a substantial and direct influence on human behaviour. This includes the studies by Bandura, Newson, and Charlton. • Studies suggest that the media play a pivotal role in the creation of moral panics and in deviancy amplification. This shows that under certain circumstances the media can have a significant impact on audiences. • The hypodermic syringe model sees media content as acting like a drug that is injected into audiences who are then directly influenced in the way they think and behave. • The mass manipulation model advanced by some Marxist thinkers also sees the media as a powerful tool of propaganda and ruling class ideology. Through this ideology people are encouraged to think that the capitalist economic system is fair and acceptable. They would not think in this way without being influenced by ideological agencies such as the media. • Companies and governments would be unlikely to spend so much money on media advertisements if they believed audiences were unaffected by exposure to media content. • Evidence of the strong influence of the media in helping authoritarian regimes maintain power. • Evidence about the use of the media for propaganda purposes by both democratic and authoritarian regimes during wartime.	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
4	• The influence of the media in recent democratic elections, such as the 2016 and 2020 US Presidential elections. • Celebrity influencers and the power of social media. Discussions of the 'copycat effect' of the new media. • Examples from of media influence from different countries. • Studies and evidence about the role of the new media in radicalisation. Against: • Studies of whether exposure to violence in the media leads people to behave violently have been largely inconclusive. • Other studies of media influence, such as those focusing on the impact of advertising and on voting behaviour, have also failed to produce definitive results. • Isolating the influence of the media to study effects on the way people think and behave is very difficult to achieve. There are other methodological difficulties in investigating media influence, and this also adds to the difficulty of securing conclusive evidence about media effects. • Criticism of the determinism and reductionism in direct effects models of media influence. • The two-step flow model supports the view of the media having only a weak and indirect impact on behaviour. • Cultural effects model suggests that any influence of the media is indirect and established only through a long period of exposure to media messages. • People are not passive consumers of the media, rather they choose how they use the media to satisfy their own personal needs. This view is supported by the uses and gratifications model, in particular. • Fears prevalent in the 1930s that people would be brainwashed by the media have proved unfounded. • Media messages can be interpreted in different ways; how individuals and groups interpret those messages is influenced by factors which the media have little control over, such as gender, class, age, ethnicity, and community.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
5	**'Religion contributes to the inequality experienced by women in society.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** The question invites consideration of the relationship between religion and gender inequality experienced by women. 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. Women are encouraged to follow traditional gender roles in society in many religions. Moreover, there is low involvement of women in positions of authority in most religious organisations. Some women report that involvement in religion has damaged their self-esteem and sense of freedom; they feel oppressed by the exercise of religious authority. Traditional feminist analysis of religion and its contribution to gender inequality can be countered in various ways. This includes reference to 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. Good answers might consider how the position of women in religious organisations may be changing and how the involvement of women differs between religions (gender inequality appears to be less pronounced in some religions than others). **Indicative content** For: • Religious support for conservative values that emphasise traditional gender roles for women. • 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. • Examples of religious support for opposing causes that feminists have campaigned for, such as abortion rights, civil marriage, and freedom from arranged marriages. • 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. • The promotion of some women within religious organisations may be a form of tokenism that conceals ongoing underlying patriarchy in these organisations. • Examples of cults and sects where significant exploitation of women has been found. Against: • Danger of over-generalising as the position of women in religion varies greatly between different religious organisations.	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
5	• Some religions are responding positively to calls for women to have greater opportunity to access positions of authority, including through ordination. • Women are now the largest worship group in many religions. • 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. • Some women claim that involvement in religious organisations has helped them form strong networks with other women through which they have often been able to improve their social position. • Some religions have always been further forward than others in supporting gender equality; for example, Sikhism and Quakerism. • Religious organisations have had to adapt to wider social changes, such as the move towards gender equality, to remain relevant and attract members. • Some religions are generally patriarchal, but aspects of them can still provide significant opportunities for women. • Only detailed study of what females think and feel about their experience of religion will shed light on whether they find religion oppressive. • The secularisation thesis suggests that religion has little social significance today and so the influence of religion in contributing to patriarch and the oppression of women may be very limited for much of the female population. • Coverage of more recent feminist contributions to the debate, highlighting positive as well as negative aspects of religion in relation to the experiences of females.	

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Question	Answer	Marks
6	**'Religious organisations remain an important influence in society.' Evaluate this view.** **Key focus of the question** This question invites candidates to consider whether religious organisations remain as important in society today as in the past. Arguments and evidence supporting the view on which the question is based are likely to be derived from sociologists who have challenged the idea of a decline in the influence and power of religious organisation in society. Candidates might also consider whether the view expressed in the question is true of all religions today. Catholicism, for example, remains a powerful influence in some European countries and this might be contrasted with the arguably weaker position of the Church of England in the UK today. Likewise, religious influence may vary between countries, for example the political power of Islam in most of Middle East or Hinduism in India. Also, the Evangelical movement is proving a powerful force in many parts of the world presently, attracting many adherents. The growth of new religious movements and New Age groupings might also be explored as a further angle on debates linked to the question. An evaluative response may draw on the secularisation thesis in arguing that religious organisations have lost social significance in modern times. Examples of loss of social significance include the declining role of religion in civic ceremonies, less involvement in government, declining role as a source of moral authority, less involvement in the education system, and the general decline in membership of religious organisations and, arguably, in religiosity. Candidates might also point to a switch from support for established religious organisations to more individualistic forms of religious observance and belief. Declining moral authority of religious organisations may also be cited in arguing against the view in the question. **Indicative content** For: • Religious organisations remain a powerful influence on public life in some societies. Contrasts between western and non-western societies may be relevant in this respect. • For some communities/ethnicities, religious organisations remain a central part of social and cultural life. • Many religious organisations are seeking to rejuvenate themselves by, for example, renewing their involvement in the community and engaging more in social and political issues. • Even in secular societies, religious organisations may still be an important influence on social and political life. Examples include the significant influence of the Christian right in US politics and the Catholic Church in Italian public life. • There is evidence of religious revival in some countries. • Some religions appear to be gaining followers (Evangelism in the US, for example).	**35**

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Question	Answer	Marks
6	• Claims that people are less religious than in the past can be questioned. For example, there is a lack of evidence about how religious people were in previous periods. This is relevant because religious organisations may need the power of numbers to be able to exercise influence in society, e.g. to shape political decisions. • Growth of NRMs which can be seen as new forms of religious organisation. Against: • In many countries, religious organisations are less involved in public life and in the institutions of the state today, e.g. less power to influence the school curriculum. • Declining role of religion as a moral authority in society, supported by postmodern views of the decline of the metanarrative. • Religious organisations play a less prominent role in civic ceremonies today. • Evidence of falling membership of religious organisations and competition from other belief systems. • The social and cultural significance of religion has declined in many countries, e.g. decline in church weddings, involvement of religion in national ceremonies. • Examples of where the power of religious organisations may have been exaggerated. • Media or other factors such as consumerism have become the new opium of the people and reduced the influence of religious organisations (Marxism). • Impact of feminist critique has drawn attention to less desirable aspects of religious organisations, including gender inequality. • Consumerism is a stronger influence in people's lives today than religion. • Growth in privatised forms of religion and believing without belonging can be viewed as evidence of the decline of established religious organisations. • Science and rationalisation have undermined the influence of religion/religious organisations. • Alternative forms of spirituality have emerged to challenge the appeal of religion.	

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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

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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

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