



General Certificate of Education

Philosophy 5171/6171

PLY2 Moral Philosophy or Philosophy of Religion

Mark Scheme

2006 examination -June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute ‘model answers’: they are intended as an ‘aide-memoire’ for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels of response marking criteria.

1

Total for this question: 45 marks

(a) Briefly explain what is meant by moral relativism. (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of what is meant by moral relativism. Explanation is likely to refer to the fact that different societies, different groups within the same society and/or the same society at different times are characterised by different cultural values, norms and practices. Moral beliefs and practices are culturally specific so relative to particular cultures or subcultures at particular times. There are no (or few) moral absolutes. Explanation may be assisted by brief illustration. Some may present relativism as a problem for moral realism. Answers at the bottom of this level may be characterised by illustration and limited explanation of relativism.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge and understanding by defining moral relativism briefly without further explanation (or illustration). Answers at the bottom of this level provide a partial and confused explanation of relativism. Some understanding may be present in tangential evaluative approaches focused on a critique of relativism.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

(b) Explain and illustrate one account of what is meant by ‘moral progress’. (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **one** account of what moral progress might consist of. This could be selected from cognitive positions (ie an account generally focused on getting closer to/discovering further moral truths or facts through, for example, the development of abilities to intuitively grasp self-evident moral truths, or the development of abilities to sense moral facts or use factual evidence to provide reasons in support of moral claims) *or* non-cognitive positions (in which case an account of progress might focus on the development of consistency and the ability to track coherent and logical relations between moral claims or, perhaps, the development of feelings of approval in relation to social change). Responses which list or blur a number of (accurate) accounts should be placed at the bottom of this level.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding probably through offering a confused account, eg the notion of moral progress, or progress generally, is not clear and/or only aspects of the account given apply to progress (for example, tolerance is referred to but it is not clear why we should view this as progress). Responses based on accurate accounts of normative theories (more happiness, more virtue, etc), which assume that, for example, more happiness is equal to moral progress, should be placed in this level as should tangential responses focused on, for example, why moral progress is a myth, but which display some understanding of the concept.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Illustrations of at least one aspect of development or change which could be considered as moral progress should be provided and may be related either to individual or societal progress. This might be drawn from any area of ethics including issues in practical ethics (euthanasia, abortion, the treatment of animals), the extension of rights to certain groups, the environment, business ethics and ethical investments, political actions, etc. Analogies with eg aesthetics may be employed.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs at least one relevant point or example and applies this to provide a clear illustration of **one** account of what moral progress is. In this level the illustration(s) provided clarify the account selected.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs at least one relevant point or example to provide a partial illustration, lacking detail and precision, of **one** account of what moral progress is. In this level the illustrative example only partially illuminates the account *either* because it is brief and undeveloped *or* because more than one account has been provided. Responses in this level may be characterised by detailed exposition, explaining an account of moral progress, and very brief illustration of what moral progress might consist in. Answers at the bottom of this level may assume that the illustration provided (eg x has made more people happy) is progress.
- 1–3 Selects or constructs at least one illustrative point to provide a basic, sketchy and vague illustration of **one** account of what moral progress is, eg it is not clear how the example provided is relevant to the account given **or** to moral progress. Answers at the bottom of this level may consist of vague exposition only, no attempt is made to illustrate.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

(c)	Assess emotivism.	(24 marks)
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

Emotivism is the (non-cognitive) view that as ethical statements do not state facts they are literally meaningless (or factually insignificant). Given that they are not fact-stating they are not the kind of statements that can be right or wrong. Statements are meaningful if they are either analytical or empirically verifiable, ethical statements are neither. Rather, ethical statements express feelings of approval or disapproval and are used for this purpose and the purpose of influencing or persuading others.

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of emotivism.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of emotivism (eg an account in which this view is confused with/barely distinguishable from prescriptivism).
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Some of the following, or equivalent, points should be selected for discussion. In favour of emotivism it might be argued that:

- Moral language is meaningless/factually insignificant and/or that its main purpose is to influence or persuade. This may follow from further elucidation of the positions advanced by Ayer or Stevenson or, perhaps, via some anti-moralist position.
- Ethical issues do provoke strong feelings and the use of emotive language.
- Moral language, or moral disagreement, does not neglect facts but does involve an evaluative add-on to the facts and it is precisely this that provides a link between value and action.
- It is consistent with the fact of moral disagreement.

