

Examiners' Report
June 2014

GCE Religious Studies 6RS04 1B

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Introduction

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1. The question in AO1 says, 'Examine the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.'

All the level descriptors in the mark scheme for AO1 and AO2 begin with reference to the passage. There are many techniques which candidates used to demonstrate their understanding of the passage and examiners were alerted to this range in order to credit various methodologies. The essential point is that whatever approach was adopted the passage must be central and pivotal.

Some candidates presented a basic summary of the whole article, in this case LaFollette, with only passing reference to the passage in the question. Where material was applicable, candidates were credited but in some cases the passage received only scant attention. In many other cases candidates used the passage as the focal point, analysing it further with reference to the overall article and this method, used correctly, may be seen as an example of good practice.

2. Candidates have improved in answering all the range of demands within AO2:

- Do you agree with the idea(s) expressed?
- Justify your point of view
- Discuss its implications for understanding religion and human experience.

In some cases candidates failed to address one or more of these requirements and presented partial answers and this was reflected on their level of achievement.

3. A feature of good practice was that most candidates made effective use of the synoptic requirements of this paper. In AO1 levels 3, 4 & 5 of the Mark Scheme there is reference to crediting answers that demonstrate the application of different elements of their course of study in this paper.

4. The question was divided into parts (a) and (b): AO1 and AO2 respectively. This was done to help candidates answer the whole question rather than bypassing elements within an assessment objective. Over the years most candidates have followed through the structure of the question but some have conflated these two parts and this has often affected the standard of the work where relevant material in AO2 has been omitted. Exceptionally, a few using this holistic approach have succeeded and produced good quality answers. There was some evidence that the quality of work was higher in AO1 compared to AO2.

5. A number of candidates developed commendable styles of writing including a commanding and confident tone with ownership of the text.

Question 1

Good practice and areas for improvement

AO1 characteristics of good quality:

- well-informed answers focused on the passage
- comprehensive understanding of the passage
- reference to the article as a whole or to related ideas and managed effectively in order to demonstrate an understanding of the passage
- structured answers in a coherent manner.
- effective use of scholarship.

AO2 characteristics of good quality:

- effective use of argument and sustained debate
- material related to other anthology sources and to relevant material in the other three units
- explicit attention to the implications for an understanding religion and human experience.

AO1 work that requires improvement:

- not focused on the passage in an explicit and systematic manner
- basic and too short in the analysis of key points and ideas
- a generic account of the whole article or a general account of related teachings at the expense of a focus on the passage in the question
- scattered references to the names of scholars but without further analysis of their work.

AO2 work that requires improvement:

- largely unsupported by evidence or argument
- limited explicit focus on the implications demands of the question.
- poor paragraphing techniques that restricted the quality of evaluation.
- Observations from the scripts

Students responded well to the passage from Lafollette. The best students were able to make links to the other anthology passages and showed a higher level understanding of the way in which the ethical issues raised in all three passages serve to interact with each other.

This passage lent itself well to use of ostensive examples such as Baby P, Fritzel and the Bulger murderers. These examples worked effectively and were contrasted with a few hypothetical examples from weaker students. In general, real life exemplars work more effectively than hypothetical ones. A popular approach was to highlight the psychological, emotional, moral and social problems of feral children who have failed to develop moral awareness because of their lack of early close relationships. Considering the right that parents had to show preferential treatment to their children, some students highlighted very elaborate and expensive presents bought for children whilst many people starve to death in the world.

Good use was made by some students of W D Ross and the concept of prima facie duties and Bernard Williams was used well in a lot of essays showing that students had a strong grasp of the rest of Lafollette's article. Occasional appearances by Hume, Rawls and Moore showed an awareness of the wider debate.

Many students displayed commendable fluency in writing and were at ease with the concepts studied over AS and A2. In particular, some were able to see the idea of impartial morality as the same as agape love in Fletcher's Situationism and others the idea of impartiality in Kant. Virtue Ethics was fairly prominent highlighting the idea that it focused on individual behaviour. Natural Moral Law and Utilitarianism were well used and very few students tried to simply outline these theories without relating them to the text.

Many students were able to express the idea that there was a problem with personal relationships and objective morality and many believed that personal relationships took precedence, even though they could argue against it.

Overall, there were a very interesting selection of answers, some with outstanding debates and most students were clearly very well prepared, although some stronger students still missed opportunities to score more marks by omitting "implications" aspects.

