



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Religious Studies (8RS0)
Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Paper 8RS0 01: Philosophy of Religion - June 2023
Mark scheme

Question number	Answer	Mark
1	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This idea is associated with modern Design arguments from scholars who refer to ideas such as 'the anthropic principle' in terms of the universe being ordered for human life. • It suggests that there are too many 'coincidences' in the laws of nature that provide for life and if things had been any different then life would not occur. • This is taken as evidence of the existence of a designing God that has fine-tuned the universe for us to be able to exist. • This idea is seen as compatible with evolution as it could be part of God's plan for humanity to emerge. • It is challenged by the idea that whilst it may seem remarkable that the conditions are 'just right' we only see this as a result of our existence within this improbable world demonstrating that order is not improbable but excessive order requires an explanation. 	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Answer	Mark
2	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting the AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classical notion of God defines God as omnipotent and omnibenevolent. • As such God could have created a world free from evil and suffering. • The evident existence of both natural and moral evil and suffering contradicts the nature of God and/or God's existence thus creating an inconsistent triad. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people accept that suffering is a reality and hold that if being wholly good means desiring to eliminate suffering as far as possible then God cannot be believed to be this type of God given the reality of suffering thus challenging the nature of God. • It could be argued that God does not have the power to eliminate suffering as some process theologians advocate; but this alters the classical notion of the nature of God and leaves some questioning whether this sort of being is worthy of worship at all. • Monists argue that suffering is an illusion and thus there is no problem of suffering and no inconsistency; but this is unsatisfactory to many experiencing suffering leaving the challenge to God's nature and even existence intact. • The scale of suffering can be the most challenging for the nature of God as even if it is accepted that some suffering can be beneficial for humans, many object to the scale and gravity observed which seriously challenges the nature of God as all loving and all powerful. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(9)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).

Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2)

Question number	Indicative content
3	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates who explore only one challenge cannot normally proceed beyond level 2. If candidates present more than two challenges, read all and credit the best material.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may not be true that everything has a cause as at the quantum level electrons can come into existence without a cause. There could have been an infinite series of causes with no First Cause. Even if there is a First Cause it need not be 'God'. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The idea that there could be an infinite series could ruin Cosmological Arguments because it undermines the key premise that without a first cause there would be nothing in existence. If it can be shown that things can come into and go out of existence without a cause then this significantly impacts the persuasiveness of Cosmological Arguments as they are based on the theory of causation. The impact of the revelation that at the quantum level things appear uncaused can be limited given there may be future understandings that explain how this is in fact 'caused' although it currently appears uncaused. Additionally, even if it can be indicated that a first cause is more likely as a reason to explain the series, given Ockham's Razor, there is no reason for the inductive leap to conclude it is 'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content
4(a)	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion experiences can be dramatic or more gradual; they are life-changing and bear fruits in the life of a convert such as a change of direction and feelings of peace and purpose as exemplified in the life of Nicky Cruz. • Numinous experiences are hard to define but include a sense of awe and wonder, a deeper understanding of reality and of a connection with the divine. • Mystical experiences tend to convey knowledge and certainty but are hard to express (noetic and ineffable); they are often short lived (transient) and the experient feels taken over by the event and are passive in it. • Corporate experiences involve groups of people sharing in the experience of the presence of God as was reported in the series known as the Toronto Blessing where people shook, wept and laughed uncontrollably as part of the encounter. • Prayer can lead to the experience of the presence of God or communication with the divine and can take many forms from silent reflection to glossolalia.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Indicative content
4(b)	<p>5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious experiences may be the product of faith, where unusual experiences are not investigated further with science but are accepted because they are interpreted through a pre-existent framework of belief and labelled God. • Physiological explanations such as these experiences being understood as a function of the temporal lobes indicate religious experience is brain wiring not God calling. • Religious experience can be explained as a projection of human psychological need, created to help face fear and death. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion experiences undermine the challenge that religious experiences are products of faith only, however these can be questioned too as recipients may still have been exposed to the tools to interpret them via other religious views rather than being a full conversion to new knowledge, even if to new conviction. • The longevity of the impact of religious experiences is testimony to the fact that something extremely powerful is at their root thus supporting the idea of God rather than other explanations as the cause. • TLE and further developments in neuro theology show how the brain works in such a way as to be able to explain heightened sensitivities in some people leading them to believe they have experienced God but it is really just a physiological phenomenon in their brain which significantly undermines these experiences as proof for God's existence. • It could be argued that God may communicate more easily with those open to receive these events and share the message thus it should be no surprise that believers report more religious experiences than sceptics and this need not undermine the argument. • The argument is not undermined by alternative explanations because if God is Spirit/Mind and not matter it would be the mind that God works through and these archetypes can have a positive impact on the mental well-being of humans supporting the idea that religious experiences come from God. • Alternative explanations may be true of some accounts: some reports may be due to temporal lobe epilepsy but that does not mean this is true for all accounts, so it could be God after all. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues may be selected (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).