



AS-LEVEL

Religious Studies

RSS01 Religion and Ethics 1

Mark scheme

2060

June 2015

Version 1: Final Mark Scheme

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 Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

<i>Level</i>	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**Indicative content**

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 1 Utilitarianism

0

1

Explain each of the following:

- **how moral decisions are made using Rule Utilitarianism**
- **Mill's ideas concerning the importance of the quality of pleasure.**

Rule Utilitarianism

Rules are decided according to their potential to maximise pleasure / happiness; these include moral 'laws' such as 'do not lie' and social conventions such as driving on the left or right; it becomes the duty of the decision-maker to follow such rules always – in the case of strong Rule Utilitarianism, or generally – in the case of weak Rule Utilitarianism in which the rules can be set aside in any situation where pleasure / happiness would be maximised as a result.

Some argue that in the latter case, Rule Utilitarianism degenerates into Act Utilitarianism.

Quality of pleasure

J.S. Mill considers the quality of the pleasure resulting from the action; eg intellectual pleasures rather than purely physical ones; it is better to aim for such pleasures, even if it is at the expense of physical ones 'better to be a dis-satisfied human / Socrates than a satisfied pig / fool'; higher pleasures identified by 'competent judges' who are capable of experiencing them and recognise their worth; funding / social resources better spent on maximising such pleasures, even if the number of those experiencing those pleasures is more limited.

Maximum Level 5 if only one of Rule Utilitarianism or the quality of pleasure dealt with.

[30 marks] AO1

0

2

'Utilitarianism provides a good way of making moral decisions.'

How far do you agree?

There may, but need not be, some analysis of 'good'.

In support

Has great strengths: Common sense – seems totally intuitive to work to maximise happiness / pleasure; democratic consensus accepts general rules that maximise happiness, so the theory formalises practice; consequences can be seen by everyone, so there is public accountability for decisions; taking consequences into account means taking all the people affected into account, which seems fair.

Other views

Has serious weaknesses: Consequences of actions cannot be accurately established; the hedonic calculus is not easy to use; in Act Utilitarianism, the interests of the minority are overlooked; the pursuit of happiness as an end in itself is not a worthwhile goal.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 2 Situation Ethics

0

3

Explain each of Fletcher's four presumptions of Situation Ethics: pragmatism, contextual relativism, positivism and personalism.

Pragmatism

Decision-makers should approach a situation asking themselves 'what will work in this situation?' rather than 'what does the law tell me to do?' By 'work' is meant, what will maximise love, which may or may not be what the law demands. For example, if the use of contraception could reduce both the population and the spread of STIs and so improve the quality of life of many people, the use of contraception may be the pragmatic decision.

Contextual Relativism

This presumes that decisions should be made relative to love and to the situation in which a decision is required; situationism does not rule out or demand any specific course of action – it does not use the commands 'never' or 'always'; it 'relativises the absolute' because all decisions must be taken relative to love; it is not antinomian, it does have standards and does not 'absolutise the relative'; eg it is not absolutely wrong to have adulterous sex, nor is it always right, it is only right if love is maximised.

Positivism

Situationism is faith based; it is based on the faith that God is love and love is the highest good. Such statements cannot be proved, nor can those of alternative ethical systems such as utilitarianism where happiness / pleasure is the highest good.

Personalism

Situation Ethics presumes that people are more important than laws. Fletcher argues that Christ showed this in (eg) healing on the Sabbath where the needs of people were put above service to the law. Fletcher contrasts the legalist who asks what the law requires with the situationist who asks who is to be helped because the basis of Situation Ethics is neighbour-regarding love (agape) which is universal and indiscriminate.

Balance between the four aspects is not expected but they must all be covered for marks above Level 5.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

4

‘Situation Ethics is a practical form of moral decision-making.’

Assess this view.

In support

Pragmatism, the emphasis on the loving outcome of decisions, shows that Situation Ethics is first and foremost practical rather than theoretical; it allows a flexibility that recognises that situations differ greatly so that what will work in one situation would not work in another eg blindly following laws against lying or stealing may cause harm to others; the agape law means that there are guidelines to follow, all decisions must be relative to love.

Other views

Judging the likely consequences of a decision is at least intellectually demanding – many people may not be capable of making such decisions; anticipating consequences may be impossible in which case the decision becomes too subjective; allowing people to make decisions on the basis of what they feel is Christian love is, given human imperfections, too dangerous; the decision maker has too much responsibility.

[15 marks]

AO2

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

0

5

With reference to one religion you have studied, examine religious teaching about the human condition.

The phrase human condition can be broadly interpreted and content will vary depending on the religion chosen.

Buddhism

Samsara; ruled by law of karma; conditioned consciousness allowing little 'free will' but karma generation can be controlled; anatta, no soul, dukkha, the unsatisfactoriness of life, anicca and constant change; rebirth in the human realm the only opportunity to achieve Nirvana.

