



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

**AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 3
AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION AND ETHICS
B120U30-1**

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

Rules for Marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 25 marks <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 - approaches to the study of religion and belief.
5	21-25 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	16-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	11-15 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	6-10 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	1-5 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 25 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">21-25 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">16-20 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">11-15 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">6-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-5 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

COMPONENT 3: AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION AND ETHICS

SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

Either,

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 (a) Explain Virtue Theory. [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Virtue Theory was developed by Aristotle and it focuses on personal character rather than rules in order to establish morality.
- Aristotle argued that humans should aim for eudaimonia, or 'well-being.' In order to achieve this, humans need to live a virtuous life, as eudaimonia is the outcome of being virtuous.
- Humans should therefore aim to cultivate virtues (arete) within a social context in order to lead a happy and fulfilled life. This is not something which can be done quickly, as virtues must be cultivated over time.
- Aristotle states that virtues fall into two categories, moral virtues and intellectual virtues; both of which are essential for human flourishing.
- While intellectual virtues require education to develop, moral virtues are developed through habit and practice.
- Aristotle identifies 12 moral virtues: courage, temperance, liberality, munificence, high-mindedness, right ambition, patience, truthfulness, wittiness, friendliness, modesty and righteous indignation.
- In order to develop the moral virtues, Aristotle states that humans must be aware that they fall between the two vices of excess and deficiency. Achieving moral virtue involves deciding where this mean lies in a given situation. This is where the intellectual virtue of prudence comes into play.
- Some people will be able to maintain the mean naturally and are therefore naturally virtuous. Others are tempted by the vices but strong-willed enough to live by the mean. Both of these are virtuous characters.
- The importance of role models helps to ensure that all virtues can be improved by practice.
- If a person practices being patient, this will become their normal response over time. A human seeking eudaimonia should practice the moral virtues until they become habits.
- The development of virtue is also a focus in Christian morality – Jesus identifies key virtues in the Beatitudes including meekness, a hunger and thirst for righteousness, mercy and purity of heart.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Virtue Theory is of no use when trying to solve a moral dilemma.’**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- The development of virtue is a valuable way to understand and develop moral behaviour as it has been used over time by many different communities including Christians
- However, it could be argued that the virtues identified by Jesus, such as mercy, purity of heart and meekness, are very different from those identified by Aristotle, such as wittiness and right ambition.
- This raises the issue of cultural relativism; if the virtues we value change over time and between societies, can this be a reliable way to understand morality.
- Also, virtue theory is not a precise system as it does not give specific guidance about how to act in real life situations. It relies on good people being able to make good decisions and this could be seen as naïve.
- Religious believers may understand morality better through considering the moral guidelines established by their particular religion, whether this be through divine command or through a form of moral reasoning such as Natural Law. Others may prefer to focus on a teleological approach such as Utilitarianism.
- However, it could be argued that virtues play an important part in human development and in helping humans to understand why they are choosing certain actions when faced with a moral dilemma. Blind obedience to rules or a certain system of morality does not help anyone to understand their own choices, whereas development of virtues such as prudence allows humans to recognise the reasons for their decisions and thus aids individual development.
- It could be argued that Virtue Theory does help when faced with a moral dilemma but that it must be used in conjunction with specific moral guidelines in order to make good decisions. This approach was taken by Aquinas in the development of Natural Law.
- Also, Virtue Theory emphasises altruism, which is useful when facing a moral dilemma with no clear answer, as it avoids selfish decision making. The goal of virtue theory, eudaimonia, is a collective rather than an individual goal. Although Virtue Theory focuses on developing the individual, this is done so that the individual can serve the community better and this is surely a useful approach.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

