



GCE AS EXAMINERS' REPORTS

RELIGIOUS STUDIES AS

SUMMER 2022

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Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCE AS

Summer 2022

COMPONENT 1A: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY

General Comments

Overall, the paper was answered fairly well, with some candidates showing extensive knowledge and understanding in AO1 and evaluative skills in AO2. The full range of marks were applied showing the paper effectively differentiated between candidates' responses. Some candidates scored much higher on either part (a) or part (b), although there was no pattern to this as some scored higher on part (a) on Section A and then part (b) on Section B, for example.

All questions were attempted, showing the accessibility of the paper. Q1 was by far the most popular selection from Section A (attempt% 85.25%) and Q4 in Section B (attempt% 68.2%). Q1 was the question answered most successfully in Section A (mean=27.8 for (a) and (b) combined), with many students writing well-constructed arguments for part (b), and Q4 was the question answered most successfully in Section B (mean=28.3 for (a) and (b) combined).

The strongest AO1 responses demonstrated excellent understanding of the specific demands of the question and showed insight into religion and belief. Stronger AO2 responses were insightful and were written with academic flair. Weaker responses demonstrated candidates had failed to fully grasp the question.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1 (a) Outline the pastoral benefits and challenges for Christians of viewing God as Father. [AO1 25]

This was the most popular question in Section A. There was a good range of answers covering all five bands. Stronger answers focused on specifically the pastoral benefits and challenges, as opposed to just generic benefits and challenges. Weaker responses generally only mentioned one of these or failed to understand the meaning of the term 'pastoral'. Some weaker responses included material that would have been better placed in part (b) in their part (a) answer and others focused more on the idea of God being 'male' rather than 'Father'.

Features of stronger responses:

- Detailed explanations of how seeing God as Father brings specific benefits or challenges compared to Mother.
- Specific reference to scripture including knowledge of God being represented as a comforting Mother.

Features of weaker responses:

- Only considered either pastoral benefits or challenges.
- Misunderstood or ignored the term 'pastoral'.
- Generalised answers about God as male not God as Father.

- (b) 'Christians should view God as Mother rather than as Father.'**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

This part was answered more successfully than the part (a) as candidates had knowledge of Sallie McFague that they included in part (b) and used to focus their argument. This knowledge allowed them to explore their own views and in essence many treated this question as a critique of McFague's ideas surrounding God as Mother. Students who had not focused their answer for part (a) due to missing a key component of the question were able to construct sound arguments for part (b) meaning this part was, on the whole, answered more successfully than part (a) on this question.

Features of stronger responses:

- Well-constructed arguments centred around McFague's Trinity analogy.
- Used knowledge to craft a well-thought-out argument, rather than treating it as an AO1 answer.
- Evaluated specific qualities such as being a 'disciplinarian' and whether these are attributes commonly associated with being a mother or a father.

Features of weaker responses:

- Treated it as an AO1 question about Sallie McFague.
- Focused solely on God as Mother or God as Father.

- Q.2 (a) Examine Christ's relationship with the Father in the Trinity** **[AO1 25]**

This was not as popular as Q1, although candidates that answered it tended to do almost as well. Many candidates showed sound knowledge and understanding of the Trinity and stronger answers focused on the relationship between God the Father and God the Son, therefore answering the specific demands of the question. Many candidates referred to Jesus' baptism as a representation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit being present and stronger answers referred to other sections of scripture. Many responses referred to Tertullian and origins of the Trinity.

Features of stronger responses:

- Specific reference to scripture used to show the relationship between Christ and the Father.
- Used specialist language and vocabulary such as coexistent, coequal, coeternal and consubstantial.

Features of weaker responses:

- Focused solely on Jesus' baptism and made no other scriptural references.
- Gave a general description of Jesus' characteristics.
- Gave a general description of the Trinity.

(b) 'The doctrine of the Trinity is necessary to understand the God of Christianity.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Stronger answers referred to both the Immanent Trinity and the Economic Trinity and explored these concepts, analysing each in detail. Some candidates included similar content to part (a) but used it to develop an argument that the Trinity is necessary as we understand the Father through his relationship with Christ. A fair number of responses showed inconsistent evaluation of the issue, where candidates changed their argument part way through their answers.

Features of stronger responses:

- Analysed the Immanent and Economic Trinity in detail.
- Consistently evaluated the issue and sustained the argument throughout.
- Used the relationship of Father and Son to construct an argument on the necessity of the Trinity.

Features of weaker responses:

- Used the same content from part (a) but did not use it to construct an argument, therefore not meeting AO2 requirements.
- Argued that the Trinity isn't necessary as Christians don't understand it, but then gave no evidence to support this thesis.

Section B

Q.3 (a) Examine the New Testament community of believers as described in Acts 2.

[AO1 25]

Very few candidates answered this question (9.1%), but those that did tended to answer it fairly well, with some candidates writing Band 5 responses. Some candidates also included content from the A Level Specification, as opposed to content only in the AS Specification and used this well. Many candidates systematically reviewed Acts 2, showing excellent knowledge and understanding of this key piece of scripture.

Features of stronger responses:

- Detailed references to specific sections of Acts 2.
- Included excellent knowledge and understanding of the kerygma.
- Included a wide variety of elements of the New Testament community of believers.

Features of weaker responses:

- Included only the more obvious elements of Acts 2 such as 'breaking bread'.
- Gave a vague response not focused on scripture.

(b) 'Contemporary Christian churches should follow the New Testament model.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Candidates generally answered part (b) well. Candidates had well-constructed arguments and used scripture from Acts 2 well to support and justify their views. Some candidates explored whether the New Testament community of believers lived communally and whether this is possible or desirable today. Some responses included modern examples of charitable work done by Christian communities, therefore supporting the view that Contemporary Christian churches should focus on action and supporting the poor and needy.

