



**General Certificate of Education
June 2013**

Religious Studies

RSS02

Religion and Ethics 2

AS Unit B

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

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	
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's theory of ethics**

0	1
---	---

**Explain the categorical imperative in Kant's theory of ethics, and show how it might be applied to an ethical issue of your choice.
(Do not choose an environmental issue.)**

- The categorical imperative might be introduced by background material, e.g. the contrast of its force with that of the hypothetical imperative.
- Expect some detail of the different forms of the categorical imperative, i.e. universalizability; treating humans as an end in themselves and not as a means to an end; living as a law-abiding member of a kingdom of moral ends.
- Within time constraints, candidates might amplify this with examples from Kant.
- The theory could be applied to any moral issue, although in practice, candidates are likely to select issues such as: war, abortion, euthanasia, and so on.
- Whichever issue is selected, candidates should show how the CI operates. With euthanasia, for example, that practice might be said to be a contradiction, since one could not logically universalize a principle which advocated death when the universal tendency of life is to live.
- Weaker responses are likely to employ incorrect generalisations, e.g. about 'not killing', and the like. The application of Kantian principles to some modern issues is not clear, since, for example, Kant made no definitive pronouncement about the ethical status of embryos. High-grade essays will be aware of the difficulties of making precise judgements about what Kant himself would have decided.

Max. Level 5 for explanation without application.

Max Level 4 for application without explanation.

(30 marks)

AO1

0	2
---	---

'Kant's categorical imperative does not work in practice.'
Assess this claim.

Agree

- Candidates are likely to highlight, for example, the alleged inflexibility of Kant's categorical imperative, perhaps through the example selected for Q.01.
- Kant is accused of ignoring the moral consequences of our actions. With euthanasia, for example, if the practice is ignored in favour of an inflexible rule, the result will often be a prolonged and painful death.
- It might be possible to show, with some issues, that the CI can support conflicting rules. One might want to universalize a rule allowing euthanasia as an act of compassion, yet others might want to universalize another rule banning it as a contradiction.

Other views

- With the principle of universalizability, whatever issues are referred to, the universal application of Kantian principles is an undeniable strength;
- Another is justice: whatever is universalized with regard to the issue selected, Kant's theory would ensure a just application of the rule.
- Candidates might refer to the fact that a society run on Kantian principles would feel safer. With regard to euthanasia, for example, people could be sure that the rules would be applied with equal justice.
- The answer to the question therefore depends very much on the meaning of 'does not work', which might be interpreted in terms of satisfactory or unsatisfactory outcome, or of ignoring the benefits of teleological principles, and so on.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2 Natural Law and ethics

0	3
---	---

Outline Natural Law Ethics, and explain the principle of double effect.

- Candidates are likely to outline Aquinas' theory, but this is not mandatory. They might look at the general principles of Natural Law theory, perhaps as indicated in Aristotle, and perhaps based on Finnis.
- The principle of double effect comes from Aquinas' principle of homicidal self-defence: where harmful effects are foreseen that are inseparable from a good effect, an action is justified provided that certain criteria are met: that the nature of the act itself is good, or at least morally neutral; that the moral agent intends specifically the good effect, and does not intend the bad effect as a means to a good end (or as the end itself); and that the circumstances of the case justify the action by the severity of possible harm, so that the good effect outweighs the bad.
- Candidates are likely to explain the principle in a variety of ways.

Max. Level 4 if only outline
Max. Level 5 if no outline.

(30 marks) AO1

0

4

'The principle of double effect weakens Natural Law Ethics.'**How far do you agree?****Agree**

- Some see double effect as an acknowledgement by NLE that its deontological principles are insufficient – that it is not possible to maintain a deontological theory without considering the consequences of actions. If this is acknowledged, then there is no need to invoke another principle in order to justify certain actions: they should be justified by the main theory.
- Some might argue that double effect is unwieldy, perhaps looking at specific instances such as its treatment of ectopic pregnancy.
- Such issues might be contrasted with the clarity of the main theory, e.g. the role of reason, its five principles, and so on.

Other views

- Some see double effect as valid way to promote the good end and to outweigh the harmful side effect.
- It is necessary for theories of ethics, even if they are essentially deontological, to acknowledge the importance of consequences/effects, otherwise the theory becomes impractical and divorced from reality and common sense.
- Even Kant has some teleological features in his theory of ethics, and Natural Law simply does the same.
- The principle is a practical one, and has clear and proper application, for example, in many areas of medical ethics, e.g. most people would accept that it is right to provide medication to terminally ill patients in order to alleviate their pain even though the side effect is to hasten death, but that it is wrong to provide such medication in order to hasten death in order to alleviate suffering. In the first case, the doctor's ultimate end is a good one — to alleviate suffering — not to cause death.
- Candidates might reach a variety of conclusions. For the higher Levels, the focus needs to be on the wording of the question, and not simply a list of the strengths and weaknesses of Natural Law.

(15 marks)**AO2**

Question 3 Religious views of the created world

0	5
----------	----------

Explain the view that the created world is the best possible world.

