

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit 3B: *Philosophy of Religion*

Additional Specimen Questions



**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION
ADVANCED LEVEL**



**RELIGIOUS STUDIES UNIT 3B
PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

RST3B

ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN QUESTIONS

For this paper you must have:

- a 12 page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.
The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is **RST3B**.
- Answer **two** questions.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 100.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- In each question, part (a) tests your knowledge and understanding, while part (b) tests your skills of reasoning and evaluation.
- You will be marked on your ability to use English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Answer **two** questions.

1 (a) (30 marks)

(b) (20 marks)

2 (a) 'Religious language is analogical and symbolic.'

Explain this view. (30 marks)

(b) Evaluate how successfully religion has responded to the challenge that religious language is meaningless.

(20 marks)

3 (a) Explain differing views of the relationship between the body and the soul.

(30 marks)

(b) Assess the view that Near Death Experiences provide reasonable grounds for belief in the afterlife.

(20 marks)

4 (a) (30 marks)

(b) (20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS



GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN MARK SCHEME PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION RST3B

Mark schemes are normally prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. When published, a mark scheme normally includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in the 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 this 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.

RST3B: Philosophy of Religion

2 (a) **‘Religious language is analogical and symbolic.’**

Explain this view.

Two views of religious language are required.

Analogical

Words that take their common meaning from a human context apply analogically to God – they do not mean the same, nor something completely different, e.g. human ‘love’ is an imperfect reflection of divine love but allows some understanding of it. Some candidates may draw on Aquinas’ ideas of analogy of attribution and proportion.

Symbolic

This term has a variety of meanings and all valid responses must be credited, from the technical (for e.g. Tillich that a symbol participates in that which it symbolises), to the general (e.g. a symbol is something which stands for or represents something else). Candidates may explore the idea simply in relation to ‘not literal’, e.g. Father; Shepherd, Light of the World as applied to God / Jesus. Throne of God / Face of God (Qur’an) images for Nirvana and Karma.

Candidates are expected to tackle both aspects. Answers dealing with one only maximum Level 5 (20 marks).

(30 marks) AO1

(b) **Evaluate how successfully religion has responded to the challenge that religious language is meaningless.**

There is no need for candidates to explain in detail why religious language has been considered meaningless, but this will be implicit in their answer. They should be aware of ways in which religion has responded (e.g. with eschatological verification) and to be able to consider the successes and failures of such ideas. They may also respond by attacking the arguments used against religious language, i.e. the principles of verification and falsification.

(20 marks) AO2

3 (a) Explain differing views of the relationship between the body and the soul.

No philosophers are specified but they may be referred to. Expect dualism (e.g. Plato, Descartes) and the idea that the soul is inseparable from the body (e.g. Aristotle). Soul may be understood as the pre-existing self that enters the body or the capacity for thought that operates where there is a functioning body, but, in this case, neither personal, nor a thing. Some may distinguish between materialism; epiphenomenalism and dualism and / or illustrate the ideas from religious teaching. Some may explore the atman / soul and karma / soul relationship.

There must be **at least two different views** in a full answer.
Answers dealing with one only maximum Level 5 (20 marks).

(30 marks) AO1

(b) Assess the view that Near Death Experiences provide reasonable grounds for belief in the afterlife.

Answers should show how Near Death Experiences could support belief in an afterlife and why they may be taken to mean that such a belief is reasonable. Candidates may examine what would constitute 'reasonable grounds' or leave that implied in their answer.

They should be able to examine some strengths and weakness of the evidence and / or of the reasoning that leads to the conclusion drawn from that evidence in order to reach a conclusion. For example, the possibility that the experiences can be naturally explained should be illustrated and the limitations of such 'natural' explanations explored.

(20 marks) AO2