



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

RSS01 Religion and Ethics 1

Mark Scheme

2009 examination – June series

This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#) which is being introduced for examinations from June 2010

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 Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument . There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	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.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	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.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and 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.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS01 Religion and Ethics 1

- 01 Explain Mill's Utilitarianism and how it may be applied to one ethical issue other than abortion or euthanasia.**

Basic ideas

Consequentialism; that the right action is that which promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest number; the distinction between lower and higher quality pleasures, often associated with Rule Utilitarianism.

Illustration with reference to an issue.

Any issue **except** abortion or euthanasia. It is likely that the separate elements of Mills' Utilitarianism will be illustrated in a better answer and that weaker answers will be more general.

For answers that lack illustration or, use abortion or euthanasia, maximum Level 4.

(30 marks) AO1

- 02 Assess the claim that Mill's Utilitarianism is too difficult to apply as a system of moral decision-making.**

Expect candidates to use some weaknesses of Mill's Utilitarianism to support this view, e.g. cannot predict consequences, cannot measure happiness, cannot clearly identify 'higher' pleasures. Against this view may be an appeal to common sense and public accountability for decisions. The conclusion that it is too difficult to use may be qualified to 'difficult'.

(15 marks) AO2

03 Examine how Fletcher’s four presumptions guide the situationist in making moral decisions.

There may be a brief explanation of the four presumptions but this should be linked to their use as a guide:

Pragmatism the right decision is the one that works, i.e. achieves a loving outcome.

Relativism the right decision relates to the situation in which it is taken – what is right in one situation may not be right in another.

Positivism the faith choice that places Christian love ‘first’ is the basis of the decision-making.

Personalism the individual comes first, not laws. The effect on the person makes the action ‘good’ not something laid down by law.

This question makes a number of demands of candidates. As a guide, please use the following:

All answers above Level 5 must refer to all **four** presumptions.
Maximum Level 4 for answers using no examples of how presumptions may be applied.

(30 marks) AO1

04 ‘Situation Ethics is not compatible with other Christian approaches to moral decision-making.’

Assess this view.

Arguments in support may include that its decisions ‘break’ biblical commandments, with examples. Arguments against may focus on the emphasis on love and the apparent priority of love over law in New Testament material. There may also be reference to the idea that Fletcher argues that Christians should approach any situation with the precedent of law-based decisions in mind, and reject these only in situations where love would not be served by obedience to law. There may be some reference to Christian casuistry, but this can only be a short answer in the time available.

(15 marks) AO2

05 Examine religious ideas about the human condition.

Allow some flexibility in the interpretation of this question.

In the theistic religions expect ideas appropriate to the chosen religion such as created, ensouled, fallen / sinful or led astray; free will; image of God; servants of God; created to worship God / enjoy loving relationship with God.

Lower than angels; stewardship; dominion over animals; tested; suffering; soul-making.

Non theistic (e.g. themes from Buddhism):

rebirth; ever changing combination of mental and physical energies / no soul (anatta); dukkha; potential for Buddhahood / Bodhisattva.

(30 marks) AO1

06 'Human life must always take priority over non-human life.'

How far would religious believers accept this view?

Priority can be explored in a variety of ways and some answers may simply explore the idea that 'it depends on what you mean' debating, e.g. 'non-human life' mosquitoes or higher primates?; 'human life' may mean survival or quality of life, and of an individual or of many people.

e.g. Value of an individual human life may make the sacrifice of an animal life too high a price; Utilitarian value of animals may make it entirely reasonable to use them to benefit humanity in any way required.

e.g. Roman Catholic Catechism paragraphs 2417 and 2418.

(15 marks) AO2

07 Explain the ethical issues involved in legislation about euthanasia.

All relevant issues must be credited – a variety of approaches are possible. Some candidates may offer a more detailed look at a few issues, others an overview of a greater number.

e.g. Would permitting or forbidding euthanasia contribute to the generation of the greatest happiness of the greatest number?

The slippery slope argument – are the possible future consequences of legalising euthanasia sufficient to show that this would be wrong?

Does the individual have the right to die and should the duty of causing death be imposed on any human being?

Would the impact on the doctor patient relationship resulting from the legalisation of euthanasia make this impossible to justify?

Can the extension of dying, with the suffering that may cause, be morally justifiable?

(30 marks) AO1

08 Assess the view that euthanasia can never be good.

In this short answer, the candidate may explore what 'good' might mean and who has the right to decide it, then apply this definition to the debate. Alternatively the definition may be implicit. One or more may be used, e.g.

'Good' – compliant with the law of God / religious teaching.

'Good' – maximising happiness.

'Good' – expressing love.

A distinction may also be made between different types of euthanasia – active / passive / voluntary / involuntary.

(15 marks)

AO2