



General Certificate of Education

# Religious Studies 1061

RSS03      Philosophy of Religion

## Mark Scheme

*2009 examination – June series*

**This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#) which is being introduced for examinations from June 2010**

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' 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

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	

## **RSS03 Philosophy of Religion**

### **01 Explain Aquinas' cosmological argument.**

Expect all three forms of Aquinas (first mover, first cause, necessary being). Explanation may include identification of basis of argument in terms of observation and rejection of infinite series; change (e.g. wood becomes hot); contingency.

Maximum Level 5 if just basic form of the three arguments.

**(30 marks) AO1**

### **02 Assess how far Aquinas' cosmological argument shows that it is reasonable to believe in God.**

#### **In support of view**

- Expect focus on strength of arguments, e.g. gives explanation, observation, rejection of infinite regression, contingency, scientific theories support.

#### **Challenging the view**

- The discussion will probably be in terms of criticisms.
- There should be some relating of the argument to the issue of reasonableness.
- Failure to show nature of 'God'.

The focus will be on reasonableness and there will be an appropriate evaluation in terms of 'how far'.

**(15 marks) AO2**

### **03 Examine the variety of forms of religious experience.**

Expect variety to be across visions, conversions and mystical experiences. Variety may also be within forms such as different types of visions or monistic / theistic mysticism.

Examination may include discussion of illustrations that highlight different elements of the particular form.

Maximum Level 5 if only one form of religious experience fully examined.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**04 'Only those who have had a religious experience can fully understand what a religious experience is.'**

**Assess this claim.**

**In support of claim**

- Expect discussion of the subjective nature of the experience or its ineffable nature.
- Can't know what is beyond one's own experiences.
- Expect some examples to illustrate.

**Challenging the claim**

- Shared experiences.
- Religious experiences have some objective features.
- Expect some examples to illustrate.
- Some candidates may argue that religious experiences have natural explanations and so can be understood.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**05 Explain how psychology may challenge religious belief.**

Expect mainly Freud examples, e.g. Wish fulfilment; Oedipus complex; religion seen as a neurotic illness.

Some may refer to Jung and his ideas about "God" as an archetype; or an anti-realist view of "God".

Level 7 possible if only Freud's challenges are fully discussed.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**06 'Religion has been successful in responding to the challenges of psychology.'**

**To what extent do you agree?**

**Agree**

- Expect critiques of Freud's and / or Jung's theories and conclusions, e.g. challenge to view that religion is guilt based / attack on Oedipus complex / not all deities are male / Jung's theory of archetypes criticised.
- Some candidates may argue that psychology strengthens religion in that it depicts it as something positive, e.g. Jung.

**Disagree**

- Explanation of the role of the mind to account for religion still strong.
- Gives new understanding of "religion".
- Religion meets people's psychological needs – psychological profile of religious people.

There should be an appropriate evaluation. Expect some reference to "to what extent....successful".

**(15 marks) AO2**

**07 Explain each of the following terms: positive atheism, negative atheism, agnosticism.**

Root of meaning of atheism – godless – gradual change of meaning.

Expect for **positive atheism**: basic definition concerning metaphysical claim about the non-existence of God. Conscious decision. Issue of proof. Positive reasons for not believing.

For **negative atheism**: basic definition concerning lack or absence of belief. Does not necessarily demand weighing up possibility of God's existence / position by default.

For **agnosticism**: root of "without knowledge", insufficient knowledge to prove or disprove existence of God. Origin – T. Huxley, background of problem of limits of knowledge.

Some candidates may discuss differences / distinctions between the terms.  
Maximum Level 5 if only two terms fully discussed.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**08 To what extent is religion in retreat in the modern world?**

**In retreat**

- Expect some listing of evidence for secularization.
- Rejection of traditional religion – views of postmodernism.
- Religion as cultural constructs. Anti-realism and “God is dead” slogan.

**Not in retreat**

- Expect reference to postmodernist view of religion as personal spiritual search and so growth of spirituality.
- Emphasis on living religion.
- Growth in religions in some parts of world.
- Atheism seen as another meta narrative.

There will be an appropriate evaluation in terms of “to what extent”.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**