

GCE

Religious Studies

H573/01: Philosophy of religion

A Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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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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Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
1. Critically assess the idea that consciousness can be fully explained by material interactions. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • some materialists apply the word soul or mind to that which people describe as consciousness, for example, and might suggest that this will be explained by scientific methods in the future • the materialist idea that the soul does not exist as a separate substance to the body and that physical existence is existence in its entirety • materialists often suggest that thinking or consciousness does not take place in a particular location in the human brain or body and might indicate evidence from brain scans to show how the brain is engaged at these times • some materialists might suggest that human thoughts can be described as learned behaviours and so consciousness can be explained entirely at the physical level • some materialists might describe consciousness as simply an element of how a body behaves – in the same way that the ‘team spirit’ is a part of how a sports team behaves.	Credit metaphysical discussion of the idea that mind and body are distinct substances and Descartes’ proposal of material and spiritual substances as a solution to the mind/soul and body problem.
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • people identify themselves as a unity and so it makes sense to suggest that consciousness is not separate in any way to the material (as would be suggested by a dualist) • physically, the mind and body seem linked – and physical needs can influence mental ones • the idea that the consciousness can be explained by material events in the brain is the simplest – and therefore more easily justifiable - explanation • consciousness and the material are completely different substances – the body can be divided into parts, but the mind cannot (Descartes) • language is the biggest barrier to exploring this issue: to try to explain body and mind in the same way is a category error • people identify as more than simply a physical body and mind and body clearly are different (as observed by Descartes) • forms of dualism need to identify how body and mind interact and approaches such as that of Descartes create philosophical questions • materialism may be rejected as an over-simplification of the fundamentals of human existence • materialism does not explain the ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions of the interaction between body and mind.	Other scholarly views on the discussion of consciousness will be credited where relevant.

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
2. ‘Anselm’s ontological argument justifies belief in God.’ Discuss. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • Anselm’s ontological argument begins with the definition of God (that than which nothing greater can be conceived) which gives a universal understanding of God (even the atheist (the fool from the Psalms) can agree with this definition) • as it is greater to exist in reality than simply in the mind, the definition of God demonstrates that God must exist in reality as otherwise, everything else that exists in reality would be greater than God • Anselm used the example of a painter: the idea of a painting is superseded by the reality of this painting because it exists both in the mind of the painter and in reality • Anselm presented a second version of the argument that distinguishes between necessary beings (beings that cannot not exist) and contingent beings (those that rely on other things for existence); as a necessary being is greater than a contingent one and as God is the greatest conceivable being, God must exist.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • a discussion about the universality of Anselm’s definition of God’s existence; whether or not it is possible to define God in human language or whether Anselm’s definition is realistic • given the frailty of human senses, the advantages of using <i>a priori</i> reasoning to approach the question of God’s existence and the extent to which Anselm’s reasoning ‘works’ • the poor logic of the argument, which can be rejected as conjuring God into existence through wordplay • the suggestion that it is possible to imagine anything, possible or impossible, good or bad and so perhaps it is sometimes better to exist in the mind alone • a discussion of the issues raised by <i>Proslogion</i> being a prayer – either because it does not intend to prove or justify belief in God or because it creates a circular argument, moving from the assumption that God exists to the proof that God exists • the argument from Gaunilo that whatever it is possible to imagine, this does not mean that it must exist in reality and rejections of this criticism (such as the idea that contingent things have no intrinsic maxim) • criticisms such as from Kant that discussions about existence must have a synthetic element (one can say it is logically necessary for a triangle to have three sides but not that it exists)	Award accordingly for use of Descartes, when tied to the discussion on Anselm.

