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AS

# Religious Studies

RSS03 Philosophy of Religion

Mark scheme

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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 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
<b>7</b>	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	<b>28-30</b>	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.	<b>14-15</b>	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.
<b>6</b>	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)	<b>24-27</b>	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.	<b>12-13</b>	
<b>5</b>	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).	<b>20-23</b>	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.	<b>10-11</b>	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.
<b>4</b>	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	<b>15-19</b>	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.	<b>7-9</b>	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.
<b>3</b>	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	<b>10-14</b>	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	<b>5-6</b>	
<b>2</b>	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.	<b>5-9</b>	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	<b>3-4</b>	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.
<b>1</b>	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	<b>1-4</b>	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	<b>1-2</b>	
<b>0</b>	Nothing of relevance.	<b>0</b>	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	<b>0</b>	

## RSS03: Philosophy of Religion

### 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 The cosmological argument

**0 1 Explain the role of God as the sustainer of motion, causation and existence in the cosmological argument.**

- God as start and sustainer of chain of motion.
- God as start and sustainer of chain of causation.
- God as start and sustainer of chain of all contingency.
- If God, as the necessary being, stops His creative action, then the world will no longer exist.
- As God begins the chain of motion and the chain of cause and effect, God can also stop them by withdrawing from the world.
- Thus, as the first mover, the first cause and the necessary being, God is responsible for all movement, all causes and effects and the existence of everything.
- Without the continuous creative activity of God, there could be no movement, no chain of cause and effect and nothing could exist.
- Aquinas is talking about a first cause of motion, causation and existence in the sense that God is first in an essentially ordered series. Such a series is 'vertical', so emphasizes the point that Aquinas was talking about motion, causation and existence here and now and not just as a linear sequence into the past.
- Copleston's argument that 'finite things have a constant relation of existential dependence on the creator' in other words not a deistic god.
- Copleston's point that in the cosmological argument, God is causation 'in esse' where a cause is in need of being sustained in order to work.

Maximum Level 5 if all aspects of the question are not addressed.

**[30 marks] AO1**

**0 2** Discuss how far the view of God as the sustainer of motion, causation and existence has value for religious believers today.

**In support**

- It coheres with revelation of the role of God in the Bible and Qur'an.
- God's presence can be known through the world in the here and now not just in the past.
- The role of God as a sustainer is more personal, a believer can depend upon God.
- Using reason the belief in God makes sense, it appeals to an individual's logic.

**Other views**

- Religious believers require no rationalisation of belief in line with Fideism.
- The conclusions of the argument do not grasp the God worshipped by believers as God is so much more.
- Too many flaws and critics for this argument to be valuable to lead to belief.

**[15 marks] AO2**

**Question 2 Religious experience**

**0 3** Explain challenges to religious experience from philosophy with reference to:

- **whether the finite could experience the infinite**
- **the problems of verifying religious experience.**

**Whether the finite could experience the infinite**

- A finite being is limited in every way in comparison to the infinite and could not comprehend nor experience such a being.
- Using Kant's claim that the human mind is contained within the phenomenal world and therefore limited within it and that God as a transcendent being is in the unknowable noumenal world which is beyond conception.
- The infinite in the physical sense is inconceivable spatially and temporally. The human mind is only capable of conceiving things spatially and temporally so therefore cannot conceive of the infinite.

**The problems of verifying religious experience**

- There is an inferential gap between someone who claims to see God in nature and someone who claims to see only nature.
- The inability to empirically test any claims fully.
- The problems of using subjective claims to make objective claims about the world.
- The fact that a lot of the experiences are mental and therefore private.
- Affective and difficult to accurately describe and therefore verify.
- There is nothing against which to authenticate the experience leaving the possibility open for abuse.
- A J Ayer's claim that religious experience accounts tell us of only the state of the subject's mind.
- 'Common core' arguments such as William James 'PINT' don't work, because other scholars give different accounts of the so-called core.

Maximum Level 5 if only one part attempted.

**[30 marks] AO1**

**0 4 Evaluate the success of philosophical challenges to religious experience.****In support**

- In today's society there is a heavy reliance on empirical evidence.
- People tend to disbelieve subjective claims or be cynical about the motive.
- Logical positivism's influence that only that which can be verified is meaningful.
- Due to the beliefs about God as transcendent, it is illogical to believe that religious experiences can occur.

