



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Religious Studies

RST4C

**Religious Authority OR
Ways of Moral Decision-Making OR
Ways of Reading and Understanding Scripture
A2 Unit 4C**

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 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) 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 barely adequate to make meaning clear.
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	

RST4C

Section A *Religious Authority*

Question 1

- 01 Examine sources of religious authority and how they function in one or more religion(s).**

It is important that the answer is able to establish the term 'sources', which should form a key part of the examination. It should be demonstrated that a source is something which can exercise authority itself because of what it is, that is, it is not dependent upon anything else. God may well be the most likely example: religious conscience can be another. Whatever is claimed, there should be within the examination a clear attempt to justify the example as a source.

The second part of the question asks for how the authority functions. This is either directly, for example, through God's intervention, or indirectly through another agent, like the prophets in Judaism. There need to be specific examples of this too.

Whilst a candidate may restrict their answer to God, a single source, they would need to demonstrate that even here there is a need for secondary sources, like the scriptures.

Maximum Level 5 if only one of source or function is tackled.

(45 marks) AO1

- 02 'Some sources of religious authority are so remote that other forms of religious authority are essential.' Evaluate this claim**

This question directly links with what candidates have examined in the first part and thus the debate should be about the source, which may well be God, and how effective any direct exercising of the authority seems to be. This may well then lead to further discussion about whether, if the source exercises authority through an intermediary, this is more effective. Thus, one might consider the Christian claim that Jesus was God in human form since this was the only really effective way for God to communicate with humans.

Religions like Hinduism or Buddhism might well maintain that the source requires explanation and other forms of human support.

Top level answers should also be able to show that there are clear ideas in religious people who believe that there is no need for any other authority; a possible example might be Quakers.

(30 marks) AO2

Question 2**03 Examine challenges to religious authority and responses to those challenges.**

It is important that answers here clearly focus upon challenge to religious authority and not challenge to religion in general. Whilst there is a connection between the two, the candidates must be able to make this connection in their examination. The examination requires that candidates explore the challenges, that is, they are able to state them, and then unpack why they really are challenges and in what way. The second part of the question asks for examination of the responses to the challenges. Again, if the candidate simply states a response without any examination, they are not fully addressing this part of the question. The examination here should probably focus upon exactly how the response is related to the challenge and in what way it attempts to respond – that is, answer the challenge. The challenges can be cited from either within religion or from without. There is no requirement that both are tackled.

If only challenges are provided with no responses then maximum top of Level 4.

(45 marks) AO1

04 ‘Religion responds successfully to all challenges.’ How far do you agree?

Candidates may take the responses they have referred to in the first part and assess how successful these have been. They may focus their answer upon religious authority and show that religious authority is maintained.

There should also be some consideration that religion is not always successful or at least not entirely. Expect examples to support these claims too.

The question, however, allows candidates to extend their discussion into any form of challenge to religion in general and top level answers should be able to do this, even if they are extrapolating from the work they have done about challenge to authority.

Thus, answers should look at broader challenges to religion from science or philosophy and consider whether it may still be accurate to imply that religion always meets the challenges.

‘How far’ requires a degree of gradation in the response.

(30 marks) AO2

Section B Ways of Moral Decision-making

Question 3

- 05 Examine the role of religious institutions and the religious conscience in moral decision-making.**

Candidates might make a distinction between religious institutions (for example in Christianity) where the religious conscience has a large role to play in moral decision-making and others (for example Hinduism) where established practice has a larger role than conscience. To some extent, all religious tradition informs the conscience, so religious authority generally tells believers what is right and wrong before conscience comes to bear on an issue. Thus it is not uncommon for various groups within each of the world religions to claim authority for their own version of the conscience and to demand that others obey that version. There are differences of emphasis within religions; so, for example, within the Christian tradition Protestant teaching emphasizes the importance of conscience to the level that it sometimes overrides all other religious authority.

Candidates might refer, for example, to the Augustinian view of the conscience as the voice of God, and discuss the difficulties of maintaining such a view; also to the Thomist idea of conscience as the operation of God-given reason. The remit of the question is general, so candidates are at liberty to take the discussion in whatever relevant direction they see fit.

