



**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2018**

Religious Studies

Assessment Unit AS 8

assessing

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

[SRE81]

FRIDAY 1 JUNE, MORNING

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

The main purpose of a mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for **GCE Religious Studies**

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including:
 - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching;
 - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies;
 - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice; and
 - approaches to the study of religion and belief (AO1); and
- analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study (AO2).

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 17 or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Levels of response

In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

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

Other Aspects of Human Experience at AS Level

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, when required, to access Bands 3–5.

Synoptic Assessment at A2 Level

Candidates must refer to different units of study in their AO1 response to access Bands 4–5.

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience in their AO2 response to access Bands 3–5.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

- Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.
- Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.
- Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.
- Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.
- Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate makes only a basic selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material lacks clarity and coherence. There is little or no use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are basic and the intended meaning is not clear.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate makes a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is limited use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear.

Level 3 (Good): The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

Level 4 (Very Good): The candidate makes a very good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with clarity and coherence. There is very good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a very good standard to make meaning clear.

Level 5 (Excellent): The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

AS Bands

Total Marks: [25]

Band	AO1 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excellent response to the question asked Demonstrates comprehensive understanding and knowledge Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies A very high degree of relevant evidence and examples A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure An extensive range of technical language and vocabulary with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very good response to the question asked Demonstrates a high degree of understanding and almost totally accurate knowledge Demonstrates a high degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies A very good range of relevant evidence and examples A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good response to the question asked Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding and mainly accurate knowledge Demonstrates a reasonable degree of understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies A good range of relevant evidence and examples A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited response to the question asked Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding Demonstrates limited understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies A limited range of evidence and/or examples A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic response to the question asked Demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding Demonstrates minimal understanding of the influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies Little, if any, use of evidence and/or examples A basic answer with basic structure and coherence A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

AS Bands

Total Marks: [25]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive and coherent response demonstrating an excellent attempt at critical analysis An excellent attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked An excellent attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience An excellent attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought A sophisticated answer with a clear and coherent structure An extensive range of technical language and terminology with accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[21]–[25]
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A very good response demonstrating a very good attempt at critical analysis A very good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked A very good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience A very good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought A mature answer with a mainly clear and coherent structure A very good use of technical language and vocabulary with a mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[16]–[20]
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reasonable response demonstrating a good attempt at critical analysis A good attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked A good attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which are set, where necessary, in the context of other aspects of human experience A good attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought A reasonably mature answer with some evidence of structure and coherence A good use of technical language and vocabulary with a reasonably accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[11]–[15]
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited response demonstrating a modest attempt at critical analysis A limited attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked A limited attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which struggle to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience A limited attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought A limited answer with limited evidence of structure and coherence A limited use of technical language and vocabulary with a limited command of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[6]–[10]

Band	AO2 Performance Descriptors	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic response demonstrating little attempt at critical analysis • A basic attempt at the application of beliefs, values and teachings to the question asked • A basic attempt using evidence and reasoning to construct well informed and balanced arguments which fail to relate, where necessary, to other aspects of human experience • A basic attempt at providing personal insight and independent thought • A basic answer with basic structure and coherence • A basic use of technical language and vocabulary with a poor grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar 	[0]–[5]

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience, where necessary, to access Bands 3–5.

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKSAnswer **one** question from Section A.

- 1 (a) Examine the nature of the problem of evil and suffering for religious believers and explain one solution to the problem.

Answers may include:

- An exploration of the problem of evil for the theist
- An exploration of the Inconsistent Triad, the dilemma of the continued existence of suffering in the light of belief in an omnibenevolent and omnipotent deity
- An exploration of the characteristics of the God of Classical theism
- An exploration of the views of relevant scholars such as Epicurus, Hume, Augustine, Irenaeus
- An exploration of a selected theodicy – Irenaean, Augustinian, Monism, the Freewill Defence, Process Theodicy
- Reference to specific examples of moral evil and natural evil
- Reference to relevant Biblical passages such as the Creation, the Book of Job and/or the Fall Narratives.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) Comment on the claim that theism fails to offer a solution to this problem. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- An exploration of the theism's failure to satisfactorily resolve the Inconsistent Triad
- Atheism's critique of selected theodices
- Reference to the views of atheistic thinkers, e.g. Dawkins, Hitchens, Fry
- Reference to the writings of selected authors on the issue of innocent suffering such as Dostoyevsky and Camus
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, theism's response to the problem of evil including the use of sacred texts and subsequent theodices
- Reference to selected writings – the Fall Narrative, the Book of Job, Pauline teaching
- An evaluation of one or more selected theodices such as the Augustinian and Irenaean theodices and the Freewill Defence
- Reference to the views of selected scholars on the puzzle of evil and suffering such as Vardy, Hick, D.Z. Phillips, C.S. Lewis, Swinburne
- The failure of **both** theism and atheism to fully explain and resolve the problem of evil.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

- 2 (a)** “All miracles are simply coincidences”.
With particular reference to this claim, discuss the central criticisms that have been levelled against miracles.

