



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies (5061/6061)

**RS04 *An introduction to
Religion and Ethics***

Mark Scheme

2008 examination - January series

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

[Marks for 15-mark questions are shown in brackets]

Level	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks
5	Appropriate form and style of writing, clear and coherent organisation of information, with appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples.	13-15 [9-10]	A very good response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and arguments and are critically analysed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate conclusion.	13-15
4	Appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information, mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / examples.	10-12 [7-8]	A good response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn which follows from some of the reasoning.	10-12
3	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.	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing reasonable understanding.	7-9 [5-6]	Main issues are addressed and views are considered, with some supporting evidence. There is some attempt at analysis or comment. Evaluation may not be fully supported by reasoning or evidence.	7-9
2	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.	An outline account, including some relevant material. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding. Some coherence.	4-6 [3-4]	A simple argument, with some evidence in support.	4-6
1	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Slight signs of understanding.	1-3 [1-2]	A few basic points which are relevant, but no real argument.	1-3
0	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0

RS04: An introduction to Religion and Ethics

- 1 **Read this passage and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.**

'Kant believed that it was very important for human beings to use their reason when making ethical decisions. Religious believers apply their religious teachings to their thinking about ethical issues, such as transplantation.'

- (a) **Explain what Kant taught about the role of human reason when making ethical decisions.**

Answers might include some of the following points:

the difference between the hypothetical and categorical imperative, the use of the mind when making decisions, the ability to reach the same decision using one's reason, reason makes us superior to animals, the need for freedom to make decisions.

Maximum Level 2 (4 marks) for candidates who confuse 'reason' with 'reasonableness.'

(10 marks) AO1

- (b) **Outline the teachings of one religion you have studied which may be applied to the medical issue of transplantation.**

Buddhism

To give of one's self is an act of compassion. No teachings about preserving the body in its entirety, however Tibetan Buddhists may demand that dead are left to rest after death, thus invalidating any organs.

Christianity

Sanctity of life, sacrifice, helping others and following Jesus' compassionate example.

Hinduism

No prohibition. 3rd Niyama of selfless giving. As death is an ongoing process of new birth, could support organ donation. Every act should be dharmik (beneficial outcome).

Islam

Allowed if consent given and donation is immediate, teachings of generosity, saving life and submission to Allah. But Shari'a law says organs and bodies shouldn't be tampered with as they belong to Allah.

Judaism

Principle of saving life. However, non-interference with body; body should be buried intact. Any donated organs have to be immediate, no storing.

Sikhism

Teaching of charity, sacrifice and selfless giving.

(10 marks) AO1

- 2 (a) **Outline Kant's theory of universalisation and explain how it can be applied to environmental issues.**

Kant's theory of universalisation is the first formulation of the categorical imperative. This should then be applied to environmental issues, i.e. all countries must reduce the amount of fuel used. However, USA does not agree with this (viz Kyoto). If the maxim cannot be applied to all, then it is not a universal law.

Maximum Level 4 (10 marks) for answers which do not apply the theory and / or do not explain universal law.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b)(i) **Outline the teachings of one religion you have studied which may be applied to environmental issues.**

Buddhism

First of 5 precepts (do not harm a living being). All life has value; humans are not in charge.

Christianity

Domination versus stewardship (Genesis).

Hinduism

Vedas state the connection between human conduct and [the reaction of] nature. 2nd Yama is do not steal; 3rd Yama is need to discipline greed.

Islam

All life created by Allah and must be treated well. Animals are there for humans.

Judaism

Similar to Christianity and Islam.

Sikhism

Teachings of justice, non-exploitation, temperance and love for humanity. Duty to monitor the environment, and to look after one's family.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b)(ii) **Assess the view that neither religious teachings nor Kant are of any help in guiding people on environmental issues.**

Assess

For

- Religious and Kantian teachings are out of date.
- Religious teachings have no part to play in a secular society.
- Religious teachings contradict each other.
- As regards Kant, people are too greedy and selfish to establish a universal law.
- People work through compromise, not laws and edicts.

Against

- Religious teachings (e.g. stewardship and mutual respect) are still relevant.
- Just because people aren't religious, it doesn't mean that the advice isn't appropriate.
- Pollution and other environmental issues need to be curbed, and Kant or religion is as good a place to start as any other.
- As well, we all need to use resources, perhaps a universal law if sensibly applied, appropriate and fair?

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) **Outline Bentham's principle of utility and explain how it can be used to justify abortion.**

The principle of utility is about the extent to which a certain action brings pleasure / happiness for the greatest number of people. This principle is the foundation of Utilitarianism. This is a teleological theory, concerned with the consequences. To work out the 'correct' action to take, Bentham devised the hedonic calculus.

Candidates should then work through the calculus, using abortion, e.g. how many people would it affect? How pure an act is it? etc.

Maximum Level 4 (10 marks) for explanation of principle of utility without application to abortion.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) ***Outline the teachings of one religion you have studied which can be applied to the issue of abortion, and assess the view that religious teachings alone can never justify abortion.***

Buddhism

1st Precept (do not harm living beings), all life is of value and precious and begins at conception. So abortion is murder, yet some Buddhist countries allow it as it is a personal issue.

Christianity

Roman Catholic Church forbids it; other churches preach compassion, love and understanding. Depends on when life begins.

Hinduism

Breach of the duty to have children. Foetus becomes a person during pregnancy and contains a reborn soul. Doctrine of reincarnation can support and condemn abortion.

Islam

Abortion is haram, but permitted in certain circumstances. Abortion is not permitted once foetus has a soul, but teachings vary as to when this is. Sanctity of life.

Judaism

Abortion permitted. Mother's life takes precedence. God is in charge of life and death, and life is sacred.

Sikhism

Interferes with God's role as Creator. Life begins at conception (Guru Granth Sahib) so is a sin to destroy it.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

For

- Religious teachings were written years ago and are out of date.
- Religious teachings are anachronistic.

Also:

- Religious teachings normally concentrate on sanctity of life so anti-abortion.
- Religious teachings imply abortion would be murder, and are therefore against it.

Against

- Nothing specific is said about abortion in any scripture, so could be said to be ambivalent.
- Principle of 'double effect' might be claimed to justify it. Candidates might also argue that whilst nothing can ever justify abortion, applying utilitarian principles might.

(15 marks) AO2