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 (a) Examine the importance of self-interest in Ethical Egoism. [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Ethical Egoism focuses on the self-interest of the agent when considering morality. It assumes that it is right for a person to pursue their own well-being.
- This could be contrasted with altruism in order to make the definition clear.
- Ethical Egoism is usually based on psychological egoism which claims that human nature is such that all our actions are motivated by self-interest. Ethical Egoism then claims that this is how humans *should* act.
- Moral decisions should focus on the long-term rather than short-term interests of the agent, which may involve doing actions which appear altruistic but which ultimately benefit the agent. Candidates may offer a range of examples to illustrate this idea.
- Ethical Egoism may be contrasted with being purely selfish and egotistical – there is a clear difference between the character trait of selfishness and the ethical theory of egoism as the main focus in deciding the right way to act.
- Max Stirner develops the focus on self-interest further. He rejects the concept of egoism based purely on material gain (as defined by capitalism), as greed is only one part of the ego. He looks more broadly at the interests of individuals and at other aspects of the ego such as empathy and critical thought. An action is moral if it serves the interests of the individual in the broadest sense and does not restrict this to one aspect of the ego.
- Stirner sees each individual as unique, and claims that in order to develop one's unique nature as an adult, one must act purely out of self-interest rather than restricting self-development for the interests of others, as one must do during childhood. Ultimately the individual seeks 'ownness' (eigenheit) – in which a person becomes their own master rather than being slave to the will of others or the confines of conscience. A person can then appreciate their own uniqueness (einzig) and can be truly free to act.
- He sees concepts such as love as ultimately based on self-interest, as all relationships with other humans should only serve to benefit the moral agent.
- Stirner argues for a 'union of egoists' in which each would cooperate with others out of mutual self-interest. An individual would therefore focus on free cooperation with others only in situations where it would serve their mutual interests.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Ethical Egoism is superior to all other ethical theories.’**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Ethical Egoism could be seen as superior to other ethical theories as it is based on psychological egoism, which many would claim is our natural state. The argument is that all apparently altruistic actions are ultimately based on self-interest and therefore morality should be based on this natural approach.
- This is not to say that Ethical Egoism advocates selfishness at all times, in fact, Stirner’s development of the theory is about recognising the uniqueness of oneself and then choosing how to act on this basis, not about simply acting out of greed or egotism.
- However, others may argue this approach would be highly damaging to communities as it promotes the will of the individual over the common good. For Stirner, this is precisely the point, the concept of the ‘common good’ enslaves people and prevents them from recognising their own uniqueness. Individuals should be able to choose whether to agree with the demands of a legal system or state.
- A counter-argument would be that this approach would lead to anarchy and moral chaos. Ethical egoism is naïve about the extent to which humans would cooperate when allowed to act purely out of self-interest. Virtue Theory could be seen as superior here as it allows individuals to develop themselves while still contributing towards community and society.
- Aristotle would argue that the premise of Ethical Egoism is wrong: one cannot develop as an individual in a vacuum and therefore must recognise oneself as part of a community in order to become a better human being. For example, it is only possible to develop friendliness, wittiness and truthfulness in relation to our communication with others.
- Alternatively, teleological theories could be seen as better approaches to ethics. It could be argued that seeking happiness is an equally ‘natural’ state and therefore Utilitarianism may be a better theory as it allows for human nature while at the same time giving greater structure to our moral thinking.
- Ethical Egoism is criticised for inevitably leading to social injustice, however candidates could evaluate whether any other theory is better in this regard.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Section B

Either,

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(a) Outline Aquinas' Natural Law theory.

