



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2019

**AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 2
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF
RELIGION
B120U20-1**

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2019 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	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 25 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><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	<p style="text-align: center;">21-25 marks</p> <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	<p style="text-align: center;">16-20 marks</p> <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	<p style="text-align: center;">11-15 marks</p> <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	<p style="text-align: center;">6-10 marks</p> <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	<p style="text-align: center;">1-5 marks</p> <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	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>
5	<p>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>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>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>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>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 2: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

1. (a) Outline Augustinian type and Irenaean type theodicies. [AO1 25]

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

- For Augustine, God is not responsible for the creation of evil. God created the world wholly good, as Genesis maintains and cannot be blamed for evil. Augustine refers to evil as a lack of goodness; the example of blindness as a lack or privation of sight helps to explain this concept.
- Evil is a direct result of the consequences of The Fall. Evil is the deliberate turning away from God, caused by the free will of humans and angels.
- All humans are 'seminally present' in Adam. This means that, as humans descend from Adam, all humans are guilty, hence original sin and original guilt. All therefore deserve to suffer. The exception is Jesus who was not seminally present in Adam.
- This is a 'soul-deciding' theodicy. Humans can make free will choices to work towards a new relationship with God or to reject God. Free will is therefore a necessity.
- 'Possible worlds' may be considered, perhaps in relation to Plantinga. This is a philosophical idea that the world as it is just right for free will to meaningfully exist and for a relationship with God to be formed.
- God is merciful. All deserve to be punished but some will undergo redemption through Christ's Atonement, which means that his death was a 'happy mistake' (Felix Culpa).
- Irenaeanus said that God did not make the world perfectly. He looks to Genesis 1 verse 26 to support his view, suggesting that 'image' and 'likeness' represent two different stages. The world was made imperfectly and will develop into perfection.
- This suggests that God may be partially responsible for suffering as he did not make the world free from flaws.
- John Hick developed this soul-making theodicy. God creates humans imperfectly in order that they can develop over time. Free will allows the choice to follow good or evil. If there was no evil, then there could be no choice. Evil therefore allows the development of the soul fit for heaven.
- Likewise the world has to be a place of pain as well as pleasure because otherwise this would be a fabricated world which would not allow for genuine development.
- God creates at an 'epistemic distance' and goodness and perfection are found through willing co-operation with God. This gap of knowledge is the difference between imperfection and perfection and can be transformed through learning noble qualities as a result of suffering. These would include compassion and generosity, both of which can result from experiencing moral and/or natural evil.
- Evil and suffering are worthwhile because of the eventual outcome. This theodicy relies on there being an afterlife because for some, soul-making may continue after death. This ultimate reward for all will justify all of the suffering experienced on earth. Human goodness will come from making free and responsible choices, in situations of difficulty and temptation.
- This is better than being born into goodness with no chance to grow or develop. This is because choosing God is worthwhile whereas being forced to follow God is of no use at all.

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

(b) 'Augustinian type theodicies fail to solve the problem of evil.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- It could be argued that saying that evil is a privation denies the reality of evil. Evil is not just the absence of good but it is a living presence in the lives of many. It also makes no sense to say that the perfect world became imperfect. If there is no evil in existence then how can bad choices be made?
- On scientific grounds Augustine's theodicy can be rejected. Humans are not descendants of Adam thus demolishing a major premise of the theodicy. It may also call into doubt the historicity of The Fall. Some would contest that humans are advancing from a primitive to a more developed state and not degenerating as Augustine suggested.
- As the majority of humans are destined for hell this suggests that hell was part of the world that God created. This not only goes against his suggestion that there was no evil at the origin of the universe but it also suggests that God has committed a major design flaw.
- However, the notion that humans must suffer as a punishment for sinning is an accepted idea in Jewish and Islamic circles and so is in accordance with major world faiths. Its basis in Scripture may also suggest that it succeeds.
- Indeed, our expectation that cause and effect as a system works in our world consolidates the success of the theodicy. All actions have consequences, many of which can last for a very long period of time.
- It can free God from blame. It points the finger directly at angels and humans showing the innate desire of all humans to turn from what is good. Augustine exemplified this by saying that all humans commit concupiscence (a desire to turn from human to God) and this can be seen in the example of a newly born twin who pushed its sibling off its mother's breast in order to secure the lion's share of milk. Until that time, Augustine had thought that sin was a learned attitude which developed as one got older. This altered his view.
- Some will say that this theodicy justifies 'innocent' suffering as through his inheritance of guilt doctrine, no one is innocent. However, Rowe and Paul would argue that innocent and animal sufferings are not justified. Animals do not inherit Adam's sin so why do they suffer?