Against emotivism it might be argued that:

- It is simplistic (boo-hurrah) and does not do justice to the complexity involved in moral reasoning.
- It does not provide a convincing account of how the speaker acquires strongly held moral views in the first place.
- It fails to successfully mark out a sphere of discourse as moral discourse *or* the account of activities present in moral disagreement does not seem especially moral.
- The language of ethics is not particularly emotional or persuasive and/or we can, and do, participate in unemotional, rational discussion in ethics.
- It conflates meaning with use.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, precise and detailed analysis of philosophical arguments about emotivism.
- 4–6 Selects, or constructs, some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of philosophical arguments about emotivism.
- 1–3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague explanation of philosophical arguments about emotivism **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to philosophical arguments about emotivism.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Evaluation is likely to be present in the points selected for discussion, beyond this a reasoned case might include:

- Emotivism is accepted on the basis that morality is rooted in sympathies and feelings that we have, the attitude we take towards the facts, and this is the basis of our moral agency. There are no self-evident moral facts, and neither can we undertake research which would discover moral facts. On the other hand, there clearly are significant areas of moral disagreement about which some do get involved in heated exchanges.
- Acceptance of a non-cognitive approach to ethics but on the basis that it is possible to improve upon emotivism, eg through reasoning, consistency, etc.
- Emotivism is rejected in favour of some version of moral realism – there are objective answers to moral questions and it is the desire to discover them which produces moral dispute and which improves our abilities to reason morally.

7–9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning emotivism and advances a clear position.

4–6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning emotivism, but either the explicit evaluation of material is not used to advance a case or arguments given in support lack detail and precision. At the bottom of this level, evaluation will be implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches.

1–3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of arguments concerning emotivism in which a view is merely described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or the argument is confused.

0 No relevant philosophical insight is demonstrated.

2

Total for this question: 45 marks

- (a) With reference to any **one** of abortion *or* animal rights *or* euthanasia, briefly explain **one** issue causing moral disagreement. (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of one issue causing moral disagreement in the area of practical ethics selected. Clearly, this will depend on the area selected but may involve issues concerning the sanctity of life; the quality of life; when, why and how it might be right to terminate a life; rights and/or duties; sentience and/or happiness, etc. Explanation of the disagreement may be assisted by brief illustration. Some may present the disagreement as occurring due to different theoretical stances. Answers at the bottom of this level may be characterised by illustration and limited explanation of the issue causing disagreement.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge and understanding by outlining an issue without further explanation (or illustration) of what the disagreement is *or* by listing or blurring more than one issue. Answers at the bottom of this level provide a partial and confused explanation of a moral disagreement.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

- (b) Explain and illustrate **two** criticisms of utilitarianism. (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **two** criticisms of utilitarianism. Candidates are likely to briefly outline what classical utilitarianism involves but full marks can be obtained by accurately identifying **two** criticisms. These may be drawn from: the consequences of actions may be difficult to predict; we generally act without first undertaking a utilitarian calculation; the difficulties of measuring happiness and/or pain; whose happiness and/or pain is to be included in the equation; maximising happiness is a ‘thin’ theory of the good and neglects other values which might be socially useful or of benefit to individuals; sometimes acts which are simply wrong would be approved of because, in this instance, they have positive consequences; it is inconsistent with the moral integrity of agents; minority interests and/or individual rights might be neglected; any other relevant point. Responses which list a number of points or blur two together should be placed at the bottom of this level.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding through offering a confused account in which the criticism is not clear or is not clearly expressed *or* by identifying only one valid criticism.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Illustrations of one criticism might be drawn from any area of ethics including issues in practical ethics (euthanasia, abortion, the treatment of animals); the rights of individuals or minority groups; situations where the outcome is not clear or where the balance of pleasure over pain is particularly difficult to assess; situations (eg killing, abusing, lying, etc) where an act which might be seen as wrong in itself is deemed right because it has good consequences/maximises pleasure, etc.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs at least one relevant point or example and applies this to provide a clear illustration of **two** criticisms of utilitarianism. In this level the illustration(s) provided clarify the criticisms selected.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs at least one point or example to provide a partial illustration, lacking detail and precision, of **two** criticisms of utilitarianism. In this level the illustrative example will only partially illuminate the criticisms *either* because it is brief and undeveloped *or* because critical points are blurred. Answers at the bottom of this level may provide good illustrations of only one criticism. Responses in this level may be characterised by detailed exposition, explaining utilitarianism and a criticism of it, and very brief illustration.
- 1–3 Selects or constructs at least one illustrative point to provide a basic, sketchy and vague illustration of at least **one** criticism of utilitarianism, eg it is not clear how the example provided is relevant to the criticism given **or** to utilitarianism or the example is poorly developed. Answers at the bottom of this level may consist of vague exposition only, no attempt is made to illustrate.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

