



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

Religious Studies

RST3F

Religion and Contemporary Society

A2 Unit 3F

Final

Mark Scheme

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 students' 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 students' 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) A2 Level Descriptors

Level	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic, which may be in depth or breadth. Information is accurate and relevant. A thorough understanding is shown through good use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate good knowledge and understanding of diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is demonstrated. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated convincingly.	28-30 41-45	A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and evaluated perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Systematic analysis and reasoning leads to appropriate conclusions. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related perceptively and maturely to the broader context and to human experience.	19-20 28-30	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, punctuation and grammar.
6	A generally thorough treatment of the topic which may be in depth or breadth. Information is almost all accurate and mainly relevant. Clear understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are clearly demonstrated.	24-27 36-40	A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate evaluation. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related clearly to the broader context and to human experience.	16-18 24-27	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown. Some knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	20-23 29-35	A satisfactory response to the issue(s) raised. Views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn that follows from some of the reasoning. Some of the response is related satisfactorily to the broader context and to human experience.	13-15 20-23	Mainly 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, punctuation and grammar.
4	Key ideas and facts are included; demonstrates some understanding and coherence using some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion. Limited knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	15-19 22-28	The main issue is addressed with some supporting evidence or argument, but the reasoning is faulty, or the analysis superficial or only one view is adequately considered. Little of the response is related to the broader context and to human experience.	10-12 15-19	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; 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.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14 15-21	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	7-9 10-14	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9 8-14	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	4-6 5-9	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4 1-7	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-3 1-4	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance	0	barely adequate to make meaning clear.

RST3F: Religion and Contemporary Society

Question 1 Religion responding to the challenges facing the world

0	1	Summarise the actions of one or more religion(s) on war and on environmental issues.
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Actions will depend on the religion chosen, but likely to cover such points as:-

War:

Many religions involved in anti war movements;
All faiths involved in the antiwar protests before the invasion of Iraq, vigils, prayers etc
Religious groups often involved in trying the establish dialogue between opposing groups, e.g. in Gaza
Many groups working for peace in a variety of ways – e.g., within Christianity, Quakers, Corrymeela, Iona; historically, Peace Pledge Union, and history of protests against war.
Trying to influence governments
Where war is seen as necessary, trying to support those involved, e.g. through chaplaincy
Drawing attention to the plight of innocent civilians (e.g. work of Christian Aid, CAFOD, Red Crescent, Khalsa Aid)

Environment

Encouraging people to live simply;
Within Christianity, the eco-Church movement
Trying to encourage responsible stewardship (Christianity and Islam)
Working to make people aware of their effects on the planet
Working in developing countries for sustainable development
Buddhism: Noble eightfold path and 5 precepts can readily be applied to environmental concerns – examples of specific community projects as well as work by individuals

If both war and environment are not addressed, maximum Level 5, however well done.

This question asks students to summarise two areas – therefore the depth normally required for an examination of a single area is not required. The skills of selection will be important.

(30 marks) AO1

0	2	'It is more important for religion to take action on war than on environmental issues.' Assess this claim.
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Agree:

War involves killing which is against the principles of many religions;
War is indiscriminate and takes many innocent lives;
War can lead to ultimate annihilation if it escalates to nuclear, so imperative for religions to act;
War leads to environmental destruction, and hastens pollution;
War can be dealt with by political means; the environment involves everyone, and so is harder to deal with

Disagree:

Environmental destruction leads to depletion of resources, which is often the cause of war, so addressing the environment can also address war;
Environmental problems lead to starvation and death, so takes life just as war does;
Everyone can do something about the environment; many feel powerless to do anything about war;
If people don't do something about the environment, then all could face destruction.

Best answers are likely to consider the interrelatedness of war and the environment; and to recognise that both are complex issues which may be very difficult for religious leaders or politicians to address.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 2 Challenges to religion in contemporary society

0 3 Examine the nature of a secular society.

Note that this question is about the secular society; not the process of secularisation, of which the secular society may be seen as the end point.

