

GCE

Religious Studies

Unit **G582**: Religious Ethics

Advanced GCE

Mark Scheme for June 2016

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.








All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme.

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Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Level one – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level two – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level three – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level four – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level five – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Highlighting a section of the response that is irrelevant to the awarding of the mark.
	Point has been seen and noted, e.g. where part of an answer is at the end of the script.

NOTE: AO1 level must be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin, with the AO2 level used immediately below.

Subject-specific Marking Instructions

Handling of unexpected answers

If you are not sure how to apply the mark scheme to an answer, you should contact your Team Leader.

NOTE: AO2 material in AO1 answers must not be cross-credited and vice-versa.

A2 Preamble and Instructions to Examiners

The purpose of a marking scheme is to ‘... enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’ [CoP 1999 25.xiv]. It must ‘allow credit to be allocated for what candidates know, understand and can do’ [xv] and be ‘clear and designed to be easily and consistently applied’ [x].

The **Religious Studies Subject Criteria** [1999] define ‘what candidates know, understand and can do’ in terms of two Assessment Objectives, weighted for the OCR Religious Studies specification as indicated:

All candidates must be required to meet the following assessment objectives.

At A level, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and their ability to sustain a critical line of argument in greater depth and over a wider range of content than at AS level.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

- AO1:** Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.
- AO2:** Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view.

The requirement to assess candidates’ quality of written communication will be met through both assessment objectives.

In order to ensure the marking scheme can be ‘easily and consistently applied’, and to ‘enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’, it defines Levels of Response by which candidates’ answers are assessed. This ensures that comparable standards are applied across the various units as well as within the team of examiners marking a particular unit. Levels of Response are defined according to the two Assessment Objectives. In A2, candidates answer a single question but are reminded by a rubric of the need to address both Objectives in their answers. Progression from Advanced Subsidiary to A2 is provided, in part, by assessing their ability to construct a coherent essay, and this is an important part of the Key Skill of Communication which ‘must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies at AS and A level’.

Positive awarding: it is a fundamental principle of OCR’s assessment in Religious Studies at Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE that candidates are rewarded for what they ‘know, understand and can do’ and to this end examiners are required to assess every answer by the Levels according to the extent to which it addresses a reasonable interpretation of the question. In the marking scheme each question is provided with a brief outline of the likely content and/or lines of argument of a ‘standard’ answer, but this is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive. Examiners are required to have subject knowledge to a high level and the outlines do not attempt to duplicate this.

Examiners must **not** attempt to reward answers according to the extent to which they match the structure of the outline, or mention the points it contains. The specification is designed to allow teachers to approach the content of modules in a variety of ways from any of a number of perspectives, and candidates' answers must be assessed in the light of this flexibility of approach. It is quite possible for an excellent and valid answer to contain knowledge and arguments which do not appear in the outline; each answer must be assessed on its own merits according to the Levels of Response.

Key Skill of Communication: this is assessed at both Advanced Subsidiary and A2 as an integral part of the marking scheme. The principle of positive awarding applies here as well: candidates should be rewarded for good written communication, but marks may not be deducted for inadequate written communication; the quality of communication is integral to the quality of the answer in making its meaning clear. The Key Skill requirements in Communication at Level 3 include the following evidence requirements for documents about complex subjects, which can act as a basis for assessing the Communications skills in an examination answer:

- Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so your meaning is clear.

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Synoptic skills and the ability to make connections: these are now assessed at A2 as specification, due to the removal of the Connections papers.

Levels of Response: the descriptions are cumulative, ie a description at one level builds on or improves the descriptions at lower levels. Not all the qualities listed in a level must be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall in that level (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive). There is no expectation that an answer will receive marks in the same level for the two AOs.

The comments in the following mark scheme are purely an indication of the content that may be produced by candidates in response to the questions. They should not be taken as exclusive and any content included by candidates that is relevant to a legitimate interpretation of the question should be credited accordingly.

