



ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2023

Religious Studies
Assessment Unit A2 7
assessing
Global Ethics
[ARE71]
FRIDAY 23 JUNE, MORNING

MARK
SCHEME

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of a mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for **GCE Religious Studies**

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including:
 - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching;
 - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies;
 - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice; and
 - approaches to the study of religion and belief (AO1); and
- analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study (AO2).

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Levels of response

In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement.

The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

Each of the two assessment objectives have been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates. Having identified, for each assessment objective, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

Other Aspects of Human Experience at AS Level

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, when required, to access Bands 3–5.

Synoptic Assessment at A2 Level

Candidates must support their answer with reference to at least one other unit of study to access Bands 4–5.

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.
- Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material lacks clarity and coherence. There is little or no use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are basic and the intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate makes a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is limited use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Very Good): The candidate makes a very good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with clarity and coherence. There is very good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a very good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 5 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent response to the question asked. • Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and knowledge. • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very high degree of relevant evidence, examples and scholarship. • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure. • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[17]–[20]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response to the question asked. • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge. • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very good range of relevant evidence, examples and scholarship. • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure. • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[13]–[16]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good response to the question asked. • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge. • Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A good range of relevant evidence, examples and scholarship. • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence. • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[9]–[12]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response to the question asked. • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding. • Demonstrates limited understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A limited range of evidence, examples and scholarship. • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence. • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[5]–[8]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response to the question asked. • Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding. • Demonstrates minimal understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • Little, if any, use of evidence, examples and scholarship. • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence. • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[1]–[4]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis. • An excellent attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • An excellent attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure. • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis. • A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A very good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure. • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis. • A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence. • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis. • A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A limited attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence. • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis. • A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence. • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[1]–[6]

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answer **two** questions from this section

- 1 (a) With reference to **one** moral example, explain the approach of Virtue Ethics to ethical decision making.

Answers may include:

- Reference to **one** moral example to explain the approach of Virtue Ethics, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, assisted conception, contraception, healthcare resource allocation, female genital mutilation, capital punishment.
- How Virtue Ethics is concerned with the qualities of virtues that can be developed in order to become a better person, to human flourishing, more concerned with being rather than doing (agent centred), how a person's moral judgement will consistently be in line with their virtuous character.
- Exemplification, e.g. abortion – how a virtuous person would not take the matter lightly, how motherhood and the birth of a child are intrinsically worthwhile and contribute to eudaimonia yet how abortion could be in keeping with a virtuous character, e.g. female genital mutilation – how it is not conducive to human flourishing in that it compromises bodily health and bodily integrity vital to human well-being yet for others, there could be virtues manifest in its practice within a particular cultural context.
- Possible reference to key figures, e.g. Rosalind Hursthouse – how a decision in relation to abortion must be in keeping with a virtuous character; Martha Nussbaum advocating against FGM using a virtue based approach.
- The relativistic character of Virtue Ethics and how it does not provide clear answers.
- How the virtues are central to this ethical theory and can be cultivated through habit.
- How the morality of any act is linked to the motives and context of those involved.
- How Virtue Ethics appears to be much more in touch with concrete human experience.
- Virtue Ethics as a holistic approach to ethical decision making.
- How it is closely linked with Natural Moral Law in that both are interested in the fundamental nature of things.
- Possible reference to the seminal contribution of Aristotle and his Doctrine of the Mean, seen as central to Virtue Ethics.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

(b) “Virtue Ethics and Determinism are incompatible as freedom is crucial to moral choice.”

How far do you agree with this statement?

Answers may include:

