



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 6061

**RS12 *Studies in Religion
and Human
Experience***

Mark Scheme

2008 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.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies Advanced Synoptic Unit

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

Level	Unit 12 Descriptor for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2	Unit 12 Descriptor AO1	Marks	Unit 12 Descriptor AO2	Marks
5	Highly appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and very high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Extensive and mature understanding of connections between several different elements of the course of study are demonstrated. A thorough treatment of the topic, which may be in depth or breadth. Information is accurate and relevant. A thorough understanding is shown through good use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate good knowledge and understanding of diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is demonstrated.	17-20 [9-10]	Elements of the course of study are related in a mature and perceptive way to their broader context and to the specified aspect of human experience. A very good response to issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and evaluated perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Systematic analysis and reasoning leads to appropriate conclusions. There may be evidence of independent thought.	17-20
4	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Good knowledge and understanding of some connections between several different elements of the course of study are demonstrated. A generally thorough treatment of the topic. Information is accurate and relevant. Good understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained.	13-16 [7-8]	Elements of the course of study are satisfactorily related to their broader context and to the specified aspect of human experience. A good response to issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought are discussed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate conclusion. There may be some evidence of independent thought.	13-16
3	Mainly 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 accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Reasonable knowledge and understanding of some connections between different elements of the course of study are demonstrated. A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown.	9-12 [5-6]	A sensible attempt is made to relate elements of the course of study to their broader context and to the specified aspect of human experience. A satisfactory response to issue(s) raised. Views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn that follows from some of the reasoning.	9-12
2	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Some relevant connections are made between at least two elements of the course of study. A superficial answer, which includes the key facts and demonstrates limited understanding using some evidence / examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion.	5-8 [3-4]	A little understanding is shown of basic relationships between some elements of the course of study and their broader context or the specified aspect of human experience. Main issue is addressed with some supporting evidence or argument, but the reasoning is faulty, or the analysis superficial or only one view is adequately considered.	5-8
1	Little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.	Some attempt is made to connect two or more elements of the course of study. Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Some signs of understanding. Evidence and examples are sparse.	1-4 [1-2]	Some simple reasons or evidence are given in support of a view that is relevant to the question.	1-4
0	Little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.	Nothing of relevance.	0	No valid points made.	0

RS12: Studies in Religion and Human Experience

Religious Experience

1 (a) Examine scholars' attempts to describe religious experience.

Expect reference to description which might be either characteristics or process, accept both, but there is no need for a balance.

For characteristics expect reference to scholars such as James, with characteristics of mysticism, although accept this also as general characteristics as now presented in some text books. Or Stace's which are general characteristics.

For process expect reference to scholars like Rambo and Farhadian with conversion.

Watch that descriptions of Near Death Experience are firmly focused upon it being a religious experience.

Might move into areas of religious experience here. This would be acceptable provided that there is a detailed religious description of the particular experience.

Explanation is looking for a demonstration from the candidate of a real understanding of the examples chosen, mere lists will not extend beyond mid Level 4.

For Level 5 expect accuracy on both naming of scholars and the description. Award levels on decreasing levels of accuracy.

(20 marks) AO1

- (b) ***Outline some of the ways used to verify a religious experience, and assess how true it is to say that religious experience can neither be described nor defined adequately and so can have no value.***

Outline

Expect candidates to refer to scholars who either describe characteristics or the process of religious experience sometimes set against other experiences.

Or those who look at the outcomes of the religious experience or a claim for one and seek to see changes in behaviour or in beliefs. They may also seek to see whether the changes are in accord with those of others who have had the same experience or that the changes are in accordance with the teachings or practices of a particular religious institution.

For Level 5 expect accuracy of both naming a scholar(s) and the definition(s). Award levels on decreasing levels of accuracy.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

Assessment is focused around the view that religious experience, if it exists at all, is too subjective for any definition or description.

Challenges to this will come from arguments about corporate experiences, tests which are applied and succeed based upon definition or description.

Some may focus upon the concept of ineffability.

There must be some discussion of the value for the individual.

There may be some discussion of the historic value for particular religions.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of 'for' and 'against' with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simple solution.

Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2

2 (a) Examine the influence of religious experience as a source of faith, religious practice and moral behaviour.

Expect candidates to refer to specific recorded religious experiences to demonstrate the influence.

Watch a generalised approach with no example; if attempted must show source for faith, practice and behaviour.

Most likely candidate will deal with each element with example, e.g.

Faith, Paul's conversion experience led him to accept a new faith; can also be about the establishment of a faith or the strengthening of a faith. Muhammad's revelation experiences lead to Muslim practice or Moses with revelation at Sinai leading to the 613 laws. Zacchaeus' meeting with Jesus caused a change in moral behaviour. There may be examples of modern people having a religious experience and then changing their lives from immoral to moral.

Whilst question focuses upon influence, accept some reference to other possible sources, e.g. Paul saw the new Christian movement as a good way to exercise power and thus became a Christian.

There should not be long accounts of the religious experiences; expect reference only, especially where there are elements which demonstrate the influence of the religious experience.

Mid Level 3 for description of the relevant religious experience without full examination of the experience as a source.

Max Level 3 if only one aspect.

Max Level 4 if only two aspects.

(20 marks) AO1

(b)(i) Outline how religious experience could be regarded as the foundation for religious movements.

Again, there should be careful selection of particular examples of religious experience which must be linked to outline of how the experience led to foundation, e.g. Buddha's enlightenment led directly to his teaching about how this could be achieved by others, thus providing Buddhist teaching like Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path which can be regarded as the foundation.

Mid Level 3 for description only of the relevant religious experience.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b)(ii) **Assess the statement, 'Without religious experience there would be no religion in the 21st century.'**

Assessment should pick up the comprehensive elements already tackled in the earlier parts of the question. Discussion might focus upon the value of the historic religious experience set against a view that religion has out-grown its origins. Arguments for continued significance might move beyond the historic to personal and frequent religious experience like prayer or conversion.

Level 5 answers should also tackle the "no religion" element of the question. Watch generalised views about religion being no longer accepted in the present day – this is not the question and thus mid Level 2 should be awarded, at best.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of 'for' and 'against' with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simply solution. Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2

Religious Authority

- 3 (a) **Examine three different types of authority within religion.**

Expect selection from areas like:
scripture
religious conscience
religious leaders
religious institutions.

Examination should provide some description of the characteristics of the authority and must have some examples of how the element has authority and how this might be exercised, e.g. the Pope is 'chosen by God' through the election by the cardinals, tradition provides the Pope with a supreme authority which may be exercised a variety of ways, from the selection of cardinals to the publication of Papal Bulls. There might also be some consideration of 'Ex Cathedra'.

Where three different types is exceeded, only award the best three mentioned and record others as rubric infringement.

Max Level 3 if only one aspect.
Max Level 4 if only two aspects.

(20 marks) AO1

(b)(i) Explain what is meant by the term ‘source of authority’ within religion.

Explanation should be about demonstrating how something is seen to act as a source from which other aspects of authority may be derived, e.g. God is a source, from his revelation comes scripture, from his selection come prophets or messengers, from his actions come selection of leaders. Scripture, messengers and leaders all in their turn also exercise authority which is based upon the initial source, God. Equally it would be acceptable to have source as something which intrinsically has authority, like scripture.

(10 marks) AO1

(b)(ii) Assess how far it is true to say that religious authority has no significance in the 21st century.

Expect views about possible decline caused by challenges to the source(s), e.g. Problem of evil can be seen to diminish the authority of God. Also expect some discussion about failure of leaders to act as expected by followers, e.g. corruption. Some consideration of general decline in acceptance of authority in general.

Set against this might be views about growth of fundamentalist approaches which often vest much authority in source and derivatives. There are plenty of examples of religious authority still being exercised; expect some examples from them.

Maximum Level two if religion in general.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of ‘for’ and ‘against’ with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simply solution. Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2

4 (a) Examine challenges to religious authority and the ways in which religion has responded to them.