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Aquinas' Natural Law theory is based on the belief derived from Aristotle that the universe and everything in it has an ultimate end or purpose (telos). For Aquinas this was derived from God.
- A good action is seen as one which fulfils the purpose of the agent, and the purpose is established through God's eternal law and can be accessed by humans through reason in the form of natural law.
- Natural Law is an absolutist theory which has teleological aspects in terms of its focus on purpose, but is deontological in the sense that morality is based on the action and not the consequence of that action.
- The ultimate purpose of a human is to establish a right relationship with God by doing good and avoiding evil. Aquinas used reason to establish primary precepts, which are seen as the natural purposes of humans on earth: to preserve innocent life, to live in an ordered society, to worship God, to reproduce and to learn and seek knowledge. A good action must work towards these purposes.
- From the primary precepts, secondary precepts can be deduced which give more specific guidance about how to act. For example, from the primary precept to preserve life, the secondary precept 'do not murder' can be derived. These are seen as absolute rules, unless in a particular circumstance they contradict another primary precept.
- Aquinas argued that humans always seek to do good, but sometimes do not recognise which action is good because of our fallen nature. A 'real' good works towards a primary precept, an 'apparent' good may appear good to the individual but takes them away from the primary precepts.
- He also focused on interior act (intentions) and exterior acts (the action itself), stating that both must be good.
- In order to develop correct reasoning, humans should cultivate the virtues. Aquinas identified three theological virtues established through God's grace – faith, hope and love (charity) and four cardinal virtues which could be developed through habit – prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **'The strengths of Natural Law clearly outweigh its weaknesses.'**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Natural Law has been used by the Roman Catholic church as a tool for moral decision making for hundreds of years. Therefore, it is clearly a good way to make moral decisions otherwise it would not have stood the test of time.
- It focuses clearly on what it means to be human and allows humans to develop in line with natural inclinations.
- However, the Natural Law analysis of human nature could be challenged. Firstly, it is unreasonable to expect a person who does not believe in God to accept that we have a 'God-given' nature at all. If the ultimate purpose of a human is rejected then the whole basis of Natural Law is destroyed.
- Also, the primary precepts established by Aquinas as part of his understanding of human nature could be seen as culturally conditioned. His view of an 'ordered society' does not sit well with modern views about equality and has certainly been used to justify oppression of women and slavery in the past.
- Another strength of Natural Law is the focus on actions themselves rather than consequences as a means to assess morality. As consequences are difficult to predict, a theory which focuses on the action itself is more likely to be correct, particularly when the idea of intention is also added. With consequentialist theories, actions with very evil intentions can be deemed moral as long as the outcome is good, whereas this is not the case with Natural Law.
- However, the legalistic nature of Natural Law could be criticised for lacking humanity. Consequentialist theories are able to take the situation and people involved into account in a more meaningful way. Examples may be used here from abortion and euthanasia to support this point.
- A counter-argument here could be the principle of double effect or the Proportionalist nature of some of Aquinas' examples, however the difficulties with establishing which effects are intended and which are foreseen but unintended may be discussed.
- Candidates may also see the role of virtues in the theory as a key strength and argue that these are valuable, regardless of religious belief.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

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 (a) Explain John Stuart Mill's development of Utilitarianism. [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Mill's development of utilitarianism attempts to address the criticisms levelled at Bentham's Act Utilitarianism, for example that pleasure cannot be measured in quantitative terms and that not all pleasures are equal.
- Mill focuses on the quality of pleasure rather than the quantity. Higher pleasures associated with the intellect are worth more than lower pleasures associated with the body. Therefore, while lower pleasures are sometimes necessary for survival, the principle of utility should be fulfilled through a greater balance of higher pleasures looking in the broadest sense at the 'interests of man as a progressive being.'
- Mill's 'harm principle' works towards securing the principle of utility in its broadest sense as it prevents people from seeking pleasure through the pain of others, while allowing maximum individual freedom to pursue happiness – 'the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others' (On Liberty).
- Candidates may explore this in relation to Mill's role as a politician and his broader interests in social justice.
- The principle of utility can be fulfilled through creating 'rules' based on past experience rather than judging each action individually. For example, the rule 'do not murder' would create the greatest overall happiness in society, even if it may not create happiness in an individual case. This means that each action does not have to be judged using the hedonic calculus, and makes utilitarianism easier to apply in practice.
- Mill is seen by many scholars as a 'weak' Rule Utilitarian, in that the rules offer good general guidelines but may be broken in extreme circumstances to better serve utility. This makes Mill's version of Utilitarianism a teleological and deontological hybrid.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Utilitarianism does not work in contemporary society.’
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Utilitarianism could be seen to work well in contemporary society as it is already a widely accepted and practised basis of morality used in modern democracies when making decisions about, for example, distribution of healthcare and other social resources.
- It is based on achieving happiness for the majority and, as happiness is a common goal in modern society, it will work well as it is based on a natural human need which has not changed over time.
- However, it could be argued that happiness is not a good enough goal for morality, and that other demands such as duty or obedience to religious rules would work better.
- The selfish pursuit of happiness could be seen as one of the problems of contemporary society and the flexibility of Act Utilitarianism could be seen as a weakness as it gives too much autonomy to act according to supposed ‘greatest happiness’ as assessed by an individual.
- Also, the pursuit of greatest happiness could lead to injustice to minorities or acts which are regarded by other moral codes as reprehensible.
- However, it could be argued that a modern, flexible approach to ethical decision making which considers the situation and the consequences is surely more appropriate for contemporary than a set of fixed rules which may lead to injustice.
- It could be argued that, while Act Utilitarianism does not work well, a form of Rule Utilitarianism may be seen as more appropriate for contemporary. This could mitigate some of the problems found in Act Utilitarianism while still holding to the greatest happiness principle. Mill’s identification of higher and lower pleasures, and the idea of the harm principle could be seen as compatible with modern ideas.
- Another line of argument would be to consider the consequentialist nature of the theory. Although it may be viewed as essential to weigh up potential consequences when making moral decisions, it is also very difficult in contemporary society to predict all possible consequences and therefore it would not work.
- Again, it may be that Rule Utilitarianism is more effective as it is less reliant on the consequences of a particular circumstances, rather it draws on past experience of consequences of similar actions to draw general moral principles. This would make it work better in some ways, but it would be more restrictive in others, particularly in its strong form.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

