

New
Specification



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2017**

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 8

assessing

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

[SRE81]

FRIDAY 2 JUNE, MORNING

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of a mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for **GCE Religious Studies**

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including:
 - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching;
 - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies;
 - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice; and
 - approaches to the study of religion and belief (AO1);and
- analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study (AO2).

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE 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 are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old GCE 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.

Mark schemes for tasks or 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.

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 in the level 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.

Each of the two assessment objectives have been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates. Having identified, for each assessment objective, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

Other Aspects of Human Experience at AS Level

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, when required, to access Bands 3–5.

Synoptic Assessment at A2 Level

Candidates must refer to different units of study in their AO1 response to access Bands 4–5.

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

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.

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

Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.

Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.

Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.

Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.

Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

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

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material lacks clarity and coherence. There is little or no use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are basic and the intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate makes a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is limited use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Very Good): The candidate makes a very good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with clarity and coherence. There is very good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a very good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 5 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent response to the question asked • Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and knowledge • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A very high degree of relevant evidence and examples • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response to the question asked • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A very good range of relevant evidence and examples • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good response to the question asked • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A good range of relevant evidence and examples • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response to the question asked • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding • Demonstrates limited understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • A limited range of evidence and/or examples • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response to the question asked • Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding • Demonstrates minimal understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies • Little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis • An excellent attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • An excellent attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • An excellent attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure • An extensive range of technical language and terminology with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis • A very good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A very good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • A very good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis • A good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience • A good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis • A limited attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A limited attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which struggle to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience • A limited attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis • A basic attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A basic attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which fail to relate, where necessary, to other as of human experience • A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, where necessary, to access Bands 3–5.

Section A

Answer **one** question.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 1 (a) Discuss Aquinas's version of the Cosmological argument for the existence of God.

Answers may include:

- An outline of the first three of Aquinas' Five Ways
- An exploration of the First Cause argument
- An explanation of the concept of the Unmoved Mover, Uncaused Causer and Necessary Being
- An exploration of related analogies such as the fire analogy, the archer analogy, the domino effect
- Reference to Aquinas' 'Summa Theologica'
- Reference to Aquinas' rejection of infinite regress
- A definition of the term Cosmological
- The influence of Plato and Aristotle to Aquinas's argument
- A classification of the argument as an 'a posteriori', inductive and Classical proof

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) Comment on the claim that 'proofs' for the existence of God will always fail to convince the unbeliever. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Support for the stated claim by atheistic scholars such as Hume, Hitchens, Oppy and Dawkins
- Criticisms of the Ontological, Cosmological and/or Moral argument for the existence of God and reasons why they may fail to convince the nonbeliever
- A scientific critique of Aquinas's arguments and unproven assumptions within the arguments, the fallacy of composition, the possibility of infinite regression
- Reference to the Russell-Copplestone debate as supporting and/or destroying the Cosmological argument
- Reference to Gaunilo and Hume's challenges to the ontological argument
- Reference to atheism's multi-stranded case against the existence of the Divine, the rejection of the god-of-the-gaps, belief in the Divine as primitive superstition
- The impact of Chaos and/or String theory on the Cosmological argument
- The distinction between the Ways/Classical arguments and Empirical proofs
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, the continued popularity and use of the proofs by modern scholars, Plantinga, McGrath, Mackie, Swinburne
- The theistic 'proofs' as answering the question as to why is there something rather than nothing
- Scientific support for a starting point/First Cause to the existence of the universe
- The fact that religious belief/faith is not based on proofs

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

- 2 (a) “It is impossible to justify the suffering of the innocent.” Examine this statement with particular reference to the work of modern writers you have studied.

Answers may include:

- Citing the work of one or more named writers and texts such as Dostoyevsky’s ‘The Brothers Karamazov’ and Camus’ ‘The Plague’
- An exploration of relevant narratives depicting innocent suffering and the responses to this suffering, Paneloux’s and Rieux’s response to the death of a child,
- Ivan and Alyosha’s responses to the abuse of a child
- An analysis of the writer’s philosophical intent – to encourage rebellion and revolt, to reject simplistic and/or facile answers to the dilemma of human suffering and evil
- An exploration of the problem of innocent suffering for theism in particular
- An exploration of writings of C.S. Lewis, William Lane Craig and Peter Vardy on the issue of suffering
- Reference to Epicurius’ Inconsistent Triad
- An exploration of atheism’s response to the problem of unjust suffering – Humanist, Existentialist and/or Utilitarian views
- An exploration of innocent suffering as the bedrock of modern atheism
- Reference to the distinction between innocence and sinfulness
- The distinction between moral/natural suffering and the relevance of the distinctions

