A-LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RST3F Religion and Contemporary Society
Mark scheme

2060
June 2014

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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' 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.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced) A2 Level Descriptors

Level	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks Unit 4 italics	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks Unit 4 italics	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 that 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

| 0 | 1 | **Examine the various attitudes to poverty found in one or more religion(s).** |

Students may give some definitions of poverty – absolute and relative

Christianity
- Longstanding concern for those in involuntary poverty.
- Concern for the poor throughout OT.
- Condemnation of social injustice by prophets, especially Elijah and Amos.
- Therefore assumption of stressing the rights of the poor, Amos' criticisms of the idle luxury of the rich.
- Teaching of Jesus stressing the needs of the poor, e.g. parable of the sheep and goats.
- Harder for rich man to enter kingdom of heaven than for camel to go through eye of a needle.
- John 12:8 'the poor will always be with you' implying fatalism.
- Victorian attitudes of 'the rich man in his castle; the poor man at his gate'.
- Some may refer to liberation theology.
- Understandings of poverty in 'mission alongside the poor', 'faith in the city' etc.
- Some may consider perspectives on poverty of liberation theology.

- But, tradition of voluntary poverty as a virtue.
- Monastic rule of poverty chastity and obedience.
- Virtue of the simple life.

- Other side of this is the link between protestant ethic and capitalism.
- Social mobility which came about in early Methodism.
- And the 'prosperity gospel' found in some churches today – God rewarding the faithful materially.

Judaism
- Tradition of the bible as for Christianity.
- Teachings in Job.
- Stress on tithing.
- People should not impoverish themselves to relieve others.
- Charitable giving a fundamental part of Jewish way of life.
- Poverty not seen as a virtue.

Islam
- Stress on equality of all.
- Zakat- an essential element of the 5 pillars.
- Recognition that there will always be those in need.
- Teachings on the responsibilities of wealth – which include meeting the needs of the poor.
- Implications of Muslim investment practices.

Buddhism
- Greed at the root of all suffering (4 noble truths).
- 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 towards them.
- Importance of the middle way.
- Spirit of living simply and giving generously.

Hinduism
- Caste system and cycle of karma and samsara in some ways encouraged people to accept poverty.
- Provided a way of making sense of major social inequalities.
- Most spiritual stage of life seen as being one of poverty and renunciation.
- Holy men – those with nothing in the way of material goods.
- But – role of Lakshmi as goddess of prosperity – prayers to Lakshmi for financial success, indicate goal of prosperity.
- Belief that by following one's dharma, one may have a better lot in the next life.
- Encouragement to work hard and make money.

Sikhism
- 'Poor' equated with humble, and used by Gurus of themselves.
- Sin of pride.
- Belief in the equality of all people as created by the one God.
- Importance of hard work and honest work – without attention to status.
- Importance of sewa.

The question may be approached in terms of attitudes to poverty itself or as attitudes to the problem of poverty, or both.

This question is about <u>attitudes</u> only. Reference to actions can only be credited if used to illustrate attitudes.

[30 marks]   **AO1**

| 0 | 2 | **'The fact that religious people have different views about poverty means that they cannot really help the poor.' Assess this claim.**

Line of argument will obviously depend on the religion(s) chosen. Students can use a broader range of examples here than those employed in 01.

In support
- Poverty seen as both a virtue and a problem, therefore cannot be high priority in social change.
- Much traditional philanthropy based on model of class-based social order.
- For some, poverty is needed to enable others to give.
- Some see suffering in this life to be recompensed by rewards in the afterlife or another life.
- Poverty is more significant for some groups who are much more concerned with spiritual life than with the practicalities of daily life.

Other views
- Religions are large and diverse structures, spanning many societies; therefore cannot expect uniformity of ideas.
- Religions can extol simplicity and avoidance of excess, without expecting people to suffer abject poverty.
- Religions can be strong agents for change, by stirring people's consciences and by urging them to question the social and economic structures which lead to poverty.

May comment on the fact that religions have much in common in their attitudes to poverty.

[20 marks]   **AO2**

Question 2   **Challenges to religion in contemporary society**

| 0 | 3 |

Examine ways in which divisions within religion(s) create challenges for those religion(s).

Students need to show some understanding of the sorts of divisions which exist, e.g.

Christianity: denominational differences – specific denominations as well as wider groupings such as Catholic/protestant. May also look at liberal/evangelical divisions, or exclusivist/inclusivist groups. Or divisions over e.g. ordination of women.
Judaism: Hasidic/Orthodox/Reform.
Islam: Sunni/Shi'a, traditionalist/modernist; cultural divisions, etc.

They may look at the divisions by religion, or by factors, e.g., socio-economic, doctrinal, cultural, issue-based etc.

Ways in which they create challenges
- Energies may be taken up with dealing with internal, rather than external issues.
- Seen by outside world as divided, and thus as weak or irrelevant.
- 'United we stand, divided we fall.'
- Not able to provide a united voice on key issues of the day, or there may be quite public struggles over who the spokesperson should be.
- Thus diminishing authority.
- May lead to lack of clarity over doctrine and practice.
- Effects on deployment of human and material resources – costs of paying different leaders, and of maintaining different buildings.
- Sometimes groups may reflect socio-economic divisions, and thus lead to charges that some religious groups are socially elitist.
- Challenge of inter-communal violence

Whilst the focus is on the present day, it would be acceptable for students to make reference to historical examples to illustrate ideas, and full credit can be gained for this approach.

