

CONFERENCE VERSION



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

AUTUMN 2020

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

B120U20-1

INTRODUCTION

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 | 21-25 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. • 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 | 16-20 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. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. |
| 3 | 11-15 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. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. |
| 2 | 6-10 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. • 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 | 1-5 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. • 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 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

1. (a) Explain the different ways in which William James and Rudolf Otto define mystical experience. [AO1 25]

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

- The transcendent, unitive and ecstatic aspects of a mystical experience may be referred to.
- Candidates should be able to 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 either James or Otto as opposed to being self-contained exemplifications.
- James' characteristics of mystical experience should be examined in detail and each characteristic should be given appropriate exemplification. Ineffable- the experience is one that is difficult to put into ordinary language. Noetic- in the experience a deeper knowledge is afforded to the individual having the experience. Transient- 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. Passive- the individual having the experience reports being completely 'taken over' where the experience happens to them; they have no control over it.
- However, Otto's views on religious experience involves the concept of the 'numinous.' In his view this underlies all religion. The meaning of numinous is "denoting or relating to a numen" and it describes the power or presence or realisation of a divinity.
- Numinous, says Otto has three components. These are often designated with a Latin phrase: *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. As *mysterium*, the numinous is "wholly other" entirely different from anything we experience in ordinary life. It evokes a reaction of silence. But the numinous is also a *mysterium tremendum*. It provokes terror because it presents itself as overwhelming power. Finally, the numinous presents itself as *fascinans*, as merciful and gracious.
- Otto believes that religious experience is something which all humans are predisposed to.

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

(b) 'Otto's definition of 'numinous' is inadequate.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- One line of argument could be that by separating religious experience from ordinary experiences, Otto is making an artificial, unnecessary and unhelpful distinction between experiences. By making religious experiences 'other' Otto can be accused of allowing religious experience to be open to attack from empiricism.
- However, in contrast to this, it could be argued that he is right to separate religious from ordinary experience. Religious experience *is* of a different nature than other experiences and his definition is correct in showing this, thus making it adequate.
- Some would claim though that Otto's definition of the 'numinous' rests on too many assumptions to be adequate. Otto states that the numinous experience is an integral part of all religions worthy of that name. However, there are many who would claim that they have not had such a personal experience with the divine or the spiritual. For them, the 'numinous' may well not be the definition that they would use and it would not be an adequate description for them.
- Following on from this then, it may be that 'numinous' is a definition which is restricted to the individual, describing only a very individual and personal experience and cannot be used more widely than that.
- Indeed, it may be added that Otto has been accused of his definition being rather vague and non-specific. This would lead to the problem that when a person thinks that God is at the core of an experience, that person cannot be sure that it is God.
- A counter to this would be that many would use the experience as a 'self-guaranteeing principle of certainty.' There may be something within the experience that allows the individual to argue 'I just know that it was God'.
- Otto does raise and enhance the role of 'feeling' within religious experience. There are numerous examples that could be cited from claimed religious experiences where the 'feeling' was of paramount importance. However, it is also true to say that some would say this makes the experience far too reductionist, where religious experience is comprised of far more than 'feeling' alone.
- Some would be far from content to describe God as simply 'wholly other'. This is because it may seem rather 'woolly' and vague providing no substance to what God actually is. 'Wholly other' may seem too distant to fit with the beliefs of some religious believers. However for others this description of the divine does retain God's majesty.

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

2. (a) Outline different challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience. [AO1 25]

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

- Due to the nature of certain types of religious experience, it may be said that the criteria for truth is almost impossible to establish. This is because some experiences are deemed to be subjective and therefore not without dispute with regard to their credibility.
- The work of the Vienna Circle and Logical Positivism said that for a statement to be meaningful (capable of passing on information) it must either be analytic or synthetic. Many religious experiences are claimed in language that falls into neither of these categories, so they are meaningless. Ayer said that at best they would be 'emotive utterances.'
- On the falsification side, Popper and Flew said that the only meaningful statements are those that are capable of being falsified. Flew said that religious believers refuse to have their statements falsified (in this case, claims of religious experience) making such language meaningless, subjective, lacking in authenticity.
- Caroline Franks Davis outlined three challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience that are usually presented by scholars. (1) Description-related. There is no proof that the claim that 'God' or 'the Divine' has been experienced. The description is therefore to be refuted. Authenticity and objectivity should be granted to that which conforms to everyday experience. Religious experiences do not conform to everyday experiences. (2) Subject-related. The subject is the person who receives the claimed experience. S/he is considered unreliable. They may suffer from episodes of hallucinations or from mental illness (described further under 'naturalistic explanations.'). As they are in a fragile mental state, they have been mistaken and misguided. (3) Object-related. This relates to the object that the person claims to have experienced. The likelihood that the object described has indeed been experienced, is as unlikely as the most unlikely object we can imagine has been experienced. If someone claimed to have experienced something preposterous, we would be unlikely to believe her or him. This should also be the case with a religious experience.
- There are other challenges to religious experience that come from the study of nature and human life. Religious experiences are not open to rational enquiry. This is something that has always been called upon in order for an experience to be considered objective, with the ability for it to be deemed as authentic. There are other explanations as to what is being experienced.
- Freud said that mystical experiences are the manifestations of the repression of sexual urges. The desire for a mystical experience is simply the desire of humans to return to the safety of the womb, a regression, which clearly is not the manifestation of a religious experience.
- Others say that the characteristics of a religious experience can be seen replicated in people who take drugs or use alcohol. Such experiences are simply hallucinations rather than an objective experience.

