



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

**A LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 5
PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION
1120U50-1**

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 or all 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.

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.

A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band (marks)	Assessment Objective AO1 – Section A questions [30 marks]
	<p><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
5 (25-30 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 shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4 (19-24 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 shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3 (13-18 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 shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2 (7-12 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. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable) • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1 (1-6 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. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable) • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication. <p>N.B. A maximum of 3 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	Assessment Objective AO2- Section B questions [30 marks] <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5 (25-30 marks)	<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. • The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4 (19-24 marks)	<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. • The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3 (13-18 marks)	<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. • The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2 (7-12 marks)	<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. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought, appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1 (1-6 marks)	<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. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

WJEC GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

UNIT 5 – PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

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Examine the contrasting views of David Hume and Richard Swinburne on the possibility of miracles.

[AO1 30]

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

- **Hume** defined a miracle as ‘a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity or by the interposition of some invisible agent’.
- There might be consideration of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ interpretations of laws of nature.
- **Swinburne** however, defends the possibility of miracles. He does not reject **Hume’s** definition of miracles, though in contrast to **Hume** he rejects ‘violation.’ He can be further contrasted with **Hume** for two reasons. He uses the phrase ‘a non-repeatable counter-instance to a law of nature’. Expect examination of this phrase and its implications.
- In contrast to **Hume**, **Swinburne** says that to be a miracle an event must have a deeper significance
- **Hume** looked at the evidence available for a particular belief. The balance of probability he concluded was against the occurrence of miracles. He said that evidence against miracles happening is far greater than the evidence in favour of them happening. This is not the same as saying that they are impossible, though highly improbable.
- **Swinburne**, in contrast, investigates whether there could be strong historical evidence for miracles and he concludes that there could be. He says there is evidence that a non-repeatable counter-instance to the law of nature has occurred and that it can be ascribed to a god.
- **Hume** however says that the laws of nature ‘holding’ have the weight of evidence behind them. Past experience has established them. **Hume** said that the weight of the quality of the testimony does not outweigh the evidence in favour of laws of nature ‘holding’.
- **Swinburne** however says that it is valid to say that an event occurred which is a counter-instance to a true law of nature. This event is non-repeatable so therefore the event has truly been counter-instance to the law of nature. **Swinburne** does not believe, as some do that a law of nature should be changed to accommodate new findings.
- Testimony does not come from the sort of people that **Hume** would consider to be reliable or credible. Expect mention of the witnesses to a claimed miracle never amounting to a ‘sufficient number’ of educated people and that they all have something to gain from lying. Witnesses also love mystery and wonder and are ignorant.
- In contrast **Swinburne** suggests that it is most unclear what a ‘sufficient number’ of witnesses would be. He also says that **Hume** is wrong to say that all witnesses to miracles are uneducated and liars. **Swinburne** also says that **Hume** is wrong to suggest that miracles only happen in ‘ignorant and barbarous’ nations.
- **Swinburne’s** view is that as there are different kinds of evidence, which should be ascribed levels of credibility. Expect the Principles of Testimony and Credulity.

- **Swinburne** suggests that **Hume's** rejection of testimony is bigoted. He also wonders what **Hume's** response would be if **Hume** himself saw such an event.
- **Hume** said that the fact that all religions claim miracles brings with it a contradiction. All purported miracles cancel out the other. An example could be given such as the apologetic value of one tradition could be cancelled out due to a miracle claimed by another tradition. Jesus was either born as the Son of God or he was not.
- In contrast **Swinburne** said that miracles across traditions do not all cancel each other out. Miracles, he said, are not about proving one tradition right and another wrong. He suggests they are not about doctrine. As they hold 'deeper significance' religious miracles or signs show the purpose and/or nature of God.

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

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Explain religious language as analogical with reference to St Thomas Aquinas and Ian Ramsey.

[AO1 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant responses will be credited.

- Candidates should explore the concept of analogy, with particular reference to the views of both scholars regarding religious language as analogy.
- The concept of analogy is not intending to function as being a statement about what is either true or false. It has a different function, which is to talk about God by way of a comparison between God and that which we understand. Reference to why Aquinas said that talking about God univocally (same word, same meaning) is insufficient as that would mean that we anthropomorphise God.
- Reference to why Aquinas said that talking about God equivocally (same word, different meaning) is insufficient as that would mean that we are not really saying anything if we are simply saying that God and humans are completely different.
- Suggesting that language about God can be used analogically is due to the 'causal link.' God caused humans to be, showing that cause and effect are inextricably linked. There is a relationship between God and humans as God caused humans to be.
- Analogy of proportion which means that entities have a characteristic in proportion to what they are. So, we have goodness in proportion to being human. God has goodness infinitely as that is what is required in proportion to God being God.
- Analogy of attribution can be viewed in two related ways. An attribute is a quality, so God has attributes which he attributes (second use of attribute) to humans as God caused us. This again shows the link between cause and effect. Aquinas used the example of a healthy bull (cause) has the effect of producing healthy urine.
- Ian Ramsey's analogical approach is via 'models and qualifiers.' A model is what we begin with as a model is that which we know. This means the model generally begins with the human realm. For example, we know what 'wisdom' is with regard to humans. When we say the 'God is wise' we must qualify this wisdom by using the word 'infinitely' when related to God.
- He uses many words and phrases that help to clarify his ideas. These could be used, explained, and exemplified. They include new dimension, ice breaks, empirical anchorage, and discernment of depth.
- Examples used in his book 'Religious language' could include the high court judge, equal pay for equal rights, the dinner jacket splitting, to name a few. These show everyday situations which work in an analogous way to religious language. The 'odd' situation or 'odd' phrase can often change a situation, bring about an understanding and transform the situation.

