



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2016**

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 6

assessing

Religious Ethics: Foundations, Principles and Practice

[AR161]

THURSDAY 23 JUNE, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

Part 1: Levels of Response

The specification requires that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the learning outcomes and skills set out in the specification.

- 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.
- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument.

Each of the two assessment objectives has been categorised into five levels of performance relating to the respective abilities of the candidates. Having identified, for each assessment objective listed opposite, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

(AO1) Knowledge and Understanding

Band 5 ([29]–[35])

- a full response to the task.
- demonstrates a high level of accurate knowledge and comprehensive understanding
- uses a very good range of relevant evidence and examples
- a mature style of writing demonstrating a clear and coherent structure
- almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

Band 4 ([22]–[28])

- a reasonably full response to the task
- demonstrates a very good level of accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a good range of relevant evidence and examples
- a reasonably mature style of writing demonstrating a clear and coherent structure
- mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

Band 3 ([15]–[21])

- a good response to the task.
- demonstrates a good level of accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a range of relevant evidence and examples
- an appropriate and reasonably coherent style of writing
- reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- makes use of a range of technical language and terminology.

Band 2 ([8]–[14])

- a limited response to the task
- demonstrates little accurate knowledge and understanding
- uses a limited range of evidence and examples
- style of writing is just appropriate to the task and may lack coherence in places
- limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- evidence of some technical language and terminology.

Band 1 ([0]–[7])

- a very basic response to the task
- demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding
- very little use of evidence or examples
- style of writing is such that there is very little coherence or structure
- very poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- little or no use of technical language and terminology.

(AO2) Critical Line of Argument

Band 5 ([13]–[15])

- a full and coherent response.
- demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis.
- very good reference to other points of view.
- highly accurate and fluent.
- very good evidence of sustained and informed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a very wide range of technical language and terminology.

Band 4 ([10]–[12])

- a reasonably full response.
- demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis.
- good reference to other points of view.
- accurate and fluent.
- good evidence of sustained and reasoned argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a wide range of technical language and terminology.

Band 3 ([7]–[9])

- a reasonable response.
- demonstrating some attempt at critical analysis.
- some reference to other points of view.
- reasonably accurate and fluent.
- some evidence of sustained argument, which is set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience.
- reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- makes use of a range of technical language and terminology.

Band 2 ([4]–[6])

- a limited response.
- demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis, although references to other points of view are limited.
- some inaccuracy in places.
- a limited argument which struggles to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience.
- limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- evidence of some technical language and terminology.

Band 1 ([0]–[3])

- a simplistic response.
- demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis.
- practically no reference to other points of view.
- minimal argument which fails to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience.
- very poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- little or no use of technical language and terminology.

Quality of Written Communication

All questions require candidates to answer in continuous prose in English. Quality of written communication is incorporated within the assessment objectives and reflected in the above assessment bands. Assistant examiners are instructed to take this criterion into account when allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Part 2: Contextual Reference Points

The generic level of response mark scheme set out above is elucidated in this part of the mark scheme through the provision of contextual reference points in terms of the content appropriate to the particular question under consideration.

Section A

Answer **one** question.

- 1 (a)** An explanation of the religious and ethical arguments used to support the case for assisted conception may include, e.g.
- the blight of infertility, all illness to be treated like other ailments
 - the biblical injunction (Genesis 1:28)
 - how the role of science in human reproduction could help fulfill the biblical injunction
 - how the gift of children can lead to the completion of marriage
 - love and compassion for the childless
 - the role of personal choice and reproductive freedom
 - how assisted conception need not undermine sex, marriage and family
 - the influence of Situation Ethics and its advocacy of the primacy of love
 - the influence of Proportionalism
 - the Utilitarian perspective, the utility principle
 - how the end can justify the means
 - the contextual nature of morality
 - how for some a child is a right
 - homosexual couples and their right to a child
 - reference to various Christian denomination views
- [35]
- (b)** An exploration of the view may include, e.g.
- the pace at which reproductive technology is developing, e.g. ICSI, PGD, Three Parent Embryos
 - the difficulties that reproductive ethics has in keeping abreast of developments
 - how such developments appear to be in the long term interest of humankind, e.g. preventing incurable genetic disorders
 - the role of the HFEA, how such developments are regulated by law
 - the need to curb excesses and to impose limits to guard against consumerist type developments
 - how secular groups such as Human Genetics Alert are concerned, e.g. have spoken out against Three Parent Embryos arguing that it crosses a line and could lead to the risk of a 'consumer eugenic market'
 - issues surrounding the moral status of the embryo
 - issues pertaining to personhood
 - the principle of the Sacredness of Human Life
 - implications for sex, marriage, family and society
 - the influence of Utilitarianism
 - the Natural Law perspective
 - how the end does not justify the means
- [15]

AVAILABLE MARKS
50

2 (a) An examination of the moral difficulties faced by Christians in confronting suicide may include, e.g.