Features of stronger responses:

- Critical evaluation of communal living or charitable deeds.
- Detailed analysis of concepts such as 'breaking bread'.
- Varied, modern examples to support arguments given.

Features of weaker responses:

- Did not focus on the question and instead just explained what happens in churches today.
- Did not justify arguments with scriptural evidence or modern examples.

Q.4 (a) Explain the importance of the Eucharist in different Christian communities.

[AO1 25]

This was by far the most popular question in Section B and the full range of Band descriptors was achieved. Strong knowledge and understanding was shown of various explanations of the Eucharist, however many answers did not focus on the importance of these. Candidates all mentioned transubstantiation and most included consubstantiation.

Features of stronger responses:

- Included a variety of views on the Eucharist.
- Focused on the importance of the Eucharist.
- Mentioned specific Christian communities, including Orthodox.

Features of weaker responses:

- Mentioned only transubstantiation.
- Did not focus on the importance.
- Only mentioned Eucharist from one type of Christian community.

- (b) **‘How the Eucharist is understood affects the way it is celebrated.’
Evaluate this view.** [AO2 25]

This question was generally the best answered (mean of 14.2) in Section B of this paper. Candidates evaluated the Eucharist but did not focus on the differences in the way it is celebrated reflects how it is understood. Some candidates instead wrote about differences in the interpretations of the Eucharist and did not mention the practice itself at all. Some mentioned, it but did not focus on the differences relating to the way it is understood.

Features of stronger responses:

- Included specific links between beliefs and practices, e.g. the view that Catholic ceremonies place a great importance on the Eucharist due to the belief in transubstantiation.
- Constructed an argument based on specific Christian communities and their practices.

Features of weaker responses:

- Did not focus on the way Eucharist is celebrated.
- Focused only on one type of Christian community.
- Treated it more like an AO1 question about the Eucharist and therefore wrote very similar material to part (a) without using it to construct an argument.

- Q.5 (a) **Explain how Jesus’ resurrection can be understood with reference to John 20–21.** [AO1 25]

Many responses tended to be either strong or weak, rather than anywhere in between. Many candidates chose to explain Jesus’ resurrection in John in a sequential way, explaining the various elements of the chiasm in order. Stronger answers included many references to scripture, including a few answers using a range of direct quotations from John 20-21. Weaker answers described the story of Jesus’ resurrection.

Features of stronger responses:

- Direct quotations explained clearly.
- Explained all elements of the chiasm.
- Linked the scripture clearly to how this is viewed as significant in Christianity.

Features of weaker responses:

- Retold the biblical story of Jesus’ resurrection.
- Included references to John but did not explain these or how they help Christians to understand Jesus’ resurrection.

- (b) **‘The resurrected Jesus had a physical body.’**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

The part (b) for this question was higher scoring (mean=10.2) than the part (a) (mean=7.9) with many candidates writing sustained arguments that were supported by biblical references. Many candidates included references to Jesus appearing in a locked room, with stronger candidates arguing that Jesus could perform impossible feats whilst on Earth, in his physical body before his death.

Features of stronger responses:

- Referred to specific biblical events in Jesus’ life and after his resurrection to argue their thesis.
- Included specific vocabulary relating to the nature of the resurrected body.

Features of weaker responses:

- Only focused on Jesus having a spiritual body due to appearing in a locked room.
- Wrote an inconsistent argument changing views throughout the answer.

Summary of key points

- Candidates should ensure the content is known well enough to explain details. Examples should be included to illustrate points where relevant, and a variety of sources of wisdom and authority should be learned so that the most appropriate can be selected.
- Candidates should read the question carefully and ensure that their response answers the specific demands of the question. Centres should warn candidates not to simply reproduce answers prepared beforehand during revision or mock examinations, for example, as they run the risk of regurgitating these in the exam and not answering the specific demands of the question.
- Centres should ensure that all vocabulary relating to the subject, especially language featuring in the specification, is taught and understood by candidates.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCE AS

Summer 2022

COMPONENT 1B: An Introduction to Islam

General Comments

All questions were attempted, showing the accessibility of the paper and Q1 (attempt% 58%) the most popular question in Section A and Q4 in Section B (attempt% 43%). Q2 was the question with the highest mean score within Section A (mean=37.7 for (a) and (b) combined), Q3 was the question with the highest mean score within Section B (mean=37.3 for (a) and (b) combined).

The standard of responses was generally good and comparable with the last full series in 2019, which is a commendable feat for candidates and teachers given the circumstances of the pandemic over the previous two years.

Candidates had clearly spent much time learning the subject matter and many wrote lengthy, detailed answers. The breadth and depth of AO1 responses reflected this. AO2 responses also contained a fair degree of supporting information. Many achieved Band 4, making purposeful analysis and evaluation. There were few basic responses which were awarded Band 1 or 2. However, there were also slightly fewer Band 5 responses. It was evident in many that the craft of developing a reasoning discussion was in development and could benefit from additional maturity. Formulaic answers, in which candidates wrote for and against, 'I agree/I disagree', 'this is a strong argument.../weak argument' were commonly used, but not always used well since they did not always match the arguments presented.

Many candidates did attempt to address the specific questions set. Weaker candidates might improve by focusing more closely on the wording of the question and selecting relevant material. Very lengthy responses often lost focus. It is necessary to provide sufficient length and detail to support an argument, but it is worth bearing in mind that the overall mark is based on how far the quality of argument matches a Band descriptor. A two-sided response to a part, well focused on the argument, would most likely be more appropriate as a response than a three-sided response lacking clarity.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1 (a) Examine the role of the rasul (messenger) in Islam. [AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Were able to identify aspects of the role of the rasul, including delivering messages from God, with names examples.
- Provided paragraphs based on aspects of the role, giving a thematic structure to the answer which directly addressed the question.
- Structured their essays by writing about some of the five prophets thought to receive such revelations and drawing lessons from them. This was also an acceptable way to answer the question.