(c)	Assess virtue theory.	(24 marks)
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

A relevant knowledge base could be selected from Plato, Aristotle, Foot, Williams, MacIntyre or equivalent source *or* from a consideration of the role of particular virtues, for example, temperance, justice, courage, wisdom and Christian virtues (faith, love, etc) in questions concerning how we should be. The central point is that character, and the development of character, is placed at the centre of morality.

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of at least one approach to virtue theory.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of virtue theory in an account which is limited to scope and/or depth.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

There should be a clear focus on, and understanding of, virtue ethics, its strengths and weaknesses, possibly with reference to the strengths and weaknesses of other first order theories. Thus:

- In virtue ethics the focus is on dispositions, moral education and developing moral character; the interest is in questions concerning how we should live/how we should be rather than questions concerning particular moral problems, morality is connected to how we are, to what we do rather than to a consideration of rules and principles.
- This may be developed by describing the doctrine of the mean (Aristotle) or via a more recent version of virtue ethics in which the development of character is linked to, for example, immersion in a tradition which gives narrative order to a life and allows excellence to develop (MacIntyre).
- There may be discussions about why learning rules and principles do not equip us for moral action whereas character traits and habits do (a focus on acquiring practical wisdom). Alternatively, it may be suggested that virtue theory can incorporate elements of other normative theories.

Potential critical points include:

- Elitism (at least in the origins of virtue ethics) and/or that circumstance makes it more difficult for some to develop moral character; it is not clear whether we should interpret the theory as relativist or essentialist; whether the doctrine of the mean is of much practical use; whether it provides a complete theory of ethics (do we not need recourse to other moral concepts? what do we do when two possible courses of action are both virtuous?, etc); whether it pays to be virtuous and/or whether virtue is its own reward; whether it is more virtuous to overcome temptation/vice or to not experience it at all; whether it is a circular theory (a virtuous person is one who develops the right traits and lives well: the right traits are those displayed by the virtuous person).

7–9 Selects or constructs relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, precise and detailed analysis of philosophical arguments about virtue theory.

4–6 Selects or constructs some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of philosophical arguments about virtue theory.

1–3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague, explanation of philosophical arguments about virtue theory **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to philosophical arguments about virtue theory.

0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Evaluation is likely to follow from, and be present in, points selected for discussion. Beyond this:

- It may be acknowledged that there has been an increasing interest in virtue theory over the last forty years – this may be linked to dissatisfaction with alternative approaches (eg as overly simplistic or rigid) – and argued that it is useful to focus on virtue as a basis for ethics insofar as it attempts to provide answers to how we should be in order to live well and/or why we should be moral. It may be suggested that it was dissatisfaction with non-cognitive meta-ethical theories that led to an increased interest in the virtues.
- One or more of the arguments against virtue ethics (listed in the previous section) may be developed by some candidates in order to suggest that virtue ethics is inadequate or incomplete as a theory of ethics. Some may argue that notions like obligation, duty and rights are as important as virtue and others might claim alternative versions of happiness are important (eg it's ok to be a satisfied pig). What's wrong with vice?

7–9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning virtue theory and advances a clear position.

4–6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning virtue theory but either the explicit evaluation of material is not used to advance a case or arguments given in support lack detail and precision. At the bottom of this level, evaluation is implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches.