**Other views**

- The self-authenticating nature of the experience.
- A lot of other experiences are not easy to verify but are not denied such as types of pain.
- The theological defence that God uses agents, such as angels, to interact with humanity.

**[15 marks] AO2****Question 3 Psychology and religion****0 5 Outline the views of both Freud and Jung that are seen to challenge religious belief and explain how religion has responded to these views.****Freud may be seen as challenging religion by:**

- Viewing it as a symptom of a collective neurosis therefore a by-product of the psyche dealing with a trauma experienced in early development.
- Viewing it as a result of repressed guilt from the Oedipus complex rather than a truth about the way the world is.
- Viewing it as a form of wish fulfilment that there is a protective father who is concerned with our well-being.

**Jung may be seen as challenging religion by:**

- Jung saw God as an archetype and in terms of inherited characteristics and so rejected any idea of a relationship with God.
- Jung's anti-realist view of God which seems to reject external God.
- An experience which stems from an internal archetype may be questioned as being termed religious.

**How religion has responded to the challenges:**

- A rejection of Freud's view that religion stems from sexual desire.
- A rejection of Jung's view of religion as a 'one way' relationship.
- The argument that there is no proven link only a theoretical link between religion and mental health, and that link is questionable.
- Jung can be seen as supporting religion in the sense that it supports religious experience as real experience.
- Psychology is welcomed as studying the religious mind may lead to further understanding of belief.

Maximum Level 4 if answer outlines only.

Maximum Level 5 if answer explains only.

**[30 marks] AO1**

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**0 6** 'Freud and Jung were wrong to suggest that there is a link between religion and mental health.'

**How far do you agree?**

**In support**

- Freud can be seen as wrong due to a reductionist view of religion and overlooks the two way relationship religious believers have.
- Jung's anti realist view of God does not account for the relationship with God and the world.
- Freud is largely discredited today and as such cannot be seriously considered.
- The sexual origin of religion has been seen as ludicrous as the religious life is based on much more than sexual desire.
- Some believers may find the theories interesting as perspectives on what is happening in the religious mind however do not accept them as correct.

**Other views**

- Both psychologists offer a convincing account for why people are religious without resorting to God or a God that is recognised by traditional views.
- People with acute psychological needs often use religion in the ways the psychologists describe.
- Both psychologists base their theories on evidence which some may find convincing.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 4    Atheism and postmodernism**

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**Explain the following reasons for the rise of atheism:**

- **Rebellion against moral absolutes.**
- **Awareness of other faiths.**

**Rebellion against moral absolutes**

- 1960s marking a rejection of traditional Christian family values and a movement in the Western world of more liberal approaches to life including acceptance of co-habitation, contraception and extra-marital sexual relationships.
- Reference to the secularisation of social attitudes to areas of morality such as homosexuality, sex outside marriage and contraception to name a few.
- A rejection of absolutist inflexible moral systems as too rigid which leads to a questioning of the fairness of God.
- A rejection of the notion of autocratic authority which leads to rejection of God.

**Awareness of other faiths**

- Explanation of the global community and awareness of the often contradictory claims about the nature of the universe and the existence of God. The view that this exposure leads to inevitable questioning of one's own faith.
- Hume's claim that with religion; "whatever is different is contrary".
- Awareness of the extremism of faiths leading to a cynicism about the role of religion.

Maximum Level 5 if both parts not attempted.

**[30 marks]    AO1**



**0 8** How far have these reasons led to a retreat of religion in today's society?

**In support**

- People find intolerant ethics unacceptable in today's society – such as punishments for abortion, sex outside marriage and homosexuality.
- People find the competing claims of religion to contradict and therefore cancel out each other.
- People find media representations of religious views inappropriate and outdated.
- Postmodern attitudes to individual autonomy and freedom of belief could be seen to replace old fashioned religious beliefs.

**Other views**

- The Ten Commandments are still the basis of most legal systems in Western society.
- Religion worldwide is not in retreat despite the national picture.
- Religious groups campaign and are active in all spheres of moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia.
- These reasons are less influential in causing the retreat of religion than the challenges from science to core beliefs about creation.
- Some may argue that religion may be in retreat in European culture and not in the rest of the world.

**[15 marks] AO2**