



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

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

- 01 Examine the general principles of utilitarianism with reference to any ethical issue(s) of your choice. (Do not choose abortion or euthanasia.)**

The trigger word 'Examine' requires both knowledge and understanding, with some unpacking of concepts and explanation with reasons, examples or illustrations. The phrase 'general principles' is broad, and is exemplified in the specification with reference to: 'consequential or teleological thinking in contrast to deontological thinking'. Maximum marks could be earned by answers that dealt with these aspects only. A broader approach is also possible.

Happiness the only good – the two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure.
Consequential / Teleological – idea that 'right' and 'wrong' depend solely on the consequences of the action, not on the purpose or motive, or on the intrinsic goodness or badness of the action. There may be explicit or implicit contrast with deontological ethics.

Examples of how consequences may be calculated.

Candidates may also offer examples of how actions may prove to have been 'right' even though they appear intrinsically bad – e.g. Sadistic Guards; gang rape; They could also refer to actions which prove to be right even though their purpose, or the motive behind them was wrong, i.e. intended to give pain, but resulted in pleasure, and actions which proved to be wrong although the purpose / motive was good –i.e. intended to give pleasure, actually resulted in pain.

There may, but need not be, be reference to higher and lower pleasures, and to Act and Rule utilitarianism.

Answers lacking reference to any ethical issue(s) or only making reference to abortion or euthanasia – maximum Level 5.

(30 marks) AO1

- 02 'Utilitarianism is so easy, anyone can use it as a method of moral decision making.' How far do you agree?**

In support: (e.g.)

Consequences can be seen and judged by everyone – so factors that make the decision 'right' or 'wrong' are public and assessable rather than private and hidden. People can learn to make successful decisions on that basis.

Contrary to the statement: (e.g.)

Consequences cannot be calculated;
Long term consequences cannot be seen;
Requires intelligence and experience to be able to make apparently successful decisions.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2 Situation Ethics

03 Examine the following ideas as they appear in the theory of Situation Ethics:

- **situation**
- **conscience**
- **relativism.**

It is not expected that candidates will write an equal amount on each concept.

Situation

The unique and concrete moment in which the decision is required. This is analysed in terms of whose well-being is concerned and what the outcome of the decision will be. A case based approach. E.g. (given by Fletcher): an overloaded lifeboat about to sink in which case all lives would be lost. The ship's mate is in charge and he orders most of the men to dive into the sea. When they refuse they are thrown overboard by one of the seamen. Fletcher describes this act as 'bravely sinful' and 'a good thing'.

Conscience

The specification asks candidates to look at what it is not as well as what it is, but candidates need not refer to both aspects here. Conscience is not a 'thing' that people have but something they do. Not innate moral guide or form of divine guidance; not society's values internalised. Conscience is something we do - our attempts to make decisions 'creatively and constructively'. Conscience is applied before the decision is made, rather than running a judgemental commentary after the event.

Relativism

What is 'right' or 'wrong' is only right or wrong in the concrete situation in which the decision-making takes place. Nothing is absolutely right or wrong. Anything is right if and only if it promotes love in that concrete situation. Something is wrong in that situation if it does not promote love. All decisions relative to love – 'relativises the absolute'.

Answers lacking illustrative example(s) or evidence (e.g. from the text) to support ideas - maximum Level 4.

Answers which do not deal with all three aspects maximum Level 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

04 'There are no rules in Situation Ethics.' Assess this view.

In support:

In terms of fixed moral laws, Fletcher writes 'There are no rules, none at all.' His rejection of absolutes can be illustrated in many ways.

Contrary to statement

Moral laws regarded as guidelines showing what has generally worked out to be the most loving decision, so should be taken into account. 'Love God through neighbour love' can be regarded as a rule, but also as a guiding principle.

(15 marks)

AO2

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

05 Examine religious teachings about the value of human life with particular reference to quality of life and self-sacrifice.

Quality of life

Teaching related to the value of disabled life in comparison to able bodied, or related to those whose experience of living is so poor that little or no value in continuing with it is seen by them and/or others. There could be reference both to the less able bodied and the terminally ill in this context.

Self-sacrifice

Many religious teachings state or imply that there are situations in which believers should be willing to sacrifice their lives. A human life does have an instrumental value as a means to an end, and that end may be achieved by sacrificing that life. Physical existence is only a part of the whole, and it may be sacrificed in order to gain a greater life in the afterlife. This could be supported, for example, with reference to the Buddhist story of the hungry tigress, gospel text, the crucifixion of Christ, martyrdom in Islam and Sikhism and the tradition in Judaism that it is better to be killed than to commit an 'exceptional sin' (i.e. idolatry, sexual immorality and murder)

Answers which do not refer to both quality of life and self-sacrifice – maximum Level 5.

(30 marks) AO1

06 'Non-human life should be valued just as highly as human life.' To what extent could religion accept this view?

Arguments that may be presented include: humanity has a God-given status superior to animals /non-humans; the unique nature of human life gives it a higher status; the importance of a human rather than non-human birth gives it a higher status.

Arguments that human beings have a unique status include those which give human beings higher levels of characteristics they share with animals, and those which claim that humans have different characteristics. There may be reference to sentience; intelligence; moral consciousness; consciousness of mortality.

Arguments supporting equality of value may follow from these. Some animals appear to have intelligence and sentience that is at least comparable to that of an infant, and in particular to humans whose intellectual development is limited. Stewardship places a value on animal life and gives humanity a moral responsibility towards it that could be considered equal to our moral responsibility to other human beings. Diversity of creation may be as /more important than survival of more human beings. Decision-making may therefore be situational – the value of a panda for example, could be considered greater than the value of a human life in the extreme situation in which it was one or the other.

A conclusion regarding 'to what extent' should follow reasoning which reflects differing points of view. There is no requirement for a candidate to offer contrasting arguments of the kind 'Religion must wholly reject this view' or 'Religion must totally accept this view.'

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4 Abortion and euthanasia

07 Explain religious teachings that support the view that ending the life of another human being can never be justified. Refer to both abortion and euthanasia in your answer.

Note that candidates may, but need not, refer to other issues in addition to abortion and euthanasia – e.g. capital punishment; self-defence and just war. They may also refer to one religion or more in their answer.

Examples of arguments include:

- Sanctity of life: In the theistic religions, life is held in trust for God, belongs to God and should be treated like a gift, with care and gratitude.
- Moral commandments: (e.g.) ahimsa in Buddhism and Hinduism; do not murder from Decalogue
- Scriptural teaching: various passages may be referred to – with clear application to abortion or euthanasia where this is not explicit;
- Arguments from scholars / rabbis / imams / Church teaching: e.g. from R.C. Catechism.

Answers which do not refer to both Abortion and Euthanasia: maximum Level 5.

(30 marks) AO1

08 ‘Human beings should be able to decide when to die.’ Discuss how far you agree with this statement.

Teaching on self-sacrifice implies this – and individuals may see death as a way of serving God or achieving the divine purpose of their lives; Utilitarian arguments; quality of life arguments; arguments based on ‘rights’, and those which look at the alternative to being allowed to choose when to die, e.g. those depending on feeding tubes may ask for them to be removed, knowing that this will result in their death. If the principle that they should be allowed to die has been accepted, it is arguably inhumane to require it to be by a slow and probably painful process.

It may be argued that a human being never, always, or only in specific circumstances has that right.

(15 marks) AO2

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