Features of weaker responses:

- Lacked breadth or depth, often by focusing only on Muhammad and not mentioning previous prophets and revelations.
- Did not distinguish the role of rasul from guide and inspiration in general, although mention of both was relevant.

- (b) 'Without messengers, Islam could not have succeeded.'**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Define 'succeeded', success against the Meccans; success in convincing people to believe; success in preserving the revealed text from corruption, etc.
- Generally agreed with the statement, but argued that if God wanted, God could have found another way for the religion to succeed, and angels were also important in process of revelation and therefore acceptance of the religion.
- Referred to Muhammad's leadership in Madinah and argued that without his messages, Muslims would not have had the confidence to repel their Meccan enemies and might have been crushed. This made for purposeful evaluation.
- Some claimed messengers were not always a success because previous messages did not last.
- Were able to grapple with 'if' statements often made stronger arguments: if Muhammad had not provided a message... then....

Features of weaker responses:

- Failed to consider what 'success' means in terms of Islam, an obvious part of the statement.
- Tended to offer a one-sided argument without considering different views.

- Q.2 (a) Explain the nature of tawhid (oneness) as uncompromising monotheism.**

[AO1 25]

Candidates demonstrated good knowledge of Islamic beliefs in tawhid and were able to articulate the beliefs about rejection of idolatry, God as one without any partners, and unable to be represented in any physical form.

Features of stronger responses:

- Defined 'uncompromising'.
- Used key terminology accurately: tawhid as opposed to shirk, the association of others besides God, seen as forbidden in Islam.
- Often gave one or two quotations to back up their arguments, such as from the Qur'an and hadith.

Features of weaker responses:

- Failed to grapple directly with ‘uncompromising’ and its meaning, although most referred to it in general terms.
- Made little or no reference to the Qur’an and hadith.

- (b) ‘The shahadah means little until it is publicly declared.’
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Candidates had clear knowledge of the shahadah and occasions during which it might be said, including conversion/ reversion to Islam, during prayer, before death and at other important times in life and during ritual. The meaning of it in terms of belief in God and acceptance of the prophethood of Muhammad was also well understood.

Features of stronger responses:

- Discussed the importance of declaring faith for acceptance and support as part of the ummah, the community of Muslims. It was mentioned as a condition for conversion.
- Argued that the true meaning of the shahadah in the heart might be considered a pre-requisite in the first instance, achieved in private reflection, before organising a ceremony of social acceptance.

Features of weaker responses:

- focused on the general importance of the shahadah, instead of directly addressing ‘means little’, as in the statement.

Section B

- Q.3 (a)** Outline the nature and purpose of three different types of prayer in Islam.

[AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Demonstrated that they knew the details of daily salah prayer, and mentioned other prayers such as personal du’a prayer, optional nawfil prayer, Jummah prayers on Friday, funeral prayer, and others besides. Most answered by writing three detailed paragraphs, one for each prayer type.
- Summarised the prayers chosen and went on to explain the purpose of the prayers.

Features of weaker responses:

- missed out the 'purpose' in their response to the question set.
- Failed to grasp that 'outline', means vast amounts of detail are unnecessary here, but balancing the answer between nature and purpose is important. Some may have left insufficient time to cover the purpose having written so much detail about the nature of the prayers. This is an important examination technique which might want to be addressed by centres.

- (b) 'Prayer is nothing more than a ritualistic act of piety.'**
Evaluate this view with reference to Islam.

[AO2 25]

It is expected that AS level candidates have a good understanding of technical terminology such as 'piety' and 'ritualistic'. Stronger candidates did so, but few gave any definition, but had they done so, it might have got their essay off to a strong and clear start. Weaker responses were unclear about the terms and wrote instead about the importance of prayer.

Features of stronger responses:

- Agreed and suggested that's all prayer should be, as an act of obedience to God leaving behind all other concerns.
- Argued that prayer should be fully understood to deepen a Muslim's faith and avoid ritual without meaning and true intention, dependent on it.

Features of weaker responses:

- were able to make some evaluation, but confident, coherent discussion was dependent on clear understanding of the terms and so proved elusive to some.

- Q.4 (a) Outline the religious, social and political role of masjids (mosques) in the UK today.**

[AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Wrote clear and detailed paragraphs, often one for each of the three areas specified in the question.
- Considered politics in its broadest sense, such as political consultation on social issues, membership, and referral to organisations such as the Muslim Council of Britain and so on.
- Social roles of mosques included support for Muslims facing difficulties with shared meals, counselling, and specific advice for social issues particularly regarding marriage.

Features of weaker responses:

- Only covered one or two areas and missed out the other or wrote in general about mosques without clearly defining the roles in these categories.
- Wrote about the roles of masjids during the time of Muhammad, but this question was specifically focused on the UK today, so political roles about the tribes in Madinah were not relevant.
- Only mentioned religious roles and therefore did not address the breadth needed for a full response to this question.

(b) 'Prostration is the most important purpose of the masjid.'
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Mentioned that the definition of masjid in Islam is place of prostration, and that there is an Islamic tradition that the whole world is a masjid on which to pray and used these two as the focus of an argument both for and against the statement.
- Focussed specifically on the 'purpose' of the masjid and what was the most important purpose.

Features of weaker responses:

- Accepted the statement without challenge and focused on prayer.
- Did not address the question set and instead simply described activities in the masjid without much discussion on the most purpose of the masjid.

Q.5 (a) Examine the nature of the Qur'an as the final revelation for Muslims.

[AO1 25]

'Examine' requires some consideration of depth, with the subject matter here being the nature of the Qur'an as final revelation. This question was generally well answered with strong knowledge from most candidates, although some could have done more to address the finality of the revelation, as this was the focus in the question.

