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Specification



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**General Certificate of Secondary Education
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Religious Studies

Paper 8

An Introduction to Christian Ethics

[GRS81]

TUESDAY 14 JUNE, MORNING

MARK SCHEME

Foreword

Introduction

Mark schemes are published to assist teachers and students in their preparation for examinations. Through the mark schemes teachers and students will be able to see what examiners are looking for in response to questions and exactly where the marks have been awarded. The publishing of the mark schemes may help to show that examiners are not concerned about finding out what a student does not know but rather with rewarding students for what they do know.

The purpose of mark schemes

Examination papers are set and revised by teams of examiners and revisers appointed by the Council. The teams of examiners and revisers include experienced teachers who are familiar with the level and standards expected of 16- and 18-year-old students in schools and colleges. The job of the examiners is to set the questions and the mark schemes; and the job of the revisers is to review the questions and mark schemes commenting on a large range of issues about which they must be satisfied before the question papers and mark schemes are finalised.

The questions and the mark schemes are developed in association with each other so that the issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed right from the start. Mark schemes, therefore, are regarded as a part of an integral process which begins with the setting of questions and ends with the marking of the examination.

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to provide a uniform basis for the marking process so that all the markers are following exactly the same instructions and making the same judgements in so far as this is possible. Before marking begins a standardising meeting is held where all the markers are briefed using the mark scheme and samples of the students' work in the form of scripts. Consideration is also given at this stage to any comments on the operational papers received from teachers and their organisations. During this meeting, and up to and including the end of the marking, there is provision for amendments to be made to the mark scheme. What is published represents this final form of the mark scheme.

It is important to recognise that in some cases there may well be other correct responses which are equally acceptable to those published: the mark scheme can only cover those responses which emerged in the examination. There may also be instances where certain judgements may have to be left to the experience of the examiner, for example, where there is no absolute correct response – all teachers will be familiar with making such judgements.

The Council hopes that the mark schemes will be viewed and used in a constructive way as a further support to the teaching and learning processes.

General Marking Instructions and Mark Grids

Introduction

Mark schemes are intended to ensure that the GCSE examination is marked consistently and fairly. The mark schemes provide markers with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. They also set out the criteria that they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses. The mark schemes should be read in conjunction with these marking instructions.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for GCSE Religious Studies.

Candidates must:

- describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding (AO1); and
- use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints (AO2).

AO1 and AO2 are interrelated and connections must be made.

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCSE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners must be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for description, explanation and analysis, using knowledge and understanding and for the appropriate use of evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range of any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old GCSE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Types of mark scheme

Mark schemes for questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

Levels of response

Questions requiring candidates to respond in extended writing are marked in terms of levels of response. In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the “best fit” bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates’ responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication. Where the quality of content is not matched by the quality of written communication, marks awarded will not exceed maximum for Level 2.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

Level 1: Quality of written response is limited.

Level 2: Quality of written response is satisfactory.

Level 3: Quality of written response is of a high standard.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

AO1: [5] marks

A [0] mark will be awarded if the answer is inappropriate.

Level 1 (Limited) ([1])

The candidate gives a basic answer with limited description, explanation and analysis using little knowledge and understanding. There is only a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Satisfactory) ([2]–[3])

The candidate gives a satisfactory answer with appropriate description, explanation and analysis using some knowledge and understanding. There is a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form of style and writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 3 (High) ([4]–[5])

The candidate gives a competent answer with very good description, explanation and analysis using knowledge and understanding throughout. The candidate successfully selects and uses an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard to make meaning clear.

AO2: [5] marks

A [0] mark will be awarded if the answer is inappropriate.

Level 1 (Limited) ([1])

The candidate uses a basic selection of evidence and gives limited reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. There is a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Satisfactory) ([2]–[3])

The candidate uses a satisfactory selection of evidence and gives good reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. There is a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 3 (High) ([4]–[5])

The candidate uses a very good selection of evidence and gives well formed and reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. The candidate successfully selects and uses an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard to make meaning clear.

AO2: [10] marks

A [0] mark will be awarded if the answer is inappropriate.

Level 1 (Limited) ([1]–[3])

The candidate uses a basic selection of evidence and gives limited reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. There is a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Satisfactory) ([4]–[7])

The candidate uses a satisfactory selection of evidence and gives good reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. There is a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 3 (High) ([8]–[10])

The candidate uses a very good selection of evidence and gives well formed and reasoned arguments to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints. The candidate successfully selects and uses an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard to make meaning clear.

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answer **all** questions.

1 Personal and Family issues

(a) (i) Answers may include:

- shared faith
- shared religious values.

Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[1]

(ii) Answers may include:

- a symbol of never ending love
- exclusive commitment; a never ending bond.

Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[1]

(iii) Answers may include:

- companionship
- sexual intercourse
- to have children.

Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[2]

(iv) Answers may include:

- an official recognition that a same-sex couple are partners

Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[1]

(b) Answers may include:

- the Bible teaches that sex should take place within marriage – (Genesis 2:24)
- waiting until marriage for sex avoids the risk of an unwanted pregnancy or STI
- people can become emotionally hurt by having sex in a relationship which is not a life-long commitment.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) Answers may include:

- there is a decline in the number of young men who want to become priests; they may be deterred by the commitment of celibacy
- being married would give priests better experience of the difficulties of marriage and family life
- Protestant churches allow clergy to marry and they are still respected.

On the other hand:

- to be a priest is a very special calling from God; being celibate sets a priest apart from the rest of the community
- being celibate shows that a priest is really committed to the priesthood
- a celibate priest is able to devote more of his time and energy to his parish; he does not have the divided loyalties of a wife and family.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels
(AO2)

[5]

15

2 War and Peace

(a) (i) The belief that war is wrong and can never be justified.
(AO1) [1]

(ii) A person who refuses to fight or serve in the armed forces.
(AO1) [1]

(iii) Answers may include:

- declared by a legal authority
- the cause must be just
- war must be a last resort
- excessive force cannot be used
- there must be a reasonable chance of success
- innocent civilians must not be killed
- peace must be restored afterwards.

Accept valid alternatives
(AO1) [3]

(b) Answers may include:

- there are always examples in the news of violent and aggressive attacks by one country on another; the only way to stop this is by armed conflict
- pacifist methods – peaceful demonstrations, strikes, sanctions, etc. – are not immediately effective
- sometimes dictators need to be challenged; pacifism would not have worked against Hitler or Saddam Hussein, for example
- in the Bible, God gives his approval for wars to be fought.

On the other hand:

- the life and teaching of Jesus support a pacifist approach to life
- if killing is wrong, then war must be wrong as war is basically a matter of killing
- in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught that violence should not be repaid with more violence (Matthew 5:39)
- peace treaties, negotiations and economic sanctions could replace armed conflict
- non-violent action is the way forward, following the examples given by people such as Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi.

Accept valid alternatives
Mark in levels
(AO2) [10]

15

3 Care For the Environment

(a) Answers may include:

- God created people to look after the planet, not to destroy it – this is the idea of stewardship
- at creation God put humankind “in charge” of the other things he had created (Genesis 1:26–28)
- this idea is reinforced in the psalms (Psalm 8:6)
“The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord” (Psalm 21:1–2)
- in Exodus 23:10, the Israelites are told to let their agricultural land rest every seventh year.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Answers may include:

- churches may follow the practical example given by Jesus in his ministry; Jesus became involved in the society around him, so Christians could lobby the government on environmental concerns
- churches can lead by example, such as being actively involved in recycling, sustainable energy alternatives or schemes to clean up part of the local environment
- church leaders can encourage members of their congregation to take environmental issues seriously and examine their own lifestyles
- churches can support groups working in the developing world, trying to encourage sustainable lifestyles and a better standard of living (e.g. Tearfund, Christian Aid).

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) Answers may include:

- animals are to be cared for: “A good man takes care of his animals but wicked men are cruel to theirs” (Proverbs 12:10).
- in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught how God shows concern for all creation, even small birds and wild flowers (Matthew 6:26–28)
- following the example of famous Christians (e.g. St Francis of Assisi) it is important to show kindness to animals
- practices such as vivisection, cruel sports and factory farming are wrong; Christians should take a stand against them.

On the other hand:

- we live in a world where many people have to endure living conditions far worse than those of our animals, such as starvation and homelessness; Christians should be more concerned about the rights of disadvantaged people
- animals do not have souls; only humans are made in the image of God
- some Christians would argue that although human beings have a responsibility to treat animals decently, animals do not have rights in the same way people do.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

4 Social Justice

(a) Answers may include:

- disability: some disabled people face discrimination in employment
- economic inequality: poor people are not just those living in the developing world; many people in our society live in poverty
- sexism: some people believe that women are still not treated equally to men in our society
- ageism: many older people in our society are looked down on and face discrimination
- racism: this is becoming a particular problem in Northern Ireland as people from many different races are choosing to live here
- religious inequality: many people may feel they are treated unfairly because of their religious beliefs.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Answers may include:

- many churches – and their members – appear to have plenty of wealth, but there is little evidence of this being used in the local area
- in the past some Christians have been prepared to take a stand against injustice (e.g. Martin Luther King) but the majority of Christians today are not willing to get involved
- there are high-profile events involving celebrities that seek to tackle injustice, such as Comic Relief and Live Aid.