Answers may include:

- A rejection of miracles as simply coincidences
- An exploration of relevance and importance of the diverse definitions of the term ‘miracle’, for example, as provided by Hume, Holland, Aquinas, Augustine
- Realist and Anti-Realist views
- An exploration of Holland’s train analogy
- An exploration of Hume’s critique of miracles
- Reference to the views of relevant modern scholars concerning miracles, Swinburne, Hick, Dawkins, Wiles
- Miracles as revealing an arbitrary God
- An exploration of theistic and atheistic concerns regarding the concept of miracle and reliance on miracle
- Reference to challenges to miracles notably claims of healing and resurrection
- An exploration of specific challenges to named miracles, visions and miraculous claims.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b)** Assess the claim that there are very good reasons for believing in the possibility of miracles. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Reference to the record of miracles as found in sacred texts such as the Bible, Torah or the Qur’an
- Theism’s support for and need to believe in continued Divine intervention
- Contemporary examples of cited miracles such as miraculous healings, visions and mystical experiences
- Reference to Swinburne’s argument for the acceptance of miracles
- Science’s inability to explain all miraculous phenomena
- Reference to the centrality of miracle within diverse religious faiths
- Reference to the importance of Jesus’ resurrection within Christianity
- Counterchallenges to the stated claim, reference to the concept of the ‘God-of-the-gaps’
- The growing challenge to the concept of any form of Divine intervention in a secular and cynical age
- Problems presented by miracles even for the faithful believer.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[25]

50

Section B

Answer **one** question from Section B.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 3 (a)** Examine the nature of the Ontological argument with particular reference to the contribution of Descartes.

Answers may include:

- An exploration of the distinctive nature of the Ontological argument, the key features and definition
- A classification of the argument as a Classical, inductive, analytical and 'a priori' proof
- An outlining of Descartes' Ontological argument, a Perfect Being as inevitably having existence and identifiable as the God of Classical theism
- An exploration of Descartes' Triangle Analogy
- Reference to the origins of the Ontological argument and Descartes' development of the argument
- An exploration of Anselm's ontological argument as a precursor to Descartes' work
- Reference to Descartes' writings on the argument in 'The Meditations'
- An exploration of the strengths of Descartes' work supporting and developing Plato's and/or Anselm's earlier argument
- An exploration of Descartes' training as a mathematician as influencing his argument
- An examination of Descartes' contribution – early or subsequent scholarship as having a greater impact on the argument
- Reference to the challenges to Descartes' work by, for example, Gassendi, Kant and Russell
- Further development of the argument by subsequent scholars
- An exploration as to whether or not existence is in fact a predicate.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) “The process of secularisation has been good for religion and society.”
With reference to other aspects of human experience, consider the truth of this statement. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the claim in relation to other aspects of human experience
- An open-ended response citing relevant historical and/or contemporary examples
- An exploration of the term secularisation and its impact on religion and society
- Secularisation as the perfect fit for ‘humanity come of age’
- Theistic states as leading to the dangers of fundamentalism, extremism and sectarian division
- The benefits of secularism in an increasingly pluralist and secularist age
- The benefits of separating religion and State for both religious and atheistic freedom
- Reference to the views of secularist leaders renouncing a sacred world view
- Reference to the link between secularism and post-modernism
- Theism’s rejection of secularisation as a denial of the essential truths and Divine purpose as provided by theism
- Secularisation as leading to moral uncertainties and a denial of the centrality of religion to life
- An exploration of the risks of moral relativism and of a purely utilitarian approach to moral decision making
- Secularisation as leading to risk of individualism and loss of hope in an eschatological future
- An exploration of the benefits of theism and religious faith for the individual and society as a whole
- Reference to the views of theistic leaders/writers rejecting secularisation, for example, Benedict XVI, Stott
- Secularism’s failure to provide spiritual support and comfort in a world of evil and suffering
- Reference to the views of psychologists and/or sociologists concerning the origins and function of religion.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

50

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 4 (a) Discuss the ideas of Rudolf Otto for an understanding of religious experience.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Answers may include:

- An exploration of the ideas of Otto concerning religious experience
- An exfoliation of Ottos' teaching concerning the Holy or numinous
- Reference to Otto's views concerning the 'mysterium tremendum et fascinans'
- An exploration of Otto's views of Divine revelation and religion as a non-reducible category in its own right
- Relevant contextual background to Otto's work
- Reference to selected writings of Otto, e.g. 'The Idea of the Holy', 'Naturalism and Religion', 'Mysticism East and West'
- Reference to Otto's classification of religious experience and identified connections of the numinous
- An exploration of Otto's views concerning human thought and the 'sensus numinous'
- Influences on Otto's work – Schleiermacher and Husserl
- A definition of the term religious experience as understood by Otto
- The contribution of Otto to mysticism and an understanding of what constitutes religious experience
- Subsequent development of Otto's ideas by theologians such as Barth.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[25]

- (b) With reference to other aspects of human experience, consider how far reason and faith stand in opposition to one another. Justify your answer.

Answers may include:

- Consideration of the claim in relation to other aspects of human experience
- An open-ended response citing relevant historical and/or contemporary examples
- A clarification of the terms faith and reason
- Reference to the clash between atheistic science/Empiricism and religion/religious belief
- An exploration of religious fundamentalism and extremism as standing in conflict with rational thought and belief, putting faith above reason
- Reference to fideism and/or natural theology
- An exploration of contemporary and historical clashes between religious fundamentalism and science, e.g. creation, astronomy, medical advances
- An exploration as to whether atheism and/or Empiricism are themselves 'faiths'
- An exploration of the distinction between prepositional and non prepositional faith
- An exploration of the view that faith and reason are God given and reconcilable
- Reference to the view that faith is not necessarily 'blind'
- An exploration of the role reason plays in affirming the existence of God
- Reference to the views of selected faith traditions/denominations and atheistic schools of thought, e.g. Humanism, Existentialism.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

Candidates must engage with other aspects of human experience to access

Bands 3–5.

(AO2)

[25]

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

50

100