Features of stronger responses:

- Focussed on finality, and therefore the authority of the Qur'an.
- Mentioned that the Qur'an was intended to complete the revelations which had begun earlier, but were regarded as corrupted over time, and that no other revelations could be expected after this final one.

Features of weaker responses:

- narrated the progressive revelation of the Qur'an in Makkah and then Madinah, and partly addressed its nature in terms of its style and beauty.

- (b) **‘For Muslims, the Qur’an is as relevant today as it always has been.’**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Discussed modern issues and debated whether the Qur’an addressed them with as much clarity as the issues of yesteryear. Issues such as abortion and euthanasia were commonly mentioned, as well as other aspects of technology and modern living.
- Argued in agreement, writing that it did not matter about the issues of the day, the authority of the Qur’an as revelation from God for Muslims as the main point and that did not change. This was developed with discussion of how the Qur’an is always looked to for principles and guidance, even if it did not directly answer an issue.
- Distinguished between relevance and importance, arguing that the Qur’an was as important as ever, but not as relevant without scholarly interpretation for the modern day. This made a strong argument.

Features of weaker responses:

- Followed an agree/disagree format, but sometimes struggled to justify any of the brief points made.

Summary of key points

- Candidates should read the command word given at the start of AO1 questions carefully. For example, they ensure they ‘explain’ (rather than describe), provide depth when asked to ‘examine’, and provide a summary when asked to ‘outline’.
- Candidates should concentrate on the quality of their argument for AO2, rather than simply the amount of factual information they can include.
- The exact wording of the statement should be addressed, and candidates should ensure they respond to all of it.
- Whilst structures such as agree/ disagree and strong/ weak argument may help some, candidates should ensure these agree with the details and case they are making, so that the overall argument builds logically.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCE AS

Summer 2022

COMPONENT 1D: AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

General Comments

The most popular question in Section A was Q2 (attempt % 80.9%). The most popular question in Section B was Q3 (attempt % 66%). Q2 was the question with the highest mean score in Section A (mean=30.8 for (a) and (b) combined), Q3 was the question with the highest mean score in Section B (mean=30.4 for (a) and (b) combined).

The paper was accessible, and it allowed candidates to demonstrate both depth and breadth across AO1 and AO2. The full range of marks/bands were visible across most of the questions. Overall, the mean mark for Part (a) AO1s and Part (b) AO2s were similar per question. In the most popular questions (Q2 and Q3) on average higher marks were awarded to the part (b) AO2 responses, some of which were exceptional. A high level of analytical and evaluative writing was demonstrated.

AO2 responses that achieved Band 5 often featured clear arguments that built up a discussion around the statement in the question, with clear analysis and evaluation throughout. Weaker responses tended to describe arguments as individual ideas rather than arguments linked to a wider debate.

Some weaker responses took a simple 'for/against/conclusion' approach that was too short to progress higher in the bands.

Candidates also need to be reminded to ensure that they clearly label their responses (a) and (b).

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1 (a) Examine the concept of punya (merit) in Buddhism.

[AO1 25]

Most candidates gave answers that explained punya through dana. There were a number of answers that focussed heavily on the link between karma and punya. This response was accepted and still allowed for the full range of marks, as long as the focus was on punya.

Features of stronger responses:

- Clear understanding of a variety of ways of generating and giving merit, fully explained with a good use of examples.
- Mature and well written response that covers either breadth or depth of the concept of punya.

Features of weaker responses:

- Did not engage with the uses and the connections between punya and other areas of Buddhism, which led to a very short answer akin to a definition.
- Simplistic arguments that go little beyond definitions and a lack of examples.

**(b) 'Punya is completely dependent on dana'
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Many candidates used their knowledge of the various streams of merit and examples of some, to form strong arguments against the statement. Candidates made strong arguments in favour of the statement, with the majority of candidates concluding this way.

Features of stronger responses:

- Referred to the streams of merit available, with examples and where this can be found in scripture
- A clear understanding of the various elements of punya and how they interconnect with other concepts. A clear understanding of the link to enlightenment.

Features of weaker responses:

- Simplistic arguments that briefly explained alternative ways in which Buddhists can gain merit
- The weakest answers gave only a one-sided response, generally in favour of the statement

Q.2 (a) Outline the meanings of the three refuges in Buddhism. [AO1 25]

The stronger arguments fully explained the meanings of each of the refuges rather than just describing the refuge. Many responses failed to get out of band three because of this. Excellent responses engaged with the importance of the refuges as part of the 'meanings' and understood that there was not one general meaning and that many traditions view the refuges differently.

Features of stronger responses:

- Detailed answers that explained how a variety of Buddhist traditions would view each of the three refuges
- Strong examples, comparisons between groups of Buddhists and references to scripture

Features of weaker responses:

- Simple explanations of Dharma, Buddha and Sangha
- A focus on 'going for refuge' as an action done by an individual Buddhist rather than the meaning of each of the refuges.

- (b) **‘Dharma is the most important refuge for Buddhists. Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Many candidates gave a response that posed each refuge as the most important, rather than critically engaging with the strengths and weaknesses of each refuge. Many responses gave the argument that none of the refuges can be the most important.

Features of stronger responses:

- Featured references to scholars and scripture.
- A clear understanding that the statement cannot be true given the variety of viewpoints explored in the part (a).

Features of weaker responses:

- Candidates who did not understand the analytic nature of the question by not including more than one point of view.
- Candidates providing three paragraphs explaining why each of the refuges is to be considered the most important. This led to some very short answers with no evaluation.

Section B

- Q.3 (a) Explain the four Noble Truths, with reference to the medical metaphor.**

[AO1 25]

Those that did engage with the metaphor took two approaches, interwoven into each paragraph about each of the Noble Truths or a separate paragraph at the end, either approach was able to achieve Band 5.