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

- (b) **‘Caroline Franks-Davis’ challenges to religious experience are not persuasive.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Caroline Franks-Davis outlined three typical challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience that are usually presented by scholars.
- The first, entitled ‘Description-related challenges’ was that there is no proof that can be offered to verify the claim and the event has simply been misunderstood.
- This can be persuasive in the sense that we could all cite examples of cases of mistaken identity and also suggest that we should only believe in that which has a large amount of evidence to back it up. However, Swinburne’s Principle of Credulity could also be used, that is that what we believe to be the case, generally is the case. Coupled with this, which resonates with the views of Otto, is that religious experience *is different* to other experiences and so should be inconsistent with other experiences.
- The second challenge is ‘Subject-related challenges’. This is akin to Hume’s challenges to miracles which casts doubt on the recipient. Others suggests that the person claiming a religious experience is delusional, possibly having been deceived by substance misuse. This person is not to be believed.
- Again it could be reasonably argued that those suffering from delusions in some areas of life could also suffer them in instances where they claim a religious experience. However, where is the evidence for this? Equally just because a person has had some delusional episodes does not mean that their whole life is comprised of delusional episodes. Similarly, Swinburne’s Principle of Testimony could be used, that is that people generally tell the truth.
- The third set of challenges are ‘Object-related challenges’. Here religious experience is categorised alongside all of the most unlikely events that could be imagined. If such incredulous claims are made in everyday life, this objection gives cause to reject them. Similarly claims to have experienced God should also be rejected.
- It is certainly true that fantastical claims do seem to make it difficult to believe them particularly when we have not witnessed them our self. Often the simplest explanation is the best and so we may reject ‘odd’ claims. However, on occasion the incredulous may be true. Just because something seems unlikely does not thereby eliminate the possibility of it happening. Indeed, the idea that religious experiences are unlikely is natural, because by their very nature, they are.

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

Section B

3. (a) Explain how the views of David Hume challenge teleological arguments. [AO1 25]

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

- Hume's empirical objections such as his critique of linking cause and effect raises issues. We may do this because of habit or laziness whereas in actual fact we cannot say that an effect (universe) has been caused (by God.) Similarly, like causes do not mean like effects, so even if the watch and the world were similar, it does not mean that they both had similar causes. We cannot go from part to whole. It is an inductive leap to say that things in the universe have a designer to concluding that the universe has a designer. This commits the fallacy of composition.
- He also said that as the analogy between the universe and the watch is weak, thus challenging the entire argument. He comments that the universe is really nothing like a mechanical object. Even if we did accept that analogy then that would lead to some rather unsavoury conclusions particularly with reference to the nature of God. Also, there are better analogies. He said the universe has greater similarity to a vegetable than to a mechanical object, something that grows of its own accord, not needing a designer.
- He commented, in his Epicurean hypothesis that the universe was bound to have an appearance of design, even though it 'just is.' This is because the universe over time produced itself to be as it is out of the 'spring of order.'
- He accepted that we may end up with a designer but this designer is certainly not necessarily the God of classical theism. It is more likely that there may have been a team of gods, just as many contribute to the design of a watch. For Hume, this would suggest that polytheism is more reasonable than monotheism. Alternatively we may end up with an old god or an absent god, who has left its design or considering the disorder in the world, a young apprentice god who produced 'the first rude essay of an infant deity.'
- Also, we infer that a house or a ship has builders as we can infer this from past experience. However we have no experience of universes being made so we cannot comment on the design of this one.

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

(b) 'Inductive 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.