The following scripts are examples of good practice.

This was a really interesting approach to the passage using contemporary cultural ideas effectively but also showing an excellent understanding of ethical theory and concepts. The student was able to engage with the text and with the concepts about ethics they have learned throughout their course.

1(a) Morality is a branch of meta-ethics concerning itself with what is 'right' and what is 'wrong', whether morals are objective or subjective, ~~and whether~~ how we ought to go about ~~the~~ being 'moral' and so on.

In his essay, Lafollette discusses the ~~conflicting~~ conflicts between impartial and partial morality. Should we place our

intimates over strangers when making moral decisions? Philosophers such as Immanuel Kant would ~~disagree~~ ^{say} no. Kant believed that the only way to follow the moral law and subsequently do the 'good will' was to follow one's categorical imperative. Kant was particularly focused on respecting other people's rationality, never using others as a 'mere means to an end' and valuing reason over emotion. For these reasons, Kant ~~was~~ was absolutely in favour of impartial morality and would perhaps even thwart the ~~at~~ common ground between impartial and partial morality* in this extract because one should not do things out of 'preferential care', but rather out of duty and respect to the moral

law. Many philosophers, such as Hume, would disagree ~~this that except attempts to present~~ with Kant. Hume once said 'reason is the slave of the passions' and was much more in favour of one engaging with

* presented

their emotions ~~a~~ amidst ethical dilemmas. While this does not necessarily exclude impartial morality, this inclusion of emotion in ethics lends itself much better to partial morality. Williams' hypothetical scenario (which appears earlier in LaFollette's essay) illustrates this: suppose there was a stranger drowning before you, as well as your own wife. ~~Including~~ ~~as~~ Unless you excluded your emotions from your decision-making, you would save your wife.

In this extract, LaFollette is detailing the view that impartial and partial morality are not mutually exclusive, but mutually supportive. As

Rachels explains, our partial views towards ~~our~~ intimates are stemmed from the impartial, ~~innate~~ ^{innate} want to be good to all members of mankind, including those with ~~whom~~ whom we are strangers. This ~~idea~~ ^{idea} is reminiscent of Aquinas' synderesis rule, which dictates that humans have a natural want to seek out / do good and avoid evil.

~~LaFollette's~~ ~~dis~~ Materialists such as Richard Dawkins would likely agree with ~~that~~ the notion that impartial and partial morality are mutually

supportive, can (and do) co-exist, and ~~are~~ are ~~partiality is~~ ~~not~~ deeply rooted in one another.

In his book *The Selfish Gene*, Dawkins explains kin altruism. ~~It~~ Kin altruism is ~~not~~ an evolutionary instinct that causes us to aid our kin (families) in the hopes of preserving our genes and surviving. ~~In this sense,~~ ~~when you~~ According to this theory, both impartial and partial morality are down to evolutionary instincts: if you save your wife from drowning, you are acting upon your instinct to preserve your genes and if you save ~~the~~ the stranger ~~you~~ you are acting upon your instinct to help others survive so that they may help you survive in future.

Towards the end of the extract, deFollette sums up ~~the~~ Rachels argument in a sentence: "the only legitimate personal relationships are derivative from impartial duties." However, ~~some~~ some philosophers take a completely ~~alters~~ alternate view. Williams, for example, believes that we would not be capable of ~~making~~ impartial morality at all, were it not for our parents treating us partially, teaching us sympathy and compassion.

Many psychologists would agree with this. Humans only learn, according to

science, in two ways: trial
to error and social
copying. ~~If morality~~ Morality
is not exempt from this
rule — we learn it from
other people. Namely our
parents. ~~We~~ We learn
morality, compassion,
sympathy and empathy
from our intimates who
treat us partially,
meaning that impartial
morality actually
derives from partial
morality. ~~The~~ Further
evidence for this can
be found in studies
of feral children or
children with attachment
disorders; children who
have not been shown
partial care by
intimates ~~have~~ often
develop with no sense of
morality whatsoever. In
the 80's documentary

"Child of Rage", we are shown what abuse and neglect can render a ~~child~~ developing child to ~~be~~ amoral.

Moreover, the literary example of Brave New World by Aldous Huxley is an example of a world in which completely impartial morality is portrayed. This ~~world~~ fictitious world is portrayed as cold and ~~is~~ impersonal. Most people would not want to live in a world like that.



