



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
2011**

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## **Religious Studies**

**Assessment Unit AS 6**

*assessing*

**Religious Ethics: Foundations, Principles  
and Practice**

**[AR161]**

**WEDNESDAY 22 JUNE, 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 very 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

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

1 (a) An explanation of any **three** teachings from the Sermon on the Mount could include, e.g.

- any three content areas, e.g. the Beatitudes, the antitheses, religious duties, priorities in life, judgement, sayings
- candidates could also address other aspects, e.g. Jesus' teaching and the O.T. Law, the Sermon as a radical ethic, the importance of the innermost motivation, the condemnation of hypocrisy, how sincerity translates faith into action, the love ethic, the challenge to perfection
- possible reference to the challenging nature of the teaching, e.g. love of enemies, cannot serve both God and mammon, discernment in judgement
- appropriate exemplification from the Sermon on the Mount. [35]

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

- how the Sermon is quite comprehensive in the areas it covers, e.g. virtues of the Christian disciple, murder, adultery, divorce, retaliation, attitudes to religious duties e.g. almsgiving, attitudes to materialism, making judgement
- how the Sermon offers principles that can guide moral decision making, principles that are unchangeable, e.g. the call to perfection, the importance of the correct interior attitude, imitating the example of Jesus, the love ethic, right judgement
- the values encouraged by the Sermon, e.g. dependence on God, spirit of gentleness, love of enemy
- the eschatological nature of morality for the Christian
- the Sermon as a blueprint for Christian ethics, society and all morality
- possible reference to other key sources for Christian morality, e.g. the Commandments and how they are seen as the very basis of religious morality, the moral teaching of Paul
- the role played in Christian ethics by theories such as Natural Law, Situation Ethics
- how the Sermon does not deal with issues prominent in the contemporary age, e.g. new reproductive technologies
- the Sermon does not inform as to how some of the deepest and most destructive human impulses and emotions, e.g. hate, jealousy, are to be controlled
- particular denominational views
- the Sermon as representing ideals that can be aspired to. [15]

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2 (a) An explanation of how the principle of the Sanctity of Human Life informs Christians in their approach to medical ethics could include, e.g.

- how the principle is defined and reinforced by Scripture, e.g. Genesis, the Decalogue, Job, Jeremiah, John, Paul
- human life as being seen to be “Imago Dei” and having intrinsic value
- the affirmation of the principle in the Natural Law teaching of Aquinas and his primary precepts and subsequent implications, e.g. innocent human life must be protected
- possible reference to other ethical perspectives, e.g. Kant’s sanctity of life argument and the universal goodwill; Situation Ethics and its advocacy of the principle of love
- less absolutist positions, e.g. life is not to be preserved at all costs but treated with dignity
- how the Sanctity of Life principle informs the understanding of personhood, e.g. in Roman Catholic teaching personhood is conferred from the very moment of conception
- possible reference to aspects of medical ethics, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, new reproductive technologies, embryo research
- some awareness of differing views amongst Christians on issues in medical ethics, e.g. conservative as against liberal views on abortion and different denominational views. [35]

(b) An exploration of the claim could include, e.g.

- awareness of the Personhood debate
- religious views on Personhood, e.g. the absolutist view as beginning from the moment of conception through to the moment of death
- how the issue of ensoulment is linked to the issue of Personhood in religious belief
- implications of these views, e.g. the unborn child, the newborn and those terminally ill as all entitled to moral status
- awareness of differing views amongst Christians on Personhood and ensoulment, e.g. some deny the moment of conception as marking the beginning of Personhood
- the views of Aristotle and Aquinas
- views on the potentiality argument
- criteria for Personhood as advanced by various writers, e.g. the particular views of Peter Singer and Michael Tooley – that personhood is not automatic
- the secular rejection of the Sanctity of Human Life Doctrine and the advocacy of a more instrumentalist view which promotes a Quality of Life argument
- religious concerns for the vulnerable in society if secular views on Personhood and Sanctity of Life prevail. [15]

**Section A**

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## Section B

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

- 3 (a) An account of Christian and secular views on **either** marriage **or** divorce could include, e.g.

