



**General Certificate of Education
June 2010**

Religious Studies

RSS01

Religion and Ethics 1

AS Unit A

Final

Mark Scheme

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor A01	Marks	AS Descriptor A02	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in A01 and A02
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*

Question 1 Utilitarianism

0

1

Examine how Bentham's Utilitarianism may be applied to one ethical issue of your choice. (Do not choose abortion or euthanasia.)

A full explanation will include:

- The identification of the choice between alternative actions to be made, e.g. between offering a transplant to an alcoholic or to a non drinker.
- The consequences of the alternative actions to be calculated using the hedonic calculus.
- The action with the outcome of the greatest happiness of the greatest number to be preferred.

Developed ideas will depend on the issue chosen, but may include all sentient beings to be counted within the equation, including animals; choices not made according to who deserves to receive the happiness-making resource, but simply according to outcome. Some alternatives will be calculated to be equally 'good' so the final decision will have to be arrived at in a different way.

(30 marks) AO1

0

2

'Bentham's Utilitarianism is not compatible with a religious approach to ethics.'
Assess this view.

In support

- Some decisions may contradict the moral code of a named religion.
- Using people as a means to an end (to increase the happiness of the majority) may deny them their God-given rights.
- Bentham's utilitarianism gives no guidelines on how happiness-making resources should be distributed, but within a religion this may be essential.
- Suffering / pain may not be wholly bad.

Against

- In many cases the decision reached may be the same – the believer may have a duty to end suffering.
- The sacrifice of the one for the benefit of many may also be consistent with religious teaching.
- Situation Ethics can be presented as a religious form of utilitarianism.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2 Situation Ethics

0	3
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**‘Situation Ethics is the middle way between legalism and antinomianism.’
Explain this statement.**

- Expect a contrast between legalism and antinomianism.
- Situation Ethics does not throw away the rule book; the decision-maker enters the situation with all the precedent of past decisions which are codified in tradition, so it is not antinomian. It also has a clear rule: love. There are various key statements from Fletcher that illustrate these points.

Situation Ethics is not ruled by the laws of any religion; they are to be suspended when love requires it. It is not legalistic. Again, this can be clearly illustrated from Fletcher.

(30 marks) AO1

0	4
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**‘Situation Ethics is not a practical way of moral decision-making.’
Evaluate this claim.**

The meaning of ‘practical’ is open to debate – cannot be used / does not work.
(e.g.)

- Too much demanded of the ability of the decision-maker;
- Impossible to decide what will bring the most loving outcome;
- Moral chaos would result (no one able to agree what the right thing to do is).

BUT

As a method of moral decision-making for extreme situations it is, or can be, useful / practical. Desirable outcomes appear to have resulted from making situational judgements.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 3 Religious teaching on the nature and value of human life

0

5

Explain religious teaching about free will. You may refer to more than one religion in your answer.

In the theistic religions this may involve a brief explanation of the relationship between human free will and responsibility and God's ultimate responsibility as creator and controller of all things. Where relevant, those schools of thought within the traditions which stress predestination and / or determinism may be referred to.

In the non-theistic religions, the idea of karma can be understood to mean that humanity's moral freedom is very limited, although still present.

(30 marks)

AO1

0

6

How far must a religious view of life be fatalistic?

There may be different understandings of fatalistic, e.g. 'ruled by fate' or 'predestined'. It may be argued that having a fatalistic view of life stems directly from a belief that, ultimately, God or Karma determine the events that occur in life and that humanity has to accept such events as 'The will of God' or the consequences of past deeds. If fatalism means not doing anything to mitigate such events, or the suffering that results from such events, then a religious view may not be fatalistic, but 'how far' is open to debate.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 4 Abortion and euthanasia

0	7
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Analyse the various answers to the question ‘when does human life start’?

The Specification lists: potentiality, conception, primitive streak, viability and birth. Answers should show awareness of the condition of the unborn in each one chosen and explain why this stage in development has been identified as the start of life.

N.B. Potentiality is ambiguous – it may be used in the sense that anything which has the potential to become human has the full rights of a human being; it may refer to the release of sperm during sex resulting in the potential for conception to occur. This would imply that the use of any form of contraception denies a potential being the right to life.

(30 marks) AO1

0	8
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‘Unborn babies cannot be murdered.’ Consider how far this is true.

Various approaches are possible:

Candidates may argue that only living humans can be murdered and that if life begins at birth the unborn never lived. A viable baby may, however, be considered a victim of murder if the murder of the mother results in the death of the baby as well – attempts to keep a mother ‘alive’ so that a baby may be safely delivered reflect a view that two lives are at stake and that every effort should be made to preserve the life of one even when the other has died. The time limit on abortions also supports this view. Some religious views are unambiguous – there is a human life from conception and ending that life is murder.

(15 marks) AO2