



**General Certificate of Education  
January 2013**

**Religious Studies**

**RSS01**

**Religion and Ethics 1**

**AS Unit A**

**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.

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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2013 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

#### COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

## 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*

### Question 1 Utilitarianism

0

1

**Explain how Act Utilitarianism and Rule Utilitarianism may be used to make moral decisions.**

**Act:**

- Each act assessed individually.
- Consequences calculated – key idea likely to be illustrated with reference to the hedonic calculus and an example.
- The action calculated to bring about the greatest happiness of the greatest number chosen as the ‘right’ action.
- The action is justified by its happiness-making consequences.

**Rule**

- Rules developed to govern (strong rule) or guide (weak rule) decision-making.
- Rules are justified in so far as they promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number – e.g. driving on the left or right, do not murder.
- Once those rules are established it is the individual’s duty to obey them always (strong rule) or normally (weak rule).

There may, but need not, be reference to Bentham and Mill.

Max level 5 for answers which refer to only one of Act or Rule.

**(30 marks)**

**AO1**

0

2

**‘Utilitarianism is not compatible with a religious approach to moral decision-making.’ How far do you agree?**

**In support: (e.g.)**

- Act utilitarianism can support decisions which contradict religious teaching – e.g. sadistic guards.
- A religious believer might act in obedience to religious law regardless of the unhappiness that results – while an act utilitarian would reject such decisions as morally wrong (e.g. not lying in a situation where a lie could/would have saved many lives).

**Contrary to statement: (e.g.)**

- In many situations the decision made would be the same.
- Taking the happiness of all those involved into account appears consistent with much religious teaching.
- Some religious teaching does take consequences into account and may set rules aside when necessary (e.g. Christian situation ethics).
- Many of the rules advocated by supporters of rule utilitarianism are consistent with religious teaching.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

## Question 2 Situation Ethics

0
---

3
---

**Explain the general principles of Situation Ethics, illustrating your answer with reference to any ethical issue(s) of your choice. (Do not choose abortion or euthanasia.)**

An overview of Situation Ethics may include the following:

- All decisions made situationally, with the guiding principle of love – this is what Fletcher describes as ‘to conscience’ a situation
- Not legalistic – enters each situation with traditional rules as a guide – but sets those rules aside when love requires (e.g. sacrificial adultery)
- Not antinomian – love is the guiding principle – relativizes the absolute
- Each situation considered individually
- Relativistic – what is right in one situation may be wrong in another (e.g. lying)

Answers lacking reference to any ethical issue, or referring only to abortion or euthanasia – max level 4

**(30 marks)**

**AO1**

0
---

4
---

**‘Situation Ethics is not a practical method of moral decision-making.’  
How far do you agree?**

**In support (e.g.)**

- Relies on predicting consequences of an action – this may be difficult in a situation where a decision is needed quickly, or impossible given that long term consequences cannot be predicted.
- Requires a decision-making ability some do not have (e.g. those unable to understand the situation).
- ‘Love’ is subjective / has such a broad meaning that no agreement on any decision may be possible – all sides may see their choice as the most loving.

**Contrary to statement (e.g.)**

- Situation Ethics emphasises pragmatism, it is one of the presumptions – the action must ‘work’ (i.e. result in a loving outcome) for it to be justified, so the practical outcome of the action for all those involved must be considered.
- The reasons given for rejecting a legalistic approach to moral decision-making include the failure of a general principle to take individual circumstances into account – i.e. that such an approach does not work in practice. Situation Ethics could be seen as more practical than legalism.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

**Question 3 Religious teaching on the nature and value of human life****0****5**

**Explain religious teaching about how far human beings are able to influence their own life and destiny. You may refer to more than one religion in your answer.**

Candidates may refer to some of the following:

Predestination: (e.g.) We have no control over our lives, actions or destiny. God chooses those who are to go to heaven or hell. All our actions and all events in our life are 'written in a book' from the beginning. God 'guides whom he will and leads astray whom he will.'

Conditioned Existence – we are constantly influenced by everything around us, carried along in the flood of life which is often beyond our control or influence.

Karma – our birth is determined /heavily influenced by actions in previous lives and nothing can come to us unless our karma attracts it – however we generate that karma through our willed actions, we can achieve moksha/nibbana by controlling our karma production.

We have complete free will to choose our own actions and these determine our destiny (e.g. by earning heaven or hell), however events in the present life are outside our control. E.g. no one suffers without God's permission.

Answers which do not refer to both life and destiny – Max level 5

**(30 marks)****AO1****0****6**

**'From a religious point of view, some human beings are more valuable than others.' How far do you agree?**

**In support (e.g.)**

- Believers are more valuable than non-believers /sinners.
- Male more valuable than female.
- Able bodied more valuable than less able bodied.
- The living more valuable than unborn (but must make it clear that unborn is being considered a human being.)

**Contrary to statement (e.g.)**

- Sinners as/more valuable than believers (e.g. prodigal son).
- Male and female equally valued, but different.
- Able bodied and less able bodied are different creations – one is not an inferior version of the other.

**(15 marks)****AO2**

**Question 4 Abortion and euthanasia**

<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
----------	----------

**Explain ethical issues involved in legislation about abortion.**

Candidates may refer to any legislation – e.g. that forbidding all abortions but those mother’s life is at risk and that allowing abortion up to 24 weeks if two doctors agree that it would cause less damage to the physical or mental health of the mother (or that of existing children) than continuing with the pregnancy.

Issues (e.g.)

- Can ‘condemning a child to life’ by forbidding abortion be justified when the child is too seriously disabled to have any quality of life or will be born with a terminal condition?
- Can ‘killing’ an unborn at a stage in pregnancy at which other babies have survived be justified?
- Can limiting the rights of the mother over her own body, in the interests of an unborn child ever be justified?
- Can ‘killing’ an unborn in self-defence be justified?
- Do the predicted consequences of making abortion illegal mean that it would be wrong to do so on utilitarian grounds?

Answers that do not refer to legislation about abortion, but do deal with ethical issues relating to abortion in general, max level 4.

Note:

England, Scotland and Wales allow abortion up to 24 weeks on the agreement of two doctors that it would cause less damage to the physical or mental health of the mother (or that of existing children) than continuing with the pregnancy.

Northern Ireland only allows abortions if the mother’s life is at risk or there is a very severe threat to her mental or physical health. It is estimated that there are only around 70 legal abortions there each year, and that many more women go abroad to have one or go to ‘back-street’ abortionists

**(30 marks) AO1**

<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
----------	----------

**‘Abortion is not murder.’ How far do you agree?**

**In support:** (e.g.)

- What is in the womb in the earliest stages of pregnancy is not a living human being.
- Some religious law allows abortion up to 120 days.
- Unborn child is not a person/ not alive and only living beings can be murdered.
- Principle of Double Effect – even if unborn is considered a human being abortion may be an unwanted side effect of a procedure aimed at saving the life of the mother and allowed as such.

**Contrary to statement** (e.g.)

- Life begins at conception – e.g. Roman Catholic teaching. From that moment the unborn is a human being with potential and has a right to life.

**(15 marks) AO2**