One of the main weaknesses of answers was that candidates did not reference the medical metaphor or when they did it was not fully explained as a corresponding analogy to the Four Noble Truths.

Features of stronger responses:

- Excellent use of technical language and full explanations of each of the Four Noble Truths, in depth. Often with a deeper understanding of the various forms of Dukkha.
- Excellent use of examples for each of the Four Noble truths as well as the medical metaphor clearly linked to each stage of the truths.

Features of weaker responses:

- Some candidates went off topic and moved into discussions about the three lakshanas.
- There were some candidates that did not include an explanation of nirodha and magga demonstrating only a basic understanding of the Four Noble Truths
- Candidates did not always clearly explain the link between the Four Noble Truths and the medical metaphor.

(b) 'The Four Noble Truths do not reflect reality'
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

The best answers were those that gave clear examples both for and against the statement. Some students made links to the reality of the Buddha's experience of the four sights. Some of the better answers included this as well as the medical metaphor explained clearly, as a real life example of the Four Noble Truths. However, some answers focussed too heavily on the examples and not enough on the arguments that they needed to make.

Features of stronger responses:

- The question is one that lends itself to examples, but the best answers were those that critically analysed these examples and were able to successfully balance their arguments.
- A reference to scholars and the ability to engage with their opinions e.g. Peter Harvey

Features of a weaker response:

- Some candidates wrote very repetitive answers that explained step by step how each of the Four Noble Truths reflected reality with a real-life example. This did not allow them to demonstrate their analytical and evaluative AO2 writing style and led to a one-sided argument.
- Some candidates made points that did not have sufficient evidence-statements without explanations.

Q.4 (a) Examine the Buddhist notion of karma

[AO1 25]

The best responses to this question explained the impact of actions rather than karma as a basic transaction, which was a feature of the weaker answers. Weaker answers described karma in the most simplistic form but did not explain the notion fully.

Features of stronger responses:

- The best answers were those that included reference to scripture, often an explanation of King Milinda, chapters 1-9. Some of the higher band 5 answers featured direct quotes that were embedded and explained.
- Candidates who expressed the scope of karma across all aspects of Buddhism

Features of a weaker responses:

- Basic definitions of karma that showed an understanding of the need for good action to attain a 'better' rebirth
- nothing beyond samsara, such as what the Buddha said about Karma or how it is more than physical good and bad actions.

- (b) **‘Buddhists should reject questions about the existence of God.’
Evaluate this view.** [AO2 25]

Many candidates used the poison arrow example to good effect here. There were many examples of candidates who engaged with the opinion of Buddhism as a philosophy, negating a need for a deity, some of these arguments were well analysed. The most effective arguments were those that engaged with the teachings of the Buddha and scholars.

Features stronger responses:

- Strong responses critically engaged with the word ‘reject’ in the question, discussing the active rejection or the passive ignoring of questions around a creator God.
- The strongest arguments acknowledged the variety of lines of questioning that could come from the statement. They demonstrated that they fully understood the demands of the question

Features of weaker responses:

- Some answers lacked analysis and evaluation, focussing more on whether God exists or not rather than engaging with the statement successfully and discussing whether Buddhists should reject questions
- Some candidates gave a one-sided response that was more reminiscent of an AO1 answer.
- There were answers that focussed on the idea that gods existed in realms but again, were not engaging with the question.

- Q.5 (a) **Explain the Buddha’s knowledge of past lives, karma and the cessation of dukkha, in accounts of his awakening.** [AO1 25]

This was the least popular question on the paper, very few candidates answered this question.

Features of a stronger response:

- The strongest answers were those that demonstrated an equal understanding of all three parts of the question.
- Strong answers included specific scripture or reference to teachings of the Buddha e.g. the Jataka tales

Features of a weaker response:

- Not including all three aspects of the question or briefly mentioning one
- Demonstrating a lack of understanding of the question requirements. Some candidates explained karma and dukkha without reference to the Buddha and his awakening.

- (b) **‘The Buddha’s Awakening is an experience beyond language. Evaluate this view.** [AO2 25]

Very few answers critically engaged with the statement to a high level. A popular line of reasoning was the idea that no religious experience can be put into words. This was countered with the idea that the Dharma came from his experiences. Few answers were able to express Buddhist teachings to support their arguments.

Features of stronger responses:

- Candidates demonstrating a clear understanding of the requirements of the question.
- A variety of arguments for and against the statement that are fully explained with specific examples found in scripture as well as general Buddhist teachings such as *santaya*.

Features of weaker responses:

- Some candidates did not engage with the question effectively. Answers of this nature explained the viewpoint of the statement but did not go further than this or express an opposing view

Summary of key points

- Candidates that performed well were those who engaged with the specific demands of the AO1 question and did not stray unnecessarily into other areas of Buddhism that were not entirely relevant to the answer they were providing or conversely not explaining all elements of question
- AO2 questions were successful when students demonstrated analysis of the points that they were making, critically engaging with argument. Lines of enquiry need to be supported by examples and evidence.
- The best answers were those that had an understanding of teachings and were able to select relevant teachings. This could be as reference rather than quoting word for word.
- There were examples of candidates having some understanding of diversity within Buddhism, but this was not always the case and could be developed.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCE AS

Summer 2022

COMPONENT 2: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

General Comments

The most popular question in Section A was Q2 (attempt % 66.8%). The most popular question in Section B was Q3 (attempt % 54.7%). Q1 was the question with the highest mean score in Section A (mean=26 for (a) and (b) combined), Q5 was the question with the highest mean score in Section B (mean=25.8 for (a) and (b) combined). Generally, across the paper mean scores were higher for the AO1 responses than AO2, apart from in Q1.