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

2. (a) **Outline the problem of evil with reference to Epicurus and Mackie.**
[AO1 25]

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

- Epicurus presents the logical problem of evil, in its classical form, often referred to as a paradox. He states that 'Either God wants to abolish evil, and cannot; or he can, but does not want to. If he wants to, but cannot, he is impotent. If he can, but does not want to, he is wicked. If God can abolish evil, and God really wants to do it, why is there evil in the world?'
- Candidates may exemplify their explanation by referring to the types of evil. If the universe was created ex nihilo by a God with the attributes of the God of classical theism (all-powerful, all-loving and all-knowing) then how can the world be so dysfunctional in terms of natural evil? If God made all humans in his image, then why are there so many acts of moral evil?
- Epicurus presents a problem in terms of contradictions or compromises regarding the attributes of God, both of which jeopardise belief in the God of classical theism.
- With regard to Mackie, 'The Inconsistent Triad' suggests evil should not exist if God is all-loving and omnipotent. If God were all loving he would want to stop suffering. If he were omnipotent he would be able to. Evil clearly exists so all three statements cannot be held to be true simultaneously. The three statements held together would entail an inconsistency.
- His argument revolves around free will. Evil goes hand in hand with good. One cannot exist without the other. God cannot create the impossible. Evil is necessary to bring about goodness. Therefore, evil is necessary for free will. God did not create free humans who always chose what was right. That is illogical. Mackie therefore deals with the logical problem of evil.
- He noted 'the paradox of omnipotence' It is illogical to say that God is omnipotent yet there are things that God cannot do. Whichever way we look at it, God's omnipotence is compromised.
- Evil is a privation, as Augustine declared, a lack of something that should be there. It is the malfunctioning of something that in itself is good. Evil cannot exist in its own right. God created 'ex nihilo'. He cannot create corruption. If there was no evil, then there could be no choice.

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

(b) 'Epicurus' form of the problem of evil is not a problem.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- For those without a belief in God, there may well be no problem of evil. Yes, there is evil present in the world; that is undeniable. However, there is no 'problem' as such as there is no God to build into the equation, a God that one needs to justify the existence of. Indeed, perhaps for some members of Eastern religions there is no 'problem' as such as evil can be explained by the workings of karma.
- However, for theists it is clear that there is a problem if they want to maintain the characteristics of the God of classical theism.
- Some would claim that we can diminish the characteristics traditionally ascribed to God. We can say that God is not all loving yet is all powerful. This eliminates the problem as God does not want to stop the suffering.
- However, for many, this would be an unacceptable compromise as God must love and for many this would simply not be responding to the problem, rather it is just an easy way out.
- Others would suggest that God is not all powerful. God did not have the power to create ex nihilo and does not have the power to stop evil now. Again, for many, this would be unacceptable if they are unwilling to give up their belief that God did create out of nothing. Equally it could be argued that a God with limited power is no God at all.
- It could be argued that the fact that God does not stop evil does not present us with a problem because we do not know the intentions of God. Suffering may all be part of a grand plan and is a necessary part of life. God's view of things is unchanging unlike the views of humans which succumb to changing times. Or it could be said that God not stopping evil does not make him wicked, rather simply 'not bothered' much like people who do not donate to charity are not wicked just apathetic.
- Some would contest that evil does not exist thus the 'problem' disappears. Evil is just a name for the manifestations of some malfunction or could all be to do with perceptions. What one person calls evil may not be the same as what another person calls evil.
- But for many this is belittling the presence of evil which is a real and living presence in the lives of many, in an emotional and/or physical sense. To simply deny its existence is ludicrous and is dodging the problem.