The question is about divisions <u>within</u> religions, which is what the specification demands. If students write about divisions <u>between</u> religions, or simply list the different divisions within a religion, then limited credit can be given.

[30 marks]   **AO1**

0	4

**'Such internal divisions make it totally impossible for religions to survive.'
Assess this view.**

In support
- Obvious ideas of 'united we stand, divided we fall'.
- Weakened by divisions.
- Do not have the resources to deal with internal divisions.
- In a time of secularisation, weaknesses are heightened, as religion as a whole is marginal.
- Ecumenical movement may be seen as necessary to survival.

Other views
- Removing all internal divisions can rob religions of their dynamism.
- People need particular groups to which to be loyal.
- If all divisions are removed, religion may be brought down to 'lowest common denominator' which is attractive to none.
- Religion is about the emotions, and people may feel passionately about the particular beliefs which make their group distinctive.
- Or firmly believe in the rightness of a particular issue which separates them from others.
- History shows that divisions can last for a long time, and the groups still survive.
- May be sectarian break-off, meaning that religion survives in new forms.

[20 marks]   **AO2**

Question 3   **New forms of spirituality both within and outside religions**

0	5

Explain reasons for the rise of interest in spirituality in recent years.

Students are likely to offer some attempt at definition of spirituality, though this is not required

- Dissatisfaction with formalism of traditional religious institutions.
- Element of protest.
- Within religions, people looking for more experiential and personal forms of religion.
- Spirituality can cut across traditional religious structures.
- Loss of traditional forms of religious authority leading people to seek something more 'inward'.
- Decline in 'stiff upper lip' attitudes means that people are more willing to express their innerness.
- Equally, many spiritual practices allow people to find new sense of community.
- Re-discovery of old forms of spirituality, e.g. Celtic, Kabbalistic.
- Attraction of Sufi forms.
- New age spiritualities
- Highly commercialised and materialistic ways of life in many societies.
- Many new forms of spirituality linked to search for alternative lifestyles.
- Travel and communications technology making eastern spiritualities accessible to more people.
- Increased environmental and ecological awareness leading people to more 'holistic' approaches.
- Wanting to be in tune with nature.
- Increased awareness of psychological importance of holistic approaches.
- Search for well being.

For higher levels (6/7), there should be some range of reasons.

[30 marks]   **AO1**

| 0 | 6 | **'The rise of interest in spirituality is greater outside mainstream religion than within it.' Assess this claim.** |

In support
- Plenty of evidence of 'mind, body and spirit' shops and materials.
- Therapies including spiritual approaches.
- Plethora of new age spiritualities.
- Many people, whether religious or not, interested in spirituality in some way – so statistically must be greater.
- Mainstream religions not really showing much of an increase in interest.

Other views
- The interest may not be so strong numerically, but it is deeper and more meaningful within mainstream religion.
- Difficult to quantify within religion.
- Effects of the spiritual dimension of e.g. charismatic Christianity very widespread.
- Sufi influence widespread within Islam.
- Some forms, e.g. kabbalism, may lead to renewed interest in the mainstream religion.
- People more willing to demonstrate their spirituality publically.

Some may argue that the fundamental nature of spirituality means that we cannot make sharp distinctions between outside and within, or that religious elements are being taken on without the religious 'labels'.

[20 marks]　　**AO2**

Question 4   Religion and national identity

| 0 | 7 | **Explain what is meant by a secular state.**

Definition – a state in which religion plays no part in public life.
Not the same as a state in which there is no religion.

Likely characteristics:
- Religion cannot be associated with the head of state, whether that be a monarch or president.
- Likely to be a president, because monarchy has many religious overtones.
- No particular religious group can be seen to have any precedence over others, or any 'official' status.
- Religion would not play any part in local or national government – so no prayers in parliament or councils.
- No roles such as mayors' chaplains.
- Religious holidays would not be public holidays.
- State may not give any financial support to religious institutions.
- Official decisions based on purely rational approaches rather than being influenced by the values of any particular group.

Some students are likely to recognise the distinctions between states which have been secular from their founding (e.g. USA) and those which have become secular (e.g. France). They may also recognise that many people in a secular state may be deeply religious.

[30 marks]   AO1

| 0 | 8 | **'In the 21st century, the state must be secular.' Assess this view.** |

In support
- Logical, in a largely secularised society.
- May also argue that in pluralistic multifaith society, state cannot be associated with particular religion.
- Human rights demand freedom of religion, so one cannot be favoured over another or the right to be of no religion.
- Modern society highly rational and technocratic, so religion may be seen as anachronistic.
- Post-modern views do not accept the single narrative proposed by a non-secular state.

Other views
- Maintenance of historical tradition does not have to conflict with modernity.
- Rituals have symbolic value for concept of nationhood.
- Giving religion a valued place in society affords status to all faiths.
- Involvement of religious leaders in government ensures that voice of religion is heard.
- Role of religion in education allows for mutual understanding.

[20 marks]   **AO2**