Christianity

Created; made in God's image; free; fallen and subject to redemption; linear view of life; living under judgement; lower than the angels, higher than the animals – may be reference to stewardship and / or dominion; subject to law and judgement; varying views in different traditions including original sin and predestination.

Hinduism

The individual soul, atman, born and reborn in the cycle of rebirth, and seeking the goal of liberation, union with Brahman; sentient and with higher mental faculties than other animals; life ruled by law of karma; the body both a means through which the soul can achieve liberation and a barrier to that liberation because of its weaknesses and appetites; 'free' in response to the present but events presented to each person reflect their karma.

Islam

Created; born in submission to God (as Muslims) but some are then led astray by their upbringing and experiences; linear view of life; combine 'intellect and sensuality' where angels are intellect and animals sensuality; given special favour and responsibilities by God above much of creation; have free will within the context of God's overall control – varying interpretations of the relationship between human free will and responsibility and overall control by God – nothing happens without his permission; subject to judgement.

Judaism

Created by God and capable of a relationship with God; living under judgement and awaiting the Messianic age; linear view of life, emphasis on this life rather than the next; an image of God – this can be understood in terms of having some divine quality within them (making them a unique type of being) or having the capacity to behave in a God-like way, or both; unique in having capacity to know good and evil; have free will.

Sikhism

Created by God, the individual soul 'Atman' seeks union with God through love, worship and service in this life; human beings live with a false sense of self (haumai) and this delusion leads to such vices as greed and pride; there is free will within the limits set by God; all actions have consequences beyond this life; rebirth continues in many different life forms until moksha is attained.

Only one religion may be credited. When more than one religion is mentioned give credit for the religion that achieves the highest mark.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

6

‘From a religious perspective, non-human life has little importance.’

How far is this true?

The idea of ‘importance’ may be interpreted broadly.

In support

Humanity has dominion over animals so animals are provided for use of humans; they may be killed for food / used as a resource so they have limited importance; only humans have souls; only rebirth as a human allows liberation from rebirth to be achieved – birth as non-human life does not allow spiritual progress so is not important in that sense.

Other views

Some religions see all life forms as an expression of the same karma or atman and all life as deserving respect eg doctrine of ahimsa in Hinduism and Buddhism, no harm to any living thing; non-human life is created by God and a holistic view of creation gives them importance – part of the harmony or balance of creation; humanity has a duty of care to non-human life – the idea of stewardship; non-human animal life may have personhood and therefore be capable of a relationship with God which would give them importance comparable to that of human beings.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 4 Abortion and euthanasia

0	7
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Explain what is meant by euthanasia with particular reference to:

- **active and passive euthanasia**
- **voluntary and non-voluntary euthanasia.**

Note that the question requires particular reference to the named features – that means that all **MUST** be included for level 6 or 7 to be awarded, but better answers may be actually be broader.

General concept: ‘good death’ enabling someone to die as an act of compassion / love, this should be clearly distinguished from murder.

Active and passive

Active: Something is done in order to bring about the death of the person eg lethal injection; the person is killed.

Passive: something necessary to keeping a person alive is not done / treatment is withdrawn; the person is allowed to die; some argue that the distinction between the two is academic eg the supposed difference between stopping feeding a baby in order to bring about its death and smothering it to cause death.

Voluntary and Non-voluntary

Voluntary: the individual is expressing a desire to die but is unable to achieve that without assistance; such an individual may ask for help in dying, may refuse food; refuse life-saving treatment; this view may be expressed long before the situation arises (eg in living will or advance directive) but the person may be unable to communicate it when they approach death, in such an event enabling or allowing death may be classed as voluntary euthanasia – but see below.

Non-voluntary: the person cannot make a decision or communicate their decision eg they may be in a coma, severely brain damaged or too young to express a view; such individuals may never have considered or expressed a desire for euthanasia so others are making the decision on their behalf; some non-voluntary euthanasia may actually be involuntary (Involuntary euthanasia: ending someone’s life against their will.)

NB Sources use non-voluntary and involuntary interchangeably, so answers may or may not refer to the possibility that non-voluntary euthanasia may be against the will of the person concerned and may use either term.

All parts of the question must be covered for marks above Level 5.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

8

'From a religious perspective, euthanasia is never good.'**Assess this view.**

There may, but need not be, some analysis of 'good'.

In support

Sanctity of life means that only God has the right to end a life – it does not belong to the person who has it, but is held in trust on God's behalf and can only be ended by God; some religious teaching forbids murder or harming any living thing, and euthanasia can be seen as murder or harm (especially involuntary euthanasia); suffering is seen by some as a religious duty, in which case ending it is a rejection of God's plan; in Buddhism the desire to die may result in bad karma.

Other views

Keeping people artificially alive could also be seen as going against the will of God and simply prolonging death / suffering; religion teaches the duty to end suffering, euthanasia can be seen as an example of that; compassion motivates many religious people; euthanasia may be seen in Situation Ethics as the loving action which in Situation Ethics defines a 'good' action.

[15 marks]**AO2**