



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED**  
**General Certificate of Education**  
**2017**

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**Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit A2 7**

*assessing*

**Religious Belief and Competing Claims**

**[AR271]**

**TUESDAY 27 JUNE, MORNING**

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**MARK**  
**SCHEME**

## GCE Religious Studies

### A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)

#### 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.

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.

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

In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

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.

There are separate levels of response for Section A and Section B of the A2 paper.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full and highly informed response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A very high degree of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A very sophisticated style of writing set within a clear and coherent structure.</li> <li>• An extensive range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• An almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable and well informed response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A very good range of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A mature style of writing set within a mainly clear and coherent structure.</li> <li>• A wide range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• A mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge.</li> <li>• A good range of relevant evidence and examples.</li> <li>• A reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• A basic range of evidence and/or examples.</li> <li>• Style of writing is just appropriate.</li> <li>• Structure is disorganised in places.</li> <li>• Limited range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very basic response to the task.</li> <li>• Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples.</li> <li>• Inappropriate style of writing within a poor structure.</li> <li>• A very basic range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Very poor use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis, supported by a high awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Very good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a highly developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• An extensive range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• An almost totally faultless use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis, supported by a good awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Good personal insight and independent thought expressed through a developed argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• A wide range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• A mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis, supported by an awareness of the views of some scholars.</li> <li>• Some personal insight and independent thought expressed through reasonable argument which is set, where necessary, in the context of wider aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis, with limited awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Limited personal insight and independent thought expressed through some argument.</li> <li>• A good range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis, with minimal awareness of scholarly views.</li> <li>• Poor personal insight and/or independent thought.</li> <li>• Shallow argument.</li> <li>• Limited range of technical language and terminology.</li> <li>• Limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- 1 (a) A discussion of Freud's critique of religion, with particular reference to the stated claim, may include, e.g.:
- Possible reference to Freud's ideas concerning the human psyche
  - An exploration of Freud's critique of religion as a form of wish-fulfilment, delusion, a universal neurosis
  - A discussion of Freud's views concerning the origins and development of religion
  - An exploration of the sociological and psychological functions of religion
  - An outlining of Freud's views concerning the Oedipus Complex and allied Primal Horde theory and the importance of religion in this
  - Religion as once necessary to restrain violent impulses in us all, but can now be set aside in favour of reason and science.
  - An analysis of Freud's view of God as an infantile need for a powerful father figure, alpha male and totem
  - Reference to Freud's writings concerning Christianity's sacrificial Messiah and Catholicism's sacrament of the Eucharist
  - Reference to relevant details of Freud's life and career, his work with neurotic patients
  - Reference to selected writings – 'Totem and Taboo', 'Civilisation and its Discontents', 'Moses and Monotheism' [30]

- (b) A critical assessment of the claim that Freud's analysis of religion is of little relevance today may include, e.g.:
- Challenges to the validity of Freud's research and findings concerning religion
  - Scientific challenges to the Oedipus Complex and the Primal Horde theories
  - Challenges to the notion of religion as reliant upon exclusively male deities
  - Reference to Jung's rejection of Freud's findings and his counter assertion that religion psychologically benefits humanity
  - Humanism's assertion that belief in God is psychologically damaging
  - An exploration of Neo-Darwinists' belief in God as a delusion and religion as a form of wish-fulfilment
  - An exploration of the continued relevancy of Freud's analysis of the origins of religion and his exploration of the sociological impact of religion
  - The positive contribution of Freud in helping to understand immature aspects of religion
  - The view that psychology has moved on and has now a firmer scientific basis. Thus Freud's ideas are no longer held in the position of esteem and respect that they once were. [20]

