



ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
2017

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## Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 7

*assessing*

An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

[AR171]

WEDNESDAY 31 MAY, AFTERNOON

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**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 from Section A.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- 1 (a) An explanation of the Teleological Argument, with particular reference to the contribution of Paley, may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of Paley's teaching concerning the teleological argument, the analogies of the eye and the watch
  - A detailing of the teleological argument and Paley's contribution to this argument
  - An exploration of the argument to and from design
  - Reference to the writings of Paley in Natural Theology
  - Reference to the argument's origins in the work of Aquinas
  - An exploration of subsequent developments of the argument post Paley, for example, the anthropic principle, Brown's case concerning the ozone layer, the potential of scientific advances to support the teleological argument
  - An exploration of the term 'teleological'
  - An analysis of the strength of Paley's teachings, Paley's use of vivid analogies
- [35]
- (b) Commentary on the claim that it is unreasonable to deny the existence of God may include, e.g.:
- Reference to the writings of Anselm concerning 'the fool'
  - An exploration of Theism's support for such a claim, possible reference to the Psalms
  - Reference to the views of fundamentalist believers and/or to those of fideism
  - An exploration of Pascal's Wager and/or Ockham's Razor
  - An exploration of the benefits of belief in a deity, societal and individual
  - Reference to the varied and convincing nature of 'proofs' offered to support belief in God
  - Reference to the concepts of judgement, salvation, fulfilment and the afterlife
  - An exploration of the strengths of selected theistic 'proofs'
  - Reference to the widespread acceptance of belief in God
  - Atheism's vehement denial of such a claim, belief in God as primitive superstition
  - Possible reference to the views of Dawkins, Hitchens and other representatives of atheism
  - Belief in God as actively harmful and/or delusional
  - Reference to the continued existence of evil and suffering as supporting an atheistic stance
  - Reference to the importance of freedom of belief for all
  - Science as offering a comprehensive and reasonable account of the world without God
- [15]

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- 2 (a) An exploration of the views of materialism concerning life after death may include, e.g.:
- A definition of the term materialism and identification of types of materialism
  - An exploration of materialism's rejection of life after death and the reasons for such a rejection
  - The concept of life after death as illogical, a linguistic error or category mistake
  - An exploration of the views of selected materialists, such as Ryle, Flew, Marx and Dawkins
  - Reference to Ryle's philosophical behaviourism
  - An exploration of analogies used to challenge the views of dualism
  - An exploration of the problems associated with life after death, for example, the question of personal identity and memories
  - Materialists' rejection of dualism and the immortality of the soul
  - An exploration of re-creation theories as materialist in nature
  - An exploration of the view that there is no evidence to support the idea of an afterlife
  - A critique of materialism, the challenges of a dualist position
  - An exploration of the 'mind/brain' identity thesis [35]
- (b) An exploration of the view that there is strong evidence to support the idea of an afterlife may include, e.g.:
- Some assessment for what might constitute strong evidence
  - An exploration of the 'proofs' for an afterlife, past life recall, near death experiences, contact with the dead, spiritualism and alternative explanations of these 'proofs'
  - An exploration of the support for afterlife as found in sacred texts – the Qur'an, the Torah and the New Testament
  - Reference to the teachings of one or more faith traditions as asserting the reality of an afterlife
  - Reference to the views of selected dualists affirming the idea of an afterlife, e.g. Descartes, Pannenburg
  - Reference to the centrality of Jesus' resurrection to Christian faith and arguments concerning the validity of this event
  - Counterchallenges to the stated claim, e.g. Empiricism's rejection of all supernatural phenomena
  - Challenges to selected 'proofs' detailed earlier, as erroneous, the result of a delusion or hoax
  - The contrasting nature of teachings on/views of the afterlife as recorded in named faith traditions, suggesting these could cancel each other out
  - Reference to Hick's Replica Theory
  - An exploration of the view that there is no empirical evidence to support the idea of an afterlife [15]

Section A

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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## Section B

Answer **one** question from Section B.