Candidates are making considerable use of the resources available to support the Eduqas specification. There is also evidence of the use of past papers and mark schemes as useful preparation. Some areas of expertise are growing considerably. In most areas there is clear evidence of some excellent teaching which is enthusing candidates to respond as they have done. Candidates have been prepared well to meet the demands of the paper in terms of recognising the skills required for both AO1 and AO2 responses.

However, there is evidence that some candidates are not always familiar with the meaning of a particular word from the Specification which causes them issues when they experience it in a question. Examples of these words are 'impact', 'persuasive', 'authenticity' and 'objectivity.' Candidates would benefit from regularly being given work which contains key words from the Specification, so that they are familiar with them before attempting the examination paper.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1. (a) Explain Descartes' and Malcolm's ontological arguments for the existence of God. [AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- did not give lengthy explanations of ontological arguments per se, although a description of the nature of them is useful.
- understood the particular nature of Descartes' ontological argument and were able to apply some of his examples effectively.
- explained Malcolm's development of St. Anselm's ontological argument and could explain the particular nature of Malcolm's line of reasoning.
- Selected relevant information to address the question.

Features of weaker responses:

- gave lengthy explanations of the nature of ontological argument, some of which was either incorrect or showed rote learning rather than understanding.
- spent a considerable amount of time on St. Anselm's ontological argument to the detriment of the stated two.
- due to the lack of real understanding, were not able to effectively explain how either Descartes' or Malcolm's ontological arguments were presented.

- (b) **‘Ontological arguments are more persuasive than cosmological arguments for God’s existence.’**
Evaluate this view. [A02 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- candidates were able to perform a comparative evaluation of ontological and cosmological arguments, rather than stand-alone evaluations of the two.
- numerous scholars were used in order to present lines of arguments as well as general persuasive and unpersuasive aspects of each argument.
- revised material was adapted appropriately to the question.
- there was evidence of both analysis and evaluation and reference was made to the word ‘persuasive’ which is not the same as ‘proves.’

Features of weaker responses:

- made this a question in which they simply evaluated each argument for God’s existence separately, rather than analysing the relative persuasiveness of one against the other. Candidates should be made aware that tagging on the question at the end of a set of statements is not real evaluation.
- little or no use of scholars.
- Compartmentalised revision, with some students displaying a lack of preparedness for this question.

- Q.2 (a) **Explain challenges to ontological arguments with reference to Kant and Gaunilo.** [AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- understood that ontological arguments have a number of challenges to them but did focus on the two scholars.
- recognised how such arguments ‘work’ and with this recognition came a greater ability to understand the challenges to them.
- did not just relate Gaunilo’s most perfect island example but understood that it must be used as an analogy to show why he rejected St. Anselm’s ontological argument for God’s existence.
- realised that the major challenge to these arguments is that existence is not a predicate and expanded on Kant’s challenge in this vein.
- also recounted the idea of Kant that as existence does not add anything to a concept then 100 real thalers contain no more thalers than 100 thalers in the mind alone. This adds weight to the challenge that existence in reality is not greater than existence in mind only.
- used Kant’s examples of the triangle and the valley and mountain.

Features of weaker responses:

- spent an unnecessary amount of time explaining the ontological argument either because they lacked the understanding to differentiate between AO1 and AO2 or because that is what they wanted the question to be.
- described Gaunilo's most perfect island example but failed to show how it should be used in relation to ontological arguments.
- did not understand ontological arguments and consequently could not examine challenges to them.
- had little or no understanding of separate challenges raised by Kant, nor did they use any of his examples.

(b) 'A *priori* arguments for God's existence are not persuasive.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- did not make this into a question purely about the persuasiveness of ontological arguments.
- may well have included reference to ontological arguments but used these arguments perceptively to draw out the persuasiveness or not of *a priori* arguments.
- made good use of a comparison with *a posteriori* arguments, suggesting that one mode of argumentation may be more persuasive than the other.
- pointed out that *a priori* arguments may be persuasive as they present unequivocal facts.
- also suggested that *a priori* arguments can rely on a play on words to be persuasive.

Features of weaker responses:

- made this entirely into a question about the persuasiveness of ontological without understanding that they are *a priori* arguments. Candidates must distinguish between different issues in AO2.
- had no real understanding of what *a priori* arguments actually are in themselves. They just stated that the ontological argument is one.
- many answers simply not referring to the nature of *a priori* arguments.
- made no use of the contrast with *a posteriori* arguments.

Section B

- Q.3 (a) Explain the problem of evil with reference to William Rowe and Gregory S. Paul. [AO1 25]**

Features of stronger responses:

- responded to the question set and did not just explain 'the problem of evil'.
- knew and were able to explain the particular contribution to the problem of evil made by Rowe. Key points were explained such as pointless and unnecessary suffering as well as reference to some evil being 'accepted' if it resulted in the greater good.
- were able to explain the particular problem that such suffering raises with regards to the traditional characteristics ascribed to the God of Classical Theism.
- knew and were able to explain the particular contribution to the problem of evil made by Paul. Key points were explained such as the large-scale death of children. Explanation as to the lack of free will in such deaths was connected to his criticism of the traditional Christian free-will defence.

Features of weaker responses:

- wasted time explaining the problem of evil in detail with reference to the inconsistent triad. Some answers showed little awareness of any material wider than that and subsequently failed to address the question set.
- where Rowe and Paul did feature in answers, the material was limited, often with reference to the lingering death of a fawn.
- showed little or no awareness of issues that both scholars raised with regard to God's nature.

- (b) 'Irenaean type theodicies solve the problem of evil.' Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]**

Features of stronger responses:

- did not write out the entire problem of evil, but rather referred to it in their analysis and evaluation.
- did not write out Irenaeus' theodicy, but rather referred to it in their analysis and evaluation.
- used pertinent and relevant 'strengths' and 'weaknesses' of this theodicy type and were able to suggest its success or failure with regard to the problem of evil – with some referring to Paul and Rowe.
- Made use of Augustinian type theodicies in order to suggest why this type of theodicy could be either successful or unsuccessful.

