



**General Certificate of Education  
January 2013**

**Religious Studies**

**RSS02**

**Religion and Ethics 2**

**AS Unit B**

**Final**

***Mark Scheme***

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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	

**RSS02: Religion and Ethics 2****Question 1 Kant and ethics**

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
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 **Explain the importance of reason and duty in Kant's theory of ethics.**

- **Reason**, Candidates might refer to the emphasis on reason in the Enlightenment period. Kant's ideas on the noumenal and phenomenal world put stress on the value of reason for our ideas about the noumenal realm. Metaphysics seeks to transcend experience in order to discover the nature of reality itself, as comprehended by pure reason.
- Practical reason is directed to the development of a good will and not to the achievement of happiness. Actions are right, therefore, from motive and duty, and not from consequence.
- Ultimately, reason arrives at maxims and laws that apply universally – actions that are right are those that practical reason wills as universal law. The claim that reason makes on us is experienced as an imperative to act in a certain way. Categorical imperatives demand unconditional obedience, and their force can be understood by contrast with that of hypothetical imperatives that are performed merely for some end or purpose.
- **Duty** for Kant is a universal obligation. What establishes duty is the willing obedience to universal laws derived from universal maxims.
- These are discovered by contrasting the instrumental good of hypothetical imperatives with the intrinsic good of categorical imperatives.
- Duty is linked to the good will.

Candidates might illustrate these ideas with examples from Kant.  
Max. Level 5 where candidates refer only to reason or only to duty.

**(30 marks) AO1**

<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
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 **'Kant's focus on reason and duty makes his ethical theory completely successful.'  
How far do you agree?**
**Agree**

- Candidates might suggest that the value of reason is that it excludes such variable features as consequences, inclinations, desires, emotions and the like. The value of reasoned judgements is that, if correct, they are universal – hence Kant's strong principle of universalizability.
- The value of an emphasis on duty is the value of universal obligation. People have no excuse for immoral behaviour: duty must be done for duty's sake, regardless of any other consideration.
- Duty links to good will, which according to Kant is the only thing that is good in itself, and most people would want to be the object of a good will.
- The criteria for 'complete success' might therefore include universalizability, fairness, justice, and so on.

**Other views**

- There are many lines that this evaluation could take: for example some might want to focus on some other aspect of Kantian theory as the basis for potential success, e.g. specific items such as the categorical imperative.
- Common criticisms of Kant are that a focus on reason and duty makes the theory cold and impersonal / devoid of emotion, etc., or that it unjustifiably ignores consequences – a thing that no common-sense theory should do.
- Some might argue that no theory of ethics can be completely successful, otherwise everyone would follow it.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**Question 2 Natural Law and ethics**

<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
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**Explain Finnis' modern development of Natural Law theory.**

- Finnis has written fairly extensively on his ideas, so candidates are likely to refer both to written publications and to internet material.
- Candidates should be aware of Finnis' proposal that there are seven basic goods by which the good life can be lived: life, knowledge, play, aesthetics, sociability, practical reasonableness and religion.
- Finnis sees these goods as being self-evidently so. They are both the motivation behind action and the goal of action.
- Finnis' 'First Moral Principle' is that *In voluntarily acting from human goods and avoiding what is opposed to them, one ought to choose and will only those possibilities whose willing is compatible with integral human fulfilment.* 'Integral human fulfilment' means the good of all persons and of the community as a whole, so it opposes abortion, euthanasia, nuclear weapons, etc.
- Further, Finnis proposes nine 'principles of practical reasonableness' which guide us in fulfilling the basic goods. These include: having a coherent life-plan, not showing arbitrary preferences among people, being detached yet committed when working out the good life, fostering the common good of one's community, and so on.
- Since the question refers to the "development of Natural Law theory", candidates are at liberty to show how Finnis' ideas develop (e.g. Aquinas') theory.

**(30 marks) AO1**

<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
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**'Finnis' development of Natural Law theory makes perfect sense.'**  
**How far do you agree?**

**Agree**

- As a system of Natural Law, that of Finnis has the strength of appealing to our common human nature, so that regulations and punishments are the same for all. The system is fair.
- The system, if followed, would produce a safe and secure community based on obedience to absolute rules.
- Most of Finnis' rules are based on common sense, and candidates might give examples.
- Finnis' system does not rely on God for its authority, so is more in tune with modern thinking. The appeal is to reason and common sense without putting these into the context of a questionable belief system.

