



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)  
June 2012**

**Religious Studies**

**RSS04**

**(Specification 2060)**

**Unit D Religion, Philosophy and Science**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **General comments**

The standard of the scripts seen during this session was pleasing. Many students were able to answer the questions with depth and breadth and examiners reported reading very few really weak scripts. There is evidence that schools and colleges are encouraging their students to provide more analysis in the AO2 sections and this was pleasing. Even more could be done in this respect. To score marks in the higher levels for AO2, students will need to judge an argument and justify their judgement with further reasoning.

### **Question 1 *Miracles***

- 01** It was pleasing to see that students were able to bring a number of different perspectives to this question and scholars were quoted accurately in support of these perspectives. The question did not require exemplification but better answers tended to refer to biblical miracles as well as more modern experiences. Whenever the religious significance of miracles arises, links between events described as miracles and the character of the deity should always be made.
- 02** The focus of the question was the extent to which miracles raise questions about God's nature. Some students appeared to see this as a straightforward problem of evil question. Students who went on to judge the effectiveness of the arguments put forward on both sides of the question were able to score the highest marks.

### **Question 2 *Creation***

- 03** This question caused the most difficulty. Some answers appeared simply to reproduce all the material relevant to a question on creation. There were many references, for example, to deism which could not be credited. Better answers considered perspectives from Aquinas (without God there would be no universe) to modern scientific approaches (fine-tuning in the universe is suggestive of an involved deity).
- 04** Most students missed the link between this question and 03. It was intended to allow for a discussion on the merits of believing that God is not just a gap-filler and that continuing creation and the evidence for that demonstrate this clearly. In this question, reference to deism could be used effectively.

### **Question 3 *The design argument***

- 05** This was the most popular question on the paper and was answered well. Students were able to articulate Paley's position as well as accurately explain the Humean critique.
- 06** Once again, there were few problems with the question. The better answers considered the 'how far' element but many students were able to counter the effectiveness of Hume with modern statements of the design argument.

### **Question 4 *Quantum mechanics and religious world view***

- 07** Once again, the number of answers was disappointingly small. Students seemed to be more comfortable with the mysticism than with the quantum mechanics but there were some good answers linking these two elements of the specification together.
- 08** The debate about the significance of the links between quantum mechanics and mysticism is little understood. Better answers explained that, for many scientists, linking quantum mechanics with mysticism is simply a step too far. Some students appreciated that drawing these parallels is not important for believers either.

**Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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