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

Section B

3. (a) Examine Anselm's ontological argument. [AO1 25]

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

- The ontological argument is a deductive argument, that is, the process of reasoning from one or more statements to a logical conclusion. It is 'a priori' based on theoretical deduction rather than from observation or experience.
- The ontological argument can be found in Anselm's Proslogion and it is important to look at his definition of God from Chapter 2. This definition of God is of 'a being than which nothing greater can be conceived'. Anselm believed in God already and was trying to show how self-evident God's existence was to him. Indeed, for him, to accept the definition of God and then to deny God's existence would be absurd and self-contradictory.
- 'Existence' is a perfection that one can have or lack. It is a quality or attribute. It is clearly better or more perfect to have existence in reality than in mind alone. In order for God to be 'a being than which...' then God must have the perfection of existence in reality.
- Anselm referred to 'the fool' in Psalm 14 who denies the existence of God. The idea is that the very definition of God means something that must exist in reality and not only in mind. Even the fool accepts that God exists in the mind, if it is only to reject God. If God is the greatest imaginable then he must exist separately from people's imaginations. He must exist in reality. If he exists only as a concept then a greater being could be imagined. This builds on his earlier premise that existence in the mind and in reality is more perfect than existence purely in the mind. This other being would be greater than a God that exists only in the mind as this other being would also have the perfection of existing in reality. This cannot be the case though as Anselm has already established that God is 'a being than which.' The logically contradictory nature of thinking of something greater than God proves that God exists (Proslogion 2).
- Anselm argued that when he thought about God he realised the necessity of God's existence. Existence imposed itself on his thoughts and he realised the necessity of God's existence. It is not that his thoughts imposed existence on God. That is the first form of his ontological argument.
- Anselm's second form of the argument is found in Proslogion 3. This considers the notion of necessary existence.
- Weaker responses will focus mainly on God's necessary existence being greater than contingent existence. Stronger responses will examine Anselm's notion that God cannot even be thought to not exist.

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

(b) 'A *priori* arguments for God's existence are persuasive.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- The ontological argument as an 'a priori' argument appears to be persuasive. This is because the argument is presented in a logical, sequenced fashion with premises that lead us to an inescapable conclusion. Many would accept premises such as the definition of God given by Anselm. If the premises are correct then it is possible that the conclusion is also correct.
- However, 'a priori' arguments do rely on the premises being correct in order that a correct conclusion may follow. Also, even if the premises of an argument are correct then the conclusion may still be incorrect thus making 'a priori' arguments unpersuasive in proving God's existence.
- It could be argued though that 'a priori' arguments are 'pure' arguments in the sense that they do not rely on (subjective) evidence unlike 'a posteriori' arguments. Supposed evidence can be wrong due to misinterpretation. The persuasiveness of an 'a priori' argument rests on the notion that they can be deemed to be universally valid. Once a definition is established in an 'a priori' fashion then it cannot be rejected. For example, a bachelor is always an unmarried man.
- Contrary to this though, it could be argued that 'a priori' arguments are not persuasive due to the very fact that they are not based on evidence and experience. This would lead us to contend that 'a posteriori' arguments are far more persuasive. Today's world asks for empirical proof before accepting something as valid. 'A priori' arguments cannot give us this 'scientific' proof and they are therefore unreliable.
- Classical arguments for God's existence such as the cosmological and teleological arguments are both examples of 'a posteriori' arguments. They provide us with far more reliable grounds for proving God's existence than 'a priori' proofs do. They have stood the test of time and their inductive nature is persuasive.
- Some indeed say that 'a priori' proofs are nothing more than circular arguments which really present us with no new information and do not actually 'prove' anything.
- 'A priori' arguments rely on the understanding of the use of language such as definitions of words. This can be viewed in two ways. First, they can be deemed to be unpersuasive as they are merely play on words, pure semantics. However, on the other hand it could be argued that they are untainted by changing times and are therefore persuasive.