**Other views**

- As with Aquinas' system, the assumption that humans share a common human nature can be questioned and rejected.
- Comment on Finnis' views on euthanasia, abortion, homosexuality, etc.
- Comment on the inflexibility of Natural Law approaches.
- Candidates might express and defend a preference for another ethical system.
- Questions concerning his list of the basic goods and the principles: e.g., for the latter, ideas about abandoning nuclear weapons in so threatening a world might be seen as impractical and idealist nonsense.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**Question 3 Religious views of the created world****0****5****Explain religious views about the status and duty of humankind in the created world.**

- Candidates are likely to focus on the theistic tradition of God as the omnipotent Creator who produces the universe from nothing, since this governs much of the modern tradition about the duties of humans.
- Hence the theistic religions describe human status as being the pinnacle of God's creation, since human powers exceed those of other creatures: e.g. Adam names the animals, and in Islamic teaching humanity becomes the Khalifah/vice-regent.
- In Judaism & Christianity, humans have the status of being created in God's image, and this is taken to mean that they have a duty to be moral beings and to care for the rest of creation.
- This is defined further by the concept of 'stewardship', often given the contrasting interpretation of 'dominion/power over'. The difference of interpretation is shown by differences of approach within the religious tradition, and different practices with regard to diet, treatment of other species, and so on.
- Candidates may refer either to one religion or more without advantage or disadvantage.

Max. Level 5 if both status and duty not addressed.

**(30 marks)****AO1****0****6****'In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we should ignore religious views about the status and duty of humankind in the created world.' How far do you agree?****Agree**

- Much depends on the general approach taken, but in point of contrast to the strengths selected, candidates are likely to focus on religious traditions that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have led to human exploitation of the created world.
- Some might criticise the lack of consistency in religious arguments.
- Religious arguments have an anthropomorphic focus, where the created order as a whole is subject to human values (as in the stewardship v. 'dominion' debate).
- Some might argue that religious views are non-empirical and therefore irrelevant, and so should be ignored.

**Other views**

- Where candidates have referred to Buddhism, for example, which has no real concept of a Creator, belief in karma and rebirth moulds ideas about duties to the world, e.g. the Buddha insisted that his followers should not eat meat or fish. For someone today who complies with this requirement, then, Buddhist views offer strong protection for the created world, particularly with the Buddhist reverence for the world in general and its views concerning the inter-related status of all things.
- Other religious views that have an 'intrinsicist' view about the value of the created world as a whole also have a strong tradition of respect for the created order, since they also stress (for example) the interdependence of all species and organisms. Organic and inorganic life must therefore be cared for.
- Some might argue that religious viewpoints have been formative for thousands of years, and so should not be ignored in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Even where they have proved to be wrong or damaging, there is a view that knowledge of such views (rather than ignoring them) teaches humanity what is, rather than what is not, productive.

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

**Question 4 Environment, both local and worldwide**

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**Explain the ethical issues raised by threats to the environment caused by pollution.**

- Candidates are likely to use a range of material to illustrate the threat posed to the environment posed by pollution, for example: the threat from global warming, effects on sea-levels, loss of habitable land, increased severity of storms / changing weather patterns, pollution of seas and rivers from oil spillage, effluent, toxic waste, sewage, and the like, exacerbated by over-fishing, loss of trees from acid rain, exacerbated by deliberate clear-felling, loss of habitat for wildlife / loss of bio-diversity, etc.
- Expect correlative explanation of the ethical problems raised, such as: the supposed right of humans, under some religious and non-religious ethical systems, to assume control of the planet and all its species / speciesism; extinction of species in threatened habitats; issue of carbon footprint – over- consumption by industrialised nations exacerbates the effects on the developing nations, who are least able to deal with it; religious issues of harm to God’s perfect world; dominion rather than stewardship, etc.

Max. Level 3 (14) for answers that list threats without explaining the ethical issues.

**(30 marks) AO1**

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8
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**‘Human beings should be forced to become environmentally responsible.’  
How far do you agree?**

**Agree**

- Candidates are likely to refer to the religious traditions of stewardship, since these require an active assumption of responsibility for the environment. If humans really are Khalifahs/stewards, then they will be answerable to God for any dereliction of duty. It would be better to force compliance rather than risk punishment from God.
- In practical terms, leaving responsibility for the environment up to the conscience of individuals or groups within society is likely to lead to dismal failure, since economic interests operate by self-interest: protection of the environment will operate only where there is a financial incentive, such as the increased market for free-range/organic products. Responsibility should therefore be forced.

**Other views**

- These might centre on the value of free will: responsibility cannot be forced, otherwise the value of the act is reduced.
- Compulsion is not effective as a motivator of human action.
- Speciesism is strongly rooted in the human psyche. Some would argue that as the dominant species, humans have a right to control the environment as they see fit.
- The issue might be seen to boil down to planetary survival, in which case some might make a baseline case for environmental control that achieves this, without compelling any particular form of environmental responsibility towards particular species.
- Candidates could discuss a range of moral and aesthetic considerations based on religious, utilitarian or Kantian presuppositions, for example.

**(15 marks) AO2**