- The Determinist view, especially that of the Hard Determinist, that everything including morality is subject to causal factors (e.g. genetic, psychological, environmental) thus impugning the role of free will in moral decision making.
- How this view has serious implications for moral responsibility as a determined action cannot be worthy of praise or blame.
- The legitimacy of the concept of diminished responsibility which would appear to add weight to the influence of external and/or internal factors on human behaviour.
- Possible reference to case studies to bear this out, e.g. the Bulger case, that of Mary Bell, that of Peter Sutcliffe.
- How such cases would appear to render the cultivation of virtues as understood by virtue theory pointless if it can be demonstrated that human actions are determined with any notion of free will illusory.
- The view that the development of the virtuous person is compromised if one is the product of a dysfunctional background possibly influenced by factors such as pornography (Bulger case), witnessing prostitution and sado-masochism (Bell case), paranoid schizophrenia (Sutcliffe case).
- The issue of creeping determinism in explaining human behaviours today, e.g. psychopathy.
- The rejection of the Hard Determinist position, that the moral agent despite being subject to influencing factors is still free to choose what to do and thus, can be held morally responsible for their actions (the Soft Determinist).
- The Libertarian view that when we choose, nothing causes us to choose as we do – while our choices may be influenced by desires and reasons, these are not causes.
- How then the idea of freedom is crucial to moral choice and hence accountability as only actions that are freely willed are seen as deserving of praise/blame.
- How then the cultivation of the virtues is so dependent on human freedom as individuals could not be compelled to be good or to possess virtue – only those actions performed by free choice could be praiseworthy; how for Aristotle liberty was an essential prerequisite for the exercise of the virtues and the achievement of the good.
- How the concept of virtue is fundamental to morality, how where moral virtues are cultivated through habit, human reactions are dependable.
- How such virtues can help people to act charitably, kindly and honestly; all contributing to the betterment of society.
- The difficulty of reconciling “cultivating virtue” against the Christian gospel of sheer grace – virtue only comes from God; virtues are not a matter of human achievement but God’s loving gift to humankind.
- The view of St Augustine – that virtue can only be truly virtuous if it reflects the knowledge and love of God.
- The renewed interest in virtue theory in the contemporary age and how it has contributed to, e.g. medical ethics, human rights issues, justice and punishment.
- Issues with virtue theory, e.g. moral vagueness, the difficulty of knowing inner motives.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

- 2 (a) Outline the understanding of natural human rights with particular reference to John Locke.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- The recognition of natural human rights as universal, fundamental and inalienable; not dependent on laws/customs of any government/culture.
- The roots of natural rights in the tradition of Natural Moral Law.
- The importance of the idea of natural human equality.
- Clear focus on the evidence from **Locke** (17th century) to support the view that rights are inherent in human nature, rights that all human beings are entitled to, e.g. the right to life.
- His view that natural rights exist because we are alive and human, that these rights are inalienable and universal.
- How they do not depend on society for existence, only for their acknowledgement and observance.
- How even if these rights are violated or over-ruled they still exist and belong to each individual.
- How in his influential work *Second Treatise of Government* (1689) he argued there are rights to life, to freedom and to property.
- Other natural rights he asserted such as freedom of speech and worship.
- How these rights are based on individual needs, in preference to the needs of society.
- The role of government in protecting and enforcing these rights by enforcing the rule of law.
- How human beings are bound by nature to respect these natural rights and therefore morality is a natural feature of human beings (different to Hobbes).
- How Locke's ideas formed the background to the modern conception of human rights and the subsequent emergence of the UDHR.
- The origins of this thinking in Aristotle's conception of natural law and Aquinas' development of this – how natural laws stand above any culture and are independent of such and are always binding – innate to the nature of human beings (Aristotle's version), set by God (Aquinas' version).
- Natural human rights as distinct from positive rights (rights attributed to individual citizens by statute).
- Possible reference to the views of other contributors in clarifying the ideas of Locke, e.g. Hobbes, Grotius, Paine.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) Critically evaluate the view that the use of birth control by women to control fertility is a human and moral right.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- The argument as advanced by many feminists that a woman's ability to control her fertility is a human right as this control is life-giving and enables her to live in dignity and freedom.
- How this control is also moral because of the responsibility that accompanies it, not only for the woman's individual life context but also the wider global context as well.
- The distinction between birth control and contraception which sees birth control as a wider and more generic issue and highly laudable as against contraception which is more to do with methods employed to achieve birth control and which are morally questionable for some.
- How many, both religious and non-religious groups, support the broad principle of exercising control over the generative capacities of human beings as it is seen as being morally responsible and therefore for the good of the family and the wider global community.
- How birth control is seen to affect women more than men, how access to birth control can help to liberate women in developing countries from a purely child-bearing role, how the practice of birth control can help to alleviate poverty and the numbers dying from starvation and disease, how women are as deserving of the same sexual freedom as men.
- The view that the use of contraceptive methods can help to achieve this liberating effect for women, how their use can promote autonomy for women and contribute to their human flourishing.
- Differing views (religious and non-religious) on contraception, e.g. Roman Catholic issues with artificial means of contraception, how contraceptive sex separates the procreative and unitive dimensions of the conjugal act, contraception as essentially contra-conception, the promotion of natural means of birth control as a way of allowing for responsible parenthood, the influence of Natural Moral Law in Catholic thinking; other Christians who would take a more liberal view seeing the matter as one of the exercising of personal conscience in light of general Christian principles, the influence of Situation Ethics; Feminist views (which vary) which generally see contraception as enabling gender justice to be achieved by ensuring a woman is not seen instrumentally as a "breeder"; the recognition that there are Christians and secularists who see all forms of artificial contraception as an infringement of human dignity and in particular demeaning of women.
- Recent statements from the Vatican which have generated debate – how avoiding pregnancy through contraception in certain situations such as exposure to HIV and the Zika virus could be a "lesser evil" – the possible influence of Virtue Ethics here.
- The view that birth control is not listed as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
- The view that while birth control is not specifically mentioned in the UDHR it could be argued that it naturally accompanies key articles, e.g. Article 1 (dignity), Article 3 (right to life), Article 25 (health and well-being).
- The view that while birth control might be a human and moral right, contraception is not.
- How abortion has been used as a means of birth control and against the interests of women, e.g. the number of female fetuses aborted globally.