Secular society is one not based on any religious presuppositions or patterns of living
Society in which religious rituals would have no place in public life
No place for religious symbols
No public recognition of religious festivals
Values and mores based on purely rational basis
Religion is allowed, but it is purely part of the private realm of the individual; people's religious belief would not in any way impinge on their public/professional roles; they could not be allowed time off for religious practice or duties
Religion may be banned from public discourse

May be, but does not have to be, equated with a secular state
There would be no state funding for any religious institutions

(30 marks) AO1

0 4 How far is it appropriate to describe UK society today as secular?

Appropriate

Religion not important in the lives of many people
Levels of belief and practice are low
People's values dictated by rationality and science
People's religious practice not important in terms of employment – under Equal Opportunities legislation, not allowed to be

Inappropriate

Religion still important in lives of many people
Interest in religious matters demonstrated through amount of material regularly found on TV programmes
Society largely very tolerant of religion in general
Role of established church
Various aspects of civic religion
Existence of faith schools, with state funding
Role of religious leaders in society

(20 marks) AO2

Question 3 New forms of spirituality both within and outside religions

0 5 Examine the work of the Religious Experience Research Unit (RERU).

Work of Sir Alistair Hardy, a biologist, established in Oxford in 1969
Now based at St David's Lampeter (now Trinity St. David's)
Designed to undertake scientific study of religious experience
Based on the question 'Have you been aware of, or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?'
Research especially among those who would not describe themselves as 'religious'
Documentation and analysis of thousands of cases
Multidisciplinary approach

Range of studies, showing that what used to be seen as the domain of religion is to be found within all people, religious or not;
Seeing spirituality as innate
Recognising that such experiences transcend religious barriers
Trying to understand that which was once seen as 'unknowable'
Helping people to talk about experiences which they may have seen as 'odd', or, if outside religion, have no language to employ,
Raising questions about the nature of what it is to be religious.

Needs clear focus on RERU rather than religious experience in general.

(30 marks) AO1

0 6 How far is interest in religious experience simply a natural response to a highly materialistic, commercialised society?

A natural response

As traditional religion declines in such a society, people look for other ways of expressing innate religiosity
People look beyond the traditional structures and organisations
In this society, the materialistic is countered by an interest in holistic approaches
The pressures of fast paced technological life make people look for alternatives

Counter view

May not be the materialistic society which leads to this, so much as the fact that people are better educated – read more widely
Or that they travel and encounter alternative lifestyles, from cultures where the spiritual and religious experience are more evident
Or that our knowledge of human nature means that there is a multi-disciplinary approach to spirituality, which encourages more people to be interested in it.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 4 Religion and national identity

0 7

Examine ways in which religion has traditionally been linked to national identity in the UK.

This may be answered in terms of British identity or of English, Scots, Welsh, Irish identity

Being 'Christian' (in the loosest sense), still seen as part of being British
'This is a Christian country' as a tabloid headline/assumption

The Union Jack is based around the symbols of 3 of the 4 patron saints
'Chocolate box' image of village churches seen as being very English

Symbolic role of the parish church

Great cathedrals seen as part of identity

'Jingoistic' elements of last night of proms, includes religious language-
'Rule Britannia..'

Hymns sung at football matches (even though singers may not be aware of them as hymns!)

Queen seen as Christian leader

Role of religion in national events

National anthem is a religious hymn

Parish structure affects every citizen, whether or not they are involved

In Scotland, role of the Kirk

Until devolution, General Assembly seen as nearest thing Scots had to a Parliament

Wales – chapel culture

Some may be able to comment on distinctive nature of British Muslims or of Anglo Jewry
but this is not required to reach the highest levels.

(30 marks) AO1

0 8

'Any idea of religion being involved with national identity is out of date in the 21st century.' Assess this view.

Agree – it is out of date:

National identity today is a complex idea, when we live in a global society; and when many of the population have actual or cultural roots in other countries

When a society is pluralistic, difficult to think of one religion being associated with the identity of the country

Most people are not religious, therefore inappropriate;

Encouraged to see ourselves as belonging to larger units such as Europe

Disagree – not out of date:

For many, this sense of identity is not far beneath the surface

Seen in aspects of civic religion such as state occasions, royal weddings, funerals etc

Important to have this symbolic identity

(20 marks) AO2