



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2010**

**Religious Studies**

**RST3F**

**Religion and Contemporary Society**

**A2 Unit 3F**

**Final**

***Mark Scheme***

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## Examination Levels of Response

### Religious Studies (Advanced) A2 Level Descriptors

Level	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
<b>7</b>	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. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated convincingly.	<b>28-30 41-45</b>	A very well-focused response to the 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. The argument is related perceptively and maturely to the broader context and to human experience.	<b>19-20 28-30</b>	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.
<b>6</b>	A generally thorough treatment of the topic which may be in depth or breadth. Information is almost all accurate and mainly relevant. Clear understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are clearly demonstrated.	<b>24-27 36-40</b>	A well-focused response to the 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 evaluation. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related clearly to the broader context and to human experience.	<b>16-18 24-27</b>	
<b>5</b>	A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown. Some knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	<b>20-23 29-35</b>	A satisfactory response to the 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. Some of the response is related satisfactorily to the broader context and to human experience.	<b>13-15 20-23</b>	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.
<b>4</b>	Key ideas and facts are included; demonstrates some understanding and coherence using some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion. Limited knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	<b>15-19 22-28</b>	The 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. Little of the response is related to the broader context and to human experience.	<b>10-12 15-19</b>	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.
<b>3</b>	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	<b>10-14 15-21</b>	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	<b>7-9 10-14</b>	
<b>2</b>	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.	<b>5-9 8-14</b>	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	<b>4-6 5-9</b>	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.
<b>1</b>	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	<b>1-4 1-7</b>	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	<b>1-3 1-4</b>	
<b>0</b>	Nothing of relevance.	<b>0</b>	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance	<b>0</b>	

## RST3F: *Religion and Contemporary Society*

### Question 1 Religion responding to the challenges facing the world

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1

**Explain the attitudes to war within one or more religion(s) you have studied.**

Answers should be able to explain the attitudes rather than simply stating them. There should therefore be reference to the basis for the attitudes. At this level, it is also expected that some candidates will be able to comment on something of the variety of attitudes within the faith(s) concerned.

#### **Buddhism**

- Essentially pacifist position – first of five precepts
- Example of Dalai Lama
- But traditions of martial arts
- Monks training Samurai warriors in Japan
- Wars in Sri Lanka have involved Buddhists.

#### **Christianity**

- Pacifism of early Church
- Overtaken by traditional concept of the 'just war'
- Positions taken by the British and German Churches during World War II
- Rise of pacifism especially in early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Varying positions of the churches
- Quaker attitudes always pacifist
- 21<sup>st</sup> century – majority of churches against Iraq War.

#### **Hinduism**

- Belief in karma and samsara affects attitudes
- Importance of concept of ahimsa
- This covers all forms of harm – not just violence
- Also traditions of kshatriya caste – warriors
- Rules in Rig Veda for conduct of war
- Story of Arjuna raises important issues.

#### **Islam**

- Clear guidelines on ethics and conduct of war
- War only in defence of Islam
- Lesser Jihad
- Holy War – HARB al MUQADIS
- Importance of early cessation of fighting
- Interpretation by some of the 'sword verses'.

#### **Judaism**

- Accepts that war is sometimes justified
- Biblical idea of God leading his people in war – strong image
- Concept of protesting against injustice (Genesis 18<sup>25</sup>; Numbers 16<sup>20</sup>)
- Talmud allows killing of a pursuer to save one's own life.

### **Sikhism**

- Concept of the 'saint soldier'
- Dharam Yudh – just war – in defence of righteousness
- No evidence that pacifism has ever been a Sikh teaching
- But teaching of gurus on equality of all, and the openness of the religion makes the concept of an 'enemy' difficult.

This question can be answered in either depth or breadth. If candidates only refer to one religion, greater depth of response will be expected.

**(30 marks) AO1**

<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
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**'War is a political issue, not a religious one.'**

**Assess how far it is appropriate for religion to concern itself with the issue of war.**

#### **It is appropriate**

- Within religious groups today, there are usually very well informed people with a high level of political and economic understanding.
- Wars involve everyone, so religious bodies have a right to speak out.
- War affects all areas of life.
- War is a moral issue, so religions cannot remain silent, especially when the actions go against the fundamental tenets of the religion.
- Many religions believe in the sanctity of life – war involves killing and the suffering of the innocent.
- When political leaders use religion to justify their cause, it is appropriate that religion should speak out.
- Religion can often provide a voice for opposition.

#### **It is not appropriate**

- Religion and politics don't mix.
- Religion and religious leaders should concern themselves with the spiritual.
- Wars arise from complex geo-political and / or economic issues which may be seen as beyond the scope of religious leaders.
- Wars involve the state government and its political structures. There are elected representatives to deal with such matters.
- There is a complex chain of decision making – not all the issues may be known to those outside the political arena.

Some may take this as religions being involved in wars. This can be credited.

Higher level answers are likely to be able to give some argument of the extent – and to consider circumstances in which it may or may not be appropriate.

**(20 marks) AO2**

**Question 2 Challenges to religion in contemporary society****0****3****Examine ways in which religions are weakened by divisions within them.****Nature of divisions**

This can be approached in a variety of ways:

- It may be denominational differences in Christianity, or divisions between Orthodox and Reform in Judaism or Ramgarhia and Singh Sabha in Sikhism.
- It may also be divisions between, for example, evangelicals and liberals in Christianity, or divisions which are based on social, national or political differences.
- It may be differences based on particular issues, as within the Anglican communion in 2008 and 2009.
- Although this paper is about contemporary society, some historical reference (e.g. Great Schism or Reformation) may be credited, but this should not be the main focus.