1–3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of arguments concerning virtue theory in which a view is merely described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or the argument is confused.

0 No relevant philosophical insight is demonstrated.

3

Total for this question: 45 marks

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| (a) Briefly explain one philosophical problem resulting from the claim that God is omniscient. (6 marks) |
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **one** philosophical problem resulting from the claim that God is omniscient. Candidates are likely to briefly outline what omniscience means (and *may* suggest that it has different meanings according to whether God is seen as existing inside or outside of time) and suggest a version of ‘free will’ as the relevant criticism. This might appear as ‘whether I can choose for myself’ or as ‘whether I am morally responsible for anything I do’. While no marks are available for evaluative accounts of how the problem might be resolved, full marks could be rewarded to clear statements of the problem within such accounts. Responses which blur a problem concerning omniscience with some other problem, but which demonstrate an understanding of the central issue, should be placed at the bottom of this level.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding through offering a confused account in which the problem is not clear or is not clearly expressed *or* by identifying a problem which is only tangentially relevant to omniscience (eg the problem of evil, the problem of how and why God would intervene in His creation).
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

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| (b) Explain and illustrate the view that religious language is meaningless. (15 marks) |
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the view that religious language is meaningless. There may be references to the Vienna Circle and/or logical positivism but full marks should be rewarded for good accounts of how this view of religious language sees religious statements as neither analytically true nor verifiable, or falsifiable, through sense experience. As these are the criteria of meaning, religious language is not meaningful. At the bottom of this level, answers may be generally correct but lack some detail and/or precision.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge and understanding, possibly by illustrating the view without further explanation *or* by providing a partial explanation. Answers at the bottom of this level provide a basic and/or confused explanation of religious language and meaning, possibly based on the failures of religious argumentation generally.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

The view may be illustrated with examples of non-verifiable religious statements or with examples used in the literature (eg the invisible gardener).

- 7–9 Selects or constructs at least one relevant point or example and applies this to provide a clear illustration of the view that religious language is meaningless. In this level the illustration(s) provided will clarify the problem.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs at least one point or example to provide a partial illustration, lacking detail and precision, of the view that religious language is meaningless. In this level the illustrative example will only partially illuminate the problem *either* because it is brief and undeveloped *or* because it is blurred with a different issue. Responses in this level may be characterised by detailed exposition, explaining the view (and possibly solutions to it), and very brief illustration.
- 1–3 Selects or constructs at least one illustrative point to provide a basic, sketchy and vague illustration of the view that religious language is meaningless, eg it is not clear how the example provided is relevant to the view. Answers at the bottom of this level may consist of vague exposition only, no attempt is made to illustrate.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

(c) Assess the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason. (24 marks)
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

That “our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason” is Hume’s conclusion following his discussion of miracles. This is quite an open question in which a relevant knowledge base may draw from:

- An account of how various arguments for the existence of God fail to provide proof of His existence, attributes, works, etc. Hence, something else is required.
 - An account of faith as, eg belief without justification; a special cognitive state (given through the grace of God); the possession of insights rather than proof, which allow for freely given assent, trust and commitment; a form of life, or language game, or way of being; opposed to reason.
- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of at least one approach to the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason in an account which is limited in scope and/or depth.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Discussion could draw from the following:

- Generally unsympathetic approaches: faith is simply blind allegiance, or fanatical devotion, possibly to a God who fulfils social or psychological needs (religiosity, generally, is written off); it is divorced from the proofs of reason and is simply a kind of pro-attitude or commitment to a way of seeing or being; as belief without warrant it is recourse to the irrational (a way of getting round the limitations of reason); the adoption of irrational 'blikes'.
- Generally sympathetic approaches: faith refers to the subjective aspect of religious belief and to the risk and moral effort involved in hoping and trusting in God; it is beyond and better than reason, it may seem irrational but only to those who have not been touched by the grace of God; faith discovers meaning in a sphere which transcends reason; faith, underpinning a particular way of seeing or being in the world, cannot be refuted by evidence about the way the world *is* because this in-itself is determined by faith; faith does not, and should not, depend on argument.
- An alleged contrast between faith and reason may be dismissed. Faith is supported by, rather than opposed to, reason and objective knowledge (a body of truths expressed in religious doctrines). Faith is not a blind leap in the dark; it involves considering evidence and forming beliefs that are reasonable and consistent. Pascal's wager may be seen in this light. Alternatively, rationality, value and truth belong within a particular, in this case religious, language game.