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2 (a) An analysis and discussion of the main ideas of Existentialism concerning human freedom and the absurdity of life, may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of Existentialism's teaching concerning freedom, man as the maker and shaper of man
- A definition and exploration of the concept of absurdity as found within Existentialism
- Reference to the teachings of selected Existentialists such as Sartre, Camus and Kierkegaard concerning human freedom
- The centrality of individual human freedom as found within Existentialism
- Humanity as condemned to be free within a meaningless world
- An exploration of the terms angst (Kierkegaard), nausea (Sartre) and absurdity (Camus)
- Existentialist views concerning humanity's response to the Absurd: revolt/rebellion, authentic choice and/or leap of faith
- An exploration of selected writings such as *Nausea*, *The Plague*, *The Outsider* and *The Fall* concerning the themes of freedom and the meaninglessness of human existence
- Reference to the concepts such as facticity, leap of faith, existence and essence
- Reference to Existentialism's rejection of Hegelianism and moral norms
- An exploration of key Existentialist allied themes including subjectivity, individualism, freedom of choice and the meaninglessness of human existence [30]

(b) A critical assessment of the view that Christianity has nothing to learn from Existentialism may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of the incompatibility of the views of atheistic Existentialism and Christianity concerning belief in God, Nietzsche's declaration that 'God is dead'
- An exploration of Christianity as offering a valued and comprehensive world view needing no reference to rival philosophical systems
- Christianity as offering humanity salvation, fulfilment and eschatological hope
- Mention of Augustine, Pascal and Kierkegaard as devout Christians who had deep Existentialist leanings, therefore Existentialism and Christianity are quite compatible
- An exploration of the centrality of the Incarnation and the concept of God made man within Christianity
- Reference to the clash between the two ideologies regarding the supernatural, the nature of the universe and humanity, and the destiny of humanity
- An exploration as to whether Existentialism may in fact benefit from the teachings of Christianity regarding morality, hope and fulfilment
- Reference to the contribution of Kierkegaard, a Christian Existentialist and the views of Christian Existentialism
- An exploration of the ways in which Existentialism has influenced Christian catechetics/counselling
- Reference to the strengths of Existentialism: its concern for the freedom and dignity of the individual, the importance of challenging the absurdity of life, the need to engage with this life here and now
- Reference to the dominance of Existentialist themes witnessed within contemporary literature and the modern media [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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3 (a) An outlining and discussion of what is meant by religious inclusivism may include, e.g.:

- An analysis of the term 'religious inclusivism'
- Reference to key features of religious inclusivism, an assertion of the primacy of a single faith tradition while promoting tolerance and acceptance of other faiths
- An exploration of the Catholic, Presbyterian and Anglican churches' teachings concerning religious inclusivism and ecumenism
- An exploration of Buddhism's promotion of religious inclusivism
- An exploration of shared truths as found across a number of faith traditions
- Reference to specific initiatives promoting religious inclusivism – Ecumenical and Interfaith Forums
- Textual references to religious inclusivism as found within sacred texts such as the Bible, such as Acts 10:1–13 and 2 Peter 3:9
- Reference to the views of relevant scholarship concerning inclusivism, e.g. Hans Küng, John Hick, Paul Knitter, Karl Rahner or Gavin D'Costa
- Comparisons between religious inclusivism, exclusivism and/or pluralism
- Possible contrast with other views [30]

(b) A critical evaluation of the claim that religious belief is opposed to inclusivism may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of religious beliefs as being unique, distinctive and broadly exclusivist in nature
- Reference to the importance of/demand for exclusivism within named faith traditions
- Expression of views on some of the world's great religions
- Reference to relevant textual references demanding exclusivism as found within sacred texts
- Reference to some evangelical and/or fundamentalist Christian denominations who oppose any form of religious inclusivism regarding it as anti-biblical and possibly heretical
- Reference to fundamentalism's rejection of shared truths and shared paths to salvation
- Inclusivism as undermining unique religious truths and as unacceptable to selected faith traditions
- An exploration of the dangers of religious exclusivism as leading to religious extremism and sectarianism in comparison to the positivity of inclusivism
- References to historical exclusivism in Christianity; wars of religion in Europe, accusations and punishment for heresy. The belief that only one religion is an expression of the truth
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, inclusivism, as offering many benefits within society
- The benefits of interfaith dialogue and of interfaith and ecumenical councils/forums
- Reference to particular individuals who endorse inclusivism e.g. Dalai Lama
- An exploration of the importance of and need to promote religious tolerance and inclusivism in a pluralistic and multi-faith society [20]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