- suicide as contravening Biblical and Natural Law
- teaching on the Sanctity of Human Life; God as the author of life
- the body as the “temple of the Holy Spirit”
- the importance of the “Thou shall not kill” Commandment
- suicide as a mortal sin
- reference to the views of Aquinas and Augustine
- the call to suspend moral judgement
- the call to respond with love and forgiveness
- understanding the pervading “culture of death”
- counteracting moral nihilism
- assistance in suicide as a charitable and compassionate act
- acceptance of altruistic suicide
- the Natural Law perspective
- the influence of Situation Ethics
- possible reference to historical attitudes, e.g. corpse not buried in consecrated ground, staked at crossroads
- the nature and purpose of human suffering
- contrast between the past where suicide was seen as a moral issue and today where it is viewed in light of the impact of psychology [35]

(b) An exploration of the view may include, e.g.

- the act of suicide as failure to confront problems in life
- suicide as surrender to the absurdity of life (the Existentialist view)
- suicide as a tragic moral choice
- suicide as an escape from personal illness, from depression
- suicide as a conscientious choice
- suicide as a courageous and selfless act
- suicide as a dignified exit from this life
- the sovereignty of the individual
- individual autonomy, the principle of ownership
- assertion of absolute rights over oneself
- freedom to live, freedom to die
- views of writers, e.g. David Hume, John Stuart Mill, Peter Singer (all take a liberal position on suicide)
- the Christian call to understand the reasons behind suicide, to suspend moral judgement and to affirm the value of life
- rights and responsibilities; consideration of the effects on others
- how various cultures could see suicide [15]

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

50

Section B

Answer **one** question.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 3 (a)** An explanation as to how Natural Law represents a deontological approach to morality may include, e.g.
- explanation of the term deontological
 - how Natural Law represents a duty based approach to moral decision making
 - interest in the moral action itself, how the act is either intrinsically right or wrong
 - the religious underpinning, how there is an ultimate purpose to existence
 - origins in Greek philosophy with Aristotle, developed by Aquinas
 - the importance of the place of human reason
 - distinction between efficient and final cause
 - distinction between real and apparent goods
 - distinction between interior and exterior acts
 - primary and secondary precepts
 - its profile in Roman Catholic moral teaching
 - reference to specific moral dilemmas to illustrate how Natural Law is deontological in character, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, contraception
 - reference to the doctrine of Double Effect [35]
- (b)** An exploration of the claim in relation to other aspects of human experience may include, e.g.
- an open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples
 - the influence of post-Modernism and the notion of moral uncertainty, how morality is essentially seen to be relativistic in character
 - how Virtue Ethics and Narrative Ethics are seen to typify relativistic approaches
 - the challenges presented by ethical relativism, e.g. no fixed moral yardsticks
 - how moral absolutism can be seen as legalistic and inflexible
 - how moral dilemmas can be complex and 'absolutes' may not be helpful
 - the value of moral absolutes as creating certainty
 - the dangers presented by moral nihilism
 - how Natural Moral Law need not necessarily be inflexible as evident in the strand of Proportionalism
 - neo-Thomist revival, e.g. John Finnis, Alasdair McIntyre
 - how for some, human reason has been ultimately tainted by 'the Fall' [15]

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- 4 (a) An explanation of the religious and moral issues in a Christian understanding of marriage may include, e.g.
- the biblical view of marriage as ordained by God
 - the traditional view of marriage as a heterosexual union
 - marriage as a covenant of love, the importance of the vows
 - marriage as having unitive and procreative elements
 - marriage as exclusive, the permanence of marriage
 - the view of marriage as a sacrament
 - marriage as a means of grace
 - reference to relevant biblical teaching, e.g. Genesis, Song of Songs, Hosea, Jesus, Paul
 - Natural Law and marriage
 - possible reference to issues relevant to marriage – adultery, divorce, children, contraception
 - Christians and the issue of same-sex marriage
 - the influence of Situation Ethics
 - liberal Christian views against traditional Christian views [35]
- (b) An exploration of the view in relation to other aspects of human experience may include, e.g.
- an open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples
 - cohabitation as not morally, religiously and legally equivalent to marriage
 - how marriage can create a more radically different and solid relationship
 - the importance of explicit, publicly witnessed declarations of lifelong love and commitment for enabling marriage to flourish
 - how the social recognition and support provided by sacramental and/or legal marriage strengthens the relationship
 - evidence that points to couples cohabiting prior to marriage having a higher risk of breakdown
 - marriage being seen as increasingly less important in a secular age
 - negative experience of marriage
 - marriage as a human institution, a human fabrication
 - cohabitation as a form of ‘trial marriage’
 - cohabitation as more attractive financially and practically
 - how cohabitation can also have commitment, fidelity and love just as marriage can sometimes lack all of these
 - how the marriage ceremony can on occasions be meaningless
 - marriage as a much cherished and popular institution
 - how some feminists view marriage as a form of slavery [15]
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| | Section B | 50 | |
| | Total | 100 | |

AVAILABLE
MARKS

50

50

100