On the other hand:

- the Bible teaches that social injustice is wrong – Isaiah and Amos spoke against oppression of the poor; Jesus had a humble birth and made a point of reaching out to the marginalised in society. Many Christians and churches do try to take this seriously
- there are Christian organisations, e.g. Trocaire, Tearfund and Christian Aid fighting poverty and injustice; many churches support these through fundraising activities
- some Christians get involved locally – perhaps helping in a soup kitchen for the homeless, or at Christmas time providing companionship, food and toys for families who cannot afford them.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

15

Section A

60

Section B

AVAILABLE
MARKS

5 Matters of Life and Death

(a) Answers may include:

- it is a woman's right to choose what happens to her body
- every child should be a wanted child
- there may be special circumstances, such as a pregnancy which is the result of rape or incest or a very young girl becoming pregnant
- there may be medical considerations – the physical or mental health of the mother may be at risk, or there may be foetal abnormalities
- women need access to abortion in order to achieve social and economic equality with men.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Answers may include:

- euthanasia means “a gentle and easy death”; it is sometimes called “mercy killing” and involves the premature death of a person who is terminally ill and in pain
- “active euthanasia” is when the patient asks someone to help them die; for example, a doctor may be asked to deliberately cause death through an overdose of pain killers
- “passive euthanasia” is when a person does not directly take a patient's life; they are allowed to die through the withholding of treatment, and/or nourishment.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) Answers may include:

- Christians maintain the “sanctity of life”, that all human life is given by God and only he has the right to end it; therefore any deliberate killing of another human being is wrong, whether through abortion, euthanasia or capital punishment
- humans are the only species created in the image of God (Genesis 1:28) so human life must be respected and not disposed of in the way animal life might be treated
- if doctors and relatives could legally decide when a life should end, then there is fear that this could be abused; elderly people would feel pressured into euthanasia, babies would be aborted instead of being offered for adoption.

On the other hand:

- there is the idea of autonomy; many people feel that they have the right to decide what happens to their body
- a person has the right to control his or her own life and decide when and how they should die
- the law in the U.K. already accepts that people have the right to end their own life, as suicide is no longer regarded as a crime; a person who cannot physically end his or her own life has the right to be assisted in this
- a pregnant woman has the right to make a decision about the life she is carrying; she should be regarded as a person in her own right and not just a container for the foetus.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

20

6 Divorce

(a) Answers may include:

- pressures of modern living – debt, depression, unemployment – can weaken the marriage bond
- health problems, infertility and sexual problems can cause some marriages to fail
- adultery; lack of commitment to one person for life
- alcohol and drug abuse; gambling
- domestic violence
- unrealistic expectations about being married
- couples marrying too young or for the wrong reasons (e.g. unplanned pregnancy).

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Answers may include:

- the couple themselves – one or both partners may experience depression, financial insecurity, awkwardness with shared friends or limited contact with their children
- the children – loss of contact with a parent, less money in the family, a lone parent who has to work longer hours, possible separation from a sibling, feelings of guilt
- the grandparents – feelings of resentment towards former son/daughter-in-law, possible separation from grandchildren, blaming themselves for not doing more to help
- some may focus on more positive aspects of divorce, referring to situations where family members were suffering prior to the divorce.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) Answers may include:

- those with a strong religious faith are more likely to have shared beliefs and values
- they will take biblical teaching on the permanency of marriage more seriously; marriage is a commitment and the couple should stay together no matter what happens; Jesus spoke against divorce (Matthew 5:32)
- they have the support of the Christian community if their marriage is in difficulties, e.g. prayer support, financial support
- many churches encourage attendance at marriage preparation classes to ensure that potential problems might be discovered before getting married.

On the other hand:

- a marriage can fail for many different reasons and there is no guarantee that a strong Christian faith will help a couple stay together
- there is a growing acceptance of divorce, even among Christians
- nowadays many churches recognise that an unhappy marriage should end; some will allow divorcees to remarry in church.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

20

7 Religious Diversity

(a) Answers may include:

- prejudice and discrimination, as many people are ignorant or misinformed about their faith
- open hostility, for example, “Islamophobia” – a hatred of Muslims as many people believe them responsible for terrorist attacks on western society
- practical problems, such as a lack of religious buildings or having to travel long distances to attend worship
- lack of opportunity to celebrate religious festivals and observances; employers may be unsympathetic about time off work
- the school syllabus and assemblies might be inappropriate and unsympathetic towards children of minority faith groups.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Answers may include:

- many Christians feel it is important to work for “inter-faith understanding” and celebrate diversity in society
- all the main churches here are involved in a range of activities aiming to bring about inter-faith dialogue; there is emphasis on Christians being involved with people of other faiths without trying to convert them
- Christianity teaches that it is important to get on with your neighbour; this involves learning about other cultures and trying to promote a more harmonious society
- some Christians may be involved with the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum, an organisation which aims to promote understanding between different faiths
- support and defend minorities when they witness prejudice/discrimination
- practical ways – love, befriend, get to know them and their culture and customs.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) Answers may include:

- in 1944 it was made law for children to pray at school everyday; it is right that this should be continued today
- although there is increasing religious diversity in Northern Ireland, we are still basically a Christian society, so school assemblies should reflect this
- an assembly with a Bible reading and prayer is part of daily routine in school.

On the other hand:

- some people argue it is not right for schools to have a daily Christian act of worship, as Christianity is not the only religion practiced here
- there are children from a wide variety of faith backgrounds attending schools here; Christian worship would lead to them feeling excluded
- school assemblies could make reference to a variety of faiths, perhaps depending on the time of year
- some might argue that assemblies should not be religious at all, but have a moral message – or that they are simply a sharing of information about the coming school day/week.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

20

Section B

40

Total

100