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

Section B

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'Jung's argument that religious belief is a product of the human mind is convincing.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Jung's argument can be supported with reference to modern Psychology. It is evident that a religious belief is a source of comfort to individuals. Belief can be a great comfort to many in a variety of different adverse situations including bereavement, persecution, and oppression. This could suggest that this feeling of comfort is generated by the mind.
- However, it can also be argued that religious belief is not a product of the human mind. Religion is an objective truth for the majority of religious believers. It is not a product of the human mind but rather, a reality.
- Religion can promote a positive mindset both in a personal and social situation. This can aid the personal growth of believers. Examples of a positive mindset might be given such as hope and optimism for the future.
- The personal unconscious can be seen to be common in all people, which is attested to in Jung's 'collective unconscious.'
- The notion of 'archetypes' can be seen to be correct with evidence that a balance of these archetypes leads to good psychological health. The dominance of one archetype can lead to neurosis or schizophrenia.
- Archetypes can be seen to be universal symbols which occur in religions and fables for instance. Examples include 'God is a wise old man' and 'the fairy godmother.'
- His work on dreams and relationship to religion/religious believers can be seen to be correct in his idea that dreams should not be analysed individually but in a series. The trustworthiness of some of his work could lead us to suggest that other ideas are also correct.
- However, Psychology today suggests that Jung's qualitative data is unscientific and insufficient as evidence. If data used in a finding is deemed to be unreliable then the 'finding' is also unreliable.
- As well as the type of data itself being of an untrustworthy nature there is simply not enough empirical evidence for his ideas. For example, there is not enough data to substantiate his psychoanalytical ideas.
- Candidates might also point out that concepts such as archetypes have no empirical evidence to substantiate them.
- His ideas can be seen as being too reductionist reducing religion to a far too simple and basic explanation. Religion cannot be reduced to one factor or just a few factors and that is what Jung is doing in his views about religious belief.
- Candidates might refer to Freud as part of the evaluation. This might be done by suggesting that Jung's ideas are not as near to reality as those of Freud. Conversely candidates might suggest that Jung's ideas are correct as Freud often suggests the opposite and Freud's views can be discredited.

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

‘Understanding religious language as non-cognitive and symbolic is an effective solution to the problem of religious language.’

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Logical Positivism suggests that religious language should not be treated differently from other forms of language. This means that religious language should be able to be empirically proven, giving information about the world. This suggests that logical positivism is the only way to establish truth, leaving symbolic religious language as meaningless.
- However, non-cognitive interpretations of religious language, such as those of symbolic religious language challenge the assumptions of Logical Positivism. They suggest that the function of religious language as symbolic means that religious language should not be viewed in the same way as other language.
- Candidates could choose to focus on specific aspects of the work of Tillich and/or Randall. However, a ‘general’ response is also valid.
- Many would suggest that understanding religious language as symbolic solves the problems of religious language as it shows that meaning is not established by empirical verification. Non-cognitive language allows meaning in the expression of emotions and in the giving of opinion.
- For a symbolic understanding of religious language is important to understand the function of religious language, how it is used, how it works. This is not a matter of objective reality. It is what religious language as symbolic does which gives it meaning.
- However, for others the function of language is unimportant. Rather, meaning comes from being able to withstand scrutiny by empirical means. It can be argued that a symbolic understanding of religious language cannot withstand this scrutiny and so the problems of religious language remain.
- It could be legitimately argued that a symbolic understanding of religious language has a function as it allows meaning. Symbols point beyond themselves and participate in the reality to which they point. This can be confirmed by referring to examples such as the Christian cross and all of the meaning that this engenders. Symbols open up levels of reality for those who encounter them, and this is a vital and meaningful role.
- Candidates could use the line of argument that symbolic religious language does solve the problems of religious language as symbols are meaningful for those who use them as part of life. This can apply to both religious and non-religious people. Examples could be a crest on a football shirt or a cross for a Christian. They are more than an emblem and two crossing lines.
- Others would argue that understanding religious language as symbolic does not solve the problems of religious language. This might be because not all symbols have meaning for all people. For some, symbolic language is just as confusing and as the literal use of language. In this sense, nothing is conveyed by symbols.
- It could be argued that symbols can illuminate and explain religious teachings, drawing out a deeper layer of meaning. This could be used to suggest that a symbolic understanding of religious language solves a problem of religious language; that is one of confusion and lack of understanding. Understanding comes when one understands that a phrase or a story should not be understood literally.
- On the contrary, the opinion of some would suggest that symbols might have the ability to entertain but they are nothing more than fairy tales, lacking in meaning. They solve nothing. In addition to this evidence shows that some symbols change in meaning over time, stripping them of any clarity.
- Conversely some religious symbols such as a dove or the symbolism of the colour white could be argued to be universal and unchanging in nature. These symbols do convey meaning and understanding.

