

GCE

Religious Studies

H173/02: Religion and ethics

AS 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. ‘The most useful approach to business ethics is provided by utilitarianism.’ Discuss. [30] AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • applying utility (what will offer the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people) in teleological and relativist approaches to business ethics • applying the hedonic calculus (calculating the benefit or harm of an act through its consequences) and its use as a measure of individual pleasure • applying act utilitarianism (calculating the consequences of each situation on its own merits) and its use in promoting the greatest amount of good over evil, or pleasure over pain • applying rule utilitarianism (following accepted laws that lead to the greatest overall balance of good over evil, or pleasure over pain) and its use in promoting the common good • applying utilitarianism overall to business ethics in terms of corporate social responsibility - towards the community and environment – and stakeholders • applying utilitarianism to profit-making, globalisation, whistle-blowing, consumerism and capitalism.	Candidates may use other forms of utilitarianism to address this question, e.g. preference, negative etc. These are acceptable but not required.
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • utilitarianism provides the most useful approach because businesses are only concerned with the best way of maximising profits bringing the greatest happiness to the greatest number • utilitarianism is flexible in dealing with any situation and in adapting to present and future needs • businesses need rules which everyone follows and this could best be supported by other ethical approaches, e.g. Kantian ethics with its focus on duty • rule utilitarianism is of most use because it allows for accepted rules and laws to be followed in promoting the common good of the business and all its stakeholders • utilitarianism does not provide the most useful approach as it is only based on consequences and means that businesses might sacrifice everything in order to maximise profits for shareholders • utilitarianism is the most useful approach as it supports globalisation (that around the world economies, industries, markets, cultures and policy-making is integrated) helping all people to flourish • utilitarianism also supports capitalism and the spread of consumerism which maximises everyone’s happiness.	Candidates may use other ethical theories to contrast, although this is not expected.

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
2. Assess the view that Kantian ethics is of little help in moral decision-making. [30] AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • duty means acting morally according to the good regardless of consequences • the categorical imperative is a command to act that is good in itself regardless of the consequences • the first formulation is the formula of the law of nature (whereby a maxim can be established as a universal law) • the second is the formula of the end in itself (whereby people are treated as ends in themselves and not means to an end) • the third is the formula of the kingdom of ends (whereby a society of rationality is established in which people treat each other as ends and not means) • the categorical imperative is the imperative of morality as distinct from the hypothetical imperative which is a command to act to achieve a desired result. • accepting the three postulates as of use in making moral decisions	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • Kantian ethics is of little help because it is vague, has little detail and only provides general guidelines • parts of Kant's categorical imperative are very helpful particularly the second formulation which upholds the dignity and rights of every human person • the first formulation shows that Kant's categorical imperative is of little help because it implies that there are universal laws agreed by everyone which is not the case • Kantian ethics is very helpful because it ensures that moral decision-making is based on absolute rules and not on trying to work out or guess consequences of moral decision-making as in utilitarianism • Kantian ethics is unhelpful because it does not give any flexibility which is essential in complex moral decision-making • moral decision-making has to involve sympathy, empathy and love but Kantian ethics does not give these a place • having reason as the only basis for moral decision-making is very helpful because it means that there is clarity about what is good, bad, right and wrong.	Candidates may choose to contrast with more modern interpretations of Kantian ethics that may solve some of the challenges to the theory, e.g. WD Ross (but this is not required) There is no requirement to contrast with other ethical theories, however some candidates may use them to illustrate their arguments

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
3. 'The five primary precepts are the most helpful part of natural law in moral decision-making.' Discuss. [30]	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
A01 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: - the origins and significance of telos in Aristotle and its religious development in the writings of Aquinas - the four tiers of law – Eternal, Divine, Natural and Human - Natural Law – the moral law of God within human nature that is discoverable through the use of reason - the key precept (do good, avoid evil) which is found through the use of reason - five primary precepts (preservation of life, order of society, worship of God, education of children, reproduction) which are found through the use of reason - secondary precepts which are derived from the primary precepts. - the five primary precepts are contributory parts of the human telos	
A02 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: - the most helpful part of natural law in moral decision-making is the concept of telos since by using this good, bad, right and wrong can be discovered - the five primary precepts are the most helpful part of natural law in moral decision-making because they can apply to all areas of life from conception to death - the precepts can all be found by applying reason to how people flourish through preservation of life, ordering of society, worship of God, education of children and reproduction – this makes them most helpful in moral decision-making - moral decision-making today involves more complex areas such as gender identity and environmental issues: in these areas the primary precepts are of no help - on their own the five primary precepts are of little help in moral decision-making – they all have to be linked to the over-arching concept of telos - the most helpful part of natural law in moral decision-making is the key precept (do good, avoid evil) since everything can be based on this - in practice the only primary precepts which are used in moral decision-making are those concerned with preservation of life and reproduction – the other precepts are not helpful. - the doctrine of double effect might be seen as most helpful part because it makes the absolute approach of natural law both relative and situational - it is not possible to isolate the most helpful part of natural law as its various parts have to be understood as a unified whole.	This question requires focus on the theory of natural law, rather than contrast with other ethical approaches. There is a requirement in the question to compare different aspects of natural law theory.

Level (Mark)	Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> • Religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching • Approaches to the study of religion and belief	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.
5 (13–15)	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 (10–12)	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 (7–9)	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	
2 (4–6)	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	

Level (Mark)	Levels of Response for AS 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.
1 (1–3)	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 AS 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.
5 (13–15)	A very good demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • clear and convincing argument • 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 (10–12)	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 (7–9)	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 (4–6)	A basic demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • some argument attempted, not always successful • little successful analysis and evaluation	

Level (Mark)	Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 2 (AO2) <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.
	- 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 (1–3)	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 – FOR MARKING ON-SCREEN

June 25

H173, H573 AS and A Level Religious Studies

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.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

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

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to

whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

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.
6. There is a NR (No Response) option. Award NR (No Response):
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

7. 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.
8. 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.

9. For answers marked by levels of response:

- a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
- b. **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

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.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

H173, H573 AS and A Level Religious Studies

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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