0 5

(a) Outline Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics.

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may **define Situation Ethics** as a relativistic, teleological and consequentialist theory whereby moral decisions are assessed by considering the individual situation and the consequences of the particular action rather than by considering rules or moral norms to be of paramount importance.
- The situational approach is seen as a **middle way** between legalism (rule-based ethics) and antinomianism (rejection of moral laws in favour of grace alone). Fletcher described it as 'principled relativism.'
- Fletcher also rejected traditional views of **conscience** in favour of a more forward thinking, practical application of Christian principles. For Fletcher conscience was a verb not a noun and underlined the idea that agape was something that we did.
- Fletcher believed that decisions should be made based on a single principle of **agape**, self-sacrificial love. This approach is grounded in scripture, such as the teachings of Jesus in Luke 10 and St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. It also follows in the tradition of Christian ethics from Augustine through to more modern thinkers such as Bultmann.
- The notion of agape is explored in the **six fundamental principles**: only love is intrinsically good, love is the ruling norm of Christian decisions, love and justice are the same, love applies equally to all, a loving end justifies the means, and love decides situationally not prescriptively. The six fundamental principles were discussed by Fletcher as a means of quality assurance for understanding what is meant by agape.
- In order to put agape into practice, the **four working principles** – pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism are used to establish the most loving action in a given situation. The principles may be related to a particular ethical issue or an example such as 'Mrs Bergmeier' in order to illustrate how they are used in practice to assess moral decisions.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Situation Ethics clearly promotes justice.’**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Situation Ethics clearly promotes justice because it is a compassionate approach based on agape, which is seen as the only intrinsic good. Everyone shares an understanding of unconditional love and as, according to Fletcher, love and justice are the same thing, then Situation Ethics can only promote justice.
- However, the assumption that humans automatically understand agape can be contested. Humans tend to interpret situations according to their own subjective point of view and struggle to grasp what selfless love actually entails. For example, few people are likely to apply the same love to a stranger as they do to members of their own family. This is a problem for non-Christians in particular, who are not immersed in the Christian understanding of selfless love.
- People can claim to be acting out of love when, in fact, they are acting from purely selfish motives which are often unjust. For example, the person who claims that euthanasia of an elderly relative is a compassion act when their true intention is to inherit money. There are insufficient safeguards within Situation Ethics to prevent this type of injustice.
- Situation Ethics could be seen to promote justice when contrasted with other rule-based theories of ethics because it considers the needs of the people involved (personalism) and the consequences (a loving end justifies the means). For example, in the case of abortion, Natural Law would state that this action was wrong in situations of rape, whereas Situation Ethics would consider the needs of the woman above adherence to rules and would appear to offer a more just approach.
- However, Situation Ethics does not offer clear guidance about what to do in an individual situation. The principles are too broad and would allow people to come to different conclusions about the loving action in a given situation. There is too much room for individual interpretation, and this is the reason that Situation Ethics is seen to promote injustice by many members of the Roman Catholic church.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised