

Version 1.0



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Religious Studies

RST3F

Religion and Contemporary Society

A2 Unit 3F

Final

Mark Scheme

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.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced) A2 Level Descriptors

Level	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic, which may be in depth or breadth. Information is accurate and relevant. A thorough understanding is shown through good use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate good knowledge and understanding of diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is demonstrated. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated convincingly.	28-30 41-45	A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Appropriate evaluation is fully supported by the reasoning. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related perceptively and maturely to the broader context and to human experience.	19-20 28-30	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
6	A generally thorough treatment of the topic which may be in depth or breadth. Information is almost all accurate and mainly relevant. Clear understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are clearly demonstrated.	24-27 36-40	A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed. Appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related clearly to the broader context and to human experience.	16-18 24-27	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown. Some knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	20-23 29-35	A satisfactory response to the issue(s) raised. Views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning. Some of the response is related satisfactorily to the broader context and to human experience.	13-15 20-23	Mainly 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 accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	Key ideas and facts are included; demonstrates some understanding and coherence using some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion. Limited knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	15-19 22-28	The main issue is addressed with some supporting evidence or argument, but the reasoning is faulty, or the analysis superficial or only one view is adequately considered. Little of the response is related to the broader context and to human experience.	10-12 15-19	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14 15-21	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	7-9 10-14	
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 8-14	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	4-6 5-9	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 1-7	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-3 1-4	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance	0	

RST3F: Religion and Contemporary Society

Question 1 Religion responding to the challenges facing the world

01 Examine the attitudes to, and actions on, poverty in one or more religion(s) you have studied.

Views will vary according to traditions studied within the religions.

Christianity

- OT prophets – e.g. Amos, speaking out against the treatment of the poor by the rich, implying that poverty not acceptable
- John 12:8 The poor will always be with you – implying fatalism about poverty
- Poverty part of the monastic ideal
- Calvinism and the rise of the protestant work ethic
- Reflected also in the social mobility which came about in early Methodism
- ‘The rich man in his castle; the poor man at his gate; God made them high and lowly; and ordered their estate’ – popular Victorian hymn
- Major thrust of philanthropy in Victorian Christianity
- In 20th century, much focus on inner city issues especially poverty; ‘Mission alongside the poor’ ‘faith in the city’ etc
- Some setting up communities in areas of significant deprivation.
- Work of many aid and development organisations not just overseas, but also at home
- Recognition that many other social ills stem from poverty
- But not universal- the ‘prosperity gospel’ of some groups- belief that God will reward the faithful with health and material wealth

Judaism

tradition of prophets as above

- no ‘bias to the poor’ (Sacks)
- Should not impoverish oneself to relieve others
- But Tzedakah a fundamental part of Jewish way of life
- Many examples of local relief of poverty
- Charity Tzedek – ‘Jewish action for a just world’

Islam

- Charitable giving – zakat – one of the 5 pillars
- Islam defines the various categories of ‘poor’ to whom zakat is to be distributed
- Tradition of beggars outside mosques – need to have someone to whom to give
- Work of organisations like Islamic Aid
- Fighting poverty not only globally but also in the UK

Hinduism

- Caste system and cycle of karma and samsara in some ways encouraged people to accept their lot
- Provided a way of making sense of major social inequalities
- The most spiritual stage of life seen as one of poverty and renunciation
- And holy men are those with nothing in the way of material goods
- Role of Lakshmi as goddess of prosperity; prayers to Lakshmi for financial success
- Belief that by following one's dharma, one may have a better lot in the next life
- Also encourages people to work hard to earn money
- Nevertheless, much done by Hindus to help the poor in giving to wide variety of causes

Buddhism

- Importance of detachment and living simply
- Non attachment towards material goods
- But poverty involves dukkha – and is therefore bad
- Monastic ideal- that of poverty
- Mendicant tradition - and duty/privilege of laity to provide for them
- Importance of the middle way
- Buddhist spirit of living simply and giving generously will mean that all attempts will be made to try to address poverty

Sikhism

- Teaching of the gurus on looking after the needs of others
- 'Poor' equated with 'humble' and used by gurus of themselves
- Belief in the equality of all people as created by the One God
- Importance of hard and honest work by all
- importance of sewa – selfless service to others
- Role of the langar – meaning that there is an immediate response to situations of poverty within the locality
- Work of Khalsa Aid

Note involvement of those from many faiths in movements like 'Make Poverty History'

Both attitudes and actions need to be examined for marks above Level 5.

Better answers are likely to be able to show the link between attitudes and actions, but this is not required.

(30 marks) AO1

02 **'Poverty is a fact of life which religions can do little to alter.'**
Assess this claim.

Stance taken is likely to depend on the religion chosen in 01 but a broader approach can be taken. Be careful about answers which simply try to judge effectiveness of particular organisations.

Agree

- This is part of the economic reality; societies are never likely to be equal
- So there will always be poverty
- If anyone is going to solve the problem it will be economists and governments rather than religious groups
- The problems are technical and require a lot of specialist expertise
- If all were wealthy, there would be even faster depletion of resources etc.