(45 marks) AO1

- 06 ‘When making moral decisions, the authority of the conscience should be accepted above any other authority.’ Evaluate this claim.**

Evaluations will depend on the scope of what is discussed in connection with the first part of the question. The question here refers simply to the conscience, and not to the religious conscience, so candidates might extend the discussion to cover non-religious concepts of the conscience, such as those based on psychology, sociology and evolution. The focus of the question is on the comparison between the authority of the conscience and that of “any other authority”, so candidates will need to specify clearly what other authority is being considered. There is a perceived difference, for example, between the authority of the religious conscience as being grounded in the authority of a higher being or some other religious institution, and that of a secular view of the conscience that is grounded in reason or psychology.

(30 marks) AO2

Question 4**07 Examine the major ethical issues which arise from either medical research and medical developments or business practice and economics.**

The question has been left very open and clearly there are a number of ethical issues involved in both topics, medical and business. The focus can be around the broad topic heading; medical research and medical developments or business practice and economics. However, candidates may well choose to deal with specific ethical issues within their chosen topic and such an approach is very acceptable.

The examination should entail an outline of the problems and then some consideration of why these are ethical issues and what makes them ethical. Thus, for example, there might be a presentation of the ethical issues about the use of human embryos in medical research and part of the unpacking of the issue might well be over when a collection of cells might become a human being, alongside why human beings should not be used in experiments.

The broad approach might focus upon the idea that business practice and economics are in themselves unethical since they act against the interest of the individual, or they promote capitalism, for example.

Accept answers that span both medical and business ethics, though both are not required.

(45 marks) AO1

**08 'These ethical issues can never be solved by any ethical system.'
How far do you agree?**

It is likely that the ethical issues referred to here will be those which have been examined in the first part of the question but allow for a slight widening if presented. The focus of the question is the success of any ethical system in helping religious people deal with the ethical issues which have been tackled in the first part of the question. Since the question refers to any ethical system, expect that top level answers will refer to more than one. Some might want to argue that this is the case but that religion does provide an answer at least for religious people. Note however that the question has no restrictions and thus the debate does not have to be limited to religion or religious people.

Expect that top level answers will be specific, that is, they will refer to particular issues and to particular ethical systems. It is likely that generalisations will only reach bottom of Level 5 maximum.

'How far' requires a level of gradation in the answer.

(30 marks) AO2

Section C Ways of Reading and Understanding Scripture

Question 5

- 09 Outline the history of the scriptures of one religion from their origin to the 21st century.**

How this is answered will depend partly upon the chosen religion, thus in some cases there will be little development of particular aspects of the scripture. 'History' should focus upon the formation and the writing down, and it might include translation.

'History' could also include comment on the oral stage of scripture: for example in form-critical analysis within the Christian tradition. The question asks for an outline, so top-level answers will be broad-based, and should not focus only on particular issues.

(45 marks) AO1

- 10 Discuss how far beliefs about the status of these scriptures have been affected by events in history.**

There will need to be some consideration of the status of the scripture within the chosen religion and then reference to the key areas examined in the first part of the question which should follow into how far this has had any effect upon the status given to the scripture. For example, the scripture may well have been translated at some point and there may be no further control on translation which has meant that the status of the scripture can be diminished in the eyes of some because it is no longer God's word. However, others might claim that translation is always guided by God working through the translation and thus there is no damage to the status accorded to something which is regarded as the Word of God.

Textual criticism and issues around validity of text might also be a consideration. Candidates should be able to illustrate their points with a clear demonstration of how the status of the scriptures has been affected.

(30 marks) AO2

Question 6**11 Examine various approaches used by scholars in the study of the scriptures of one religion.**

The choice made by the candidate of the religion will clearly affect the type of answer given. There might be different approaches to different types of scripture or different approaches made by different elements within the religion. All of this should be taken into consideration in the answer. The examination should focus upon the possible different styles of textual scholarship, what these are and why they have been adopted. Where appropriate the negative should also be examined, that is, why a particular section of scripture is preserved from all scholarly study.

(45 marks) AO1

12 Consider how far the work of scholars is necessary for an understanding of the scriptures.

The 'how far' should lead to a consideration of whether scholarly study has made understanding more difficult and, if this is the case, for whom: only the scholars or for religious people or indeed for people in general?

There may well be some discussion around the accessibility of the scriptural teaching which in most cases was almost certainly not intended only for scholars when first conceived or received.

Top level answers should debate the necessary element of the question and thus may show that it is not vital but can be very helpful, for example. Again, expect specific examples from scriptural passages and scholarly understandings.

(30 marks) AO2

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