

GCE

Religious Studies

H173/03: Developments in Christian thought

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. ‘God may be known through the natural order of creation.’ Discuss. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • knowledge of God may be defined in different ways: it might mean rationally knowing that God exists and/or having a relationship with God (believing in) • knowledge of God through the natural order might be gained through seeing order and purpose in creation (argument to design) from which a person might infer there is a supremely powerful designer i.e. God (argument from design) • as humans are created in the image of God, there is a natural or innate human or instinctive ‘sense of the divine’ • St Paul states in his letters that God’s invisible nature may be known through the natural order, especially its beauty as the mirror of the divine and the source of ultimate truth • the natural order may be seen as a ‘point of contact’ between God and humanity • God may be known through human openness and moral conscience; conscience helps humans to distinguish between good and evil and realise that there is a natural God-given moral order of the world (as expressed in Genesis 1).	Knowledge of the design/teleological arguments from unit 01 should be used judiciously.
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • some theologians argue that although knowledge of God from the natural order may be a ‘point of contact’ between a person and God, it is not true knowledge; true knowledge of God is a two-way relationship in which God reveals himself personally to a person of faith • formed faith goes beyond unformed or natural knowledge of God (for example, by intellectually accepting design arguments) through prayer, worship and a willingness to believe in the person of Christ; these enable a person to have a personal relationship with God (which is true knowledge) • some theologians argue that there is no point of contact with God through the natural order of creation because human nature is utterly corrupt due to the Fall; whatever ‘order’ humans see in the natural world is a projection of their own desires to create ‘God’ in their own image • some consider that human nature is not so corrupt that there cannot be a balance between the natural world which informs humans of the existence of God (seeing order, purpose, truth in creation) but this is insufficient for a full redeemed relationship with God as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
others argue that God reveals himself in the ongoing process of creation, so there is no sharp distinction between natural and revealed theology; the natural order is not fixed but ever changing in relationship with God's immanent love for his creation as revealed at a particular moment in history in the person of Jesus Christ.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
2. 'Jesus' mission was primarily to be a teacher of wisdom.' Discuss. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: - the biblical notion of wisdom is to understand the workings of God's world and to live a full, balanced and fruitful life - love of wisdom in the ancient world meant 'philosophy' often at a very technical level as a means of having a true understanding of existence so as to live the 'good' life - Jesus' teaching covered a wide range of experiences. In the Sermon on the Mount, he set out the qualities of the good or 'blessed'/'happy' person in the Beatitudes. He reinforced the Ten Commandments but focused on their inner meaning and how these affect a person's relationship with others in the community e.g. anger, disputes, sexual treatment of women - Jesus' teaching on wisdom set a very high level of moral behaviour; in the Sermon on the Mount, he required his followers to be 'perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' - like many other wisdom teachers Jesus used parables to illustrate his teaching on what he called the 'Kingdom of God', that is God's reign or presence in the world, to which a follower should aspire.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: - Jesus' mission was similar to some of the ancient wisdom teachers. He wanted people to live simpler lives, with a close affinity to nature and the will of God. His illustrations and parables often chose example from nature e.g. he compared the lilies of the field and the birds of the air as examples of God's providence - Jesus was much more than a philosopher and a teacher of wisdom because his message was revolutionary and sought to liberate people from oppression, class, gender and race - his teaching on the Kingdom of God was not just about spiritual and moral attitudes but a reversal of the social order whereby	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
the last will become the first; there is a preferential option for the marginalised; the rich are judged and seen to be responsible for society's injustices (i.e. social and structural sin) • Jesus' mission was aimed at the 'lost sheep of Israel', the 'sinners' whom society regarded as beyond redemption, more than this he regarded his sacrificial death on the cross as a 'ransom for many' and the sins of the whole world • Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man, the suffering servant, and as the Son of God he was chosen by God not to be served but to serve and to reconcile humanity to God through his crucifixion and resurrection.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
3. To what extent does reason have more authority than the Bible for Christian ethics? AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • many Christian traditions consider the authority of Christian ethics to be threefold i.e. Bible, Church and reason (heteronomous ethics) • biblicists hold the view that the Bible has authority because it is the word of God as revealed through his prophets and writers • the Bible establishes the covenantal relationship between God and his people which is the basis for moral behaviour • the moral biblical life is expressed classically in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount but also in Paul's letters and creation ordinances of Genesis 1 and Leviticus • the Church represents the continued presence of Jesus as the 'body of Christ'; through its teachings the Church offers moral guidance to Christians • autonomous Christian ethicists argue that reason is the God-given ability to discern the moral order of the world, to apply Jesus' teaching on love (agape) in given situations and to make judgements about current moral issues.	Knowledge of situation ethics and natural moral law from unit 2 should be used judiciously.
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • the biblicist theonomous view is that the Bible is foundational for Christian ethics as it is the revealed word of God and without it there would be no timeless and consistent means of knowing the will of God for moral action • reason is needed for reading and interpreting the Bible; reason leads to a critical understanding that the Bible was written over a long period of time with different writers expressing a range of	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
views and moral judgements according to the context and situation they were responding to • without reason there would be no coherent moral system by which Christians are able to discern good/bad and to have reasoned informed views on topics such as just war, euthanasia, the environment, sexuality etc. • reason is the authoritative basis for Christian natural law by discerning what the 'goods' are of moral action; reason and conscience are ultimately the only means by which a Christian knows the will of God and how they should act • some argue that reason by and of itself does not lead to a distinctively Christian way of life and operates only according to the culture of the times • as the revealed word of God, the Bible challenges human desires and culture and must therefore be the primary authority for Christian moral behaviour; however, reason plays a necessary but secondary role in aiding intelligent and informed reading and application of scripture • some might argue that neither scripture alone nor reason are sufficient and that the wisdom of the Church through its collective interpretation of scripture and application of reason should be the primary authority (i.e. the magisterium) of Christian ethics.	Knowledge of natural moral law and situation ethics from unit 2 should be used judiciously.

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.	

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.
	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	
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 <i>Assessment of Extended Response:</i> <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 <i>Assessment of Extended Response:</i> <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.	

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.
	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 - 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 2025

H173, H573 AS and A Level Religious Studies

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.)*

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 the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.

7. 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).

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:
- 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

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.

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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