### Marriage

- the Biblical view of marriage as ordained by God
- marriage as a heterosexual union
- marriage as a covenant of love
- marriage as having unitive and procreative elements
- marriage as exclusive, the permanence of marriage
- reference to relevant Biblical teaching, e.g. Genesis, Song of Songs, Hosea, Jesus, Paul
- the view of marriage as a sacrament
- marriage as a means of grace
- possible reference to Natural Law teaching
- marriage as a useful social and economic institution
- marriage as not something sacred
- changing attitudes to the nature of love
- the rise in cohabitation
- the advent of “open marriages”
- marriage as not being exclusive or permanent
- marriage as an outdated institution
- the advent of same-sex unions/partnerships
- how the secular view might share some of the features of the Christian vision, e.g. marriage as a lifelong commitment
- the feminist view – marriage as the enemy of the emancipation of women
- the Marxist view – marriage as part of the Capitalist conspiracy of economic and social control.

### Divorce

- the biblical view of marriage as part of God’s creation
- marriage as a covenant of love
- marriage as a unique and exclusive bond, the permanence of marriage
- reference to relevant Biblical teaching, e.g. Genesis, Deuteronomy, Exodus, Jesus, Paul
- the view of marriage as a sacrament
- the distinction between divorce and annulment
- difficulties surrounding the “epi porneia” clause (Matthew 19:9)
- attitudes to remarriage
- particular denominational views, e.g. Roman Catholic, various Protestant views
- the demise of religious views
- non-religious views of marriage and divorce, e.g. Secular Humanist
- feminist views, e.g. divorce as an escape from abusive/violent relationships
- divorce as a possible loving outcome for all involved
- changing attitudes to commitment and fidelity
- the rate of marital breakdown
- attitudes to divorce law.

[35]



(b) An assessment 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
- the importance of explicit, publicly witnessed declarations of lifelong love and commitment for enabling a marriage to flourish
- how marriage can create a more radically different and solid relationship
- how the social recognition and support provided by legal marriage strengthens the relationship
- evidence that points to couples cohabiting prior to marriage having higher risk of dissolution
- concerns for children born within the relationship
- cohabitation as an acceptable alternative to marriage
- changing social norms in a society that seeks to accommodate personal choice
- marriage being seen as increasingly less important in a secular society
- negative experience of marriage
- cohabitation as a form of “trial marriage” in the context of a rising divorce rate
- cohabitation as being more attractive practically, e.g. financial costs
- what ultimately matters is the intention of the couple involved and not the marriage ceremony (also acknowledged by some Christian ethicists)
- the notion that cohabitation can also have commitment, fidelity and love just as marriage can sometimes lack all of these. [15]

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- 4 (a) An explanation of the approach of Situation Ethics to moral decision making with reference to **two** relevant examples could include, e.g.
- Situation Ethics as having a contextual and situational character
  - the rejection of legalistic and antinomian approaches
  - the importance of asserting the primacy of love, the agape principle
  - seeking to emulate the example of Jesus
  - the contribution of Joseph Fletcher
  - Fletcher’s working principles – Pragmatism, Relativism, Positivism, Personalism
  - Fletcher’s six fundamental principles, e.g. love and justice are the same
  - its appeal to Liberal Protestantism
  - how Roman Catholicism sees Situation Ethics
  - examples of its application, e.g. abortion, euthanasia, contraception, homosexuality, marriage
  - possible reference to examples from Fletcher’s work
  - possible difficulties raised by the theory, e.g. mercy killing, possible legitimising of adultery.
- [35]

- (b) An assessment of the view in relation to other aspects of human experience could include, e.g.
- an open-ended response citing relevant contemporary and/or historical examples
  - the fine difference between moral absolutism and moral relativism, e.g. the principle “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” can be seen to have an absolutist character
  - the value of moral absolutes as offering certainty
  - the challenges presented by ethical relativism, by moral nihilism
  - how moral absolutes can be seen as legalistic and inflexible
  - how moral dilemmas can be complex and “absolutes” may not be helpful
  - the importance of the situation, the context
  - the development of Narrative ethics
  - the problems presented by subjectivist approaches to ethics
  - the impracticality of endeavouring the principles of Situation Ethics to every situation, including trivial ones.
- [15]

**Section B**

**Total**

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100