Disagree

- The history of religions shows their ability to change fundamental values
- So why shouldn't they help with this?
- Religions have done a massive amount to demonstrate charitable giving, and have often been the spearhead for government action
- Change can come about by small local action

(20 marks)

AO2

Question 2 Challenges to religion in contemporary society**03 Examine the range of meanings of the term 'secularisation'.**

Many meanings have been given to this term, and candidates do not need to know the full range of those suggested below. They should however be able to comment on some of the variety of meanings. This is AO1, so candidates are not expected to debate these concepts but should be able to explore some aspects of the ideas.

Decline: This may be in terms of identification, membership, practice or belief. Whilst the question is not asking them to debate the validity of the theory, they should be able to cite some examples of different forms of decline.

Loss of dominance of religion over society: Decline in the authority of religion; religion no longer equated with power structures of society.

Conformity with this world: Breakdown of traditional divisions between the sacred and the secular; religion becoming more 'worldly'.

Removal of religion from public to private realms of life: Candidates should be able to give examples of ways in which it is no longer a matter of public concern whether one is or is not a member of a religion – in fact legislation to prevent such questions being asked in employment law etc.

Desacralisation: The loss of a sense of mystery about the natural world; the sense of humans being in control of nature rather than at its mercy.

Diversification of religion: The fragmentation of religion as well as pluralism, which can lead to a loss of religious dominance in society.

The movement to a secular society: The loss of the place of religion in society; a society lacking in religious symbols and rituals.

The question asks for 'range', so there must be some range for marks of Level 4 and above.

(30 marks) AO1

04 'Secularisation is such a broad term that it is of little use.' Assess this view.**Agree**

- Talks of many different ideas, rather than one unified process
- So the 'umbrella term' may have very little meaning
- Some ideas may be self contradictory
- Especially in the context of societies such as the USA

Disagree

- Although the ideas are very different, they point to a process of fundamental change in the relationship between religion and society.
- May be unified by the idea of decline, which is the most commonly used meaning.

NB focus here is on the concept, and not on debates about whether it is happening.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 3 New forms of spirituality both within and outside religions

05 Examine the various forms which spirituality may take both within and outside mainstream religion.

Within religion

- Wide range may be cited- answers most likely to come from Christianity, but any religion will provide appropriate examples.
- Inward side of religion as opposed to outward practices
- 'Classical spirituality' e.g. of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches (some may explore this in detail)
- The discipline of spiritual training and spiritual discipline
- Working towards a spiritual goal
- Sacraments
- Prayer and devotion
- Setting apart time
- The role of 'sacred space' in providing environment for such
- May refer to more physical means, such as yoga, or the practices of the Sufi tradition
- Recognition of commonality of approach between religions

Outside religion

- Increasing current emphasis on 'mind, body and spirit'
- Holistic approaches
- Being at one with nature
- Centres for spiritual activity
- As well as individualistic approaches
- Recognition of idea that spirituality is not dependent on religion

Must address both 'within' and 'outside' for marks above Level 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

06 'Spirituality outside religion is just as important as that within religion.'
Assess this claim.

Agree

- To be human is to be spiritual, therefore no prerogative of religion
- Cannot be imposed by the structures of religion
- All involved in this basic quest
- All have the capacity to be spiritual
- Spirituality does not have to be validated by religion in order to be genuine

Disagree

- True spirituality needs a focus beyond the self, and therefore must belong within a religious tradition
- It is not an end in itself but a form of service to the divine
- Expressing submission and humility

Candidates may make comment on religious experience in this context. This is valid as long as it is clearly related to the focus of this question.

(20 marks)

AO2

Question 4 Religion and national identity**07 Explain what is meant by 'civic religion'.**

- Expect comments on religion in public life, in situations that may otherwise be regarded as secular
- Religion used as an expression of national identity
- Giving certain institutions religious or quasi religious value
- Long standing feature of civic life – not limited to modern world
- Place of symbolism and ritual
- Often fulfilling function of bringing society/community together
- And expressing shared ethos

Wide range of examples may be cited:

- Rituals at level of town or city
- Religion in the role of mayoralty or civic leadership
- Religion in national life, including parliament
- Religious aspects of Remembrance Day
- Role of the National Anthem
- Role of religion in education may be seen as a form of civic religion
- Coronations
- State funerals
- Royal weddings.

(30 marks) AO1

**08 'Civic religion should have no role in the United Kingdom (UK) today.'
Assess this claim.****Agree**

- Civic religion anomalous in a secular society
- It makes it difficult for those who do not have religious beliefs to take on certain forms of public office;
- Civic religion is not really religion – it is using religious symbolism for secular purposes

Disagree

- Civic religion meets a need
- Especially in times of public or national crisis
- Society has no other language with which to address some of these concerns
- It still expresses the feelings of the majority of people, who may not themselves be outwardly religious

(20 marks) AO2

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