This student kept quite close to the passage and explained terms and points of view very well. There was effective use of a range of scholarly opinion.

In AO2 the student considered the demands of the whole question. There was a clear line of reasoning and the student argued the case well and came to a coherent conclusion.

Throughout the answer there was a considerable range of different types of examples. Some were more effective than others. Some hypothetical examples became quite narrative compared to some other cases which were succinct and to the point.

1a.) LaFollette in his Article is Examining whether personal relationships (partiality) and morality (impartiality) seem to conflict. In the passage LaFollette has stated his view that impartiality does 'undermine personal relationships'. This is because the problem with impartial morality is that it is based upon the principle of Equal consideration. For instance, you can, and it is morally acceptable for you to treat your mother better than a stranger that you met at a bus stop because the morally and 'relevant' reason is that 'she is your mother'. However let me explain why LaFollette is stating that they do conflict. This is because, for example, if you had twenty friends the impartial rule would state it is acceptable for you to treat them better than strangers, however it also dictates that you must treat each friend the same. i.e. you must spend the same amount of time and energy with each friend. However naturally in reality we do not do this. Much is why 'impartiality undermines personal relationships'.

Therefore LaFollette is expressing that maybe we should look at 'Universal love' from Rawls that would allow us to have an duty for the impersonal other. And we cannot just have an obligation towards our 'family' but it needs to be for the whole of 'mankind'.

Rawls's idea is similar to that of Kant's deontology in that we do have a 'duty' and moral 'obligation' to look after the impersonal other. However this is much stronger than just 'general' deontology as it is required to help all others.

For example, if you were on your way to work and you saw an elderly person fall over you do have an impersonal 'duty' to help them and you cannot just look after your own family as this is too partial behaviour. Naturally you would help the person because we do have a 'duty' to do so.

As Rawls stated 'morality is of utmost importance' and this explains why LaFollette is suggesting that we should act through this idea.

of impartial morality.

Furthermore he is explaining how we could use Rawls's concept to explain why parents treat their children better to that of strangers as it is their 'duty' to do so.

For example, if a family bring another child into the world they cannot just abandon it as it is their 'duty' to raise them.

However he is also saying that when we do this we cannot treat our interests too specially as it causes problems.

For instance, virtue ethics does use 'partial' concepts because it looks at 'self-flourishing' and important to reach Eudaimonia. However what Rawlsite

is stating is that if we do not

embrace Rawls's ideas of 'duty'

we cannot treat our interests too

specially as it would encourage the

flourishing of 'self' what would

mean that we do ignore the 'needs

of less well off children' we do need

to take into consideration that we

do need to look after the needs of

our children as we do. How an obligation to do so.

In order to fully explain what LaFollette is explaining in the passage we need to look at the article as a whole to attain full picture.

Now, in context to the passage LaFollette agrees that we do need to look after the impersonal other to Eradicate the 'accident of birth' as it is not fair that someone's life chances are affected by luck.

For example: A child born to a billionaire has a greater life chance than a child born to a single teenage mother.

This is the importance of the ideas expressed in the passage because it shows we cannot just look after ourselves but we do need to spread our energy to help other people. This would allow us to work against morally odious problems such as racism which is a result of being too partial which is why LaFollette

agrees with some ideas of Rawls.
However we cannot identify completely
Embrace the idea of universal law
as morality does begin to suffer the
same problem as Deontology or NML
as everything does become an 'obligation'
and we cannot look at the
circumstances or consequences of an
action.

The problem is that this does undermine
personal relationships as it makes them
'Duty Bound'.

For Example Imagine your Family
saying to you that they only looked
after you because they 'Had to'
Not because they 'wanted to'.

This is why it did lead scholars to
show that the two concepts do conflict.

Williams Example does show that we
cannot just use Rawls concept because
it is absurd especially when personal
relationships are at risk.

Further if we do look at the idea
of the passage for Aristotle it
does eliminate the all that is
good from personal relationships. This is

where he do Experience and learn
the moral knowledge through 'compassion'
and 'love' Required For Impartial
morality.

LaFollette therefore added his opinion on
the ideas expressed in the passage that
he cannot embrace Rawls's completely
as he 'cannot be moral in a vacuum',
he need to look at a hybrid
approach where the two ideas
support one another.

For example rather than just using
Virtue Ethics or Deontology we should
use both.