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
1	<p>‘Metaethics is more important than normative ethics.’ Discuss.</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates may consider that metaethics is concerned with the language of ethical discourse. They may include such theories as those produced by major thinkers within the field of metaethics including Naturalism, Intuitionism, Emotivism and Prescriptivism. They may also include unique thinkers whom they have encountered within their own wider reading in this field.</p> <p>They may use this to say that metaethics is not intended to give particular solutions to moral dilemmas, but that normative ethics gives the guidelines for actions and aims to determine our ethical behaviour. Within this area, candidates may use such ethical theories that they have encountered such as the works of thinkers who may include, for example, Aquinas, Kant and the various Utilitarian ethicists.</p> <p>This, they may explain, means that metaethics deals with analysis rather than prescribing particular actions. They may, however, discuss the fact that Prescriptivism does say that it is the nature of ethical language to prescribe actions and so is the same as normative ethics. Naturalism also has direct links that could be made to such ethical systems as Utilitarianism.</p> <p>They may consider the different metaethical approaches and whether moral judgements express beliefs which in turn lead to ethical decisions.</p>	35	<p>Responses by candidates may consider the following questions when responding to the metaethical element of this question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean to say that something is right or wrong? Are there any objective criteria by which I can assess moral statements? • What is moral language? Is it a statement about facts of any kind? • Does a moral statement simply express a person’s wishes or hopes about what should happen? • In what sense can a moral statement be said to be either true or false? <p>This question is likely to elicit a wide variety of responses in terms of the thinkers and theories that are used by candidates in their responses.</p> <p>Candidates may demonstrate a variety of levels of understanding of normative ethics. In some cases they may have included normative ethical concepts without directly identifying them as such, leading to an implicit response.</p> <p>In dealing with the specific case of Prescriptivism, some candidates may make the point that this metaethical viewpoint crosses the boundaries between normative and metaethical concepts in detailing both what it means and how the individual should act; similarly with Naturalism.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>Some candidates may focus on the implication of ethical language such as 'good', 'bad' etc., and use this in comparison between metaethical interpretation and normative interpretative to build their response, e.g. Utilitarianism would interpret 'good' as that which produced the greatest amount of happiness.</p> <p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates may argue that metaethics is necessary to make sense of normative ethics as it helps us determine whether something is good or whether we are obligated to do a certain action and so may be considered to be more important. They may say that metaethics gives us the tools to discuss the nature of ethics and moral reasoning.</p> <p>Alternatively normative ethics gives the guides to moral behaviour and helps us to answer the question 'what ought I to do?' They may give examples of normative ethics such as those of Kant, Bentham or other thinkers to illustrate this.</p> <p>Candidates may analyse the views of different scholars and how they would explain ethical statements. They may assess the view that ethical statements are prescriptive and not merely descriptive, and so they give directions about how someone should act; therefore there is little difference between normative ethics and metaethics.</p> <p>They may discuss whether ethical statements can be simply described as subjective or objective, and whether one person's opinions may be considered any better than another's.</p> <p>They may discuss whether moral judgements are subjective or objective, relative or absolute and whether this matters when facing ethical dilemmas.</p>		<p>Some candidates may implicitly respond to the question through the use of the application of the different concepts to particular examples of situations.</p> <p>Candidates may challenge the assumption of the question that one element is more important than another, and make the point that both are, to an extent, mutually dependent on each other and that one cannot fully function without the other. In order to know the 'good' action, one has to have an appreciation of 'good' in the first place.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
2	<p>To what extent is the Golden Mean the most important aspect of Virtue Ethics?</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates may begin by explaining the classical Virtue Ethics of Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas and others. They may also include a more modern version such as that of Hursthouse which does discuss the Golden Mean. Other modern virtue ethicists may be used by candidates as part of their discussion and should be credited accordingly. They may say that Virtue Ethics is agent rather than act centred.</p> <p>They may explain the idea of the Golden Mean as the balance between the vice of deficiency and the vice of excess. They may explain that this is not an exact centre point and will not be the same for everyone and depends on circumstances. They may explain that people need to apply <i>phronesis</i> (practical wisdom) and <i>sophia</i> to decide the right course of action and may give examples to illustrate it. Some candidates may demonstrate the cultural relativity of the Golden Mean and use this as part of their argument.</p> <p>Candidates may explain other aspects of Virtue Ethics such as the acquiring of the virtues through practice and the example of virtuous people. They may explain how the virtues are learnt and internalised so that a virtuous character is developed that will make the right ethical choices. Some may demonstrate the different types of virtues conceived by thinkers over the development of the theory.</p> <p>They may also explain that Virtue Ethics considers that virtues aim to help people to achieve a certain telos – eudaimonia.</p>		<p>There are a wide variety of systems which fall within the broader ambit of Virtue Ethics which may be employed by candidates in building their responses to this question, including such concepts as ‘warm and cool’ virtue theory. Within this, care ethics may also be incorporated.</p> <p>A large number of religious ethics also incorporate the concept of virtue within their development, notably Buddhist ethical concepts and the Natural Law of Aquinas. Candidates may make a legitimate claim based upon these concepts in building their response to the question.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates may argue that the idea of the Golden Mean is central to acquiring a virtuous character. Rather than being told what to do in a given situation, people will develop a good character so that they are able to make the right choices.</p> <p>Candidates may consider the problems with deciding what moral virtues are – for example courage: what may be courageous for a soldier in battle might be foolhardy for a civilian. They might evaluate whether the Golden Mean is useful in dealing with practical ethical situations.</p> <p>They may compare the importance of the Golden Mean to other aspects of Virtue Ethics such as the importance of <i>phronesis</i>, following the example of virtuous role models and/or the practice of the virtues.</p> <p>Some candidates may consider the importance of building a virtuous community through the use of Virtue Ethics and may refer to the concept of the <i>polis</i> within Aristotle and/or the work of Alisdair MacIntyre in relating the virtues to society itself.</p>		<p>Some candidates may make the argument that the relativism of the Golden Mean may be seen as either a critical strength or weakness of the system in depending on time, place and culture to identify the mean between the vices.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
3	<p>To what extent does the religion you have studied adequately insist on human beings taking responsibility for the environment?</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates could explain religious approaches to the environment, perhaps in terms of Biblical teaching, using for example Genesis 1-3 and some Psalms to show the views of dominion and stewardship and how these can lead to conflicting approaches. They may also discuss the ideas of St. Francis of Assisi who gave intrinsic value to the natural world. Other religious approaches, such as Rapture Theology and Creation Spirituality by Matthew Fox, may equally be used by candidates in creating their response.</p> <p>Candidates may also examine an ethical theory which may be seen as essentially religious, such as Aquinas' Natural Law and Fletcher's Situation Ethics.</p> <p>The Gaia Hypothesis may be considered to be a religious ethical response to the environment. While not specifically religious it has been acknowledged by religious thinkers and has an overall spirituality that allows it to be linked to religious belief, especially within a new-age approach to religion. Equally this may be applied by some candidates to Deep Ecology with its links to Daoism, the writings of Confucius and the beliefs of St. Francis of Assisi.</p> <p>This could be applied to environmental issues e.g. pollution, deforestation, ozone depletion, global warming, animals etc. but the focus should be on the responsibility of humanity, not just on environmental issues.</p>		<p>It is not necessary to compare the religious teachings on human responsibility for the environment, as it is possible to respond to the question by simply evaluating the religious teaching.</p> <p>Candidates may make use of viewpoints on the environment from within a variety of religious traditions in making their response.</p> <p>Where candidates are making reference to religious beliefs, there should be specific use made of religious teachings in terms of scripture, dogma and other sources of authority, rather than a simplistic and generalised "they say....".</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>The teachings of any religion studied can be used such as Buddhism that does not view humanity as stewards but as having responsibility to the less sentient beings who live with them in the world. Non-violence is central to Buddhism and the requirement to avoid harm to all living beings impacts on attitudes towards the exploitation of the natural world.</p> <p>Hinduism teaches that all life is of equal value and has the same right to exist. Humans have responsibility towards other life forms as they may be reborn as one of them. They also respect trees, plants, mountains and rivers – humans may use the natural resources but not abuse or exploit them.</p> <p>Judaism also has laws about the responsibility of humanity to the environment such as the Sabbath and Jubilee Years that are seen as a reminder not to exploit nature.</p> <p>In Islam humans are seen as vice-regents to protect and promote all aspects of the environment.</p> <p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates should consider whether religious approaches adequately insist on giving humanity responsibility for the environment.</p> <p>They might wish to look at whether religious ethics may not be a good approach because of the different interpretations of religious texts.</p> <p>They might discuss how religious ethics have led to a misuse of the environment, using the criticisms of Lynn White and Peter Singer. They may introduce ideas that other ethical theories, such as Bentham's Utilitarianism, might be potentially harmful to the environment as they only consider the greater good of humans.</p>		<p>Some candidates may approach their analysis by questioning whether humanity can have any responsibility towards the environment by questioning the existence of human free will and general responsibility in any decision-making process. The argument that human nature is pre-determined in a variety of possible ways could be used by candidates to make a legitimate claim that humanity cannot bear any responsibility for any action including those relating to the environment.</p> <p>On a deeper level, the claim may be made that what happens to the environment as a whole is already determined as part of a greater plan made by God, and that humanity is simply playing a pre-determined part within that.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>The arguments from religious ethics could be assessed in relation to Deep Ecology and the Gaia hypothesis, or simply compared to each other to assess the teachings on human responsibility for the environment.</p> <p>Candidates may decide that protection of the environment is of paramount importance and that the exact approach taken in securing this is secondary.</p>		

