



ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
2016

Religious Studies
Assessment Unit A2 7
assessing
Religious Belief and Competing Claims
[AR271]
FRIDAY 3 JUNE, MORNING

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

AO2 (20 marks)

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

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

1 (a) An outlining and discussion of the main teachings of Karl Marx concerning religion, with particular reference to the influence of Feuerbach may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of Karl Marx's rejection of religion with particular reference to the contribution of Feuerbach
- "The criticism of religion as the premise of all criticism"
- Reference to the influence of Feuerbach and his view of God as a human projection, an anthropomorphic creation
- An exploration of Marx's atheistic materialism
- Religion as a harmful delusion, 'the opium of the people'
- An exploration of religion as a symptom of economic injustice, as superstructure
- An exploration of the alienation religion induces
- The importance of rejecting religion as a reactionary force
- An exploration of the writings of Karl Marx, for example, The Communist Manifesto, Das Kapital
- Reference to other influences on Karl Marx's views of religion, for example, Proudhon, Hegel
- Reference to related biographical detail to support Marx's atheism
- An exploration of religion as a tool of oppression [30]

(b) A critical assessment of the claim that religion alone offers humanity happiness, may include, e.g.:

- A clarification of the term 'happiness'
- An exploration of theistic teachings regarding eschatological hope and an afterlife
- An exploration of concepts such as redemption, atonement, salvation and fulfilment
- Reference to the nature of God as Judge, Saviour and/or Liberator of humanity
- An exploration of Jesus' role as universal saviour
- An exploration of the benefits religion provides humanity
- Atheism's challenge to the stated claim, rejection of an afterlife as harmful delusion
- Religion as a form of wish fulfilment
- Reference to Marx's promise of an earthly Utopia
- The views of atheistic thinkers such as Freud, Hitchens and Dawkins
- Alternative ideologies as providing humanity with greater happiness [20]

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2 (a) Identifying and discussing a religious approach to morality may include, e.g.:

- Morality as Absolutist, Deontological and God given
- Moral codes as having their foundation in Divine Command
- An exploration of Aquinas' Natural Law theory
- A discussion of Divine Command theory
- Reference to the importance of sacred texts and religious moral role models
- The importance of religious founders/leaders in shaping morality
- Sin as disobedience to Divine will
- An exploration of the role of conscience
- Reference to selected Bible passages such as the Creation and Fall Narratives in Genesis or the Pauline Epistles
- Reference to Kant's duty ethics, the Categorical Imperative
- Reference to Fletcher and Situation Ethics
- Reference to the distinction between secular and sacred morality
- Possible references to religious approaches being seen as outdated

[30]

(b) A critical assessment of the view that without God, everything is permitted, may include, e.g.:

- Support for the concept of moral freedom and authentic living from Existentialists such as Camus and Sartre
- Secular society's demand for moral freedom and rejection of Divine Command Theory
- The individual as moral law maker and adjudicator
- An exploration of Humanism and/or Utilitarianism's rejection of the statement, morality as guided by the needs of/the greater good for all humanity
- Reference to the writings of Dostoyevsky
- An exploration of the views of Dawkins concerning the centrality of evolution within moral decision making and the importance of the 'selfish gene'
- Theism's acceptance of this view, morality without God as both free and flawed
- An exploration of the dangers of ethical living without Divine guidance

[20]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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3 (a) An exploration of the importance of revelation and how it can be understood in relation to the Creation narratives with particular reference to the statement, that God has revealed himself fully to all humanity, may include, e.g.:

- An exploration of what is meant by the term revelation and its significance for humanity
- An exploration of the various means through which God reveals himself to humanity including through Creation/nature, sacred texts and key figures
- An exploration of the importance of the Creation narratives with references to revelation
- An exploration of the impact of Divine revelation upon individuals, communities and/or society as a whole
- Reference to the distinction between General and Special revelation
- An exploration as to whether the Divine can be seen through Creation, its inception, aesthetic beauty and structure
- Reference to varied forms of revelation such as miracle, mysticism, meditation and conversion
- An exploration of the nature of the Divine, as imminent and/or as beyond all human comprehension
- Challenges to the stated claim, atheism's rejection of any form of Deity or Divine revelation
- Reference to the writings and views of selected scholars concerning revelation [30]

