



This is a revision focused activity, putting together the earlier skills learnt. It is about creating an end product, applying the skills required by AO1. A bulleted summary is given, though it is not necessary to develop all the bullet points. The order of the bullet points may also need changing. A variety of quotations are provided, but again, not all are required. You will need to do your own intermediate summaries and produce a completed essay within the 25 minute time available.

## ESSAY TITLE:

### An examination of the problems for Jewish communities and individuals living in Britain today in practising their faith.

#### Food

- Keeping kashrut – Orthodox Jews keep the laws of kashrut in their entirety and with exact care, insisting that foods be certified by a trained rabbi. It is difficult in some cities to maintain this.
- Eating out at restaurants, although use of a shomer for large gatherings at non-Jewish places e.g. hotels etc.
- Some close-knit communities e.g. in London and Manchester, do have access to kosher butchers.
- Danger of separation and isolation from other non-Jews.
- Hoffman argues that ‘The Orthodox position is that the traditional Halakhah is binding... They are a reminder of distinctiveness. They require discrimination, recognising that the body and food are given by God who calls for holiness in his people.’

#### Dress

- Hasidic Jews have distinctive appearance and style of dress.
- Men have beards and side-curls obeying Leviticus 19:27, they dress in black suits with long black coats, white shirts and a large black hat or a fur hat known as a shtreimel for special Jewish occasions.
- Women wear skirts which cover the knees; sleeves extend over the elbows; and low necklines are not allowed and when married, she usually wears a wig.
- Problems: stand out, instantly visibility, vulnerable to ridicule and discriminatory, anti-Semitic action. One of the largest Hasidic communities in Europe is to be found in North London and



forms its own cohesive community that is self-sustaining.

## Religion

- British society does not recognise Shabbat.
- Difficulties in separating from society on a Saturday – pressures on children etc.
- Synagogue attendance may be difficult.
- May not fit in with modern work hours.
- Requirements of Shabbat e.g. home before sundown on Friday is difficult for workers in winter.
- Specific marriage and divorce rituals, problems with delays to funerals, ceremonies (brit milah) seen in a negative light by secular society etc.

## Education

- The issue of state schools (ethos, mixed gender, non-Jewish collective worship, kashrut etc.)
- Faith schools may isolate Jews further.
- There are many Jewish parents who send their children to state schools and are dependent on the synagogue for their Jewish religious education. The synagogues organise a system of supplementary Jewish studies, and the children attend class after school and on Sundays.



## QUOTATIONS

'These commandments that I give to you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children.'  
(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

The Mishnah lays down a balanced educational programme: 'At five... (should be taught) Scripture, at ten Mishnah... at fifteen Talmud.' (Unterman)

'The (UK) law affords various types of aid to Jews who wish to adhere to their beliefs without suffering discrimination because of their ethnicity or religion.' (The Employer's Guide to Judaism)

'Practising Jews work in all areas of industry, trade and professions, and are able to operate within a normal work environment while still fully observing their Judaism.' (The Employer's Guide to Judaism)

'To the Hasid, this mode of dress proclaims him a servant of God. His clothing is a constant reminder to the outside world and to himself of his chosen religious discipline, his separateness.' (Robinson)

'Of particular importance to Reform is the distinction that is made between private and communal life.'  
(Hoffman)

'...the dietary laws have the incidental consequence that Jews who wish to keep them need to live in Jewish communities where the supporting institutions of kashrut are to be found...' (Unterman)

'A kashrut-observing Jew is brought face-to-face with his belief in the Almighty every time he lifts a fork to his mouth or puts a box of cereal in his shopping cart. To achieve that complete sense of connectedness to the Holy, an extra set of dishes seems a small price to pay.' (Robinson)

'Only be sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life...' (Deuteronomy 12:23)

'(Food laws) train us to master our appetites; accustom us to restrain our desires; and to avoid considering the pleasures of eating and drinking as the goal of man's existence.' (Maimonides)

'A man's table is like the altar.' (Talmud)