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
criticisms such as from Kant that existence does not add to the understanding of something – and so is not a determining predicate.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
3. Evaluate the claim that individual religious experiences are a union with a greater power. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: - individual religious experiences might include those categorised as mystical experiences; William James defined these as having common core characteristics and leading to measurable fruits or outcomes - James' common core characteristics are ineffability, having a noetic quality, transiency and passivity - his fruits include a lasting sense of elation and change in emphasis in life (through a shift of 'habitual centre'), self-surrender and the conviction of there being something beyond this world - James' belief that the 'sick soul' needs to be 'twice-born' through union with a greater power - mystical experiences are often described in intense terms, providing experiences of the divine that cannot be explained through ordinary means - candidates might use examples of religious experiences from religious traditions to illustrate how these might be interpreted as union with a greater power - other types of religious experience, such as conversion experiences, might be explored with examples.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: - the reliability of mystical experiences – the common core, for example, suggests a single, reliable source for these experiences - the range of testimony for these experiences points to a source beyond the material world, a greater power - the idea that those who undergo these experiences are left with the clear impression, not explicable through ordinary means, that they have encountered a higher power, even though it is difficult then to prove using philosophical method due to the nature of these experiences being subjective and non-repeatable - the clear change in behaviour from those who have undergone these experiences suggests their validity - that in the absence of any reason to reject these experiences or the testimony of those who have been through them, there is no reason to deny their origin - that other influences may have led to these experiences, such as psychological reasons (a psychological desire or a neurosis) - that physiological reasons might have led to these experiences (such as an illness)	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
• how religious experiences are interpreted and the language used to describe them can lead to different understandings of religious experiences and what they may or may not indicate about a greater power • religious experiences are likely to be encounters with the religious traditions of a person's background, which could either suggest that they are 'tricks of the mind' or that the greater power is not limited by human religious institutions.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
4. ‘Falsification successfully shows that religious language has no factual quality.’ Discuss. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: - the falsification principle’s approach to language that distinguishes between scientific and non-scientific statements: that scientific statements can be identified because they can offer evidence that would show them to be wrong - the discussion about religious language in the context of falsification found in the falsification symposium with contributions from Flew, Hare and Mitchell - Flew’s use of the parable of the explorers in the jungle to suggest that religious believers make claims about their beliefs which, when presented with counter-examples, they qualify because they do not wish them to be wrong - Hare’s use of the parable of the student who is deluded to suggest that religious statements are different from scientific statements because they are non-cognitive expressions of a worldview (i.e. Hare’s invented word ‘blik’) which cannot be falsified but which influence believers greatly - Mitchell’s parable of the stranger in wartime to show the efforts religious believers put into trying to examine counter-arguments to their beliefs: their statements are backed up by reason but are different from scientific assertions.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: - the suggestion that religion dies ‘the death of a thousand qualifications’ because its assertions do not match those of scientific assertions – its language cannot be falsified and therefore has no factual quality and believers are mistaken in suggesting that religious and scientific language are alike - religious language might be different from scientific language but this demonstrates that religion and science are different aspects of life, not that religious language has no factual quality - if religious language is not scientific, then it might be said not to be cognitive and therefore is undermined - if Hare is right, then religious statements have meaning for an individual making them (a group of people) and so they have factual quality for these people - Hare’s approach might be criticised because religious statements, like scientific statements, seek to make universal claims and so religious language needs to be applicable to all - if Mitchell is right then the reason used for religious believers to engage with so-called counter-arguments about God or belief	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
emphasises the different role of faith-based assertions and suggests that there is factual quality in them; they are not the same as scientific claims. • that belief in the factual quality of faith statements is tied to the existential impact of religious language through the believer's actions in the world.	

Level (Mark)	<u>Levels of Response for A Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)</u> <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> • <i>Religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> • <i>Approaches to the study of religion and belief</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all listed strands of Assessment Objectives 1 (AO1) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
6 (14–16)	An excellent demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • fully comprehends the demands of, and focusses on, the question throughout • excellent selection of relevant material which is skilfully used • accurate and highly detailed knowledge which demonstrates deep understanding through a complex and nuanced approach to the material used • thorough, accurate and precise use of technical terms and vocabulary in context • extensive range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
5 (11–13)	A very good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question : • focuses on the precise question throughout • very good selection of relevant material which is used appropriately • accurate, and detailed knowledge which demonstrates very good understanding through either the breadth or depth of material used • accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a very good range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
4 (8–10)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • addresses the question well • good selection of relevant material, used appropriately on the whole • mostly accurate knowledge which demonstrates good understanding of the material used, which should have reasonable amounts of depth or breadth • mostly accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a good range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
3 (5–7)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • generally addresses the question • mostly sound selection of mostly relevant material • some accurate knowledge which demonstrates sound understanding through the material used, which might however be lacking in depth or breadth • generally appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • A satisfactory range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding with only partial success •	

Level (Mark)	Levels of Response for A Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> • <i>Religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> • <i>Approaches to the study of religion and belief</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all listed strands of Assessment Objectives 1 (AO1) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
2 (3–4)	A basic demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • limited selection of partially relevant material • some accurate, but limited, knowledge which demonstrates partial understanding • some accurate, but limited, use of technical terms and appropriate subject vocabulary. • a limited range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding with little success	
1 (1–2)	A weak demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • almost completely ignores the question • very little relevant material selected • knowledge very limited, demonstrating little understanding • very little use of technical terms or subject vocabulary. • very little or no use of scholarly views, academic approaches and/or sources of wisdom and authority to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
0 (0)	No creditworthy response	

Level (Mark)	<u>Levels of Response for A Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)</u> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all elements of Assessment Objective 2 (AO2) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
6 (21–24)	An excellent demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • excellent, clear and successful argument • confident and insightful critical analysis and detailed evaluation of the issue • views skillfully and clearly stated, coherently developed and justified • answers the question set precisely throughout • thorough, accurate and precise use of technical terms and vocabulary in context • extensive range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority used to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is an excellent line of reasoning, well-developed and sustained, which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i>	
5 (17–20)	A very good demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • clear argument which is mostly successful • successful and clear analysis and evaluation • views very well stated, coherently developed and justified • answers the question set competently • accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a very good range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority used to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i>	
4 (13–16)	A good demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • argument is generally successful and clear • generally successful analysis and evaluation • views well stated, with some development and justification • answers the question set well • mostly accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a good range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority are used to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear, relevant and logically structured</i>	

