



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

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GCE

Religious Studies

Unit RS04

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Unit 4: An Introduction to Religion and Ethics

Examination Levels of Response: AS Level descriptors

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

| Level | Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2 | Descriptor AO1 | Marks | Descriptor AO2 | Marks |
|-------|---|---|-----------------|--|-------|
| 5 | Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation. | A thorough treatment of the topic. Information is highly accurate and relevant. Good understanding is demonstrated through appropriate evidence/examples. | 20-17 [10-9] | A very good response to issue(s) raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and arguments, and critically analysed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate evaluation. | 10-9 |
| 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 accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation. | A fairly thorough treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and relevant. Good understanding is demonstrated through use of some appropriate evidence/ examples. | 16-13 [8-7] | A good response to issue(s) raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn that follows from some of the reasoning. | 8-7 |
| 3 | Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; 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. Key facts and ideas are included, showing reasonable understanding, using appropriate evidence/ examples. | 12-9 [6-5] | Main issue(s) is/are addressed and different views are considered with some supporting evidence or argument, and some attempt at analysis or comment. Evaluation may not be fully supported by reasoning and evidence. | 6-5 |
| 2 | Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to make meaning clear. | An outline account, including some relevant material. Limited in breadth or depth. Limited understanding but some use of some evidence/ examples. Some coherence. | 8-5 [4-3] | Aspects of the issue(s) are understood and different views are mentioned. Some simple reasons or evidence are given in support of a conclusion, or an adequate but one-sided argument is presented. | 4-3 |
| 1 | Little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear. | Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Some signs of understanding. | 4-1 [2-1] | Basic reasons or evidence presented to support a view that is relevant to the question. | 2-1 |

1 *Read the passage and answer questions (a) to (d) which follow.*

“If we apply utilitarian principles to the allocation of resources in medicine, some individuals may be unfairly denied treatment on the grounds of their old age so that more younger patients may be treated. By contrast, religions emphasise the equality of all human beings and therefore a religious approach to allocation would uphold the right of everyone to treatment, irrespective of age.”

(a) *Outline Bentham’s utilitarian principles.*

Candidates should include some or most of the following ideas:

Utilitarianism is a teleological / consequentialist theory; it considers the consequences of an action.

In assessing the consequences, the only thing that matters is the amount of happiness / unhappiness caused.

Can be summed up by the phrase ‘the greatest happiness (good) for the greatest number’. (Also known as the Greatest Happiness Principle.)

In line with the ethos of the ‘Age of Reason’, Bentham wanted to establish a universal theory which could be applied to all ethical dilemmas.

Argued for a ‘Principle of Utility’ by which an action is judged good or bad, according to the results achieved.

Developed the Hedonic / Utility calculus to measure the possible consequences of different actions, according to the pleasure or pain generated.

In calculating happiness / unhappiness, no one’s happiness is to be counted as more important than anyone else’s.

‘Everybody is to count for one, nobody for more than one.’ (Bentham).

Limit to Level 2 for mere explanation of Hedonic Calculus.

(10 marks) AO1

(b) *Outline the key features of a utilitarian approach to the allocation of resources in medicine.*

Candidates may legitimately discuss utilitarianism with no explicit mention of Bentham or Mill, but they may also discuss utilitarianism through Bentham and / or Mill. (Level 5 marks should be available for these options).

Good answers should briefly illustrate how utilitarianism could be applied to either actual instances or hypothetical instances of questions concerning resource allocation.

Vague answers with little attempt to link the issue should not be able to get above Level 2 marks.

(10 marks) AO1

- (c) *Explain how key ideas from the religion you have studied could be applied to the issue of resource allocation in medicine.*

Candidates should pick out relevant key beliefs and emphases from the religion they have studied, they should briefly link those ideas with the religion and then briefly explain how they link to resource allocation issues.

Examples of the key ideas might include:

Open and transparent decision-making resource allocation

A concern to protect the weakest in society

The importance of fairness and equality across social, racial and geographical divides

Sensible use of limited resources (ideas of stewardship)

The creation of sensible expectations in the wider community concerning what can be done with limited resources

A brief link should be drawn between these key ideas, beliefs, teachings and the religion chosen, e.g. equality stemming from the identity of all made in the image of God within the Jewish or Christian traditions

A good example of how two or more key ideas backed up with teachings might be linked to the issue should be sufficient for Level 5 marks.

