

General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 5061

RS01 An introduction to Religion and Human Experience

Mark Scheme

2006 examination – January series

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.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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 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 this passage and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

‘Some believers claim to have had a revelation experience. They also claim that the experience is a good source of authority for the truths that were revealed to them. Others disagree. They do not accept that revelation experiences can be trusted as a source of authority.’

- (a) *Explain the distinctive features of a revelation experience.*

Key idea: revelation experience ‘uncovers’ someone or something that was previously unseen; it may be seen as a communication from God. There are different forms, e.g. the revelation of words / ideas, e.g. the word of God coming to Moses on Mount Sinai, or to Muhammad on Mount Hira. Also, revelation that occurs when the individual ‘sees’ an historical or natural event as a sign from God. In some answers these may be referred to as direct / propositional revelation or general / non-propositional revelation—but this is not necessary. The Buddha’s enlightenment could also be seen as a ‘revelation’, but not in the sense of a being (e.g. God) communicating with humanity. Revelation may come through, e.g. visions / dreams / flashes of insight.

Maximum Level 2 for example only.

Maximum Level 3 for answer lacking example.

Maximum Level 4 for answer lacking breadth.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain why some people may not trust revelation experiences as a source of authority.*

Various answers are possible, e.g.:

Such an experience may be purely subjective – so it is always possible that the person is lying or mistaken; the ‘message’ may challenge existing teachings; an event ‘seen as’ a sign from God by one person may be seen as something totally different by another—or the message may be interpreted differently.

Maximum Level 3 for answer lacking example / illustration.

(10 marks) AO1

2 (a) Explain the nature and role of scripture as a source of authority.

Answers here will vary according to the scripture chosen.

Buddhism

May deal solely with the three elements of the Tripitaka or refer to Mahayana Scriptures. Attention may be paid to how the material was collected together and to the importance of personal experience as a judge of the value of the teaching within the scriptures.

Christianity

May consider the Bible as the Word of God and be aware of differences among Christians, e.g. Fundamentalist and Liberal approaches. For 'role' they may, for example, illustrate the use of the Bible as a source of beliefs, of law, and of authoritative examples.

Hinduism

The nature of the Vedas and the difference between smṛti and śruti material. The collection of the material and its role in religion.

Islam

This answer could refer only to the Qur'an but may also refer to Hadith. Qur'an as Word of God. Role of the Qur'an as the main source of Shari'a Law and of beliefs.

Judaism

This answer may, but need not, be confined to the Torah. Nature of the Torah, its compilation and use as a source of Law and beliefs. Role as authority in Orthodox and Reform Judaism.

Sikhism

This answer may be confined to the Guru Granth Sahib. Nature of material, and of writers, and role as Guru.

Maximum Level 3 for answer dealing with only one of 'nature' or 'role'.

Maximum Level 3 for answer lacking examples / illustration.

Maximum Level 4 for answer lacking breadth.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain three reasons why the authority of scripture may be challenged, and assess the view that religious leaders are more important than scripture as a source of authority in religion today.*

Explain

Among the reasons that may be given are:

doubts about its recording or translation
lack of relevance to 21st century / out of date
discredited by Science / primitive
open to conflicting interpretations
contains contradictions
each point should be illustrated in a high level answer.

Maximum Level 2 for one way.

Maximum Level 3 for two ways.

Maximum Level 3 for an answer without example / illustration.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

Various approaches are possible, e.g.

Leaders

Are able to apply teaching to the 21st century; have charisma / personal authority; guided by God / have special spiritual insight **but** human and capable of error / may have their own motives for their interpretation.

Scriptures

Status as ‘revelation’; infallible; out of date / timeless; need interpretation.

Maximum Level 4 (11 marks) for answers not referring to ‘today’.

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) *Explain the distinctive features of a mystical experience.*

e.g. Union with the Divine / Loss of self in an experience which is Passive, Ineffable, Noetic and Transient. Some candidates may also mention introvertive and extravertive experiences and / or comment on the stages of mystical experience, e.g. purgative, illuminative and unitive. Examples / illustrations should be used to explain the distinctive features identified.

Maximum Level 2 for example only.

Maximum Level 3 for an answer without example / illustration.

Maximum Level 4 for an answer which lacks breadth (i.e. recognition of some diversity in Mystical experiences).

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain how religious experience may inspire faith, and assess the view that religious experience is an essential part of a believer's life.*

Explain

Expect candidates to refer to conversion experiences, with at least one example, and to those who have been inspired to believe or to act by dreams / visions / revelation.

Maximum Level 2 for example only.

Maximum Level 3 for an answer without example / illustration.

Maximum Level 4 for an answer which lacks breadth, i.e. some recognition that people may be inspired by religious experience in a variety of ways.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

The word 'essential' is very strong and candidates should be able to debate it.

Reasons for arguing **it is essential** include:

brings personal knowledge of God / the divine or individual and personal reason for faith. Makes faith more than words;

Reasons for arguing that **it is not essential** include:

not everyone has one—their faith as good / valuable. Doubts about how genuine supposed experiences are – not to be trusted; can contradict orthodox teaching.

N.B. some candidates may interpret this to mean how important are past experiences (e.g. Muhammad). This is not required but is permissible.

(15 marks) AO2