

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE **G572**

Religious Ethics

Mark Scheme for June 2010

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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.

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AS 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.

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 Advanced Subsidiary, the questions are in two parts, each addressing a single topic and targeted explicitly at one of the Objectives.

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 not write detailed comments on scripts; 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.

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.

AS LEVELS OF RESPONSE – G571–G579

Band	Mark /25	AO1	Mark /10	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1-5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little relevant material some concepts inaccurate shows little knowledge of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>a.c.i.q</i></p>	1-2	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little or no successful analysis views asserted with no justification <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				
2	6-10	a basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge limited and partially accurate limited understanding selection often inappropriate might address the general topic rather than the question directly limited use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>	3-4	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some analysis, but not successful views asserted with little justification <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				
3	11-15	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some accurate knowledge appropriate understanding some successful selection of material some accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sat att</i></p>	5-6	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some successful analysis which may be implicit views asserted but not fully justified <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				
4	16-20	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate knowledge good understanding good selection of material technical terms mostly accurate <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>	7-8	a good attempt to sustain an argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some effective use of evidence some successful and clear analysis considers more than one view point <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 /25	AO1	Mark /10	AO2
5	21-25	<p>a very good/excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information • accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>	9-10	<p>A very good/excellent attempt to sustain an argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehends the demands of the question • uses a range of evidence • shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>
<p>Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good</p>				

- 1 (a) **Explain the differences between absolute and relative morality.** [25]

This question could be answered by reference to subjectivism and objectivism in ethics. Candidates could also explain the difference between calling a theory deontological or teleological.

Candidates could also explain the difference with reference to Natural Law, Kant's ethical theory, cultural relativism and consequentialism (such as Utilitarianism).

They may contrast the idea of there being fixed moral norms for everyone with the idea that these might vary from person to person, culture to culture or situation to situation. They may give examples to illustrate this.

Answers may contrast ideas such as universal truth with the idea that moral truth is difficult to identify.

- (b) **'Relativist theories give no convincing reason why people should be good.'**
Discuss. [10]

Candidates may consider that there is a need for some absolute criteria and that these exist across all societies, eg 'do not murder'.

Alternatively they may support a relativist viewpoint by considering that absolutism may seem intolerant of cultural diversity and that relativism explains the differences in moral codes.

Answers may consider that all ethical theories are based on universal principles and that cultural relativism allows nothing to be condemned, however distasteful or wrong it may seem.

- 2 (a) **Explain the main strengths of Mill's Utilitarianism.** [25]

Candidates may consider that Utilitarianism promotes general happiness and does not take the side of the individual against the majority. It is a practical theory which fits real life situations. Utilitarianism can be seen as fair, not needing prior beliefs about the world or about God, so it can be accepted by different belief systems and cultures.

Candidates may consider how Mill built on and improved Bentham's theory of Utilitarianism by stressing quality rather than quantity and that this distinction might overcome the problem of minorities being discriminated against.

They may explain that Mill saw that happiness was the fulfilment of higher ideals and that pleasure should be universalisable.

Another strength they might mention is the need, as Mill suggests, for some universal rules that would promote the principle of Utility.

Note: this question specifically requires candidates to explain the strengths of Mill's Utilitarianism, not the weaknesses.

- (b) **'Utilitarianism can lead to wrong moral decisions.'** Discuss. [10]

Candidates could consider the fact that as we cannot accurately predict the future, we can therefore make mistakes. They may discuss that there is potential to justify any act, so there is no defence for minorities.

Some candidates may consider that it is impractical to calculate the morality of each choice, and so people simply will not bother. They may argue that having general rules based on the principle of Utility would be a better approach.

On the other hand, candidates might consider that Utilitarianism is democratic and practical, and so can deal with most moral situations.

Some candidates may question what is meant by 'wrong' moral decisions. They might compare Utilitarianism with another ethical theory.

- 3 (a) **Explain how a follower of Kantian ethics might approach issues surrounding the right to a child.** [25]

Candidates may explain the ethics of Kant and apply this to the right to a child.

They may consider that Kantian ethics, following the Categorical Imperative, would require that people are treated as ends in themselves. If the embryo is considered a person a follower of Kantian ethics would need to ask whether the destruction of so many embryos to create one life is justified.

Candidates may also consider the question of universalisation and whether IVF is to be offered to every infertile couple.

Candidates may consider contradictions of will and human dignity.

- (b) **'The right to a child is an absolute right.'** Discuss. [10]

Candidates may consider whether reproduction is a right or whether a child is a gift. They may contrast right and duties. They may say that a child cannot be a right as life is a sacred gift and IVF etc interferes with nature.

Candidates may also consider whether everyone should have the right to a child and reference could be made to IVF and surrogacy.

Some candidates may argue that the right to a child is relative depending on cost and medical technology. However, they may also say that infertility is a condition that can be treated and that couples have a right to treatment so that they have a child that belongs to them biologically.

- 4 (a) **Explain the ethical principles of the religion you have studied in relation to war.** [25]

Candidates may discuss four main religious approaches to war: holy war, Just War theory, pacifism and realism.

Most answers will probably concentrate on explaining the Just War theory and on pacifism.

Candidates may explain the conditions for when it is right to fight and how a war should be fought.

Pacifism could be included as an explanation of why certain religions and Christian denominations hold a pacifist position.

Some candidates may include Christian war realism and the work of Niebuhr who said that force was sometimes necessary to maintain a just society as human nature was essentially evil. War in this sense is seen as morally acceptable if it helped society as a whole.

Candidates may approach this question from the ethical principles of any religion studied.

- (b) **'War should not be allowed even as a last resort.' Discuss.** [10]

Some candidates will take the pacifist position and reject any form of violence as a means of settling disputes between countries, including self-defence. They may back this up with either religious or philosophical reasons.

Some responses may consider that the loss of life, and/or economic and social damage to be too great.

Other candidates may defend a Just War or realist approach, allowing war when all other avenues have failed.

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