(b) A critical evaluation of the claim that the world views offered by Scripture and science are irreconcilable may include, e.g.:

- Scripture and atheistic science as providing profoundly different views of knowledge, humanity and the universe
- Reference to the views of Empiricist science as rejecting all non empirical and supernatural truths
- An exploration of specific examples of conflict between Scripture and science, contemporary and/or historical
- Reference to the views of Neo-Darwinists concerning this claim, such as Dawkins and Hitchens
- Reference to clashes concerning the creation of the universe, the source of truth and final destiny of humanity
- An exploration of ethical clashes, for example, concerning cloning, embryonic research, the sanctity of life
- Reference to an accommodationist approach – science and Scripture as read side-by-side, e.g. Polkinghorne, Ward
- Theism's view of human intelligence and scientific curiosity as God given
- Specific examples of Scripture and science working in harmony [20]

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4 (a) A presentation of the case for and discussion of religious pluralism may include, e.g.:

- A discussion of the main ideas of pluralism, the argument that at their heart all religions are the same and simply reflect linguistic and/or cultural differences
- A definition of the term ‘pluralism’ with particular reference to religious belief
- An exploration of the work of selected pluralists, for example, Hick
- Reference to selected analogies such as “the blind men and the elephant” and Hick’s “mountain analogy”
- Religious pluralism’s aims as beneficial, promoting religious tolerance and respect for all faiths
- The popularity of pluralism in a religiously diverse society
- Pluralism as a means to overcome religious fundamentalism and extremism
- The promotion of pluralism within the media and society as a whole
- An exploration of the main features of pluralism [30]

(b) Critical evaluation of the view that pluralism undermines religious belief may include, e.g.:

- A critique of religious pluralism
- Religious pluralism as denying unique truth claims of selected religions
- Religious pluralism as illogical, religions do clearly differ
- Reference to specific examples of religious diversity, and unique truth claims
- Religious pluralism as devaluing the teachings of sacred texts such as the Qur’an and Bible
- Pluralism’s failure to undermine mainstream faiths and cults
- An exploration of the views of exclusivism and/or inclusivism and their challenge to pluralism
- Counterchallenge to the stated claim, pluralism as promoting shared religious truths
- Pluralism as presenting a shared voice against the challenges of atheism [20]

Section A

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

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

AO2 (20 marks)

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

Section B

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

- 5 (a)** An outlining and examination of the key ideas associated with religious leadership, with reference to at least **two** different areas of study, may include, e.g.:
- An exploration of the key ideas associated with religious experience referencing two areas of study
 - A discussion of core teaching such as: - ethical message; the existence and nature of the Divine; discipleship; the existence and nature of an afterlife
 - A definition of the term leadership with particular reference to the nature of religious leadership
 - The reaction to these key ideas by supporters and opponents
 - Reference to writings and or teachings of the religious leaders selected
 - Scholarly analysis of these key ideas
 - The origins of religious authority as lying with the Divine
 - An exploration of the challenge presented by these ideas
 - The development of these ideas by subsequent scholarship
 - Challenges to religious leadership by atheistic thinkers [30]
- (b)** A critical assessment of the view that modern society no longer puts its trust in religious or secular leaders, with reference to other aspects of human experience, may include, e.g.:
- The emphasis of modern society on personal liberty and freedom and the rejection of autocratic leadership
 - The impact and influence of selected religious and atheistic leaders
 - Increasing preference towards a democratic and/or utilitarian approach – a focus on the greatest good for the greatest number
 - Secular society’s rejection of religious leadership
 - Reference to specific examples of abuses of trust and leadership
 - Counter challenges to the stated claim, the importance of strong ethical leadership
 - Modern society’s demand for authoritative and powerful leadership
 - The continuing dominance of, and trust in powerful authoritative leaders
 - Consideration of a range of historical and/or contemporary examples
 - The growing popularity of grass roots movements [20]

Section B

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Total

150