- Candidates may make reference to the cosmological and/or teleological arguments for God's existence as examples of inductive arguments. However it should be noted that the answer should not be confined to an evaluation of these arguments for God's existence.
- A particularly persuasive aspect of inductive arguments could be that they do allow for the possibility or even probability of an answer, including leading to the possibility of God's existence. Many would argue that this is better than there being no chance at all!
- However, others may argue that the fact that inductive arguments are not 100% undeniable proofs then they are unpersuasive as a method of argument.
- Inductive arguments rely on experience which is universal and testable. For example, it is evident that 'all mechanical objects' have a designer. This empirical approach can enhance the credibility of an argument, including an argument for God's existence based upon inductive arguments.
- The arguments are flexible and can in fact support a number of conclusions which appeals to many. However, the lack of a definitive conclusion can also be seen as a major drawback of inductive arguments. It is more than possible to accept all of the premises that an inductive argument is based upon but then to reject the conclusion. This makes it a very shaky method to use when attempting to prove God's existence.
- Having said that, the fact that the premises can in fact support a conclusion shows that the overall structure of inductive arguments is a rational one. If one can accept the premises then one may be justified in accepting the conclusion also.
- The fact that inductive arguments can allow for the chance of error can also be seen as a persuasive aspect of them. Lines of reasoning can be changed to account for different findings.
- Swinburne pointed out that whilst inductive arguments may have weaknesses individually, when considered collectively they gather cumulative force for persuasion.

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

4. (a) Examine challenges to ontological arguments.

[AO1 25]

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

- The Ontological Argument is an 'a priori' argument and attempts to prove God's existence by using the meaning of the word 'God'. It is deductive (conclusion follows from the premises) and analytic because the truth or falsity of the argument is determined by the meaning of the words used. One challenge is that the nature of such arguments is that they fail. The argument has been accused of using circular logic. One may well accept the premises but then the conclusion may not necessarily follow.
- This is coupled by the fact that the argument's success relies on the acceptance of the definition of the word 'God'. Critics argue that there is no clear agreement on what the word 'God' means or the definition, as given by various proponents of the ontological argument, could simply be wrong.
- A further challenge concerns the idea of the 'greatest or most perfect being.' Are such terms meaningful and does 'most loving' have a maximum? This aspect of the ontological argument has been severely challenged by numerous scholars.
- Gaunilo's challenges centre on the view that replacing the word 'God' with 'greatest island' produces true premises, but a false conclusion. The greatest island must possess all perfections, including existence according to St. Anselm's logic. But as Gaunilo pointed out this certainly does not mean that such an island exists in reality. We can always think of a bigger or better island, but such an island cannot have an 'intrinsic maximum.'
- As some have also pointed out, against St. Anselm, there are some things that are actually better in the mind than in reality. Our minds can conjure up fantastic ideas which, if they materialise, may not be anywhere near as great as they were when conceived in the mind.
- Kant argues that existence is not a real predicate because it does not tell us what an object is like. The rejection of 'existence' as a predicate is a very popular challenge to the ontological argument.
- Moreover, the word 'exist' merely states that a concept has an actuality. It does not actually add anything to the concept. The real contains no more than the merely possible. Kant used the example of 100 really thalers/100 real thalers existing. They contain no more thalers than the merely possible.
- He challenges the view that God is a necessary or 'first order' predicate as it only uses concepts and not realities. He claimed that God cannot be argued into existence and therefore, existence cannot be a predicate. Thus, if you have a triangle, then you must have three angles, but if you do not have a triangle, then you do not have three angles. One can reject the triangle along with its properties. So too one can reject God along with God's properties.

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

(b) 'Ontological arguments are successful in proving God's existence.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- The ontological argument is regarded as effective because it is an 'a priori' argument and a deductive proof with a logically inescapable conclusion. It presents a logically necessary conclusion once the premises are shown to follow on successively in a coherent fashion. This is attractive to believers of theistic religions, because for them the existence of God is self-evident. This is a better line of argumentation than inductive, a posteriori proofs which only lead to a possible conclusion.
- Modern versions of the argument are still in evidence showing the reasonableness of the ontological argument. Candidates may refer to Malcolm's argument citing effective aspects of his work. This may include his definition of God which can be accepted, 'unlimited being' and his reference to God's existence as being 'necessary'.
- However, there is a powerful and obvious conclusion that you cannot define something into existence. Those who disregard it cite the effectiveness of counter-claims e.g. Gaunilo's 'greatest island' or Kant's use of examples such as thalers, mountain and valley and a triangle.
- St. Anselm and Plantinga however would argue against Gaunilo suggesting that the argument applies only to God and not to material things such as an island. Anselm's response was that God is unique and has necessary existence. Clearly this does not apply to an island. The consolidation of the argument by Descartes may also be referred to as an effective development of the argument.
- The argument does seem to be logical in its assertion that we cannot explain the concept of God properly without coming to the conclusion that he exists. That is, if one understands the definition of God then it will be an obvious deduction that God does indeed possess the property of existence. To deny this would be tantamount to foolishness.
- In addition, the premises of the ontological argument may not be true as they stem from medieval times and do not take account of modern science. If one rejects the premises of the argument then the conclusion arrived at will also be false.
- Candidates may also discuss the nature of proof as ambiguous or may consider alternative strengths of indicative arguments as an indication that ontological arguments cannot be considered as successful.

