
AS

Religious Studies

RSS01 Religion and Ethics 1

Mark scheme

2060
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Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

| <i>Level</i> | 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 | |

RSS01: Religion and Ethics 1

Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 1 Utilitarianism

0 1 Explain how Act Utilitarianism may be used to make moral decisions with reference to any ethical issue(s) of your choice. (Do not choose abortion or euthanasia).

- Makes a decision in the light of the individual situation.
- Aims to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
- Identifies the options available and predicts the likely consequences.
- Applies the calculus to measure the pleasure.
- Chooses the option which generates the most pleasure / happiness.
- Students may, but need not, refer to Bentham.

[30 marks] AO1

0 2 'Act Utilitarianism is not an effective way of making moral decisions.'

Assess this view.

Students may reflect on the meaning of 'effective'.

In support

- Consequences may be difficult or impossible to predict.
- There may not be enough time to use the calculus.
- Not everyone can use act utilitarianism, it requires intelligent decision makers.
- Can lead to decisions which are considered immoral.

Other views

- Takes the individual circumstances into account.
- Intuitively many agree that the 'best' decision is the one that brings pleasure rather than pain.
- The decision is often consistent with other moral codes and seems to match religious teaching such as 'Love your neighbour'.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 2 Situation Ethics**0 3** Explain each of the following:

- **The meaning and importance of ‘the situation’ in Situation Ethics.**
- **How Situation Ethics may be seen as the middle way between legalism and antinomianism.**

The Situation

- **Meaning:** The context in which a decision is required.
- Often one in which the application of law would bring about an unloving outcome.
- **Importance:** An action is right only if it brings about a loving outcome in that situation, so the precise circumstances must be examined before a decision is made.

Middle way**Situation Ethics is not antinomian:**

- It has a law, the law of love.
- Actions are justified only if the outcome is loving.
- Existing moral laws are guidelines taken into account when the decision-maker enters the situation.

Situation Ethics is not legalistic:

- Decisions are made situationally not prescriptively.
- Moral absolutes such as ‘do not kill’, ‘do not commit adultery’, are set aside if they produce an unloving result.

Situation Ethics is the middle way

- Laws are only set aside if the situation requires it.
- Although no actions are ruled out, the chosen action has to be justified as a means to producing love.

Maximum Level 5 for an answer that does not consider all parts of the question – the meaning and importance of the situation and the middle way.

[30 marks] AO1**0 4** ‘A loving action is a right action.’**Assess this view.****In support**

- Love is the only intrinsic good.
- A loving action fulfils Jesus’ command to ‘love one another as I have loved you’.
- Only agape love is meant – it must be selfless and universal.
- An unloving action would intuitively seem to be a wrong action.

Other views

- It depends on what is meant by ‘love’.
- The consequences of a supposedly loving action may be unintentionally awful.
- Right actions are those that obey God / the moral law.

[15 marks] AO2

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

0 5 Examine religious teaching about equality with particular reference to gender and disability. You may refer to one or more religion(s) in your answer.

Gender

Note: There are differing views within each religion as illustrated below. Students should support their answers with relevant references to scripture and / or religious authorities.

Buddhism

- The Buddha is reported to have refused to ordain women, to have said that allowing women into the Sangha would shorten its life by 5000 years and that women had to be reborn as men before they could attain Nirvana.
- Other teachings say that the male/female division is essentially unreal.
- Some Asian forms of Buddhism are still male-dominated, some western forms give equal status to both genders.

Christianity

- Both genders are made in the image of God.
- 'All one in Christ'.
- But in Genesis 2 woman is created as the 'helpmate of man', Jesus chose male disciples and some Churches do not allow women priests.

Hinduism

- Much teaching supports equality and there are both male and female gods.
- Male and female have different roles, both equally important.
- Cultural practices suggest male superiority.
- Vedic ceremonies are performed only by men.

Islam

- Different roles but both equally important.
- Verses such as 4:34 can be interpreted to mean that men have a higher status.
- Cultural practices suggest male superiority, as do inheritance laws.
- Some laws favour women eg it is the duty of the man to support his wife financially but her private wealth is for her to spend as she wishes.

Judaism

- Both genders in the image of God, some understand that God has both male and female characteristics.
- Different roles but both equally important.
- Traditionally in Orthodox Judaism women cannot be Rabbis and can take only a limited role in synagogue worship, in Reform Judaism they can play an equal role to men.

Sikhism

- Teaching stresses gender equality and shared roles.
- They can lead religious congregations and play a full part in diwan (worship).
- In practice this has been hard to achieve because the division of roles leaves many women in the home.

Disability

Three key themes can be found within the religions. These may be illustrated with reference to scripture or religious authorities.

- Disability is a sign of sin, or bad karma, either individual or collective.
- Disability is an opportunity for the power of God to be displayed, or the character of the individuals and those around them to be developed – eg the disabled promote compassion and generosity in others.
- ‘Disability’ should be celebrated as difference – disabled people are of equal value to the able-bodied and should not be compared to them and found inferior.

Maximum Level 5 for an answer that does not consider both parts of the question – gender equality and disability.

[30 marks] AO1

0 6 ‘Religion is not really interested in race equality.’

Assess this view.

In support

- In many societies, a specific religion is linked to a specific racial group and is part of their identity, so the perceived superiority of their religion is linked with their perception that other races are inferior.
- Religion has supported racial discrimination at various times eg Dutch Reformed Church and apartheid.
- Racial equality, where it is supported, may be only within the religion and not affect relationships with outsiders.

Other views

- There is explicit teaching concerning race equality such as ‘We are all one in Christ’, ‘There is neither Arab nor non-Arab, black nor white’ (Muhammad’s last sermon) and ‘The foreigner in your own land must be treated as one of your own.’ (Leviticus, so Judaism and Christianity).
- Some religious groups have taken an active role in promoting racial equality.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 4 Abortion and euthanasia**0 7** Explain the arguments in favour of abortion based on:

- the best interests of the mother
- the principle of double effect.

Best interests of the mother

- If the unborn child is not considered a human being then the interests of that unborn child do not need to be considered.
- A utilitarian might calculate that the greatest happiness would be served by allowing the mother to do what she wishes.
- Killing in self-defence is allowed in many religions.
- The mother has autonomy over her own body.

Principle of double effect

- An operation to save the life of the mother may have the unintended side effect of ending the pregnancy eg in the case of an ectopic pregnancy.
- The action itself is morally good – it saves a life.
- The ending of the pregnancy may have been foreseen or inevitable, but as long as it was not intended, it is permissible.

Maximum Level 5 for an answer that does not consider both parts of the question – best interests of the mother and double effect.

[30 marks] AO1**0 8** 'The unborn child is only a potential life.'**Assess this view.**

This debate takes place within religions as well as between religious and secular thinkers so a variety of approaches is possible.

In support

- In the early stages there is only a mass of cells which may or may not develop into a child or children.
- This collection of cells is not a human being nor like a human being.
- Life does not begin until eg ensoulment, before that time there is only something that may become a child, this can be illustrated from a number of religions.
- Life with potential begins at birth.

Other views

- Life begins at conception.
- From the moment of conception there is a life with potential (RC Catechism) or the presence of a reborn being (Buddhism).
- Life begins at ensoulment.
- those who adopt the view that personhood is a process would most likely see the unborn child as more than potential life at eg 12 or 24 weeks.

[15 marks] AO2