

AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
7061/1

Paper 1 Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Methods of Marking

It is essential that, in fairness to students, all examiners use the same methods of marking. The advice given here may seem very obvious, but it is important that all examiners follow it as exactly as possible.

1. If you have any doubts about the mark to award, consult your Team Leader.
2. Refer constantly to the mark scheme throughout marking. It is extremely important that it is strictly adhered to.
3. Remember, you must **always** credit **accurate, relevant and appropriate** answers which are not given in the mark scheme.
4. Do **not** credit material that is irrelevant to the question or to the stated target, however impressive that material might be.
5. If a one-word answer is required and a list is given, take the first answer (unless this has been crossed out).
6. If you are wavering as to whether or not to award a mark, the criterion should be, 'Is the student nearer those who have given a correct answer or those who have little idea?'
7. Read the information below about using Levels of Response mark schemes.
8. Be prepared to award the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks when the answer merits full marks or to give no marks where there is nothing creditable in an answer.
9. No half marks or bonus marks are to be used under any circumstances.
10. Remember, the key to good and fair marking is **consistency**. Do **not** change the standard of your marking once you have started.

Levels of Response Marking

In AS Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, levels of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Levels of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Levels are tied to specific skills. Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Levels of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully, responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. This should only be necessary occasionally and where this occurs examiners must indicate, by a brief written explanation, why their assessment does not conform to the levels of response laid down in the mark scheme. Such scripts should be referred to the Lead Examiner.

Assessment of Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives. Where students are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. The quality of written communication skills of the student will be one of the factors influencing the actual mark awarded within the level of response. In reading an extended response, the examiner will therefore consider if it is cogently and coherently written, ie decide whether the answer:

- presents relevant information in a form that suits its purposes
- is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- is suitably structured and that the style of writing is appropriate.

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Levels of Response: 15 marks AS-level – AO1

- Level 5**
13–15
- Knowledge and understanding is accurate and relevant and is consistently applied to the question.
 - Very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is clear and coherent and there is effective use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 4**
10–12
- Knowledge and understanding is mostly accurate and relevant and is mostly applied to the question.
 - Good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is mostly clear and coherent and specialist language and terminology is used appropriately.
- Level 3**
7–9
- Knowledge and understanding is generally accurate and relevant and is generally applied to the question.
 - Some use of appropriate evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is generally clear and coherent with use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 2**
4–6
- Knowledge and understanding is limited and there is limited application to the question.
 - Limited use of appropriate evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Limited clarity and coherence and limited use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 1**
1–3
- Knowledge and understanding is basic.
 - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information.
 - Basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

Levels of Response: 15 marks AS-level – AO2

- Level 5**
13–15
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Reasoned and evidenced chains of reasoning supporting different points of view with critical analysis.
 - Evaluation is based on the reasoning presented.
 - The answer is clear and coherent and there is effective use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 4**
10–12
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Reasoned and evidenced chains of reasoning, with some critical analysis, supporting different points of view.
 - Evaluation based on some of the reasoning.
 - The answer is largely clear and coherent with specialist language and terminology used appropriately.
- Level 3**
7–9
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different points of view supported by evidence and chains of reasoning.
 - The answer is generally clear and coherent with use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 2**
4–6
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view relevant to the issue(s) with limited supporting evidence and chains of reasoning.
 - Limited clarity and coherence and limited use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 1**
1–3
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view is stated with some evidence or reasons in support.
 - Some clarity and coherence and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

Question 1

0 1 . 1

Explain the relationship between reason and faith in arguments for the existence of God.

[15 marks]

Target: AO1.1: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

The belief that 'God exists' is a reasonable hypothesis based on evidence, such as the observation of order and purpose in Paley's analogical argument. Paley's argument demonstrates how faith may be inspired by reasoning and observation of the universe and everything in it. Therefore, in some of the arguments for the existence of God reason is the basis of faith.

The relationship between reason and faith can be understood as entirely separate in the arguments. For example, Price distinguishes between 'belief that' and 'belief in'. He claims 'belief that' God exists may be discovered through reason. 'Belief in' God's existence refers to faith, which Price notes is not discoverable through reason. Anselm's demonstration that God exists as a result of logical analysis of the concept of God can show the idea of God is possible, but that argument itself Price claims is not faith nor leads to faith, it is simply acceptance of a logical assertion.

Aquinas believed that faith was supported by reasoning, but did not result from reason and that faith was instead from God's grace. In his Way 3 Aquinas argues that the logical solution to an infinite regression of necessary beings was an uncaused necessary being. This reasoning supports belief in the existence of an eternal creator God. In this argument for the existence of God, faith is complimented and supported by reason.

