

GCE 2005
January Series



Mark Scheme

Religious Studies Specification

RS01 An introduction to Religion and Human Experience

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

[Marks for 10-mark questions are shown in brackets]

Level	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks
5	Appropriate form and style of writing, clear and coherent organisation of information, with appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples.	13-15 [9-10]	A very good response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and arguments and are critically analysed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate conclusion.	13-15
4	Appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information, mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / examples.	10-12 [7-8]	A good response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn which follows from some of the reasoning.	10-12
3	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing, some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary. Satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing reasonable understanding.	7-9 [5-6]	Main issues are addressed and views are considered, with some supporting evidence. There is some attempt at analysis or comment. Evaluation may not be fully supported by reasoning or evidence.	7-9
2	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.	An outline account, including some relevant material. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding. Some coherence.	4-6 [3-4]	A simple argument, with some evidence in support.	4-6
1	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Slight signs of understanding.	1-3 [1-2]	A few basic points which are relevant, but no real argument.	1-3
0	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0

RS01: An introduction to Religion and Human Experience**1 Read the passage and answer questions (a) and (b) which follow.**

“Believers study their scriptures, looking within them for spiritual truths. What they find are passages that may be interpreted in a variety of ways; for example, some passages of scripture may be interpreted symbolically. Religious experiences are also open to interpretation; for example, a vision can mean one thing to one believer and something very different to another.”

(a) “Passages of scripture may be interpreted symbolically.”

Explain what this means.

Symbolically - to take the words as standing for something else / representing a different truth (in contrast to taking the words literally). The candidate could use passages like Genesis 1 and explain the symbolic meaning that they are given, or offer descriptions of Nirvana / God / Ultimate Reality which are said to be beyond understanding in human terms, and which are therefore symbolised by the words used to describe them.

The question invites the candidate to refer to more than one passage.

For answers lacking illustration - maximum Level 3.

For answers with only one illustration - maximum Level 4.

(10 marks) AO1

(b) Explain why “a vision can mean one thing to one believer and something very different to another.”

This question is not just about what a vision is, but about a variety of understandings of visions. This may be taken to mean different meanings that have been attached to visions like that of Ezekiel, the Annunciation or Transfiguration, but could also be answered by candidates speculating if the vision was ‘real’ or ‘imaginary’.

There is no requirement for candidates to use only one ‘vision’ to illustrate their answer, but they may do so if they can draw contrasting interpretations out of it.

For answers simply explaining what a ‘vision’ is - maximum Level 3.

For answers selecting an appropriate vision and giving a simple statement of different understandings of it - maximum Level 4.

(10 marks) AO1

2 (a) State and explain two definitions of religious experience.

Most commonly, three types of definition will be offered:
An experience in which one experiences a spiritual reality;
An experience of the numinous (Otto); and
Any experience interpreted religiously.

Look for two definitions, rather than different illustrations of the same definition, in the highest quality answers.

For answers dealing with only one definition maximum Level 4 (11 marks)

For answers not explicitly referring to definitions of “religious experience” maximum Level 3

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain the role of religious experience as an inspiration for faith, and assess the view that religious experience has little authority in religion today.*

Explain

The phrase ‘inspiration for faith’ could be taken to mean ‘faith’ as in religious truths, through revelation, or ‘faith’ as in personal faith, through conversion / response to prayer, etc.

For answer without example(s) maximum Level 4 (7 marks)

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

The assessment may draw on evidence from organised religion about the importance of religious experience and / or a reasoned response challenging the authority of religious experience in general.

If the answer does not relate specifically to ‘today’ - maximum Level 4 (11 marks)

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) *Explain the use of scriptures as both a guide and inspiration for religious practice.*

Exemplification of this central idea from any tradition(s) with reference to both guide and inspiration for the way of life / ritual.

As a **guide** - look for source of law and instruction, and of example, where appropriate. Look for specific examples from the tradition(s) named.

For **inspiration** - look for development of the above, plus use of scripture in random reading / meditation / prayer. Worship is obviously part of the way of life of a believer, but the answer should extend beyond this.

For answers dealing with one only of ‘guide’ or ‘inspiration’ maximum mid Level 4.
For answers without examples maximum mid Level 4.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain the other sources of religious practice found in religion today, and assess the view that the scriptures are the most important source of religious practice.*

Explain

This is likely to be taken as ‘other authorities’ and the likely choices are: religious experience; religious leaders; tradition and custom. Expect two fully developed, or three outlined, in a full answer.

For an answer without example(s) maximum mid Level 4 (7 marks)

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

A wide-ranging discussion is possible, e.g. celebration of festivals and rituals often owes as much to tradition and custom as it does to scripture, whereas ethical living may derive most obviously from scripture.

(15 marks) AO2