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) Critically assess the claim that the Irenaean Theodicy provides the best solution to evil and suffering. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- An evaluation of Irenaeus’ soul making theodicy, an exploration of the concept of suffering as serving a positive purpose
- A brief overview of the Irenaean theodicy – humanity as being born in the image of God but as needing to develop into the likeness of God
- An exploration of the allied Freewill Defence Argument and Determinist counterargument
- A comparison of alternative theodices such as the Augustinian theodicy or Process Theodicy as providing a better solution to the problem of evil and suffering
- An exploration of the views of Swinburne and/or Hick in support of the Irenaean theodicy
- A critique of the Irenaean theodicy as being non-scriptural, and as being unjust in offering universal salvation
- Hick, Swinburne and/or Vardy as providing more accessible forms of the soul making argument than Irenaeus
- An exploration as to whether any theodicy can fully resolve the problem/mystery of human suffering and evil

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

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3 (a) Explain how different Christians understand the concept of miracle.

Answers may include:

- The views of theologians such as Aquinas, Wiles, Swinburne, Schleiermacher
- An exploration of relevant philosophical examples and analogies, Aquinas' classification of miracles, Swinburne's feather example
- Reference to relevant Biblical teaching concerning miracle
- The origin, nature and purpose of miracles for Christianity and theism
- The centrality of the miracle of Jesus' resurrection within Christianity
- Reference to selected examples of miracles – scriptural, historical and contemporary
- Distinction between evangelical/fundamentalist and liberal Christian views
- Reference to issues such as whether or not Christians should rely on miracles and the question of the continuing possibility of miracles
- The importance of the miracles of Creation and Incarnation within Christianity
- A definition of the term miracle
- Background to miracle in the Bible
- The role of miracles in revealing key characteristics of the Divine
- Miracles as supporting and/or challenging the existence of the God of Classical theism
- Miracles as events which science has yet to understand

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) "A fully scientific understanding of the world has ruled out the possibility of miracles." Assess the truth of this claim with reference to other aspects of human experience. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Scientific atheism's rejection of the concept of miracle as contrary to a scientific understanding of the world, miracles as contravening the amassed body of Empirical evidence
- An exploration of the views of relevant scholars such as Darwin, Dawkins, Hitchens, Davies and Craig
- Freud's rejection of miracles as a delusion, the product of wishful thinking
- The Atheistic view of miracles as illogical, contrary to the laws of nature
- Miracles revealing an arbitrary and unjust deity
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, the continued witness to and belief in miracles today
- The continued support for miracles within different faith traditions and cultures
- Reference to specific miracles, examples of healings and the evidential support cited for these
- Modern science's challenge to the concept of fixed laws of nature
- Science as not in itself atheistic

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

50

4 (a) Explain and discuss John Hick's views on religious pluralism.

Answers may include:

- An outlining of Hick's views concerning religious pluralism
- Reference to Hick's emphasis on the commonality of all religions, a quest for the Real
- An analysis of Hick's rejection of religious exclusivism
- An exploration of the concept of the Real and universality of salvation
- A definition of the term religious pluralism
- Reference to related analogies such as the Blind Men and the Elephant, the Mountain paths analogy
- A discussion of Hick's view of religious language as mythological and religious identity as an 'accident of birth'
- Reference to selected writings, 'Faith and Knowledge', 'An Interpretation of Religion'
- Examples of Hick's contribution to interfaith dialogue and interfaith groupings
- Relevant biographical details that contributed to Hick's support for religious pluralism

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

(b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, evaluate the view that the solution to the world's problems is to be found in atheism and secularisation. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- An exploration of the growth of secularisation and atheism in modern society
- An exploration of the strengths of secularisation and atheism, as offering rational solutions to all humanity's dilemmas
- An exploration of selected problems which atheism or secularisation has tackled, attitudes towards gender identity, sectarian hatred
- A discussion of the benefits of separating Church and State
- Reference to atheism's rejection of any and all systems of religious belief
- Reference to the success of progressive secularisation
- Religion as the source of problems and religious tensions in society
- How atheistic regimes have undermined the common good
- Reference to the views of relevant scholars, e.g. Durkheim, Freud, Jung, Marx, Stark
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, the benefits of religious pluralism
- An exploration of the benefits of shared beliefs, moral and ethical messages
- Reference to the benefits of spirituality and religious beliefs for society
- Shared religious beliefs as unifying society

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

Total

100