[15 marks] AO1.1

0	1	2
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‘Religious experiences have little influence on religious faith.’

Assess this view.

[15 marks]

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

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: The influence of religious experiences and their value for religious faith.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Religious experiences have little influence on religious faith because their status has been undermined by challenges from science. Some scientific studies argue that religious experiences have natural explanations rather than spiritual. However, despite scientific challenges, religious experiences still have influence on religious faith because they remain the foundations of many faiths, for example the revelation of the Qur’an to Muhammad.

Religious experiences have little influence because they cannot be verified. Many philosophers argue that without verification experiences cannot be considered valuable, so are not serious sources of influence. However, religious experiences do have influence as sources of inspiration for pilgrimage in many faiths, for example the visions of Bernadette inspiring pilgrimage to Lourdes. For many believers, philosophical verification is irrelevant and so religious experiences remain influential.

Religious experiences have little influence on religious faith because the experiences of people from different religions may seem to contradict each other with competing claims to truth. This appearance of contradiction may deter people from valuing religious experience. However, religious experiences remain so influential to those who experience them that they cause significant, measurable life changes. Therefore, religious experiences continue to have great influence on religious faith.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 2

0	2	.	1
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Explain how the evidential problem of evil influences belief in God.**[15 marks]**

Target: AO1.2: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

The evidential problem of evil may lead to doubts that God is truly benevolent or truly omnipotent, because it claims that there are known facts about evil which count decisively against belief in the existence of God. For example, Rowe shows that evil is overwhelming in quantity and quality, which raises the issue for believers of why a perfect creator would allow such excessive suffering, therefore undermining belief in God.

The evidential problem of evil may negatively influence belief in God by making people doubt the likelihood of God's existence. For example, Rowe poses two possible hypotheses: that God exists or God does not exist. The argument demonstrates that, in terms of probability, the most convincing hypothesis is that a benevolent, omnipotent God does not exist. This may lead people to doubt the possibility of God's existence.

The evidential problem of evil may lead some to argue that regarding the matter of God's existence, reason and evidence are not relevant. Belief in the existence of God is a matter of faith alone, and only faith can give certainty. This is why any argument to prove that God exists or does not exist will ultimately fall short, including the argument from the evidential problem of evil.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not address the evidential problem of evil.

[15 marks] AO1.2

0	2	.	2
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‘Arguments for the existence of God do not prove that God exists.’

Assess this view.

[15 marks]

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

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Arguments for the existence of God.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

The cosmological argument does not prove the existence of God because of the argument’s philosophical approach. The argument uses inductive reasoning, therefore it can only offer a probable conclusion, as no inductive argument can be logically certain. Therefore, it fails to prove that God exists. However, the ontological argument uses deductive reasoning, which means that if all the argument’s premises are accepted, its reasoning is conclusive. Therefore, if the premises are accepted, the ontological argument does prove that God exists.

Hume argues that design arguments fail to prove the existence of God. For example, they fail because they do not reconcile the existence of evil and suffering with the nature of a designer God. Design arguments offer no adequate solution to how God can be omnibenevolent and omnipotent and allow evil and suffering. However, there are many arguments which suggest that God can exist as omnibenevolent and omnipotent despite the presence of evil and suffering. For example, evil may be part of God’s design to allow goodness to develop. Therefore, the design argument does prove that God exists.

The cosmological argument does not prove the existence of God as the universe may exist necessarily. This means that the universe does not need an unobservable God to be its creator. If God did not create the universe, God’s existence itself may be questioned. However, Aquinas argues that if the universe did exist necessarily, the universe’s matter would need an uncaused necessary being to bring this into existence. God is the only being capable of this, therefore the cosmological argument does prove that God exists.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 3

0	3	.	1
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Explain different approaches to moral decision making.**[15 marks]**

Target: AO1.4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

One approach to moral decision making is the deontological approach found in Natural Moral Law. Deontological ethics looks to duties and rules to determine and guide moral decisions, for example the primary precepts used in Natural Moral Law. Deontologists believe that actions are intrinsically right or wrong and this is discoverable by reason or, in some cases, by knowing God's will.

Another approach to moral decision making is teleological ethics found in Situation Ethics. Teleological ethics uses consequences to determine right or wrong and guide moral decisions. For example, in Situation Ethics the most agapeic outcome is the one that offers the most love in the situation. Teleologists believe that actions are right or wrong depending on their utility to achieve the desired outcome.

Character based ethics is another approach to moral decision making found in Virtue Ethics. Character based ethics focuses on the character of the ethical decision maker to guide moral decision making. Virtue Ethics states that a good person is one who has developed habitual moral character traits and will make virtuous moral decisions.

