

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE **G582**

Religious Ethics

Mark Scheme for June 2010

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

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A2 Preamble and Instructions to Examiners

The purpose of a marking scheme is to ‘... enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’ [CoP 1999 25.xiv]. It must ‘allow credit to be allocated for what candidates know, understand and can do’ [xv] and be ‘clear and designed to be easily and consistently applied’ [x].

The **Religious Studies Subject Criteria** [1999] define ‘what candidates know, understand and can do’ in terms of two Assessment Objectives, weighted for the OCR Religious Studies specification as indicated:

All candidates must be required to meet the following assessment objectives.

At A level, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and their ability to sustain a critical line of argument in greater depth and over a wider range of content than at AS level.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

- AO1:** Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.
- AO2:** Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view.

The requirement to assess candidates’ quality of written communication will be met through both assessment objectives.

In order to ensure the marking scheme can be ‘easily and consistently applied’, and to ‘enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’, it defines Levels of Response by which candidates’ answers are assessed. This ensures that comparable standards are applied across the various units as well as within the team of examiners marking a particular unit. Levels of Response are defined according to the two Assessment Objectives. In A2, candidates answer a single question but are reminded by a rubric of the need to address both Objectives in their answers. Progression from Advanced Subsidiary to A2 is provided, in part, by assessing their ability to construct a coherent essay, and this is an important part of the Key Skill of Communication which ‘must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies at AS and A level’.

Positive awarding: it is a fundamental principle of OCR’s assessment in Religious Studies at Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE that candidates are rewarded for what they ‘know, understand and can do’ and to this end examiners are required to assess every answer by the Levels according to the extent to which it addresses a reasonable interpretation of the question. In the marking scheme each question is provided with a brief outline of the likely content and/or lines of argument of a ‘standard’ answer, but this is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive. Examiners are required to have subject knowledge to a high level and the outlines do not attempt to duplicate this.

Examiners must **not** attempt to reward answers according to the extent to which they match the structure of the outline, or mention the points it contains. The specification is designed to allow teachers to approach the content of modules in a variety of ways from any of a number of perspectives, and candidates’ answers must be assessed in the light of this flexibility of approach. It is quite possible for an excellent and valid answer to contain knowledge and arguments which do not appear in the outline; each answer must be assessed on its own merits according to the Levels of Response.

Practical application of the Marking Scheme

General administrative information and instructions are issued separately by OCR.

Apart from preliminary marking for standardisation purposes, which must be carried out in pencil, the first marking of a script should be in red ink. There should be a clear indication on every page that it has been read by the examiner, and the total mark for the question must be ringed and written in the margin at the end of the script; at A2 the two sub-marks for the AOs must be written here as well. Half-marks may not be used.

To avoid giving the impression of point-marking, ticks should not be used within an answer. Examiners should follow the separate instructions about annotation of scripts; remember that the marks awarded make the assigned Levels of Response completely explicit.

Key Skill of Communication: this is assessed at both Advanced Subsidiary and A2 as an integral part of the marking scheme. The principle of positive awarding applies here as well: candidates should be rewarded for good written communication, but marks may not be deducted for inadequate written communication; the quality of communication is integral to the quality of the answer in making its meaning clear. The Key Skill requirements in Communication at Level 3 include the following evidence requirements for documents about complex subjects, which can act as a basis for assessing the Communications skills in an examination answer:

- Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so your meaning is clear.

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Synoptic skills and the ability to make connections: these are now assessed at A2 as specification, due to the removal of the Connections papers.

Levels of Response: the descriptions are cumulative, ie a description at one level builds on or improves the descriptions at lower levels. Not all the qualities listed in a level must be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall in that level (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive). There is no expectation that an answer will receive marks in the same level for the two AOs.

