



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies (5061/6061)

**RS06 *An introduction to
Religion and Science***

Mark Scheme

2007 examination - June series

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

[Marks for 10-mark questions are shown in brackets]

Level	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks
5	Appropriate form and style of writing, clear and coherent organisation of information, with appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples.	13-15 [9-10]	A very good response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and arguments are critically analysed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate conclusion.	13-15
4	Appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information, mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / examples.	10-12 [7-8]	A good response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn which follows from some of the reasoning.	10-12
3	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing, some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary. Satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing reasonable understanding.	7-9 [5-6]	Main issues are addressed and views are considered, with some supporting evidence. There is some attempt at analysis or comment. Evaluation may not be fully supported by reasoning or evidence.	7-9
2	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.	An outline account, including some relevant material. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding. Some coherence.	4-6 [3-4]	A simple argument, with some evidence in support.	4-6
1	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Slight signs of understanding.	1-3 [1-2]	A few basic points which are relevant, but no real argument.	1-3
0	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0

RS06: An introduction to Religion and Science

- 1 **Read this passage and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.**

'The Big Bang theory argues for a scientific understanding of the origin of the universe. Despite this, many religious believers would not see a conflict between a religious understanding of 'creation' and a scientific understanding of the origin of the universe.'

- (a) Outline the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe.**

Big Bang – explosion of space / time, 15 billion years ago, the cooling of the universe – emergence of hydrogen and helium, expanding universe, cooled, no concept of “before” Big Bang as time began at that point.

Level 3 maximum for simple outline of basic theory.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b) Explain why many religious believers see no conflict between a religious understanding of 'creation' and a scientific understanding of the origin of the universe.**

Asking different questions – how? / why? questions, e.g. the results of laws of nature / why there are laws of nature? – what is in time? / what is beyond time?

Science incomplete – religion fills gap.

Non-literal approach to religious accounts – make it consistent with scientific theory.

Level 4 maximum if only one area fully discussed.

(10 marks) AO1

2 (a) Explain the following definitions of miracle:

***‘A violation of a law of nature by a supernatural agent’, and
‘An amazing coincidence of religious significance’.***

Violation of a law of nature

Unexplained events beyond what we know nature can do.

Objective. Interventionist. Expect examples to illustrate.

Cause of such events is divine intervention.

Answers may include Aquinas’ 3 types of miracles – what nature cannot do; what nature can do, but not in this order; what is usually done by nature, but without the operation of the principles of nature.

Amazing coincidence

Expect Holland’s boy on railway line, “natural” events. Interpretive, subjective, personal, no direct supernatural intervention (or actual intervention to bring about ‘natural’ event).

Possible discussion of different types of religious significance.

Level 4 (10 marks) maximum if only one fully discussed.

(15 marks) AO1

(b)(i) Explain the difficulties raised for religious believers by defining miracle as ‘a violation of a law of nature by a supernatural agent’.

Problem of identifying a law of nature.

Can God violate his own laws?

Problem of interventionist God.

Inadequate definition of miracle (e.g. omits religious significance / beneficial).

(10 marks) AO1

(ii) Assess the extent to which defining miracle as ‘an amazing coincidence of religious significance’ overcomes these difficulties.

Yes – overcomes difficulties

Removes scientific / law of nature debate as can be natural but beneficial timing.

No – doesn’t overcome difficulties, raises more

Beneficial timing may still demand breaking law of nature to bring about.

Does it remove supernatural aspect and become subjective?

Good candidates will discuss that both have same difficulties, e.g. interventionist / moral God.

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) ***Outline the design arguments for the existence of God as presented by both Aquinas and Swinburne.***

Aquinas

Things in nature, which lack knowledge, act for and achieve their end. Such things require a being with knowledge / intelligence to direct them. Therefore such a being exists / God.
Good candidates may include Arrow / archer illustration / final causes.

Swinburne

Regularity – temporal and spatial.
Analogy – laws of nature / with those produced by (rational, free) man – therefore similar agent.
Probability – universe complex – brute fact or chance as inadequate alternatives.
Extent of design – must be a reason for ways things are arranged (parable of card shuffling machine).
Expect candidates to either explain fully one aspect of Swinburne’s argument or briefly explain two or more.

Level 4 (10 marks) maximum for only one philosopher.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) ***Outline the ways in which science has challenged the design arguments, and assess how successful these challenges are.***

Big Bang may explain how the universe achieved order. Evolution seen as mechanism and supposed evidence of support. Disorder in universe.

(10 marks) AO1

Successful

Evidence from science overwhelming, God is more complex hypothesis, denial of supernatural and non-empirical, Oxford lobby (Dawkins / Atkins).

Not successful

Challenges from science not problem: evolution consistent with God, science now showing more “design” and complexity in universe. Laws need explanation.

(15 marks) AO2