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

4. (a) **Examine William James' four characteristics of mystical experience.** [AO1 25]

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

- James' characteristics of mystical experience should be examined in detail and each characteristic should be given appropriate exemplification. Candidates could provide appropriate exemplification from the tradition of one or more world religions in their explanation. These need to be linked to the characteristics given by James as opposed to being self-contained exemplifications.
- Each of the four characteristics are described by James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, lectures 16 and 17.
- **Ineffability** – This means that the experience is one that is difficult to put into ordinary language. This shows that the experience must be a direct one. One person cannot pass the nature of this experience on to someone else. It defies words. He acknowledges that this does lay the mystic open to ridicule and disbelief. However, the fact that it cannot be described, does not, according to James detract from its value. James writes '*The subject of it immediately says that it defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be given in words. It follows from this that its quality must be directly experienced; it cannot be imparted or transferred to others.*'
- **Noetic Quality** – This means that the experience affords a deeper knowledge to the individual having the experience. Mystics will claim that deep insight has been given into truths that were previously hidden to them during their experience. James writes '*They are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for after-time.*'
- **Transiency** – This means that the experience itself does not last for a very long time or the person experiencing may not have any recollection of the time the experience lasted. James writes '*Mystical states cannot be sustained for long. Except in rare instances, half an hour, or at most an hour or two, seems to be the limit beyond which they fade into the light of common day.*' He does say though that the effects of the experience are not short-lived.
- **Passivity** – This means that the individual having the experience reports being completely 'taken over' where the experience happens to them; they have no control over it. This does not deny the active role a recipient may play in the stages up to the mystical experience. But once that experience begins they are taken over by a superior power. James writes '*Although the oncoming of mystical states may be facilitated by preliminary voluntary operations... when the characteristic sort of consciousness once has set in, the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power.*'

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

(b) 'James' four characteristics adequately define mystical experience.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- It could be argued that James' four characteristics are more than adequate as they integral characteristics to the majority of religious experiences. Any other characteristics given by other scholars are either peripheral to mystical experiences or simply present James' characteristic using different words.
- However, against this there are many aspects of the mystical experience which James' four characteristics do not refer to. Examples of these could be the kataphatic nature of some experiences where the mystic can make some claims about the experience. This adds to the ineffable nature as outlined by James. Stace's classification of introvertive and extrovertive could be claimed to be important characteristics also. Having only four characteristics severely restricts the nature of the mystical experience and is not all-encompassing enough. There are other examples that a candidate may discuss which would add to James' definitions.
- In a similar vein, James deals only with the characteristics of a mystical experience. Other important studies have identified the stages of mysticism which are lacking in James' work.
- It could be suggested that James' four characteristics should be used alongside those other features identified by other scholars. This would mean that James' work has a degree of adequacy but does need other things in order to complement and enhance his characteristics.
- It cannot be denied that James' work has been a major driving force in academic studies in this field. His findings are widely held and highly respected. That adds some weight to the adequacy of his four characteristics. However, the dynamic nature of scholarly research means that we cannot package something up from years ago and say that we will not allow new findings in.