He stated that if a personal relationship
Does recognize the needs of the
Impartial other then integrity will
flourish and morality will work.

we do need personal relationships as
it does allow us to ~~develop~~
develop the requirements for
Impartial morality. In essence
rather than just looking
at impartial principles seen in
the passage we do need to

Experiences partial personal relationships
First Before he can go out and
treat the world impartially.

However to do this the personal relationships
must have a 'Honest' foundation.

An amoral or immoral personal relationship
will not provide an environment for
impartial morality, hence the personal
relationship has to be 'legit' to work.

He explains that from the passage he
realises that there has to be a
tender balance between partiality
and impartiality. morality is 'difficult'
and loopholes will occur as W.D. Ross
explained. However so long as he do
not be too impartial so that in the
passage or too partial and keep
a tender balance between the two
then morality can work.

(b) The implications of Lafollet's

Article are vital for our
understanding of morality and its
place within society.

I do agree with Lafollet's view
that morality does require some

Impartial concept as without them
we do become to self-centred.
For instance the case of the Zambian
copper company shows that the leaders
did not pay tax nor did they
pay their workers a fair wage as
they did not too partially, which
I believe is unfair as they are not
contributing to help ~~erase~~ eradicate
the 'Accident of Birth'. This implies
for Human Behaviour and Religious
communities that ^{we} cannot just look
after ourselves or our own religious
communities and we do actually need
to take action rather than just
being Hypocritical. we do need to
work to promote and help the
interest of others as we cannot let
our fellow Human Being struggle as
we thrive.

~~we~~

However I do challenge the fallacious
idea that people are ~~able~~
able to create impartial morality
because modern day society shows

it to be more partial than being impartial. For instance concerning in Brazil the world cup has finished but yet people of Brazil are starving, have no money or education. so how can we say that people are trying to act impartial to eradicate the idea of util? They are NOT, but instead are being too partial. Many people also challenge LeFolletus view in the passage because they believe morality should be based around individual justice rather than impartial concepts. John Locke added that we are entitled to look after our own property and tax is a form of theft. Morality does not lie through impartial concepts like Rawls but should be based around ourselves like that of Aristotle's virtue ethics. This implies for humans that maybe we should look after ourselves though partial principles alone as we cannot look after the impersonal other if we cannot look after ourselves.

Further I do strongly believe that we should incorporate the idea of 'obligation' and 'impartial principles' into morality because it would allow us to redress the problems found in a 'parasitic' modern society where people only look after their own skin. If we look at the UK there has been an increase by +11.4% of teenage pregnancies. Now the majority of these children which are born do not have a father and are raised by a mother alone. It is not fair that these children do not have the same opportunities compared to others. The idea strongly implies to individual autonomous humans and religious communities that we cannot avoid tax to benefit ourselves. We need to put this money back into society so it can help those who are disadvantaged. If we do not then we cannot expect these problems to disappear by themselves. Further Peter Singer's Global Ethics shows that we do have

an obligation to be Impartial as
we do need to Help all other people
NOT just our own Religious communities
or groups. He stated if a
child was drawing ^{Next} ~~Next~~ to you,
you would Help Them. Just because
a child is drawing in another
country is No Excuse. Hence we
should look to THE idea that
morality comes before religion.
This implies to Humans ~~and~~ that
we do need to spread our
attention to Help all and Not
some. For Religion it implies that
Religious communities should also Help
all and NOT just look after
their own people. i.e. Christians should
only look after Christians...
we do need to receive Embrace
Impartial concepts but apply them on
a 'Global' scale.

In conclusion I do agree with
Lafollet's view that we do need
to Embrace Impartial concepts though
not of Reichel's. But I do

challenge to what extent,
I believe we do need to look
at a theory like virtue ethics
in combination to Singer's Global
Ethics because it would allow
us to look after ourselves but
put the needs of all others
before our own demands. The
overall implication is that you do
do need to be impartial to
as extent that it helps all others
and reduces the accident of birth /
luck. LaFollet's article is important
and effective as it shows where
morality should be directed to.



Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are encouraged to:

- develop their interest in an academic study of religion
- develop study skills that reflect these academic demands such as thorough study of the texts, the ability to analyse complex ideas and to manage their material in order to answer the question in an explicit manner
- adopt a critical approach which reflects on their prior learning in the other RS units
- engage with the implications of their studies.

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