



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

Religious Studies

RSS03

Philosophy of Religion

AS Unit C

Final

Mark Scheme

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 students' 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 students' 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	

RSS03: Philosophy of Religion

Question 1 The cosmological argument

0	1
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Examine the different understandings of the role of God found in the cosmological argument.

The focus is on the roles of God that underpin the cosmological argument rather than a presentation of the cosmological argument.
Expect Aquinas reference to Prime Mover, First Cause and Necessary Being.
Other references to role of God may be as sustainer, temporal first cause, personal God.
Other forms of the argument should be credited.

Maximum Level 5 (23) if the cosmological argument is merely rehearsed.

(30 marks) AO1

0	2
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'The cosmological argument shows that it is reasonable to believe in God.'
How far do you agree?

Expect support to be in terms of its strengths of how it shows that there must be a God e.g. gives explanation, observation, rejection of infinite regression, contingency, scientific theories support.

The challenges will involve criticisms of the logic of the arguments are explanations with out recourse to a God.

An appropriate conclusion will be in terms of "how far" with some discussion as to what is classed as "reasonable".

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2 Religious experience

0	3
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Explain the argument from religious experience for the existence of God.

The focus is on how religious experience can be used to give support for the existence of God.

Possible approaches might refer to:-

inductive argument (e.g. subjective experiences that have a particular characteristic imply divine agent);

direct awareness (i.e. foundational belief, God directly encountered);

cumulative argument; Swinburne's principle of credulity and principle of testimony.

Maximum Level 2 if summary of types of religious experience with no reference to argument for God.

Not all approaches required for Level 7.

(30 marks) AO1

0	4
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'Religious experiences cannot prove that God exists.'
Assess this claim.

Expect support for claim to include some reference to the subjective nature of the experience or the difficulty of establishing the source of the experience.

For the opposing view expect some reference to criteria that would add weight to validity, Foundational beliefs, Swinburne's argument.

An appropriate conclusion should be expressed in terms of "assess" and expect some discussion about "cannot prove" that may include problem of inductive arguments.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 3 Psychology and religion

0	5
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Examine Jung's understanding of religion.

The focus is on Jung's understanding of religion.

Expect reference to the collective unconscious that contains the structures that when combined with our experience generates images /archetypes.

For Jung, all archetypes are religious. Expect some reference to the key archetypes especially God and Self.

To experience the archetype is a numinous experience (Otto) and ineffable and therefore religious.

It is a valid religious experience whether experience comes from objective God or within mind. The importance is that the experience alters consciousness.

Expect discussion about role of religion as maintaining the balance of the mind through innate process of individuation (integration). Wholeness involves balance (between conscious/unconscious mind, different archetypes). Hence positive view of religion.

(30 marks) AO1

0	6
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'Jung's understanding of religion has more strengths than weaknesses.'
How far do you agree?

The focus is on weighing up the strengths against the weaknesses.

Strengths may include arguing that Jung had a positive view of religion and the spiritual journey. Importance of religion for mental health. Not about subscribing to a particular creed or belonging to a religious organisation. Experience of archetype as a numinous experience.

Weaknesses might include criticisms of the theory of the archetypes and its apparent denial of god in the traditional sense.

An appropriate conclusion should be expressed in terms of "how far the strengths outweigh the weaknesses".

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4 Atheism and postmodernism

0	7
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Examine the reasons for the rise of atheism.

Expect a variety of reasons.

Science – natural explanations/astronomical discoveries/evolution/psychology

God of the gaps.

Empiricism – source of knowledge. Scientific approach. Rejection of supernatural.

Problem of God as nonempirical. Knowledge and justification of belief of God deemed impossible. Religious language seen as nonsense.

Problem of evil

Moral absolutes – social change – source of authority of rules challenged. Cultural and relative. Questioning by philosophy -Does morality really require a God.

Other faiths – growing contact with other faiths. Dialogue and contradictions. Cultural influences rather than revelation and truth.

Not all reasons required for level 7.

(30 marks)

AO1

0	8
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To what extent is religion in retreat in the modern world?

To support “in retreat”, expect some citing of evidence for secularization.

Rejection of traditional religion – views of postmodernism.

Religion as cultural constructs. Anti-realism and “God is dead” slogan

To challenge “in retreat”, expect reference to postmodernist view of religion as personal spiritual search and so growth of spirituality. Emphasis on living religion. Growth of religions in some parts of world. Atheism seen as another meta-narrative.

There should be an appropriate evaluation in terms of “to what extent”.

(15 marks)

AO2

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