**Ways in which they weaken**

- Divisions may prevent the faith community from presenting a united front on issues.
- May even prevent the faith community being recognised as part of the same community, thus making their numbers appear smaller and their status in society less.
- May stop them from addressing important external issues.
- May stop them from focussing on their central message.
- May stop their mission – if this is central to the faith concerned.

Answers which just make general points, without specific exemplification, cannot be awarded above Level 4. Need to show how they are weakened for marks above Level 5.

**(30 marks)****AO1****0****4****'Challenges to religion from outside are greater than those from within.'****Assess this claim.**

Answers may focus on divisions or other internal threats or both.

**Agree**

- Greater threats lie in secular society, which sees any form of religion as irrelevant.
- Or in indifference of majority culture.
- May also be the challenge from outside of other religions.
- May also cite scientific reasoning which may be seen as hostile to religion.
- Or contemporary lifestyle which makes the practice and observation of religion difficult.

**Disagree**

- Divisions within undermine the very structure of faith groups, whereas external threats often serve to unite them.
- Internal divisions may have more long lasting effects.
- Internal divisions often produce threats to leadership which then undermine ability to cope with external challenges.
- Dangers of schism may be illustrated from contemporary or historic examples.

**BUT**

May argue that news of divisions serves to awaken interest in religion and to challenge people to think about the issues.

Or those sometimes internal divisions arise as a response to external challenges, so the two cannot be separated.

**(20 marks)****AO2**

**Question 3 New forms of spirituality both within and outside religions**

<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Examine sociological and psychological reasons for the current interest in various forms of spirituality.</b>
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Expect some **definition of spirituality** – either explicitly or implicitly.

Depending on the sources which have been studied, a variety of reasons may be suggested. These may include:

**Sociological**

- Rejection of forms of outward authority in many aspects of life.
- Breakdown of many traditional social structures – marriage, the family.
- Decline of institutional religion – leading to a need for new channels for ‘inwardness’ and spirituality.
- High pressure; fast paced society.
- Recognition that the material is not the only thing in life.
- Increased stress on individualisation as opposed to ‘congregational’ activity.
- Interest in ‘New Age’ aspects.

**Psychological**

- Increased openness to speak about inward things.
- Increased subjectivity found in many areas of life.
- Spirituality meeting deeper needs.
- Dissatisfaction with the pace of life – and the search for something inward.
- Rise of holistic approaches – mind body and spirit-wellbeing.
- Pessimism about the world – seeking ‘something other’ though not in traditional forms of religion.
- Candidates may also cite influences of literature and the media in stimulating this interest.

There needs to be some breadth of approach for marks above Level 5, but cannot make a rigid distinction between sociological and psychological, as some of these may overlap.  
**(30 marks) AO1**

<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Assess which of these reasons best explains the current interest in spirituality.</b>
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Here it will be up to the candidate to make a logical case for the most significant. They should be able to set their chosen reason against the others, and make a clear case for it, or to argue that no one factor can be seen as paramount. Answers may focus on sociological v psychological or on particular aspects of these reasons.

**(20 marks) AO2**

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**Question 4 Religion and national identity**

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**Examine the role of the ‘established church’ in either England or Scotland.**Expect some **basic definition of the term ‘established church’****Church of England**

- Expect some reference to historical basis, though historical detail is not required.
- Theoretical power of monarch to appoint leaders, though by 20<sup>th</sup> century, political choice.
- Twenty-six bishops having seats in House of Lords.
- Traditionally, some state funding.
- Overlap of civil and Anglican parishes.
- Position of Church of England in society – this is likely to be a key point for many.
- Providing central role for civic and national ceremonial.
- Some ‘livings’ traditionally in the gift of government or monarchy.
- Providing ‘default position’ for religious practice for many people.
- Part of Anglican communion.

**Church of Scotland**

- Role of the monarch when in residence in Scotland.
- Role of the monarch at the General Assembly.
- Official role for national and civic ceremonial.
- Traditional role of the Moderator.
- National significance of the General Assembly – at least until the establishment of Parliament.
- Role of General Assembly in commenting in current issues.
- Part of national identity.
- Presbyterian.

There may be some elements of Civic Religion. These can be credited as long as they are focused on the question.

**(30 marks)****AO1**



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8

**Assess the claim that there is no place for an established church in contemporary society.**

**This may be answered with reference to one of the Churches discussed in the first part, or in a more general way.**

**Agree**

Candidates may make reference to the various attempts at disestablishment, though highest levels can be obtained without this.

- May argue that one Christian Church should not have a position of privilege over others.
- And that in a multi-faith society it is inappropriate for one faith to hold a position of privilege over others.
- In a largely secular society, it is anachronistic for a religious body to hold this status, and does not reflect the nature of society at large.
- 2004 poll showed majority of MPs were in favour of disestablishment.
- Stated intention of Prince of Wales to be 'defender of faith' rather than 'defender of the faith'.

**Disagree**

- May argue that the place of the Church provides social cohesion.
- And helps to define aspects of national identity.
- Provides a focus in times of crisis.
- And for ceremonial / state / civic occasions.

Some may use the differing cases of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and argue that it is the particular form of establishment, rather than establishment itself, which is called into question.

**(20 marks)**

**AO2**