



# Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In Religious Studies (9RS0)  
Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

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## General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

## Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion 2306

### Mark scheme

Question number		Mark
1	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Analogy' can be a way of understanding less familiar concepts.</li> <li>• There are analogies between order in the world and machines such as a watch made by human beings.</li> <li>• There is evidence of analogies between order in the human body such as the eye and order in the world.</li> <li>• There is the experience of order over time as in laws of nature and, analogically, between machines made by humans.</li> <li>• Analogical reasoning leads to links between experience of machines and the origin of order in nature, namely God.</li> </ul>	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2	<p>4 marks AO1, 8 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Big Bang theory may explain the origins of the universe without reference to God.</li> <li>• Scientific methodology uses methods of observation, reason and experiment; conclusions can be tested and repeated which differs from religious belief.</li> <li>• Creation themes in religious belief rely on myth and the miraculous which contain a different type of truth.</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The methodologies of science and religion are very different; therefore, it is impossible for them to be compatible.</li> <li>• Some thinkers hold that science itself needs an explanation; therefore, there may be room for both a scientific and religious understanding of the origin of the universe and other creation themes.</li> <li>• The idea that God is beyond the universe and non-empirical is fundamentally unscientific and therefore these two fields can never work together.</li> <li>• There are questions surrounding whether knowledge can be gained in other ways than just sense experience; therefore, the case for dismissing religious knowledge is not decisive.</li> </ul> <p><b>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</b></p>	(12)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Information/issues are identified (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(a)	<p>10 marks AO1</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free will, the capacity to make autonomous choices, is a gift from God at creation.</li> <li>• The value placed on free will means that human behaviour can, sometimes, be justified even if it brings about suffering.</li> <li>• To be without free will is ultimately less desirable even though it would reduce or even eliminate suffering.</li> <li>• If humans were determined by God, it would be impossible for them to enter into a free relationship with him.</li> <li>• Human free will removes direct blame from God for the existence of evil and suffering on the assumption that once created with moral freedom, God cannot intervene in human choices.</li> </ul>	(10)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is superficial (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies that are not directly linked to the extract (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed, however it is not fully developed (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are linked in most cases to reference from the extract (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 3	7–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed and fully developed (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs and is fully linked to references from the extract (AO1).</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(b)	<p>5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural (non-moral) evil involves those events in the natural order which cause suffering but are beyond human control.</li> <li>• Moral evil involves those events and situations caused by human action.</li> <li>• Whilst moral evil may be deemed beyond God's control, natural evil is presumably part of his creative work.</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The logical problem of evil, as expressed through the 'inconsistent triad': an all-powerful and all-loving God must possess both the power and the will to remove both natural and moral evils from the world, therefore continued existence of both types of evil challenges belief in such a God.</li> <li>• The evidential problem of evil points to the incontrovertible evidence of evil in the world; examples include war, famine, disease, natural disasters. Consequently, it has to remain open to question why a loving God would not intervene on at least some occasions.</li> <li>• There is an evidential problem with the Design Argument for the existence of God, because natural evil appears to show a flaw in God's design, which is inconsistent with the idea of an all-knowing and all-powerful God.</li> <li>• Moral evil might be seen as an acceptable result of free will, however God has no excuse for allowing natural evil, since in his omnipotence he could presumably, have created a world in which such evil did not occur.</li> <li>• Some natural evils can be seen as utterly unjustifiable, because for example, William Rowe's example of a fawn dying in agony in a forest fire, are opposed to the moral convictions of theists and atheists.</li> <li>• Despite free will, the extent of moral evil may offer the greatest challenge to belief in God, for example, the Holocaust surely cannot be justified by the importance of human moral autonomy.</li> </ul> <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(20)



Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Information/issues are selected (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made, which are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of the elements in the question, which are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question, which are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4	<p>5 marks AO1, 25 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critiques of religious belief may be functionalist (e.g. sociological), projective (e.g. psychological) or popularist (e.g. Richard Dawkins)</li> <li>• Such critiques challenge the role, purpose and impact of religious belief on individuals and society.</li> <li>• Critiques may align with agnosticism, atheism or anti-theism.</li> </ul> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sociological critiques may be decisive because they offer an understanding of the role religious belief plays in uniting and sustaining communities, especially in times of trial.</li> <li>• Popularist critiques can be persuasive because they focus on extremism and rely on shock tactics which are appealing to a less religiously literate audience.</li> <li>• Critiques of religious belief focus on the negative or immature aspects of religious belief and practice and thus discourage an engagement with the intellectual enquiry of religion, assuming religion is anti-intellectual and morally undeveloped.</li> <li>• However, critiques of religious belief may rely on a Straw Man Fallacy, deliberately focussing on absurdities or extremes which therefore do not fairly represent religious belief.</li> <li>• Critiques of religious belief are often influenced by advances in the scientific understanding of the world because they rest on the false assumption that religious belief is incompatible with scientific interpretations.</li> <li>• Critiques of religion may focus on moral arguments such as the claims of religious extremists, which can unfairly imply that all religious believers follow an unquestionable divine command ethic (this shows links with Religion and Ethics).</li> <li>• The use of biblical narrative to critique religion may be effective since it poses a challenge to the foundational teachings of religion, for example, problematic statements such as 'Sell all you have.... and come follow me' or the challenge of supernaturalism such as the resurrection of Jesus (this shows links with New Testament Studies).</li> <li>• Critiques of religious belief typically challenge Western perspectives, whilst Eastern spiritualities may be less vulnerable since they rely less on obedience to divine commands and absolute values (this shows links with the Study of a Religion).</li> </ul> <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p> <p>Candidates who do not show links with another area of their course of study will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 4.</p>	<p>(30)</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Information/issues are identified (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> <li>• Conclusions are provided but are simplistic and/or generic (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> <li>• Conclusions are provided, which loosely draw together ideas but with little or no attempt to justify (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> <li>• Conclusions are provided, which logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 4	19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Reasoned judgements are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2).</li> <li>• Convincing conclusions are provided, which fully and logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 5	25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).</li> <li>• Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are fully justified (AO2).</li> </ul>