3 (9–12)	A satisfactory demonstration of analysis and/evaluation in response to the question: • some successful argument • partially successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted but often not fully justified • mostly answers the set question • generally appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a satisfactory range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority are used to support analysis and evaluation with only partial success Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a line of reasoning presented which is mostly relevant and which has some structure.</i>
2 (5–8)	A basic demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • some argument attempted, not always successful • little successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted but with little justification • only partially answers the question • some accurate, but limited, use of technical terms and appropriate subject vocabulary. • a limited range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support analysis and evaluation with little success Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a line of reasoning which has some relevance and which is presented with limited structure.</i>
1 (1–4)	A weak demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • very little argument attempted • very little successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted with very little justification • unsuccessful in answering the question • very little use of technical terms or subject vocabulary. • very little or no use of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>The information is communicated in a basic/unstructured way.</i>
0 (0)	No creditworthy response

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
5. **Crossed Out Responses**
Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a ‘new start’ or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add a tick to confirm that the work has been seen.

7. Award No Response (NR) if:
- there is nothing written in the answer space

Award Zero '0' if:

- anything is written in the answer space and is not worthy of credit (this includes text and symbols).

Team Leaders must confirm the correct use of the NR button with their markers before live marking commences and should check this when reviewing scripts.

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**
If you have any questions or comments for your team leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or e-mail.
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.
10. For answers marked by levels of response:
- To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
 - To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Level one – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level two – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level three – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level four – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level five – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	(H573 only) Level six - to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Highlighting a section of the response that is irrelevant to the awarding of the mark.
	Point has been seen and noted, e.g. where part of an answer is at the end of the script.

12. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

Introduction

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. You should ensure that you have copies of these materials:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper and its rubrics
- the mark scheme.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

Information and instructions for examiners

The practice scripts provide you with *examples* of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Lead Marker and Team Leaders.

The specific task-related indicative content for each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However, this indicative content **does not** constitute the mark scheme: it is material that candidates **might** use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. It is hoped that candidates will respond to questions in a variety of ways. Rigid

demands for 'what must be a good answer' would lead to a distorted assessment. Candidates' answers must be relevant to the question. Beware of prepared answers that do not show the candidate's thought and which have not been adapted to the thrust of the question. Beware also of answers where candidates attempt to reproduce interpretations and concepts that they have been taught but have only partially understood.

Using the Mark Scheme

Please study the Mark Scheme carefully. The Mark Scheme is an integral part of the process that begins with the setting of the question paper and ends with the awarding of grades. Question papers and Mark Schemes are developed in association with each other so that issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed from the very start.

This Mark Scheme is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers. The Mark Scheme can only provide 'best guesses' about how the question will work out, and it is subject to revision after we have looked at a wide range of scripts.

Please read carefully all the scripts in your allocation and make every effort to look positively for achievement throughout the ability range. Always be prepared to use the full range of marks.

The Mark Scheme contains a description of possible/content only; all legitimate answers and approaches must be credited appropriately. Learners are expected to make use of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support their argument.

The Levels of Response must be used in conjunction with the outlined indicative content.

Assessment Objectives

Two Assessment Objectives are being assessed in all questions:

AO1 (Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief) and

AO2 (Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study).

Responses are credited for **AO1** for selection, detail and accuracy of the knowledge and understanding of religion and belief deployed.

Responses are credited for **AO2** for how well the response addresses the question, for candidates using their knowledge and understanding to draw, express and support conclusions in relation to the question posed. Candidates will be assessed on the quality of the conclusions and points they argue and the clarity and success of their argument.

Levels of Response

Questions in this paper are marked using a levels of response grid. When using this grid examiners must use a **best fit** approach. Where there are both strengths and weaknesses in a particular response or particularly imbalanced responses in terms of the assessment objectives, examiners must carefully

consider which level is the best fit for the performance.

Note that candidates can achieve different levels in each assessment objective, for example a Level 3 for AO1, and a Level 2 for AO2.

Please note that the Assessment Objectives being assessed are listed at the top of the mark scheme. Where a candidate does not address all of the Assessment Objective strands listed, the candidate cannot achieve the top level of response.

Assessment of Extended Response

The GCE General Conditions of Recognition state that:

GCE 5.1 In designing and setting the assessments for a GCE qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, and awarding organization must ensure that, taken together, those assessments include questions or tasks which allow Learners to -

- a) provide extended responses

As such, the quality of extended responses are assessed in all questions. While marks are not specifically given for this, descriptors for extended responses can be found in the AO2 Levels of Response *in italics*.

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