



General Certificate of Education

# **Religious Studies 1061**

RSS01      Religion and Ethics 1

## **Mark Scheme**

*2010 examination - January 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 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	
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	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.
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

## RSS01 *Religion and Ethics 1*

- 1 (a) **‘Utilitarian thinking is consequential.’**

**Explain the meaning of this statement. Refer to the utilitarianism of both Bentham and Mill in your answer.**

The consequences of an action are the only consideration in deciding whether it is right or wrong. Generation of the greatest happiness of the greatest number = right. Calculation by hedonic calculus (Bentham), quality of happiness and not just quantity (Mill). Each Act to be separately assessed (Act Utilitarianism). General rules to be assessed (Rule Utilitarianism). Clear examples will be needed to illustrate the ideas presented.

Only one of Bentham or Mill – Maximum Level 5  
Neither Bentham nor Mill – Maximum Level 3.

**(30 marks) AO1**

- 1 (b) **‘Happiness is the only goal in life that is worth working for.’**

**Discuss how far you agree.**

Discussion may include – depends on nature of happiness (physical pleasure / higher pleasure / spiritual pleasure); physical pleasure / hedonism may be seen as an unworthy and, in the end, futile goal; higher pleasures depend on intellectual and, perhaps, spiritual development. Answer may also depend on whether goal is within or beyond this life.

**(15 marks) AO2**

- 2 (a) **Examine how Situation Ethics may be applied to one ethical issue of your choice. (Do not choose abortion or euthanasia.)**

Expect good understanding both of the chosen issue and of decision-making process.

The answer should consider the situation; the people whose interests are involved; the options available, and the likely outcome of each. Each of the four principles may be considered here, but this is not required. Better answers would show that different decisions may be made in different circumstances.

Only one issue may be credited.

For answers that only explain the issue or only outline Situation Ethics – maximum Level 3.

**(30 marks) AO1**

- 2 (b) **How far is Situation Ethics a satisfactory approach to moral decision-making?**

Candidates could, but need not, relate their assessment to the issue discussed in part (a). This allows candidates to look at some strengths and weaknesses in Situation Ethics – they may ask themselves ‘satisfactory to whom?’ and deal with different perspectives, e.g. traditional Christian / Kantian on the one hand and confident liberal thinker on the other. Certainly some criteria for ‘satisfactory’ need to be stated or clearly implied.

**(15 marks) AO2**

- 3 (a) Explain religious teaching about equality with particular reference to gender and race. You may refer to more than one religion in your answer.**

The notion of equality may be interpreted in different ways, e.g. of same worth (to God), judged by same standards. Candidates may also discuss equality of opportunity for example. There is no need for both gender and race to be treated equally.

Likely themes:

**Gender**

Genders different but of equal value, with duties that are of equal importance. However, in some traditions most important roles reserved for men and status of women can be very contentious.

**Race**

If the worth of any human being is related only to their moral or spiritual status, race is irrelevant. Historically there have been traditions in many religions that put one race / racial group higher than others (e.g. the apartheid regime was supported by the Dutch Reformed Church).

For answers dealing with only one of these, maximum Level 5.

**(30 marks) AO1**

- 3 (b) 'People with disabilities are less valuable than able-bodied people.'**

**To what extent must religion reject this view?**

The phrase 'less valuable' is deliberately open to interpretation. The following illustrates some possible approaches:

- Some religions appear to link disability with sin, in a previous life or in the womb, or with being out of favour with God. The disabled may be viewed as an imperfect version of an able-bodied person so in that sense, of less 'value'.
- Moral and spiritual worth may be solely related to conduct and spiritual relationship with the divine – disability irrelevant.
- Any condition of birth may be regarded as being 'in trust from God' – to have a special God-given role which is different, but of equal worth, to the role intended for the able bodied.

For answers making no reference to religion – maximum Level 4.

**(15 marks) AO2**

- 4 (a) Summarise arguments against abortion with reference to both ethical and religious teachings.**

Ethical (e.g.) Utilitarian – the consequences may not be the greatest happiness for the greatest number when the possible consequences of allowing abortion are considered. These may include a distorted gender balance in the population; pain to mother and unborn; mental suffering; reduction in diversity within population, intolerance of differences which could have been prevented through abortion; wrong to permit anything that detracts from the greatest possible happiness.

Religious: from any religious tradition(s): e.g. sanctity of life; the unborn as a living human being with potential; abortion as taking innocent life / murder.

For answers dealing with only one of ethical or religious, maximum Level 5.

**(30 marks) AO1**

- 4 (b) ‘The mother’s right to life should always overrule the rights of her unborn child.’**

**Assess this view.**

This offers an exception to the arguments outlined in part (a). Candidates should be aware of situations in which this is a real dilemma (ectopic pregnancy; mother requiring cancer treatment or similar), and may also be aware of actual cases. Arguments that the mother’s life should take priority may take into account the viability of the unborn (e.g. in ectopic pregnancy) or the value of the mother’s life to others. It may also be argued that the decision is the mother’s alone.

**(15 marks) AO2**