(10 marks) **AO1**

- (d) *Assess the claim that under utilitarian principles “some individuals may be unfairly denied treatment on the grounds of their old age”.*

Candidates might make mention of the Hedonic Calculus, with specific examples as to why an older person might be discriminated against in favour of a younger one.

For another viewpoint

Claim of Bentham (and Singer) – no one is to be counted as more important than anyone else, e.g. a scientist with a cure for cancer or another illness, a mother versus her child, a politician versus a juvenile criminal.

Mill’s ‘higher’ pleasures to promote a similar idea.

Mill’s ‘rule’ utilitarianism, i.e. that one cannot make a rule that younger patients should take priority over older ones.

Mention might also be made of Mill’s phrase ‘Do as you would be done by.’

Criticisms might include:

Seeming justification of the majority suppressing a minority.

Difficulty in measuring potential happiness and predicting consequences.

Candidates should comment on the use of the word ‘unfairly’, and that under utilitarianism, motives are unimportant, and that utilitarianism and justice do not necessarily correspond, i.e. under utilitarianism, the ends justify the means, whatever these may be.

(10 marks) **AO2**

- 2 (a) *Explain how Kant's categorical imperative might be applied to the use of foetuses in medical research.*

Connection between Kant's categorical imperative and use of foetuses in medical research.

Better answers would include some of the following:

Some mention of the contemporary use of foetuses, e.g., the use of organs from dead foetuses, research on foetuses within the womb, the harvesting of ova from aborted foetuses.

Research not concerned with hypothetical outcomes, but with application of Categorical Imperative.

If the foetus is 'a (potential) person', then the second formulation of the Categorical Imperative, 'So act that you use humanity whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means', may be violated.

Dead foetuses do not violate this principle but the issue of parental consent then becomes vital.

Discussion of universal law issue.

(20 marks) AO1

- (b)(i) *Explain how a religious believer might approach the use of foetuses in medical research.*

Answers on a religious perspective should normally make some reference to the key sources of authority within the religion they have studied, e.g. the 5 Precepts within Buddhism or the Bible within Christianity.

Need to provide proper burials for the dead foetuses

Issues of burial of 'intact' foetuses

Importance of parental consent

Issues of the sanctity of life, so no harvesting of ova from aborted foetuses.

Etc.

Without reference to any source of authority, answers are unlikely to go beyond Level 2.

(10 marks) AO1

- (b)(ii) *Assess the claim that religious principles alone should determine how foetuses are treated.*

Evaluation of utilitarian or Kantian contribution

Benefit to advance of medicine from foetal research

Need for ova in IVF so need to harvest eggs from aborted foetuses

Religion is sufficient guidance because of strengths, **or** because of weakness of other approaches.

(10 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) *Identify and explain a religious perspective on environmental issues.*

May well generalise religious attitude to the environment but answers should contain specific religious environmental reference. Reference should be made to key sources of authority and / or the key religious concepts.

Areas include:

the welfare of animals

pollution

the use and conservation of natural resources and habitats

global warming, etc.

(20 marks) AO1

- (b) *Explain how a Kantian might approach issues of the use and conservation of natural resources, and assess whether this is the most important way forward for humanity faced with modern environmental dilemmas.*

Kant and natural resources include:

Categorical Imperative (no maxim for overuse of natural resources); respect for humans and future generations (never as a means to an end)

Neo-Kantians (e.g. R.W. Hepburn) have extended 'respect' idea to include non-human living creatures (includes endangered species and their habitats)

Criticism of Kantian approach may include:

Times have altered since Kant formed his theory

Kant says little on this subject

Kant's philosophy is with rational human agents and thus irrelevant to inanimate natural world.

Is misrepresenting Kantian philosophy.

Other philosophical or religious perspectives might be more appropriate (must be linked to a critique of Kantian approaches)

(10 marks AO1 and 10 marks AO2)