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

5. (a) Explain St. Teresa of Avila's types and stages of prayer. [AO1 25]

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

- Candidates may place St. Teresa in the wider context of mysticism and may briefly describe mysticism in its own right. St. Teresa's accounts are classical examples of how prayer re-energises a person on their spiritual path.
- She deemed God's grace to be essential in order to assist a person to perform meaningful prayer. Her metaphors used aspects that people could relate to, making them easier to understand. She tracks the spiritual progress of a person from their first attempts at prayer, as a novice, through to those who through effort and God's grace have become more competent.
- St. Teresa referred to prayer using metaphors from gardening. One metaphor shows God as the one who roots out 'weeds' or obstacles from the soil and plants good plants instead. As a person's soul develops they can then practise prayer as obstacles have been removed. God's grace has facilitated a person's development towards Union with God through prayer.
- Another metaphor shows **four types** of prayer by referring to how a garden is watered. One method is to get water from a well. This does show the active nature of prayer at this stage but it is extremely hard work. This presents obstacles to the person praying. The second method is to use a water-wheel. This stage of prayer brings greater clarity. The third stage is when the water comes from a stream or a brook. This is Christ's input. The last stage is when the garden is watered by heavy rain. This requires no work from humans as God does it.
- In 'The Interior Castle' St. Teresa describes the soul as a diamond in the shape of a castle. She may have been influenced by Avila as a walled town and also by her Carmelite surroundings. This castle had seven mansions. She shows the progress of the soul through these seven dwelling places with the intensity increasing as this happens. These are the **stages or 'grades' of prayer**.
- The stages of prayer through from stage one to three do not give supreme union. They represent prayers which are useful and valid but there is so much more to come.
- The fourth mansion is The Prayer of Quiet. This begins the mystical stages. In this stage faculties are dormant. The fifth mansion is The Prayer of Union. God has touched the soul and this is assured and certain. The sixth mansion is spiritual marriage. This represents the longing for the divine as a person may long to spend all of their time with their spouse. The seventh mansion is mystical marriage. At this point, an individual has experienced ultimate unity with the divine. The mystic knows the divine.

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

- (b) **‘Religious experience has a major impact on religious belief and practice.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- It could be argued that religious experiences clearly change the beliefs and practices of the person who has the experience. There are many examples of individuals whose experience has really changed their life. This can be seen in a variety of types of religious experience. Candidates may refer to specific examples such as the Buddha’s Awakening, the Prophet Muhammad’s encounter where he received the words of the Quran, Wesley, C.S. Lewis to name but a few. Others may contend that the relationship is the other way around. That is, that it is a person’s beliefs and practices that induces a religious experience.
- Many religious experiences lead to a complete transformation in the person’s life and compel that person to action. Saul’s conversion experience for example covers both of these aspects and it is undoubtedly the case that it was the experience that prompted this.
- However, others may argue that it was not the experience that led to Paul’s change of heart. Rather, it was an inner battle that he had been fighting for some time and the change would have occurred anyway. In this sense, the experience did not play a major role in the change of belief and practice.
- It seems however that it was Peter’s vision of the sheet full of animals in Acts that led him to the conclusion that it was permissible for him to eat with Gentiles. Though some will level the same idea as for Paul’s conversion; that is, that he had been wrangling with the idea for some time and he would have come to the same conclusion anyway without any experience.
- It is also a question as to whether a religious experience has an impact on the beliefs and practices of anyone other than the person having the experience. This can be answered in both the negative and the affirmative. For some, the experience is entirely personal and is not extended at all to the beliefs and practices of another. However, others will argue that when people have believed the experience of another to be valid, that experience has altered the lives of other people too. Indeed, there are examples of communal religious experiences which have a major impact on the beliefs and practices of many people.
- William James as a pragmatist would look to the ‘fruits’ of the religious experience. His view is that such experiences do positively impact upon a person’s life and the effects can be seen in a change in their behaviour. However, it could be suggested that a change in a person’s beliefs and practices cannot be proved to be as a direct result of their religious experience. Such a change could be explained on psychological grounds, for example.
- The question of ‘so what?’ could also be raised. In other words, just because a religious experience has had an impact on beliefs and practices, this means nothing in relation to whether there is a God or not. Experiences do not prove that God is real. Contrary to this though, others would argue that such experiences are good pieces of evidence for God’s existence. It could be said that it does not matter whether it proves God’s existence. The religious experience is real to the person experiencing it and this is all that matters.

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