

# **Religious Studies**

Advanced GCE **G581**

Philosophy of Religion

## **Mark Scheme for June 2010**

---

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme.

© OCR 2010

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622  
Facsimile: 01223 552610  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

## A2 Preamble and Instructions to Examiners

The purpose of a marking scheme is to ‘... enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’ [CoP 1999 25.xiv]. It must ‘allow credit to be allocated for what candidates know, understand and can do’ [xv] and be ‘clear and designed to be easily and consistently applied’ [x].

The **Religious Studies Subject Criteria** [1999] define ‘what candidates know, understand and can do’ in terms of two Assessment Objectives, weighted for the OCR Religious Studies specification as indicated:

All candidates must be required to meet the following assessment objectives.

At A level, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and their ability to sustain a critical line of argument in greater depth and over a wider range of content than at AS level.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

- AO1:** Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.
- AO2:** Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view.

The requirement to assess candidates’ quality of written communication will be met through both assessment objectives.

In order to ensure the marking scheme can be ‘easily and consistently applied’, and to ‘enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’, it defines Levels of Response by which candidates’ answers are assessed. This ensures that comparable standards are applied across the various units as well as within the team of examiners marking a particular unit. Levels of Response are defined according to the two Assessment Objectives. In A2, candidates answer a single question but are reminded by a rubric of the need to address both Objectives in their answers. Progression from Advanced Subsidiary to A2 is provided, in part, by assessing their ability to construct a coherent essay, and this is an important part of the Key Skill of Communication which ‘must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies at AS and A level’.

**Positive awarding:** it is a fundamental principle of OCR’s assessment in Religious Studies at Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE that candidates are rewarded for what they ‘know, understand and can do’ and to this end examiners are required to assess every answer by the Levels according to the extent to which it addresses a reasonable interpretation of the question. In the marking scheme each question is provided with a brief outline of the likely content and/or lines of argument of a ‘standard’ answer, but this is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive. Examiners are required to have subject knowledge to a high level and the outlines do not attempt to duplicate this.

Examiners must **not** attempt to reward answers according to the extent to which they match the structure of the outline, or mention the points it contains. The specification is designed to allow teachers to approach the content of modules in a variety of ways from any of a number of perspectives, and candidates’ answers must be assessed in the light of this flexibility of approach. It is quite possible for an excellent and valid answer to contain knowledge and arguments which do not appear in the outline; each answer must be assessed on its own merits according to the Levels of Response.

### Practical application of the Marking Scheme

General administrative information and instructions are issued separately by OCR.

Apart from preliminary marking for standardisation purposes, which must be carried out in pencil, the first marking of a script should be in red ink. There should be a clear indication on every page that it has been read by the examiner, and the total mark for the question must be ringed and written in the margin at the end of the script; at A2 the two sub-marks for the AOs must be written here as well. Half-marks may not be used.

To avoid giving the impression of point-marking, ticks should not be used within an answer. Examiners should follow the separate instructions about annotation of scripts; remember that the marks awarded make the assigned Levels of Response completely explicit.

**Key Skill of Communication:** this is assessed at both Advanced Subsidiary and A2 as an integral part of the marking scheme. The principle of positive awarding applies here as well: candidates should be rewarded for good written communication, but marks may not be deducted for inadequate written communication; the quality of communication is integral to the quality of the answer in making its meaning clear. The Key Skill requirements in Communication at Level 3 include the following evidence requirements for documents about complex subjects, which can act as a basis for assessing the Communications skills in an examination answer:

- Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so your meaning is clear.

\*

Synoptic skills and the ability to make connections: these are now assessed at A2 as specification, due to the removal of the Connections papers.

**Levels of Response:** the descriptions are cumulative, ie a description at one level builds on or improves the descriptions at lower levels. Not all the qualities listed in a level must be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall in that level (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive). There is no expectation that an answer will receive marks in the same level for the two AOs.

**A2 LEVELS OF RESPONSE – G581–G589**

Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	absent/no relevant material	<b>0</b>	absent/no argument
<b>1</b>	<b>1–5</b>	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>little relevant material</li> <li>some concepts inaccurate</li> <li>shows little knowledge of technical terms</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>a.c.i.q</i></p>	<b>1–3</b>	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>little or no successful analysis</li> <li>views asserted with no justification</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>v lit arg</i></p>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
<b>2</b>	<b>6–9</b>	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge limited and partially accurate</li> <li>limited understanding</li> <li>might address the general topic rather than the question directly</li> <li>selection often inappropriate</li> <li>limited use of technical terms</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>	<b>4–6</b>	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some analysis, but not successful</li> <li>views asserted but little justification</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
<b>3</b>	<b>10–13</b>	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some accurate knowledge</li> <li>appropriate understanding</li> <li>some successful selection of material</li> <li>some accurate use of technical terms</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sat att</i></p>	<b>7–8</b>	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some successful analysis which may be implicit</li> <li>views asserted but not fully justified</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sust/just</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
<b>4</b>	<b>14–17</b>	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accurate knowledge</li> <li>good understanding</li> <li>good selection of material</li> <li>technical terms mostly accurate</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>	<b>9–11</b>	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some successful and clear analysis</li> <li>some effective use of evidence</li> <li>views analysed and developed</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
<b>5</b>	<b>18–21</b>	A very good/excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information</li> <li>accurate use of technical terms</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>	<b>12–14</b>	A very good/excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>comprehends the demands of the question</li> <li>uses a range of evidence</li> <li>shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

- 1 **Evaluate the claim that analogy can be used to express the human understanding of God.** [35]

**AO1**

Candidates may begin by exploring some kind of definition of analogy. They may, for example, talk about the process of saying that things are like each other in such a way that a complex thing can be explained by comparing it with a simpler thing. If they are going to use the work of Thomas Aquinas they may go on to explain the difference between analogy of proportion and analogy of attribution.

