



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

**General Certificate of Education**

**Religious Studies 1061**

**RSS01 Religion and Ethics 1**

**Mark Scheme**

*2009 examination - January series*

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## Examination Levels of Response

### Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	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**

- 1 (a) **Explain the general principles of Utilitarianism, including reference to both Act and Rule Utilitarianism.**

**General Principles** An overview is looked for here with some awareness that there are different approaches within Utilitarianism. There is no set list of what should be included and there will be variations in emphasis but, the following may be expected.

- Consequentialism.
- Generation of pleasure as the determining characteristic of a 'right' action.
- Actions, in the case of Act Utilitarianism, or rules in the case of Rule Utilitarianism, judged according to their utility – their ability to maximise 'the greatest happiness for the greatest number'.
- This should be illustrated with examples, and there may, but need not be, a contrast with deontological thinking.
- Awareness of variations within Utilitarianism may be confined to Act and Rule but may also involve Bentham and Mill / quality as opposed to quantity of happiness.

Maximum Level 4 for answer lacking explanatory examples.

Max Level 5 (25 marks) for answer lacking breadth.

**(30 marks) AO1**

- (b) **'Increasing pleasure is more important than ending pain and suffering.'**

**How far would Utilitarians agree with this statement?**

There are various possible approaches here – the answer will necessarily be short and it is not expected that all points will be covered.

e.g.

It depends on the quantity of pain or pleasure in question.

The negative consequences of allowing the suffering to continue may outweigh any short-term good.

Torture may be necessary to promote a greater happiness.

Application of the hedonic calculus would justify suffering of the one / few to produce the happiness of the greater number.

Negative Utilitarianism argues that the principle should be that an action is good if it removes pain, however this is usually rejected as leading to absurdity.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**2 (a) Examine any four of Fletcher's six principles of Situation Ethics.**

The six fundamental principles are:

Only love intrinsically good; love as ruling norm of Christianity; love and justice the same; love wills the neighbour's good; only the end justifies the means; love's decisions made situationally.

Expect a statement, explanation and illustrative example for **each one** chosen.

For only one principle maximum 14 marks.

For two principles maximum 20 marks.

For three principles maximum 25 marks.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) 'Love is the highest law for Christians, and it should override all others when necessary.'**

**Assess this claim.**

More able candidates should notice that this view does not dispense with law, merely claims that it should be suspended when necessary. The argument will be necessarily limited given the time available.

Arguments **in support** include:

- Biblical support.
- Example of Jesus from the Gospels (Sabbath / Corban).
- Supposed limitations of law – when it seems unloving to obey it.

Arguments **against** include:

- Biblical support.
- Human limitations / fallen nature resulting in Christians unable to make loving decisions and needing laws.
- Slippery slope – where would the process of over-riding the law end? Would Christians make exceptions until there was no law left?

**(15 marks) AO2**

**3 (a) Explain religious teachings about the value of human life. You may refer to one or more religion(s).**

Value may be interpreted quite broadly, and emphasis will vary depending on choice of religion, e.g.

- Valued as a gift from God and held in trust on God's behalf.
- To be protected as a valued gift from the moment of conception / birth and throughout life.
- Duty to fulfil individual potential and to provide conditions in which others can fulfil their potential.
- To be sacrificed should service to God / compassion for others demand it.
- Purpose / importance of life may be developed, e.g. this life is one among countless opportunities to reach Nibbana / Nirvana – not something to be attached to.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) 'People should always be treated the same regardless of race or disability.'**

**How far may religious believers accept this view?**

This claim can be approached from varying perspectives, e.g. a debate about the equality of all humanity before God and / or one of the dilemmas of any commitment to equality of opportunity – is treating people the same treating them equally?

Since the question relates to religious believers only, the debate must also be focused.

**Arguments for**

May be centred on the idea that an individual's value is based on his / her moral actions / beliefs and not on skin colour or disability; religious identity separate from racial identity and disability; God as creator of all with differences not related to value.

**Arguments against**

These may focus on the views (including extremist views) of some religious groups that some births are more favoured than others and some people more valued than others, e.g. white supremacist groups such as Christian Identity.

This may be illustrated with reference to decisions regarding allocation of medical resources, for example between the severely disabled and 'healthy'; or to decisions made on behalf of severely disabled individuals (e.g. to remove the womb of a severely mentally and physically disabled woman). The answer should show how such discrimination could be justified on religious grounds.

A debate regarding positive discrimination in favour of under-represented groups in the world of work is also relevant.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

**4 (a) Explain religious and ethical arguments in favour of euthanasia.**

This is a very open question – the candidate may choose one or more religions and any ethical theory, although it may be expected that most will choose Utilitarianism. They may use Situation Ethics as a religious view.

**Religious**

- Religion requires that believers show compassion and love. Compassion and love require believers to end suffering including emotional suffering; forcing someone to stay alive against their will is neither compassionate nor loving.
- Free will and self determination are God given qualities – they may be (and are) used to artificially sustain life (or as some writers put it, to extend the dying process) and could be used to bring about life's end.
- Ecclesiasticus 30<sup>17</sup> says "Death is better than a miserable life, and eternal rest than chronic sickness."
- Double effect.

**Ethical**

Utilitarian: happiness generated by euthanasia; those determined to do it are helped to make it painless rather than resorting to painful, and possibly unsuccessful, methods which would cause themselves and others enormous suffering.

Candidates may refer to any ethical theory.

Where only one of religious or ethical theory appears, maximum mid Level 5 (25 marks).

**(30 marks)**

**AO1**

**(b) Assess the view that, from a religious perspective, humans have a right to life.**

Reference may be made to one or more religion(s).

This may focus on an absolute right to life, and the duties which that would impose on others (e.g. not to take that life or not to take it unjustly, and to provide that life with what it needs to survive). The issues considered may, but need not, be confined to abortion / euthanasia, e.g. capital punishment and killing in self defence may also be considered.

Arguments **in support** from one or more religions include:

- Sanctity of life.
- Right to life from conception – the unborn child is ‘not a potential human being, but a human being with potential.’
- Right to have that life sustained. This can include the right to life support and to not having treatment withdrawn.

Arguments **against** include:

- Where the preservation of one human life necessitates the death of another, there is a conflict of rights, e.g. ectopic pregnancy. Religions generally qualify the right to life to allow for such cases (e.g. double effect).
- The ‘right to life’ is forfeit in the teaching of some religious traditions when death is ‘just’ (capital punishment); in a ‘Just War’ and in self-defence.
- ‘Right to life’ can be interpreted to apply only to ‘persons’ – in which case it may be argued that withdrawing life support is not taking any right away, because the person to whom the right belonged is already dead.

Debate may be supported by a range of examples.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**