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

5. (a) **Examine the Kalam cosmological argument for God's existence.**
[AO1 25]

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

- The Kalam cosmological argument is a 'first cause' argument. The argument has a long history but has seen resurgence in the work of William Lane Craig, who also uses this argument in his rebuttal of the challenge from New Atheism. Originally moving within Islamic circles this argument is now used within Christianity.
- Craig makes the logical point that there is a cause for every effect, for everything that exists. He goes on to state that the universe has a start. In order to consolidate this claim, Craig noted the difference between actual and potential infinity. This was necessary to do in order to challenge the claim that the universe is infinite. An actual infinite has no beginning or end. It cannot be added to nor can anything be taken away from it; it is actually infinite. Craig claims that the universe cannot be actually infinite. He shows that this idea is completely illogical.
- Candidates may refer to an actually infinite supply of chocolate. If some chocolate is eaten then there is still an actually infinite amount of chocolate. This makes no sense. Equally, a popular example would be to use an actually infinite library. There are various particular ramifications of this. For example, if a book is borrowed from an actually infinite library, then there are still an actually infinite number of books at the library. This makes no sense. This simply does not correspond to our world.
- Craig did recognise the mathematical concept of potential infinity and accepted that this does exist. It is always possible for us to add to a number for example. This does correspond to the reality of our world. Craig believes that this notion of potential infinity illustrates that the universe in fact did have a beginning.
- However, so far this first part of Craig's argument proves nothing about the existence of God. Hence he proceeded to form a further part to his argument. It could be suggested that the beginning of the universe can be explained using scientific means, by referring to the laws of nature. He made the point 'If the cause were simply a mechanically operating set of necessary and sufficient conditions existing from eternity, then why would not the effect also exist from eternity?' In other words the cause of the universe has to be separate from the effect.
- This separate cause must be eternal as the effect is temporal. In order to bring about the beginning of the universe, this eternal cause had to choose to do so. This results in the universe being the personal choice of a personal Creator, God. This would now satisfy the need to show that a temporal universe cannot have been brought into existence by purely scientific means.

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

- (b) **‘Challenges to cosmological arguments for God’s existence are effective.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Cosmological arguments suffer various challenges. One is that cause and effect may not be linked. This makes an inductive jump which is not warranted. There is an effect (universe) but we cannot say definitively what the cause is, even whether there is a cause at all. It certainly cannot be claimed with any certainty that the cause is God. Also, as the cosmological argument is inductive, the conclusion may be possible, even probable but it is not definitive proof. Thus, it may be claimed that it is not as effective as *a priori* proofs.
- There may indeed be a plurality of causes thus the cosmological argument does not prove the God of classical theism.
- If everything needs a cause, then what is the cause of God? This shows a flaw in the logic of the cosmological argument. To suggest that God is not part of the link between cause and effect makes nonsense of the lines of argumentation.
- Aquinas would argue that God is a ‘special case’ and the arguments regarding causes do not apply to God. This would concur with the views of many believers, that is, that arguments concerning God are not of the same nature as other arguments about material things. This could be highlighted with reference to Gaunilo and Plantinga’s arguments.
- The universe could just be a brute fact, something that exists without the need of an explanation. This would be the view of Russell who states that the argument is only effective if we wish to ask the question about the origin of the universe in the first instance. Though it could be argued that simply avoiding the question is not a sound form of argument. This would be the view of Copleston who accused Russell of not sitting down at the chessboard in his desire to not get check-mated.
- Further, Kenny stated that there is no need for a first mover as things are capable of moving themselves. Indeed, it is scientifically true that things can continue to move after having been started to move, albeit that inertia sets in. However, it could still be argued that initial movement would not have started without a Prime Mover. Things can only achieve a different state via the intervention of a third party, the efficient cause.
- The Big Bang can account for the existence of the universe without the need for reference to God as the first cause. However, many would suggest that there must be a reason why the Big Bang occurred suggesting there is still a role for God.
- The cosmological argument is effective as it rejects the concept of infinity. The concept of infinity is indeed illogical as we cannot add to infinity. The present moment would not have arrived if infinity were true.

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