A2 LEVELS OF RESPONSE – G581–G589

Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1–5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little relevant material • some concepts inaccurate • shows little knowledge of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>a.c.i.q</i></p>	1–3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little or no successful analysis • views asserted with no justification <p style="text-align: right;"><i>v lit arg</i></p>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6–9	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge limited and partially accurate • limited understanding • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • selection often inappropriate • limited use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>	4–6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some analysis, but not successful • views asserted but little justification <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10–13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some accurate knowledge • appropriate understanding • some successful selection of material • some accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sat att</i></p>	7–8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful analysis which may be implicit • views asserted but not fully justified <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sust/just</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14–17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate knowledge • good understanding • good selection of material • technical terms mostly accurate <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>	9–11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful and clear analysis • some effective use of evidence • views analysed and developed <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				

Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
5	18–21	<p>A very good/excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information • accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>	12–14	<p>A very good/excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehends the demands of the question • uses a range of evidence • shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>
<p>Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good</p>				

1 'The weaknesses of Virtue Ethics outweigh its strengths.' Discuss. [35]**AO1**

Candidates may begin by explaining Aristotelian and modern approaches to Virtue Ethics. They may explain the Golden Mean and how this may seem to promote mediocrity.

They may discuss the fact that virtues can seem to be culturally relative and so Virtue Ethics is difficult to apply to modern dilemmas as there are no guidelines from rules or consequences.

Candidates may discuss the difficulty of learning from virtuous people as it is difficult to assess someone's motives.

They may contrast this with the importance of a person or agent centred approach which allows virtues to grow and integrate emotions, commitments and relationships into ethical decisions.

Candidates might also refer to the reasons for the revival of Virtue Ethics in the 20th and 21st centuries.

AO2

Candidates are free to agree with the question or not but they need to assess the arguments both for and against a person-centred theory.

They may do this by contrasting Virtue Ethics with another ethical theory which they judge may offer a better outcome or they may conclude that a virtuous person would not need ethical principles to make the right decisions.

Candidates might assess the usefulness of a theory which does not rely on consequences.

2 Assess the usefulness of Religious Ethics as an ethical approach to business. [35]**AO1**

Candidates may discuss biblical guidelines that can easily be applied to the ethical issues surrounding business. They may discuss laws about the ethical treatment of employees/workers such as Leviticus 19:13 or about honesty and fairness.

They may use the teachings of Amos or of Jesus about justice and exploitation.

They may contrast the protestant work ethic with ideas of social justice from both Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians.

They may contrast the approach of Religious Ethics with that of another ethical theory such as Utilitarianism or Kantian ethics.

Candidates might apply an ethical theory which is seen as religious such as Natural Law or Situation Ethics.

AO2

Candidates could consider whether Religious Ethics are the best way of dealing with international business issues or not.

They may wish to consider whether Religious Ethics are useful because of: their universal application; the role of Christians as shareholders; the role of ethical investments; religious criticism of environmental impact of business.

They may discuss whether an alternative ethical approach would be more useful, such as the benefits to the majority offered by Utilitarianism or Kant's ideas duty and the Categorical Imperative.

3 Critically assess the claim that all people are free to make moral decisions. [35]

AO1

Candidates could discuss what is meant by moral freedom, libertarianism and hard determinism. They may discuss whether people are ever really free to make moral decisions.

They may compare these opposing views to compatibilism or soft determinism.

Some candidates may also consider theological determinism and contrast this to religious teachings on free will.

Responses may include the role of conscience in making moral decisions, whether free will is an illusion or whether psychological, genetic or social factors limit our freedom to make moral decisions (e.g Darrow).

AO2

Candidates should consider the implications for ethics if our moral decisions are not free, and whether we are morally responsible or accountable for our ethical decisions and actions.

They might consider whether we are really free or just think we are (e.g Locke) and that our freedom is just apparent.

They may introduce the Kant's argument that to be moral we must be free.

They may assess the implications of Sartre's ideas, for example that it is only in acting freely that gives authentic meaning to our lives.

4 To what extent are ethical theories helpful when considering the issues surrounding homosexuality? [35]

AO1

Candidates could explain and contrast different views of sexual ethics: religious, such as Natural Law and Divine Command Theory; Utilitarianism; libertarian etc. and their approaches to homosexuality. They may consider different aspects of homosexuality: inclination v practice; fidelity v infidelity; age; the views of society etc.

They might consider the influences of society, environment, genetics etc on homosexuality.

Candidates might apply the Categorical Imperative to homosexuality.

They may discuss the role of the conscience in making decisions in matters of homosexuality.

AO2

Candidates may consider the ethical theories helpful or may simply apply the liberal harm principle as a method of judging the issues surrounding homosexuality.

They may discuss whether there are any absolute principles that are binding in every sexual relationship, including homosexual ones e.g. not harming other people, adultery harms others, there should be equality between the partners etc.

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