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
4	<p>'Kantian ethics is of little use when approaching sexual ethics.' Discuss.</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates may wish to begin by addressing some of the complexities of Kantian ethics when applied to sexual matters. Some candidates may include reference to Kant's Lectures on Ethics where the morality of sexual acts are discussed.</p> <p>They could examine the Categorical Imperative, especially the idea that you should never treat another as a means to an end. This could be used to discuss prostitution and pre/extra-marital relationships. Kantian ethics seems to say that sexual acts are wrong in themselves as they mean using another person for one's sexual pleasure, but this seems to apply to prostitution not marriage. For Kant marriage is a contract in which two people grant each other reciprocal rights, so sex within marriage is not wrong and the purpose of marriage is not procreation, as in Natural Law but the union of two equal people.</p> <p>The importance of duty could be considered, especially in marriage, but that duty should always respect the individual and women should not be forced to have children. Equally, candidates may also discuss the use of the good will to moderate attitudes and behaviour and may make reference to concepts such as personal autonomy and the rights of the individual to self-determination as major elements of Kantian thought within this area.</p> <p>Universalisation could be applied to issues such as homosexuality. Kant wrote that homosexuality degrades humans lower than animals as he believed that it made people a 'slave to their passions.' Some candidates may go into detail</p>		<p>Candidates may focus exclusively on the application of Kantian ethics to the issues within sexual ethics. Equally they may compare it with other ethical theories and make the justification that an alternative theory would be of greater use. Some candidates may simply juxtapose different theories without the comparative element which is necessary to the response.</p>