Clearly, the approach adopted will determine the kind of material selected for discussion which might draw from Hume, Pascal, Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein, Hare, Mitchell, Plantinga, etc.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear precise and detailed analysis of philosophical arguments about the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of philosophical arguments about the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason.
- 1–3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague explanation of philosophical arguments about the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to philosophical arguments about faith and reason.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Candidates may adopt a variety of approaches:

- Faith is a necessary aspect of religious belief but it is not opposed to reason: faith and reason are mutually supportive aspects of religious belief.
- Faith is necessary due to the limitations of reason. If reason were successful faith would not be necessary (or possible?).
- The opposite view – even if knowledge were possible, faith would still be necessary to ground action. It is a necessary aspect of our coming to have a proper relationship with God (commitment, trust, etc.)
- Faith is necessary and opposed to reason. Faith is necessary and transcends reason. Faith is necessary in order for reason to get off the ground.
- It may be necessary in sustaining (supporting) religious belief but it is impotent in defending (supporting) religious belief.

7–9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason and advances a clear position.

4–6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason but either the explicit evaluation of material is not used to advance a case or arguments given in support lack detail and precision. At the bottom of this level, evaluation is implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches.

1–3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of arguments concerning the view that religious belief is founded on faith rather than reason in which a view is merely described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or the argument is confused.

0 No relevant philosophical insight is demonstrated.

4

Total for this question: 45 marks

(a) Briefly explain the view that belief in God is properly basic. (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the view that belief in God is properly basic. There may be references to reformed epistemology or to Alvin Plantinga, but full marks should be rewarded for good accounts of how this view sees belief in God as ‘foundational’ in the sense that it does not depend on other beliefs or arguments but rather underpins other religious beliefs. There may be some references to the failure of arguments attempting to prove God’s existence and/or to the view that, as a matter of fact, people do not believe in God having been convinced by the arguments of natural theology. Similarly, there may be references to God’s existence as being self-evident through our experience and/or to the nature of faith. Some may compare belief in God with other beliefs that might be said to be basic, eg belief in the external world. At the bottom of this level, answers may be generally correct but lack some detail and/or precision.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge or partial understanding by providing a partial and/or confused explanation of the notion of a basic belief, possibly within a tangential account based on religious argumentation generally. Answers at the bottom of this level may display some grasp of the notion of a basic belief through equating basic with simplistic.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

(b) Explain and illustrate **two** reasons for doubting that religious experiences provide evidence for the existence of God. (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **two** reasons for doubting that religious experiences provided evidence for the existence of God. Candidates are likely to provide a brief account of what a religious experience is (eg Swinburne’s five types of religious experience) or of the alleged properties of religious experiences (ineffable, noetic, transient, passive, mystical, numinous, convert the person who experiences them, etc) but full marks can be obtained without doing so. Reasons for doubting that religious experiences evidence God’s existence might be drawn from their subjective and/or unverifiable nature; they are culturally specific and/or individual rather than universal and as such they conflict with and/or reflect existing beliefs; they are unlike other types of sense experience; they do not reveal aspects of God’s attributes, eg infinity; God cannot be ‘experienced’; experiences are deceptive, we cannot get from private experience to reality of God; religious experiences say more about the psychological state of the person than they do about God; other ‘hallucinatory’ experiences have similar properties and we can explain these scientifically; principles of credulity and/or testimony are unconvincing; why does God reveal himself to a few?; the circularity involved in self-authentication; or other reasonable point. Responses which blur reasons together or list more than two should be placed at the bottom of this level. No marks are available for evaluative accounts of how to overcome difficulties.

- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding through offering a confused account in which the reasons are not clear or clearly expressed or by identifying only one reason.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

It is equally likely that an illustration of a religious experience will be provided, and reasons for doubting its credulity given, as it is that the reason for doubt will be illustrated. Either approach is acceptable. Illustrations are likely to be familiar (eg biblical) but any, hopefully imaginative, illustration of, or leading to, a reason should be rewarded.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs at least one relevant point or example and applies this to provide a clear illustration of **two** reasons for doubting that religious experiences provide evidence for the existence of God. In this level the illustration(s) provided clarify the reasons.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs at least one point or example to provide a partial illustration, lacking detail and precision, of **two** reasons for doubting that religious experiences provide evidence for the existence of God. In this level the illustrative example(s) will only partially illuminate the reasons *either* because it is brief and undeveloped *or* because only **one** reason has been identified. Responses in this level may be characterised by detailed exposition, explaining the reasons (and possibly objections to them), and very brief illustration.
- 1–3 Selects or constructs at least one illustrative point to provide a basic, sketchy and vague illustration of **two** reasons for doubting that religious experiences provide evidence for the existence of God, eg it is not clear how the example provided is relevant to the reason stated **or** to religious experience. Answers at the bottom of this level may consist of vague exposition only, no attempt is made to illustrate.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

<p>(c) Assess the cosmological argument for the existence of God.</p>	<p>(24 marks)</p>
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Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

The universe's existence is offered as proof of God's existence (on the basis that we cannot account for it without recourse to something else, God). Dimensions of the argument are:

- God as prime or unmoved mover – explaining why there is motion, why things happen.
- God as first cause – avoiding an infinite regress in the causal chain of events.
- God as sufficient reason – the necessary, non-contingent, basis of why something exists at all.

It is likely that most candidates will refer to the first cause argument.

- 4–6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the cosmological argument. Answers at the bottom of this level will probably focus purely on God as the uncaused cause of the universe.
- 1–3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of the cosmological argument in an account which is limited in accuracy and/or depth.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding is demonstrated.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Some effort may be made to explain the appeal of the argument, eg to account for *why* there is something rather than nothing. However, it is more likely that some well-rehearsed objections will appear:

- Is *rest* the natural state of things and is it necessary to explain *motion*? What meaning can be given to ‘cause of itself’ or ‘necessary being’? Why look for a ‘sufficient reason’? Is it possible to explain the *why* of natural order by referring to something outside of natural order? Is logical argument compatible with the *a posteriori* nature of the argument?
- We should treat the universe as a ‘brute fact’. Viewing it as God’s creation offers us no more than viewing the universe as something which just happened to happen. Is the universe less intelligible because not fully explained?
- Must every event have a cause? Every event might have a cause but does it follow that the series of events has a cause? Why can’t there be an infinite series of causes? Why must there be a single first cause? Experience provides us with an understanding of causation and this does not extend to the origins of universes. Is the argument contradictory? Everything is caused *and* there is a first cause.
- Does the argument satisfy psychological needs rather than valid reasoning?
- Does science offer a more plausible explanation of the origins of the universe?
- Does the argument lead to the God of the theists?

A good account of Hume’s objections, and replies to Hume, will cover a range of points.

- 7–9 Selects or constructs relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear precise and detailed analysis of philosophical arguments about the cosmological argument for the existence of God.
- 4–6 Selects or constructs some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of philosophical arguments about the cosmological argument.
- 1–3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague, explanation of philosophical arguments about the cosmological argument **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to philosophical arguments about the cosmological argument.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points are made.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Evaluation is likely to be present:

- Through assessment of (critical) points selected for discussion, ie an evaluation of the quality of the argument. This might lead to the argument (or aspects of it) being firmly rejected or accepted.
- Through assessment of the conclusions licensed by the argument, eg while we might accept the notion of a first cause should we also accept the God of the theists as this first cause? If we accept the notion of a beginning must, should or can we also accept the idea of God as explanation of this beginning?

- 7–9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning the cosmological argument for the existence of God and advances a clear position.
- 4–6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning the cosmological argument for the existence of God, but either the explicit evaluation of material is not used to advanced a case or arguments given in support lack detail and precision. At the bottom of this level, evaluation will be implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches.
- 1–3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of arguments concerning the cosmological argument in which a view is merely described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or the argument is confused.
- 0 No relevant philosophical insight is demonstrated.