Some candidates may address the issue by explaining that Aquinas was reacting against the teaching of Pseudo-Dionysius and Maimonides. Aquinas was searching for a way of talking positively about God moving away from the idea that we can only describe God by saying what he is not.

Candidates may also explore Aquinas' discussion of the use of equivocal and univocal language in this context, and explain why he rejected them as incapable of allowing meaningful dialogue about God.

Candidates may possibly spend much of their essays exploring the issues of proportion and attribution, explaining both their meaning and the reasons that Aquinas argued that they did allow a method of speaking about God with meaning.

**AO2**

In their responses candidates should assess the extent to which philosophers such as Aquinas were successful in producing a system which allowed a method of expressing the human understanding of God or whether they were susceptible to the kinds of critique of religious language that all other systems can suffer from.

In the end if a believer says 'God is good', does this really say anything about God if human beings can only understand good within the limits of its use in everyday language?

Some candidates may assess this view by comparing it with other kinds of religious language, this is acceptable as long as they use their other knowledge to address the specific question and and they avoid writing generally everything they know about religious language.

- 2 **'Boethius was successful in his argument that God rewards and punishes justly.'** Discuss. [35]

**AO1**

Candidates may begin by placing this particular aspect of beliefs about God within the general discussion about God's attributes, briefly discussing the context of believing in a God who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.

Others may begin by exploring the Boethian understanding of the nature of divine knowledge, exploring what he meant when he said that God's knowledge was eternal. They may perhaps unpack the meaning of eternal knowledge being the 'simultaneous possession of boundless life, which is made clearer by comparison with temporal things'.

They may also discuss the distinction Boethius makes between two kinds of necessity, namely the simple kind and the conditional kind. This may lead them to explore what he meant by the difference being located in the addition of the condition.

They may also explain the way that Boethius is keen to point out that while God may know about an act eternally, if we look at the nature of the act in itself it is entirely free. It is for this reason that Boethius comes to the conclusion that God can justly reward and punish.

**AO2**

In their assessment candidates may evaluate the extent to which Boethius in his attempt to solve the problem of a good God knowing what we are going to do and not influencing these actions in any way still being able to reward and punish ends up describing a God who can barely be accepted as a Christian God.

They may for example explore the consequences of a God who is so deist and uninvolved in His creation being the same God who Christians believe became incarnate to save mankind from their sins.

Others may argue that having solved this issue in this way Boethius raised legitimate questions about the accepted Christian understanding of God.

**3 Critically assess, with reference to William James, the arguments from religious experience. [35]****AO1**

Candidates may begin their responses to this question by explaining what is meant by a religious experience; making use of the general distinction which is made between direct religious experiences and indirect religious experiences.

One of the most famous examples of direct religious experience being that of St. Paul being spoken to by God on his way to the city of Damascus. For indirect experiences of God some may talk about events like the birth of a child.

Further distinctions may be explored, and candidates might mention the views held and described by Swinburne of private and public experiences. They may at this point explain the way that such experiences are often seen as validated by the effect it has on the one experiencing the event.

Looking specifically at William James, candidates may explain his terminology and its importance in understanding the experience. So they may explain terms such as ineffable, noetic, transient and passive.

Candidates may point out that James left open the question as to whether or not these experiences were evidence of the existence of God. In the same way when he suggests that these experiences were 'psychological phenomena', he was not saying that therefore there was clearly no divine involvement.

**AO2**

There are a number of approaches to assessing James' work. For example, candidates may evaluate the idea that arguably religious experiences are the first source of religious belief. They may assess the extent to which psychologists and sociologists are right to criticise this view by saying that usually religious experiences happen to those who are already believers. Some candidates may refer to thinkers such as Russell or Hobbes in this context.

Others may explore the idea that some of these experiences are chemical reactions in the brain, which have nothing to do with any event outside of the person having the experience.

In their evaluation candidates should keep in mind that James himself did not think that these were issues which could ever be resolved by philosophical debate.

**4 To what extent is belief in an afterlife necessary in resolving problems raised by the existence of evil? [35]**

**AO1**

Candidates may begin at either end of this issue; they may for example outline the philosophical problems raised by living in a world which would seem to have so much evil in it. Candidates may refer to the theodicies of Augustine, Irenaeus and Hick.

Alternatively they may explore different ideas of what might be meant by an afterlife.

Some may make a distinction between natural and moral evil, exploring the extent to which those who are made to suffer here by others may look forward to a time when they are rewarded and the others punished.

Others may focus their attention on the kind of afterlife which one would need to believe in to resolve problems raised by evil in this lifetime. Is it, for example, necessary to believe in heaven and hell or would it be more just to believe in an afterlife which followed many rebirths into this kind of life in order to become perfect.

Other candidates may explain the writings of Richard Dawkins which could be used in this area, exploring the extent to which we are just very lucky to be here at all, and that there being no afterlife we would need to resolve issues of the existence of evil in other ways.

**AO2**

In their evaluation candidates may assess the success or otherwise of those theodicies which seem to rely on some kind of reward and punishment in an afterlife to make sense of the suffering in this one.

This may lead to an evaluation of the kind of God this view brings about who would make people suffer for all eternity for mistakes made during a very short lifetime. They may then evaluate the way, as with other philosophical questions, the proposed solution to one problem raises may others in its wake.

Whichever route candidates take, they should have come to some conclusion by the end as to whether or not belief in an afterlife is **necessary** to resolve the issues raised by the existence of evil.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**14 – 19 Qualifications (General)**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England  
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU  
Registered Company Number: 3484466  
OCR is an exempt Charity



**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
Head office  
Telephone: 01223 552552  
Facsimile: 01223 552553