- How birth control has been associated with eugenics and used against women, e.g. the Norplant controversy in the USA during the 1990's which was seen as the intertwining of racism and misogyny in controlling woman's bodily autonomy; China's one child family policy and the use of forced sterilization; the experience of the Uyghurs in China; the experience of Roma ethnic groups in Europe; the experience of Greenland Inuit women and forced contraception (1970s).
- The view that there are global double standards in population control measures, e.g. encouraging women in the developing world to have fewer children (not necessarily in the interests of women in this context) whereas in the developed world there is a concern about falling birth rates as evidence by the Lancet Report (July 2020) which predicted dramatic population decline by 2100 as a consequence of fewer births.
- The view that fertility control should not just be expected of women but also men.
- Consideration of the primary importance and absolutist nature of the right to life and existence, of affirming and reinforcing human dignity.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[30]

50

AVAILABLE
MARKS

3 (a) Explain why some Christians support capital punishment.

Answers may include:

- Clear focus on why some Christians support capital punishment and the reasons for such.
- How Christians who support the capital sentence resort to sacred scripture to justify their case, e.g. Genesis 9:6 – “lex talionis” (that a grievance, whether an individual’s or society’s, requires satisfaction on the part of the victim – a person who sheds blood shall have their blood shed); the Old Testament Mosaic Law and the citing of capital offences such as adultery (Deuteronomy 22); Romans 13:4 (carrying out God’s judgement with the sword for wrongdoers); the use of examples which show God’s wrath, e.g. the destruction of humankind through a flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the fate of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts.
- How ethical theory can be used to support the Christian view, e.g. infringement of the primary precepts and the serving of natural justice as evident from the Natural Moral Law perspective – “just desserts”, the importance of maintaining the social order.
- How Christian Virtue Ethicists could align with “just desserts” for those whose actions undermine the “polis”.
- How the Christian view can be based on the ethical rationale of either retribution or deterrence.
- Particular denominational views, e.g. how it is mainly conservative Christians who support the retributivist view; possible reference to the position of the Roman Catholic Church which has moved from maintenance of the retributive principle to the view that the capital sentence is “inadmissible” (Pope Francis) as it contravenes the Consistent Life Ethic.
- Possible reference to issues for some Christians, e.g. possible suffering of the innocent, possible diminished responsibility, possible bias against ethnic minorities, its inhumane and barbaric nature, how the death penalty is bad practice and sends out the wrong signals about behaviour in the community.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[20]

(b) Critically assess the claim that the only ethical basis for the use of capital punishment is deterrence.

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the merits of the arguments on the basis of deterrence as against other possible ethical justifications, e.g. retribution.
- How the argument from deterrence represents a forward-looking view as it sees punishment as a means of enabling society to function in the future as the desire is to prevent others from committing similar crime.
- How the deterrent view does not punish the offence for its own sake as the punishment is to protect society for the future – any infliction of pain can only be justified if it leads to greater happiness for all and not just a minority
- How this argument from deterrence is the lynch pin of the utilitarian position (as advanced by Jeremy Bentham) as the desire is to prevent others from committing crime.