Examination requires that there is some clear exemplifying along with demonstrating that there is an understanding of exactly what the challenge was / is. Expect tackling of response on an individual basis for each example. For upper Levels (4 and 5) there needs to be clear demonstrating of the specific response not a generalisation. As with Question 3 the examples must be related to authority and not religion in general (maximum mid Level 2 for general approaches). Watch candidates who adopt prepared answers and may well move into evaluation, which is not part of the question and cannot be credited.

Top of level 3 if only challenges.

(20 marks) AO1

(b)(i) Outline some of the challenges religion has made to secular authority.

Again there needs to be specific examples drawn from religion(s). Level 5 answer will need at least two different examples presented in some detail. Expect illustration from either individuals such as the Archbishop of Canterbury or from states such as Iran.

(10 marks) AO1

(ii) Assess the claim that religious authority is beyond human challenge.

Expect answers which focus upon the idea that all religious authority stems from God or from some exceptional insight into reality. In either case they are so far from what might be regarded as normal human experience they could be said to be beyond human criticism. This is the style of debate sometimes adopted by the more fundamentalist views of religion. A counter approach would be to say that either forms of religious authority has, of necessity, to act through human vehicles and thus is open to challenge since the human contact, by definition, cannot be perfect.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of 'for' and 'against' with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simple solution. Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2

Life, Death and Beyond**5 (a) Examine religious perspectives on the nature and value of human life.**

The examples must be drawn from religion. There does not need to be a balance between nature and value but for Level 5 there must be reference to both. Perspectives means views which may not derive from scripture or tradition but can also include the religious scripture or tradition. Examination requires that candidates are able to show an understanding of the examples given. Watch long accounts about the rights and wrongs of, for example, abortion, which are not related to specific religious perspective.

(20 marks) AO1

(b)(i) Explain what is meant by the phrase 'concepts of spiritual life'.

Expect candidates to tackle this from different understandings. They may take a view that it means living the 'good' religious life, following laws and practices fully. They may mean that it is seeking to rise above the ordinary to the extraordinary contact with God, a moving into higher realms of experience. It might be adopting a very specific form of training, Sufism, Kabbalah, for example.

(10 marks) AO1

- (ii) **Assess the relevance for people today of ideas about the nature and value of human life and about spiritual life.**

This has been opened out to people in general and thus discussion can include the non-religious. There may be some interesting debate here from the spiritual aspects! There should be some discussion about nature and value in a changing world and whether these have or should change. Whilst part (a) was restricted to religion, here it is not and thus candidates may choose to discuss philosophical and ethical approaches to the nature and value of human life, although this is not a requirement.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of 'for' and 'against' with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simple solution. Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2

- 6 (a) **Examine what religion teaches about the relative importance of life on earth and life after death.**

Expect a demonstration of ideas about judgement and how this affects life on earth in many cases. All religions have clear idea that all actions and behaviours have consequences which stretch beyond the immediate. Whilst some examination of teachings about life after death is acceptable, these must be related to life on earth and there should be reference to specific religious teaching not generalised reference to notions of life after death and judgement.

Max top Level 3 if one aspect only.

(20 marks) AO1

- (b)(i) **Examine briefly how life and death are symbolised in religion.**

Candidates may approach this with examples of life and then turn to examples of death, or they may combine the two. Either approach is acceptable. Examination is asking candidates to move beyond mere recording; if examples are used expect explanation about why the chosen example is indeed a symbolism for life or death.

Presentation of symbols with little or no explanation should only reach top of Level 2.

(10 marks) AO1

- (ii) ***Assess the claim that people in the 21st century are only interested in the present and the material world.***

Most likely this will lead to discussion about the value of idea of life after death, but can be focused more into a discussion about relative values held about life on earth and the concept of living whether on earth or after death. Better answers might pick up realised eschatology.

Question is not limited to religious people and thus they can be a widening into those with no religious faith and how they might see their actions being important beyond the present, teleological approaches. Some candidates may choose to discuss the merits or otherwise of the material and take their discussion into the spiritual.

Maximum top of Level 3 where the candidate provides a straightforward presentation of 'for' and 'against' with no debate around the issue showing that there may be a balance and there is certainly not a simple solution. Or there may be no attempt to weigh up the situation / the debate with a discussion focused upon the strength and weaknesses of particular approaches / arguments.

(20 marks) AO2