



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

RSS03 Philosophy of Religion

Mark Scheme

2010 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	

RSS03 *Philosophy of Religion*

1 (a) Explain key criticisms of the cosmological argument.

Expect the key criticisms that are listed in the Specification, though others can also be credited.

E.g. explanation of ‘infinite regress’ and its significance to the argument; the challenge to the need for a start to a series / need for explanation; expect reference to Russell and his brute fact argument.

Explanation of fallacy and how it relates to argument; idea of inference from something that is already known to be true of each member of group, to conclusion concerning the group itself.

Explanation of ‘necessary being’ and philosophical problems with the concept; alternative conclusions such as matter / energy that is necessary.

There should be some explanation as to how they are a criticism of the argument.

Maximum marks for two fully developed criticisms.

If only one criticism, then maximum Level 5 (23 marks).

(30 marks) AO1

1 (b) ‘The weaknesses of the cosmological argument far outweigh its strengths.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

The focus will be on identifying both weaknesses and strengths, and expect some basic attempt at weighing one against the other.

Possible strengths may be – gives explanation, science supports argument of beginnings to universe.

Agree with view

Strengths identified but they are shown to be limited. Force of criticisms discussed.

Disagree with view

Expect either some replies to criticisms and / or some positive arguments to support the cosmological argument.

(15 marks) AO2

2 (a) Examine the main characteristics of conversion and mystical experiences.

Expect some descriptive accounts of relevant religious experiences (e.g. Saul’s / John Wesley’s conversion or Teresa of Avila).

There should be reference to the main characteristics, e.g. such features as:

Conversion: gradual / sudden, self surrendering. Passive / active, transforming.

Mysticism: ineffability, noetic, transiency, passivity.

For depth account expect illustration of characteristics or wide range of characteristics.

For conversion expect different types of conversion including from one faith to another.

For mysticism expect wider than William James, e.g. different types of mysticism (monistic / theistic).

If only one of conversion / mysticism answered, maximum Level 5 (23 marks).

(30 marks) AO1

2 (b) 'It is impossible to verify a religious experience.'

Assess this claim.

Support claim

Expect some reference to the subjective nature of the experience or the difficulty of establishing the source of the experience.

Challenge claim

Expect some reference to criteria that would add weight to validity, Swinburne's argument.

(15 marks) AO2

3 (a) Examine Jung's view of religion as an expression of the collective unconscious.

Expect a range of aspects of the collective unconscious with reference to some of the key points, such as archetypes, the shadow and the animus.

There should be an explanation of some of the major relevant terms such as the major archetypes of the collective unconscious. Expect focus on the idea of inherited characteristics which determine how a person will react to life experiences.

Seeing Religion is an expression of the collective unconscious.

(30 marks) AO1

3 (b) 'Jung's view of religion challenges religious belief.'

Assess this claim.

Support claim

Religion seen in terms of inherited characteristics. Seems to reject external God. An experience which stems from internal may be questioned as being termed religious.

Challenge to claim

Jung's view is wrong (expect criticisms of Jung's view); Jung had positive view of religion. Sees religion as a valuable entity.

(15 marks) AO2

4 (a) Examine what is meant by saying 'God is dead'.

Expect some depth of coverage of the term with some explanation. This may include some reference to its origins, e.g. Nietzsche / T.S. Eliot. Idea of secular world and a culture that has no place for God.

Candidates may discuss consequences of this movement, e.g. Jesus' ethic and a focus on morality rather than theology. Some candidates might refer to the more positive use of the phrase which expresses the idea of God suffering in Christ and so in one sense 'dying'.

(30 marks) AO1

4 (b) Assess the claim that, in the modern world, God is not dead.

Support claim

Evidence for growth in spirituality and world religions. Importance of religion in modern world (especially Islamic). Resurgence of evangelism, etc.

Challenge claim

Evidence for secularism and growth of atheism. Explanations sought in science and psychology rather than religion and supernatural.

(15 marks)

AO2