- Candidates might explain the idea that the created world is the best possible world with reference to religious systems, or to philosophical/ethical arguments, or both.
- For the former, for example, the theistic religions describe the creation of the world/universe in a specific order that follows God’s purpose. Each separate act of creation is described as good, as a reflection of God’s goodness. Humans are described as being made ‘in God’s image’, so later theology envisaged this as the creation, therefore, of a perfect species reflecting the God-given virtues of reason and morality. The world they inhabit would presumably be the best possible, to reflect that status.
- For philosophical/ethical arguments: God’s omnibenevolence might be said to produce the best possible world as a reflection of perfect goodness.
- That this is ‘the best possible world’ might be asserted in connection with the totality of God’s attributes, since an omnipotent, omniscient, perfect creator might be supposed to produce the best possible world.
- Leibniz introduced the concept of this as the best possible world, being one in which there is the perfect balance of good over evil, whatever that is. The world is fit for purpose.
- Some might refer to Swinburne’s view that this is ‘a’ best possible world, i.e. one of several ‘best possible’ arrangements. A world with death is a better world than one without it, since death brings renewal. It also allows for the possibility of the ultimate good of self-sacrifice.
- Accept relevant views from quantum physics about the optimisation of God’s plan through multiple universes.

(30 marks) AO1

0	6
----------	----------

**‘This world cannot be the best possible world that God could have created.’
How far do you agree?**

Agree

- Candidates are likely to refer to the imperfections of this world, for example through natural and moral evils.
- This might be expressed in terms of the ‘inconsistent triad’ – *God is omnipotent / God is omnibenevolent / evil exists*.
- The main problem is often seen as God’s omnipotence: for example some hold that an omnipotent being should be able to do the logically impossible, which would include creating a world without moral and natural evils, where normally this would be seen as logically impossible.

Other Views

- Some might reply with traditional theodicies – that the imperfections of the world are related to human and angelic sin, or that its imperfections are intended to provide an environment in which humans can develop second-order goods of courage, empathy, sympathy and the like.
- Some might develop Swinburne’s view, that a world without death and disease, and so on, would be inferior (in terms of God’s purposes) to a world with them.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4 Environment, both local and worldwide

0	7
---	---

Explain religious teachings about human responsibility for both the living and non-living environment.

- Whatever religion is selected, the answer needs to discuss human responsibility for the living and non-living environment rather than just issues of environmental concern.
- For Hinduism, for example, human responsibility to the living environment might be rooted in seeing nature as a manifestation of Brahman. Brahman sustains all living creatures, so humans must live in harmony with the environment: abuse of the environment is irreligious, and humans must practise ahimsa.
- For Christianity, the limits of human responsibility are defined by the view of humans as created in God's image, and thereby having 'dominion' over the environment, which can be interpreted instrumentally or intrinsically. Thus Thomist teaching has an instrumentalist / anthropocentric view of human responsibility in which humans for example have only indirect duties to animals. Intrinsicist interpretations see dominion as 'stewardship', whereby humans have a duty to care for the environment as a whole, living and non-living: perhaps illustrated by Process Theology, and Christian Feminist theology. The inclusion of the non-living environment within the sphere of human responsibility also follows from the biblical emphasis on the aesthetic value / perfection of God's creation.
- Some might show in various ways that religious teaching about the environment, and the interpretation of that teaching, often varies greatly within each religion. In other words, religious teachings do not take a clear line, for example on the issue of eating meat.
- Accept material which is religious by association, e.g. where candidates assert that Christians/Jews/Muslims are often members of environmental groups such as Deep Ecology, so their responsibilities are interpreted in line with the aims of such groups.

Max. Level 5 if only one aspect considered.

(30 marks)

AO1

0

8

**‘Environmental protection should be the responsibility only of the rich.’
How far do you agree?**

Agree

- The question can be looked at from the point of view both of rich individuals and rich nations. There are some aspects of environmental concern that can be addressed only by the rich nations, such as those aspects of ‘First World’ involvement in ‘Third-World’ countries which are causing many of the problems.
- Poor nations do not have the financial ability to effect change unilaterally, since they lack investment capital, educational opportunities, and a host of other factors that are needed before there is time and effort available to be used for looking after the environment.
- The rich individually are often the cause of the problem, so should bear the responsibility. Even where poor people destroy the environment through over-farming / deforestation, etc., this is generally the result of corruption, greed and irresponsibility at governmental level, and in many countries this is where the wealthy are to be found.
- The rich, both collectively and individually, should therefore accept the responsibility for environmental protection, politically and financially.

Other views

- Environmental issues are not black and white. Many of the environmental problems facing TW countries need to be addressed in partnership with the FW nations, such as: fair trade to minimise environmental impact; planned economic change and development; development of educational infrastructure; political cooperation to minimise the damaging effects of unstable governments in the Third World, and so on. It is neither possible nor desirable, therefore, for this to be the responsibility solely of the rich.
- For individuals, wealthy donors do make environmental issues their concern (although in many cases those individuals have become wealthy through developing technologies that are damaging to the environment), and many of the environmental agencies are funded by donations from the wealthy middle classes; nevertheless there are many agencies within TW countries that operate effectively, albeit on a smaller scale. They call on rich and poor alike to join forces to protect the environment and to provide opportunities at all levels.
- Some might argue that the statement is impractical, since enforcement of any such decision is impossible: there is no agency that can compel those with wealth and power to become environmentally responsible. The UN has no such mandate. The suggestion therefore fails by default.
- Some will argue that Christian stewardship is a universal requirement, so Christians would advocate that all humans should accept responsibility for the environment.

(15 marks)

AO2