- 4 (a) An identification and consideration of the main features of **one** secular view of morality may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the main features of a named secular morality, such as Existentialist, Utilitarian, Humanist, Marxist
  - An exploration of the origins and sources of morality
  - Possible mention of the rejection of Divine morality in favour of consequentialist morality
  - An outline of selected teaching concerning moral rules and principles – Marxism’s ‘ten steps’, Utilitarianism’s ‘felicitus calculus’, Existentialism’s demand to choose for oneself
  - Atheistic morality as being altruistic demanding good action as an end in itself and/or for the benefit of society/future generations
  - An exploration of moral relativism and/or moral determinism
  - Reference to relevant texts, the Communist Manifesto, The Humanist Manifestos.
  - An exploration of the views of named scholars such as Bentham, Mills, Marx, Blackham
  - The centrality of human moral decision making over and above Divine Command
  - An exploration of the contribution of moral leadership, e.g. the Communist Party as vanguard of the workers
  - An exploration of the rejection of moral absolutism and the importance of teleological morality
  - Secular morality as befitting multiculturalism [30]
- (b) A critical evaluation of the view that moral relativism leads to many dangers may include, e.g.:
- Clarification of the term moral relativism, the concept that all ethical and moral choices are of equal weight and have equal value yet denying moral absolutism
  - An exploration of the risks of moral relativism, moral relativism as enabling all moral choices to be affirmed and justified
  - An outline of the distinction between cultural relativism, descriptive relativism and normative relativism
  - An exploration of the difficulty in judging morally relative values
  - An exploration of humanity’s need for moral absolutes and moral truths
  - The importance of and need for moral guidance, command and authoritative moral leadership
  - The risks of moral relativism leading to no fixed yardstick for morality
  - Reference to the views of relevant religious and academic scholars like David Hume, R.M. Hare, W.T. Stace and Pope Benedict XVI’s statements concerning moral relativism
  - The rejection of moral relativism and promotion of moral absolutism within selected faith traditions
  - The necessity of relativism when making moral choices with supporting examples
  - The promotion of moral relativism by secular schools of thought such as Humanism and Existentialism
  - Reference to the views of Situation Ethics, morality as dependent upon situation but with core principles in place such as the priority of love
  - An exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of absolutist and relativist morality [20]

Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

100

## **GCE Religious Studies**

### **A2 Mark Scheme (A2 1 – A2 8)**

#### **Synoptic Assessment**

##### **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, correct language and terminology appropriate to the course study. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A level candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connections between different elements of their course of study.
- Critically evaluate and justify a point of view through the use of evidence and reasoned argument. In addition, for synoptic assessment, A Level candidates should relate elements of their course of study to their broader context and to aspects of human experience.

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 overleaf, the band in which the candidate has performed, the examiner should then decide on the appropriate mark within the range for the band.

It is important that in the marking of the synoptic assessment unit, assistant examiners take account of the candidate's abilities in drawing together strands of knowledge and understanding from at least two different content areas.

Using the chosen theme, candidates will be expected to explore connections between elements of the selected areas of study. They should make appropriate use of the content as set out in the subject content for each module.

The five strands of knowledge and understanding act as a common and unifying structure for the specification. These are:

- the key concepts within the chosen areas of study, (e.g. religious beliefs, teachings, doctrines, principles, ideas and theories) and how these are expressed in texts, writings and/or practices
- the contribution of significant people, tradition or movements to the areas studied
- religious language and terminology
- major issues and questions arising from the chosen areas of study
- the relationship between the chosen areas of study and other specified aspects of human experience

In particular candidates should demonstrate the ability to relate such connections to other aspects of human experience.

**A2 BANDS****AO1 (30 marks)**

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full and comprehensive understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Well integrated response.</li> <li>• Clear and critical analysis.</li> <li>• Highly accurate use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Sophisticated style of writing. Very well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>25–30</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high degree of understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• A well integrated response.</li> <li>• Some very good critical analysis.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mature style of writing.</li> <li>• Well structured and coherent throughout.</li> </ul>	<b>19–24</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• For the most part an integrated response.</li> <li>• Reasonable degree of critical analysis.</li> <li>• A good degree of accurate evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Reasonably mature style of writing.</li> <li>• Some evidence of good structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>13–18</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Mere juxtaposition of the two areas of study, perhaps emphasising one content area at the expense of another.</li> <li>• A limited attempt at critical analysis.</li> <li>• Insufficient use of accurate evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Immature style of writing.</li> <li>• Lacking in structure and coherence.</li> </ul>	<b>7–12</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic understanding of the connections between the selected areas of study in relation to the theme.</li> <li>• Demonstrating only partially accurate knowledge of the different content areas studied.</li> <li>• Little attempt, if any, at critical analysis.</li> <li>• Inappropriate style of writing with a very basic structure.</li> </ul>	<b>0–6</b>

## AO2 (20 marks)

<p><b>Band 5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very effective comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Mature personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A very well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately and fluently with considerable sophistication using a wide range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>17–20</b>
<p><b>Band 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Good personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A well sustained and critical argument, expressed accurately, fluently and using a range of terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>13–16</b>
<p><b>Band 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reasonable analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Very good comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Some evidence of personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A line of argument, expressed accurately and using some relevant terminology.</li> </ul>	<b>9–12</b>
<p><b>Band 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Some comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Limited personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• Little evidence of critical argument.</li> <li>• Inaccuracies evident.</li> </ul>	<b>5–8</b>
<p><b>Band 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis of the statement in relation to connections made between the areas of study and other aspects of human experience.</li> <li>• Little, if any, comparison and evaluation of scholarly viewpoints.</li> <li>• Minimal personal insight and independent thought.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to follow a line of argument.</li> <li>• Imprecisely expressed.</li> </ul>	<b>0–4</b>

## Section B

- 5 (a) An exploration of the contribution of selected religious and philosophical thinkers to the theme of leadership with reference to at least two different areas of study, may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the contribution of named religious and philosophical thinkers from at least two areas of study
  - An exploration of the impact of the selected thinkers, on their followers and upon society as a whole
  - An exploration of how their theistic and/or atheistic views have impacted upon their thinkers
  - Reference to the legacy of the selected leaders, religious, sociological and/or political
  - An exploration of the importance and relevance of the message of the named thinkers
  - Reference to selected writings of the named thinkers
  - An exploration of the impact of the life and career of the thinkers chosen
  - An exploration of the vision and moral message of the thinkers selected
  - Reference to the type of leadership displayed – democratic, authoritarian, religious, atheistic
  - A critique of the contribution made by named thinkers, examples of weak and/or flawed leadership
  - An exploration of the dangers of tyranny, oppression and totalitarianism

[30]

- (b) A critical assessment of the view that above all else, society needs compassionate leadership may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of the term 'compassionate' within the context of leadership
- A discussion of the benefits of compassionate leadership, nationally and internationally
- Compassion as being a core ethical value found within multiple faith traditions and non-religious traditions
- An exploration of national examples which require a compassionate response, care for the vulnerable and disadvantaged, treatment of prisoners
- An exploration of international situations that require a compassionate response, e.g. the refugee crisis, response to war/civil war, retaliatory action/air strikes
- An exploration as to whether compassionate leadership is best exemplified by religious/servant leadership
- Reference to specific examples of historical and/or contemporary despotic and tyrannical leadership and a contrast
- An exploration as to whether compassionate leadership equates to weak leadership
- An exploration of humanity's demand for authoritative and strong leadership
- An exploration as to whether compassion must go hand in hand with truth and justice

[20]

Section B

Total

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

50

50

150