Maximum Level 2 for answers that explain only one approach.

[15 marks] AO1.4

0 3 . 2

‘Character based ethics have more strengths than weaknesses.’**Assess this view.****[15 marks]****Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Character based: virtue ethics with reference to Aristotle and The strengths and weaknesses of these ways of making moral decisions.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Character based ethics have more strengths than weaknesses as by not being act based, it avoids moral indecision on any issue and avoids making absolutist claims on any issue that may over time become unacceptable. However, not being act based makes character based ethics very different from deontological ethics which identifies intrinsic rights and wrongs, and so character based ethics can be accused of being no guidance at all and therefore entirely flawed.

Character based ethics allows for the development of an individual’s moral judgement and mistakes. This is considered a strength as it places autonomy on the decision maker rather than requiring blind obedience to rules. However, character based ethics is criticised for placing unrealistic responsibility on decision makers to know the virtuous act, leading to considerable weakness when compared to other ethical systems. For example, it is argued that rule based or consequentialist ethics place some responsibility on the decision maker but also use rules or desirable outcomes to guide decision makers, which is more realistic.

In Virtue Ethics the doctrine of the mean allows for flexibility and takes a relative approach to each moral situation. This is considered a strength when making moral decisions as new moral situations can be addressed and each situation can be considered individually. However, Virtue Ethics can be criticised for inflexibility regarding the Aristotelian virtues, which many claim are patriarchal and Eurocentric. For example, Foot claims that the virtues overlook the traditionally female virtues and do not account for cultural relativism. This criticism highlights that the theory lacks the flexibility of the main doctrine itself and so is, by nature, flawed.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 4

0	4	.	1
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Explain ethical arguments for and against capital punishment.**[15 marks]**

Target: AO1.1: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

One ethical argument for capital punishment is put forward by Aquinas. Aquinas argues that capital punishment may be used by a state's legal system as a means of protection. This means capital punishment may be justified to keep members of a community safe. Followers of Natural Moral Law may view the punishment as a means of keeping an ordered society.

Another ethical argument for capital punishment could be derived from Aristotle's Virtue Ethics. The virtue of justice may see somebody justifying the use of capital punishment. For example, capital punishment may be used when somebody commits murder, as it is a method of punishment which allows for a balancing of acts, a life for a life.

One ethical argument against capital punishment may be proposed by situationists, who follow the ethic of Fletcher. Some may view capital punishment as rejecting the principle of agape. This is because it fails to show unconditional love. Some situationists may advocate for reform and suggest criminals should be supported to change, rather than be put to death.

Another ethical argument against capital punishment could be made by followers of Natural Moral Law. They may argue that capital punishment does not preserve life, therefore it goes against a primary precept. As a result, a secondary precept may prohibit its use, in favour of other means of punishment.

[15 marks] AO1.1

0 4 . 2

‘Voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide are morally justifiable.’**Assess this view.****[15 marks]****Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Normative ethical theories and Issues of human life and death: voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Note that voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide may be treated discretely or together as one issue.

Some argue using Situation Ethics, that the most loving thing to do is to find a rational, pragmatic and personal solution. In some cases, voluntary euthanasia and assisted suicide could therefore be morally justifiable in order to alleviate terminal and acute suffering. However, Situation Ethics also has a presupposition of relativism and so would also recognise that in some circumstances the most loving thing to do would be palliative care and that euthanasia or assisted suicide would not be morally justifiable.

Virtue Ethics could argue that, in the face of terminal illness, choosing euthanasia may be the virtuous mean of bravery, foolhardiness and cowardice in an impossible situation. Voluntary euthanasia could therefore be morally justifiable in conditions of terminal illness. However, Virtue Ethics could also argue that the act of euthanasia itself, is not right or wrong. Instead the decision maker’s character is either virtuous or not and so Virtue Ethics cannot justify euthanasia and assisted suicide in this way.

In Natural Moral Law it may be morally justifiable to consider voluntary euthanasia, for example, by using the doctrine of double effect. In the circumstance of a patient requiring toxic levels of pain relief to combat acute, terminal pain, if the pain killing resulted in the deterioration of the patient, several conditions of the doctrine may be met. For example, the means-end condition and the right-intention condition. However, euthanasia rejects many primary precepts and so cannot be morally justifiable. It rejects preserving life by deliberately terminating life. It rejects the precept of worshipping God by returning the God-given gift of life. It rejects the precept to live in an ordered society because in the majority of countries euthanasia is an illegal act.

[15 marks] AO2