

General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 5061

An introduction to Religion and Human Experience
RS01

Mark Scheme

2006 examination – June 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.

‘Scriptures contain writings of many different kinds and these affect believers in a variety of ways. They can be an inspiration for faith, causing people to believe, giving them hope and making them want to live better lives. They also show believers how to live better lives.’

- (a) *Identify and explain three different kinds of writings found in scripture.*

There are many possibilities here. It is likely that most candidates will answer with reference to a single scripture (e.g. the Qur’an), but this is not required.

For each kind there should be a brief explanation and / or an explanatory example / illustration, i.e. more than just the name of a writing.

Possible kinds include: myth; poetry; history; law; gospel; parable; prayer; psalms; songs; Torah; Neviim; Ketubim (Judaism); Smrti; Shruti (Hinduism); Akham; Mutashabihat (Islam). Distinction could also be made between literal and symbolic material.

Maximum Level 2 for answers referring to one kind only.

Maximum Level 3 for answers referring to two kinds only.

Maximum Level 4 for an answer which offers no explanatory examples.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain the role of scripture as an inspiration for faith.*

‘Faith’ may be taken to mean ‘religion’ or just belief.

Examples illustrating ‘inspiration’ include: reading / hearing scripture causing conversion; the effect of learning about the actions of Prophets / Christ or other figures, or about events in their lives; the effect of the promise of reward / threat of punishment. Candidates may be able to name specific individuals and show how they were inspired by the scriptures of their faith. Answers which refer to the role of scripture as a guide to life will not be relevant unless they focus on the motivational / inspiring role of the teaching.

Maximum Level 2 for example only.

Maximum Level 3 for answer lacking explanatory example / illustration.

(10 marks) AO1

- 2 (a) ***Explain the role of both scripture and religious experience as sources of authority in religion.***

Scripture as a source of authority

Source of law or basis of law; used differently by different traditions, (e.g. fundamentalist / liberal in Christianity; Sunni / Shi'i in Islam; Orthodox / Reform in Judaism). Used in religious courts, in preaching and teaching. Source of authoritative examples, and of criteria for identifying genuine religious experience; Source of belief and practice.

Religious experience as a source of authority

For example: source of knowledge of God or Ultimate Truth; source of Divine Law or of insight into the Holy Path; source of guidance (through prayer for example).

Maximum Level 3 for answer lacking explanatory examples / illustrations.

Maximum Level 4 for answer lacking recognition of diversity within traditions (where appropriate) or breadth.

Maximum mid Level 4 (11 marks) for an answer dealing with only one source of authority – (N.B. candidates may present the scriptures of the religion(s) they are referring to as a record of revelation and so conflate their answers.)

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) ***Explain the role of religious leaders as a source of authority, and assess the view that scripture is the most important source of authority in religion today.***

Explain

Role of religious leaders: content will depend on the religion(s) chosen. For example, the role of: Lama; Pope; Priest; Guru; Imam; Rabbi. Answers do not need to, but may, be confined to one religion. Answers need not, but may, refer only to the role of leaders today – they may, for example, refer to the roles of Jesus, Muhammad or the Buddha although this will have to be clearly reflected in their evaluation.

The explanation may focus on what their role shows about the authority they have, and / or on what is believed about the source or nature of their authority. Look for an understanding that such figures may act as an intermediary between the divine and the human, or be able to offer guidance on the basis of their knowledge of scripture, or act as a representative / figurehead of the collective view of the religious community. They may also have a role as authoritative example or model.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

Answers will vary according to tradition(s).

For example: limitations of scripture may be used to argue that leaders are more important for today, e.g. if the scripture are seen to lack modern relevance or to be inaccessible to believers. The interpretation of key teaching may have more importance in practice than what the text actually says, and this could be reflected in sects or divisions with religions.

However, scriptures may be the source of authority for leaders and provide the criteria by which their judgements are assessed, and by which genuine religious experiences are identified. This would put the authority of scripture above these other sources. The best answers should be able to give examples where the priority of one source of authority over another is seen, (e.g. disputes about the meaning of scripture on controversial issues).

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) *Explain the distinctive features of the following forms of religious experience: revelation and visions.*

Revelation Experiences

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.

Visions

These are religious experiences distinguished by their visual element. They vary greatly, and include corporeal, imaginative and intellectual visions; visions of the future; heaven and hell; visions of divine beings; they may, but need not, be accompanied by words; they are most often reported by individuals, but are sometimes reported by groups. It is not always clear if they are ‘in the mind’s eye’ or appear externally, but if the latter there is still something that clearly distinguishes them from a non religious experience.

Maximum Level 3 for an answer with no explanatory examples or illustrations.

Maximum Level 4 (10 marks) for an answer dealing with only one of these.

Maximum Level 4 (12 marks) for an answer which does **not** reflect BREADTH within these experiences.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) *Outline the beliefs of one religion you have studied about the revelation or inspiration of its scriptures, and assess the view that religious experience is of no importance as a source of authority in religion today.*

Beliefs in **one** religion: e.g. Islam and the revelation of the Qur’an; Buddhism and the recording of the insights gained through enlightenment.

N.B. It is likely that candidates will repeat the example(s) they have used in part (a) to illustrate revelation. This must be credited.

Maximum Level 2 for account of an experience in which scripture was revealed / writers were inspired to write, which does not explicitly identify relevant beliefs.

Maximum Level 4 for answers lacking understanding of diversity of views within a religion where this is appropriate or recognition that there are different types of scripture believed to have been revealed / inspired in different ways.

e.g. Differing views of the revelation / inspiration of the Bible.

Revelation of Qur’an differing from beliefs about the inspiration behind the Hadith material; different views of the Buddha’s enlightenment and / or of the different types of writing in the Tripitaka.

(10 marks) AO1

Assess

This can be taken to mean personal religious experience today and / or the religious experiences recorded from the past, including those that gave rise to the scriptures. Answers will vary according to the religion(s) used but possible arguments include: religious experiences may be unreliable and those who have them may be deluded. Time for revelation is past / revelation is complete. Alternatively insight / answers to prayer / conscience provide the only guide to modern issues not dealt with in the scriptures and the authority of religious leaders that stems from their personal religious experience very important.

(15 marks) AO2