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>over the issues of contradictions of will and nature that may be brought to bear in consideration of sexual ethical issues.</p> <p>AO2</p> <p>Some candidates may interpret the words ‘little use’ in a variety of ways, including that it is useful for modern discussion, reliable as a methodology and so on.</p> <p>Candidates may argue that there are some aspects of Kantian ethics that are useful when discussing the issues surrounding sexual ethics and others which are not.</p> <p>They may assess his ideas on not using people as a means to an end, showing that this would protect the autonomy of every individual in sexual relationships. They could discuss how Kant saw sex as imperfect and yet necessary for the survival of the human race, but also emphasised the importance of companionship in marriage.</p> <p>Candidates may assess whether, as MacIntyre argues, anyone can universalise anything for their own situation, for example ‘sex is always right in a consenting relationship.’</p> <p>They may assess whether the weaknesses in his approach outweigh the strengths and whether he has anything relevant to say on the matter in today’s world where both laws and attitudes are different to those of his own time.</p> <p>Candidates may legitimately compare the approach of Kant with those of other ethical systems. They may focus on specific elements within sexual ethics (contraception, pre- and extra-marital sex and homosexuality), or they may apply Kantian ethics to a wider understanding of sexuality as an area of ethical concern.</p>		

A2 LEVELS OF RESPONSE

Level	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1-5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little relevant material • some concepts inaccurate • shows little knowledge of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L1</p>	1-3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little or no successful analysis • views asserted with no justification <p style="text-align: right;">L1</p>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6-9	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge limited and partially accurate • limited understanding • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • selection often inappropriate • limited use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L2</p>	4-6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some analysis, but not successful • views asserted but little justification <p style="text-align: right;">L2</p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10-13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some accurate knowledge • appropriate understanding • some successful selection of material • some accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L3</p>	7-8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful analysis which may be implicit • views asserted but not fully justified <p style="text-align: right;">L3</p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14-17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate knowledge • good understanding • good selection of material • technical terms mostly accurate <p style="text-align: right;">L4</p>	9-11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful and clear analysis • some effective use of evidence • views analysed and developed <p style="text-align: right;">L4</p>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
5	18-21	A very good / excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information • accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L5</p>	12-14	A very good / excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehends the demands of the question • uses a range of evidence • shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints <p style="text-align: right;">L5</p>
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

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