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

Evaluate this view.**[AO2 30]****Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.**

- Candidates will need to consider a number of definitions of miracle and evaluate whether they are in direct conflict with each other.
- An alternative approach would be to consider if each of the definitions are in themselves contradictory.
- It could be strongly argued that the definitions of miracles given by Hume and Swinburne do not contradict each other. Both define miracles as a break in the law of nature. Swinburne’s reference to a non-repeatable counter-instance does take the definition further but in essence, both definitions incorporate the idea that the law of nature has not ‘held’.
- The same could be said with regard to Aquinas’ definition. Ultimately he would ascribe a miracle to the work of divine agency. God does something that nature cannot do or does not conform to what is normally done by the workings of nature. He does not specifically use the terminology that would link him completely with Hume and Swinburne, but his medieval knowledge would not allow for such anyway.
- However, Hume and Swinburne’s definitions are contradictory in that Hume’s conclusion may seem unclear. At times he seems to suggest that miracles could happen and at other times that they absolutely cannot. Swinburne is unequivocal; miracles can happen as a non-repeatable counter-instance to the law of nature performed by a god.
- It appears that there is a glaring contradiction between the definitions of the above three men and that of Holland. For Holland a miracle is an event of religious significance where no law of nature is broken. The event happens within the natural laws.
- It may be pointed out though that there is some point of contact between Holland’s reference to a religiously significant event and Swinburne’s reference to the same thing.
- If we say that there are different classes of miracles, then of course it is permissible and understandable that definitions relating to each should differ. Holland’s definition is referring to ‘contingency’ miracles whilst Hume, Swinburne and Aquinas are referring to ‘violation’ miracles.
- However, there are still vital contradictions that could be levelled even if they do refer to different classes of miracles. Violation miracles are objective, they are available to be witnessed by all. Contingency miracles are subjective; an event ‘becomes’ a miracle if that is how a believer chooses to interpret a situation. It may not be a miracle for all. So, the fundamental objective versus subjective contradiction still stands.
- A different line of reasoning is that all definitions of miracles are equally valid. It is not a matter of there being contradictions. Rather, they are personal interpretations of an event. The issue may be more one of disagreement of semantics rather than a contradiction.
- Although if we have no one definition then that opens interpretation up far too widely to an ‘anything goes’ mentality.

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

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- The issue at stake is whether religious language is a 'closed' language, available only to those within a religious tradition.
- One reason to disagree with this claim is to suggest that religious language can be understood by anyone, not just by religious believers. Religious language, as suggested by philosophers such as Braithwaite should be viewed in the same way as language concerning morality. He said that religious statements were expressions of how one intends to live life. In this sense, religious language performs the same function as moral language, which is also an expression of an attitude, possibly accompanied by a suggestion that others could live life in this way too. This would mean that religious language can be understood by anyone, whether they are religious believers or not.
- Conversely, it could be argued that religious language is only understood by believers and the meaning is relative to the particular religious tradition that one is a part of. Claims such as 'God is Three-in-One', 'Allah is One', 'God is Spirit' may not be understood by non-religious believers. Equally however, each claim may only hold any significance to the members of the religious tradition that might make those particular claims.
- The work of Wittgenstein might add weight to the claim of the question. His position shows that language is relative to the community within which it arises. Providing that one understands the rules of the game then that language is meaningful as its function is understood. To those outside of the game, the language is unintelligible, suggesting that non-religious believers do not understand religious language.
- However, this position does not recognise that non-religious believers may be completely immersed in religious language through their job or due to their particular interests. Detailed study of religion and of religious language is undertaken by those who have no religious belief. This does not mean that their studies are lacking in understanding.
- To counter this though, there is a considerable difference between truly accepting as an objective fact that 'Jesus died for our sin' and understanding what this concept means in a purely academic sense. In this way it can be said that the true meaning of religious language with all of its passion and emotion is only really understood by those with a religious belief.
- This does however leave religion in a fairly precarious and insulated position. This would mean that there is no proper dialogue possible between theist and atheist or between members of different religious traditions. It can be suggested that this does not reflect reality as we have evidence that such dialogue is possible and does indeed occur today.
- Religious believers are involved in many areas of life, so it makes little sense to suggest that their religious language is confined to within their religious tradition.

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