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

**3 (a)** A description of mystical experiences, with reference to particular examples, may include, e.g.:

- A definition of the term 'mystical experience'
- Identification of various types of mystical experiences: – conversions, visions, dreams with relevant examples cited
- An analysis of selected mystical experiences, for example, Teresa of Avila's description of encounter with the Divine
- An exploration of the experiences of mystics studied, Teresa of Avila, Martin Buber and Thomas Merton
- Reference to mystical and religious experiences as recorded in sacred texts
- Reference to the writings of named mystics, Buber's 'I and Thou', Teresa of Avila's 'The Interior Castle', 'The Way of Perfection'
- An exploration of the ecstatic and/or erotic nature of selected mystical experiences
- An exploration of shared features of mystical experiences as identified by, for example, Otto and/or James
- An exploration of the distinction between general and special revelation

[35]

**(b)** An exploration of the claim that religious experience lacks both credibility and relevance, with reference to other aspects of human experience, may include, e.g.:

- A critique of religious experiences in general and of selected religious experiences in particular
- Religious experiences as the product of ignorance, delusion and/or dishonesty
- The irrelevance of religious experiences in a secularist and materialist age
- A critique of selected religious experiences such as Marian visions, divine voices
- Claimed religious experiences as evidence of human gullibility and religious predisposition to belief
- Atheism's rejection of an interventionist deity and thus all forms of religious experience
- Reference to the arbitrary and potentially contradictory nature of religious experiences
- Reference to the importance and centrality of Divine revelation within all faith traditions, such revelation being incontestable in those traditions
- Reference to biblical examples of religious experiences
- Reference to Creation as bearing the marks of a designer Creator, natural revelation as available to all
- The notion of religious experiences as going hand in hand with belief in a deity
- Reference to contemporary examples of religious experiences
- The inviolability of sacred texts for religious fundamentalists

[15]

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- 4 (a) An explanation of Christian teaching concerning the nature and purpose of miracles, with particular reference to the stated claim, may include, e.g.:
- A definition of the term 'miracle' and identification of types of miracles
  - An exploration of miracle classifications
  - Reference to Hume's definition of miracle as violations of the laws of nature
  - An exploration of the nature and purpose of miracles within Christian teaching with possible reference to specific examples
  - A discussion of miracles as 'signs' of the Kingdom of God, evidence of Divine intervention
  - The biblical view in conflict with modern views of nature
  - An exploration of the role of miracles as revealing an omnipotent, omniscient and benevolent God
  - Reference to the role of miracles in foreshadowing an eschatological age
  - An exploration of theological and christological significance of miracles
  - A discussion of the views of theistic scholars, e.g. Panneburg, Aquinas, Swinburne
  - An exploration as to whether or not all miracles violate laws of nature
  - An exploration as to whether or not laws of nature are indeed fixed
  - Reference to selected miracles as recorded in the Bible, notably the New Testament
  - An exploration of the centrality of Jesus' resurrection within Christianity
  - An exploration of the views of F. R. Tennant [35]
- (b) Commentary on the view that miraculous events will eventually be explained by science, with reference to other aspects of human experience, may include, e.g.:
- Atheism's rejection of all deities and thus all forms of divine intervention
  - An exploration of the views of selected atheists on this issue, e.g. Hitchens, Dawkins
  - An exploration of specific examples of scientific and technological advances that challenges theistic belief in miracles
  - An exploration of the rejection of miracles in a post-modernist, cynical and secularist age
  - An exploration of alternative explanations to miracles recorded in sacred texts, divine healings as the result of the placebo effect, miracles as coincidences
  - Miracles as unexplained events
  - Reference to the concept of the 'god-of-the-gaps'
  - Reference to theism's rejection of reliance on miracles to prove the Divine, Wiles' argument that miracles reveal at best a capricious and arbitrary deity
  - Challenges to the stated claim, theism's support for the continued existence of miracles
  - The failure of science to explain miraculous events
  - The continued importance of belief in miracles for theism
  - An exploration of selected miracles, places of pilgrimage and healing ceremonies
  - The therapeutic benefits of a belief in a benevolent deity and miracles
  - Science's failure to answer the question why there is something rather than nothing [15]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

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**Section B****50****Total****100**