- How this can protect innocent lives rather than preserving the lives of those who are guilty.
- How some utilitarians do not support the retributivist position as they do not accept that there is any intrinsic or natural basis for “just desserts”.
- The strength of the deterrence argument in that it is able to look at each case discreetly with some independence – the exercising of a minimising approach.
- Christian support for the death penalty on the basis of deterrence (on the understanding of biblical teaching) in that if it is rightly and justly applied, then it will have a powerful deterrent effect.
- Cesare Beccaria’s argument (a utilitarian rationale) that the only rational and morally sound basis for capital punishment is deterrence as the purpose of punishment is to create a better society, not revenge, yet his view that the capital sentence does not deter, that it is barbaric and is inconsistently and indiscriminately used.
- Issues with the deterrence argument, e.g. the difficulties in supporting the position on the basis of evidence as capital offences have not diminished in states that have the death penalty, does the end justify the means, should someone be used as a means to an end, the essential question for the utilitarian – whether the death penalty is ever proportionate for the greatest happiness of the greatest number?
- How the argument on the basis of retribution most clearly expresses what many people feel should be the rationale for punishment.
- How retribution (a backward-looking view) acts psychologically as a form of vindication that the law has been upheld and acted upon.
- The continued support for this rationale amongst Christians and others on the basis of the principles of “lex talionis” and “just desserts”, utilitarian support for the retribution rationale as in the arguments of J.S. Mill and James Rachels, Kant’s view based upon respect for persons (the criminal is treated in the same way they have treated their victims), contemporary retributivist thinking.
- Issues with the retribution position, e.g. the crudity of the principle of “lex talionis”, how the death penalty is indiscriminately and inconsistently applied, the possibility of innocent suffering, the issue of diminished responsibility, is revenge an appropriate motive for punishment?
- The importance of reformation and rehabilitation (forward-looking) as against deterrence and retributivist positions, the use of punishment as the means and opportunity to return the offender to society, how revenge is not an acceptable motive for punishment, how killing someone who has killed transmits a paradoxical and wrong message to society, the influence of relevant religious teaching, e.g. the sanctity of life principle, the example of Jesus in lauding mercy, compassion and forgiveness.
- Issues with the reformist position, e.g. looks more at the offender than the victim(s), the autonomy and dignity of both the offender and the victim.
- How even if deterrence is the only ethically sound justification for the death penalty there remains the issue as whether there is a moral obligation or not to use it.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels
(AO2)

[30]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

Section A

100

Synoptic Bands

Total Marks: [20]

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellent attempt at analysis with a full and highly informed response to the question. • Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very high degree of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure. • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[17]–[20]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good attempt at analysis with a well informed response to the question. • Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A very good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure. • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[13]–[16]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good attempt at analysis with a reasonably well informed response to the question. • Demonstrates a good understanding and mainly accurate knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A good range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence. • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[9]–[12]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited attempt at analysis with a limited response to the question. • Demonstrates a limited understanding and limited knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A limited range of relevant evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence. • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[5]–[8]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic attempt at analysis with a basic response to the question. • Demonstrates a basic understanding and basic knowledge of the themes considering the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies. • A basic range of evidence, scholarship and exemplification with particular reference to at least one other unit of study. • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence. • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[1]–[4]

Candidates must refer to at least one other unit of study in their AO1 response to access Bands 4–5.

Synoptic Bands

Total Marks: [30]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • An excellent attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • An excellent attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • An excellent attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure. • An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[25]–[30]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • A very good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A very good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A very good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure. • A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[19]–[24]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis in relation to other aspects of human experience. • A good attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A good attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence. • A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[13]–[18]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis which struggles to relate to other aspects of human experience. • A limited attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A limited attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A limited attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence. • A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[7]–[12]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis which fails to relate to other aspects of human experience. • A basic attempt to evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief. • A basic attempt using evidence, reasoning and scholarship to construct well informed and balanced arguments. • A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought. • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence. • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	[1]–[6]

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Synoptic Assessment

Theme: Conscience, Freedom and Tolerance

You **must** answer this question

- 4 (a) “Conscience should be free from religious teaching.”
With reference to this statement, outline the secular understanding of conscience.
You must support your answer with reference to at least **one** other unit of study.

Answers may include:

- The widespread view, both within religious and secular thinking, of the significant role that conscience plays in ensuring that moral standards are upheld in society and how it is an important source of moral authority.
- How in the secular view conscience should be divorced from the baneful influence of religion yet reliant on the use of unaided human reason and human experience.
- How conscience is dependent on knowledge of the good and personal freedom.
- The diversity of views within secular thinking on the nature, role and importance of conscience, e.g. Fromm’s views on the authoritarian conscience (obeyed because of fear) and his preference for the humanistic conscience – a person’s own voice, free from external sanctions and rewards; Kohlberg and how conscience develops from the socialisation process through which we become aware of universal ethical principles and respect for others, the subjectivity of conscience; Freud’s views as to how conscience is acquired, a product of upbringing, its role as a “moral policeman”, its connection with guilt, the dangers of association with religion, conscience as an unreliable guide for morality; Kant’s understanding of conscience as informing the duty to act morally regardless of the consequences, conscience as innate and the duty to cultivate it, the categorical and practical imperatives, how “pure practical reason” can inform and direct the will of the moral agent; Austin Dacey’s thesis (*The Secular Conscience*) that secular society must rediscover the secular moral conscience and advance a moral case for the values of personal autonomy, equality, toleration, self-criticism and well-being.
- The secular humanist view of the importance of human experience and the development of a moral code that is utilitarian and reciprocal, free from religious dogma.
- Possible reference to examples in moral decision making.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must support their answer with reference to at least one other unit of study to access Bands 4–5

(AO1)

[20]

- (b) Critically evaluate the view that all decisions made in light of one's conscience are always in the interest of the "common good". You must refer to other aspects of human experience in your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- Evaluation of the view in relation to other aspects of human experience using a range of historical and/or contemporary examples.
- The decisions made by various individuals to speak out (the prophetic voice) against practices seen as contrary to the common good, e.g. Amos (treatment of the widow and orphan), William Wilberforce (slavery), Martin Luther King (racism and discrimination), Oscar Romero (treatment of the poor), Sister Helen Prejean (capital punishment), Archbishop Vincent Nichols (the Welfare Reform Act 2012), Archbishop Justin Welby (austerity and symbols of white supremacy), Pope Francis (environmental destruction), Rowan Williams and wealth tax.
- The opinions of non-religious writers who have aired views seen to be in the interests of the common good, e.g. Bertrand Russell (war and nuclear disarmament), Peter Singer (poverty and the environment), Sikivu Hutchinson (social and economic justice).
- The example of prisoners of conscience and how they advanced the common good, e.g. Quakers such as George Fox and William Penn and social justice; Gandhi and the development of satyagraha – the idea of nonviolent resistance; Mordechai Vanunu and peace activism.
- Examples of possible perverted conscience which have contravened the common good, e.g. the concept of the Aryan race in Nazi Germany, the Final Solution and the Holocaust; Adolf Eichmann's defence of his involvement in the Holocaust (merely fulfilling a bureaucratic role); Pol Pot and the declaration of Year Zero and the programme to purify Cambodia of all the vestiges of capitalism; Islamic Jihadists and the use of violent struggle to eradicate obstacles to restoring Allah's rule on earth and defending the Muslim community.
- The dangers of conscience being linked to religion, e.g. Richard Dawkins and his views of religion as a divisive force subverting science, encouraging intolerance and bigotry (e.g. against homosexuals), the use of religious conscience to justify horrendous acts (e.g. Islamic suicide bombers) and how religion is like a dangerous virus.
- How religion has been associated with events historically that contravened the common good, e.g. the Crusades, the Inquisitions, association with dictatorships, aligning with the bourgeoisie, failure to protect the vulnerable as in the clerical abuse scandals.
- The view of some religious groups that they are preserving the interests of the common good through appealing to the higher moral law, e.g. Christian bakers who have conscientiously objected to providing products that explicitly supported same-sex marriage; Catholic midwives who conscientiously objected to abortion provision and supervision (Scotland).
- Issues pertaining to Covid management during the recent pandemic and the adoption of ideological positions, e.g. how for some, the individual good takes preference.
- The principle of the supremacy of conscience within the Christian tradition and the view that the good of human beings cannot be achieved independently of the common good to which they belong – the seeking of the genuine good within the context of the universal common good.

- The failure to distinguish the common good from the collective good as society is made up of morally distinct groups. (Robert Vischer).
- The relationship between personal autonomy and conscience, the tension between individual autonomy and the relational dimension (Robert Vischer), how some see conscience as an expression of autonomy, the view that personal integrity is replacing the notion of conscience (Bernard Williams), how conscience has a moral-epistemological function (as understood by, e.g. Aquinas and Newman) as well as a moral-psychological one.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access

Bands 3–5

(AO2)

[30]

Section B

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

50

150