Features of weaker responses:

- did write out the problem of evil and/or Irenaean type theodicies which wasted precious time and did not address the issue.
- found it either difficult or impossible to relate any material on Irenaean type theodicies to the solution to the problem of evil. In other words, there was a list of 'positives' and negatives of the theodicy type with no attempt to analyse or evaluate the points.
- confused Irenaean and Augustinian type theodicies.

Q.4 (a) Explain Caroline Franks Davis' challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience. [AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- understood what 'objectivity' and 'authenticity' challenges to religious experience are and gave a brief explanation of these.
- were able to explain Franks Davis' three main challenges which are 'description', 'subject' and 'object related'. Exemplification was evident which showed understanding.
- these were then connected. That means that the three challenges were linked to the particular type of challenge, whether that be objectivity, authenticity or both.

Features of weaker responses:

- had little or no awareness of what either 'objectivity' or 'authenticity' mean. Those that did spent a disproportionate amount of time discussing religious experience without going on to Franks Davis.
- knew little more than Franks Davis' subject-related challenge to religious experience.
- gave few or no examples, with little explanation.

(b) 'Religious experience has no impact on religious belief and practice.' Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- used wider material in order to answer this. For example, some referred to the view of William James that religious experience can bear fruit in a person's life. Reference to the Buddha's Awakening or the experience of prophet Muhammad enhance responses.
- some acknowledged that some believers have never had a religious experience, but their lives and practices are still different for some reason.
- a pertinent question would be to ask, 'whose belief and practice?' A response might be different if one refers to an impact on one's own belief and practice or whether someone else's religious experience has had an impact on others.

Features of weaker responses:

- found it very difficult to interpret what the question is asking and discussed religious experience.
- because of this they found it virtually impossible to access wider material as it seems that they had been unprepared for such a question.
- made it into a question about the credibility of religious experience.

Q.5 (a) Outline David Hume's challenges to cosmological and teleological arguments. [AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- recognised that the word 'outline' means that one has to be selective.
- were able to consider a number of Hume's challenges by explaining his objections to empirical and inductive reasoning. Key philosophical terms were used whilst doing this such as 'inductive leap' and 'fallacy of composition' which developed from the work of Hume.
- Recognised challenges that were particular to Hume. Examples could range from a conclusion that it is more reasonable to suggest many gods rather than one God, to suggestions that the universe is more analogous to a vegetable than a mechanical object.

Features of weaker responses:

- failed to distinguish between Hume's challenges and the challenges of others to cosmological and teleological arguments.
- disregarded the word 'outline' and unfortunately did not have much or any time to complete part (b).
- wrote out one or both arguments without any analysis.

(b) 'Teleological arguments for God's existence are persuasive in the 21st century.' Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- recognised that 'the 21st century' makes the question different from one that does not contain that phrase. Material was then selected accordingly and was far more relevant to the question than it otherwise might have been.
- used a range of teleological arguments which gave a far broader scope to the answer.
- considerable use was made of the contribution of Tennant, in particular the anthropic principle.
- as well as this pertinent examples from the observation of nature today could suggest the persuasive aspects of teleological arguments. For example, observation of our world shows us that an acorn becomes an oak tree.

Features of weaker responses:

- ignored the reference to '21st century'. This meant that they were answering a question on whether teleological arguments are persuasive. This led to the material being far less selective and therefore not as appropriate as it should have been.
- restricted the material to Paley's watchmaker analogy. Not only did this limit the material that could be used, but it also made it very difficult for the candidate to draw out persuasive or unpersuasive aspects in the 21st century.

Summary of key points

- Candidates need to be able to recognise that Part (a) AO1 and Part (b) AO2 questions require different skill sets. For example, candidates should make sure they analyse and evaluate in an AO2 response. Following through a line of reasoning and offering alternatives is a skill that can be rehearsed.
- Candidates would benefit from making their own summary notes for AO1 and AO2 type questions, this will aid their understanding, rather than rote learning. Any issues or specification terms they don't understand they can then ask their teacher about.
- Candidates need to be able to read and respond to the trigger word in the question – these are clearly explain in the [Guidance for Teaching](#) document on pages 8-9
Candidates should be able to select material to address the question set.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCE AS

Summer 2022

COMPONENT 3: AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGION AND ETHICS

General Comments

Candidates showed a general understanding of the rubric of the paper, with very few having not attempted both parts of one question from each section.

The most popular question in Section A was Q2 (attempt% 69.7%). The most popular question in Section B was Q3 (attempt% 48.1%). Q2 was the question with the highest mean score in Section A (mean=25.9 for (a) and (b) combined), Q5 was the question with the highest mean score in Section B (mean=27 for (a) and (b) combined). Across the paper the AO2 mean scores were higher than those of the AO1 responses.

Many candidates showed a clear knowledge and understanding of the questions that they chose to answer. There was generally a clear knowledge of subject specific vocabulary and evidence of reading from the wide range of resources that are now available for this paper.

However, there were many cases of long and unnecessary introductions to the study of ethics that did not address the question directly. On occasion, these introductions took up most of the first page of the response and were repeated in both AO1 and AO2 across both questions. Similarly, there were many cases of conclusions that simply restated in brief, the arguments that had been covered in the main essay, but without any further development towards the question or evaluative judgements or comments. The most successful AO2 responses tended to use their conclusions to evaluate which approach or viewpoint was the most successful in the light of the question, and why.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1 (a) Apply Aquinas' Natural Law to the issue of voluntary euthanasia.

[AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Used euthanasia as a way to explain the key features of Natural Law
- Went through the relevant Primary precept of preserve innocent life to show the formulation of a secondary precept not to assist dying.
- Included reference to real and apparent goods, interior and exterior acts and double effect
- Understood that a traditional interpretation of Natural Law would never allow voluntary euthanasia
- Accurate understanding of how casuistry leads to development of secondary precepts that prohibit voluntary euthanasia

Features of weaker responses:

- Gave a grand tour of the whole of Natural Law including its place in the four levels of law and a definition of all the virtues, without any application to voluntary euthanasia.
- Struggled to accurately apply double effect to show that voluntary euthanasia was unacceptable as a deliberate act, but would be morally blameless if it was a secondary effect of an action that upheld a primary precept
- Treated the virtues as an additional list of rules to be kept or broken rather than characteristics to enable good decision making.
- Explained Natural Law in depth but without any focus upon the application of it to Voluntary Euthanasia
- Focused on euthanasia or killing in general rather than the issue of Voluntary Euthanasia or assisted dying.
- Sometime candidates tried to argue that Precepts of Order Society, Education, Reproduction or Worship God might be violated by allowing Euthanasia, but often with more limited effect.

**(b) ‘Applying Natural Law promotes justice.’
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Discussed that the virtue of justice was inherent within Natural Law and the idea that the primary precept of order society required a fair and just system of law.
- Tried to consider whether there was a difference between equality and equity and how this might relate to justice.
- Mentioned that it could be applied the same way to all people.
- Discussed how some people in difficult situations would find it harder to stick to than others.

Features of weaker responses:

- Did not understand what justice means, for example as fair treatment of all people.
- Produced general answers about the strengths and weakness of Natural Law
- Produced simple responses regarding the dislike of rules in modern society.
- Were unable to give examples to demonstrate justice or the absence of it.
- Were able to state relevant arguments but struggled to consider the value of those arguments in the light of the question.

Q.2 (a) Apply Aquinas' Natural Law to the issue of abortion.

[AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Covered the most vital primary precepts or preservation of innocent life and reproduction and used them to demonstrate the formulation of a secondary precept not to abort.
- Were able to draw relevant material from a range of areas from within Natural Law, rather than limiting themselves to precepts.
- Understood double effect as enabling lifesaving treatment of the mother, but not a direct abortion.
- Recognised scholars like Kainz show an alternative understanding of Natural Law than the traditional Roman Catholic Church, wishing to allow exceptions to abortion in certain cases.

Features of weaker responses:

- Made the error of stating the abortion is allowed in cases of rape, poverty, or young age of the mother.
- Misunderstood Double Effect as an acceptance of direct abortion
- Saw Natural Law as relativist and consequentialist on the basis that it has teleological features.
- As in Q1a, some tried to treat virtues as extra rules that could be kept or broken, rather than personal qualities that might assist good decision making.
- Did not use examples of abortion, but instead used other examples to illustrate points such as old ladies crossing roads or stealing.

**(b) 'Natural Law is not an effective way to make decisions about abortion.'
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Recognised the unfairness that becomes apparent when a person is pregnant against their will
- Were able to refer to the current situation in some countries which reject abortion.
- Compared the response of Natural Law with that of other theories like Situation Ethics to assess comparative effectiveness.
- Muddled Natural Law with Divine Command Theory and treated it as though it was the same.

Features of weaker responses:

- Listed strengths and weaknesses of Natural Law rather than addressing the question.
- Failed to recognise any flexibility that might be present in Natural Law
- Included large amounts of AO1 material, explaining Natural Law rather than evaluating it.
- Suggestions that secondary precepts were entirely relative and could be tailored to the individual situation.

Section B

Q.3 (a) Explain the six fundamental principles of Situation Ethics. [AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Were able to go through all six of the fundamental principles and define them.
- Used Fletcher's wording, at least in part, and could accurately explain what he meant
- Could use examples, especially those from Fletcher himself.
- Provided some brief context regarding what the six fundamental principles are and what they were trying to achieve.
- Referred to Scripture to support some principles

Features of weaker responses:

- Could not accurately list all six principles.
- Gave paraphrases of some or all the principles that missed the point Fletcher was trying to make or struggled to convey meaning at all.
- Gave a grand tour of the whole of Situation Ethics, including the four working principles which took time away from their answer.
- Struggled to give exemplification to support any of the principles.

(b) 'The strengths of Situation Ethics clearly outweigh its weaknesses.' Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Could use Scripture or Fletcher's examples to support their view.
- Could make effective comparisons with other normative ethical theories such as Divine Command or Natural Law
- Considered how practical or useable it was in real life.
- Were able to explain why a feature of Situation Ethics was a strength or a weakness.

Features of weaker responses:

- Focused on the general effectiveness of Situation Ethics rather than the comparison of strengths against weaknesses.
- Tended to become repetitive, focusing on one main strength or weakness and restating it.
- A range of arguments were explained and presented, but not engaged with or evaluated.

- Q.4 (a) Explain how the Hedonic Calculus is used in Act Utilitarianism. [AO1 25]**

Features of stronger responses:

- Gave examples to demonstrate how an action might be weighed up or calculated
- Were able to show understanding that the assessment might be different for different people in different situations
- Awareness was shown of all seven elements of the calculus, even if then a smaller selection were chosen for more in-depth study.
- An understanding and appreciation of what is meant by Act Utilitarianism.

Features of weaker responses:

- Deliberately chose to only know two or three features of the Hedonic Calculus which limited their answers
- Focused so hard on the 'how' part of the question that they did not explain any of the features of the Calculus at all.
- Were not able to explain how the calculus was used, only what the different features were
- Showed no understanding of what this might mean for assessing each individual act in Act Utilitarianism

- (b) 'Utilitarianism is a practical way for religious believers to make moral decisions.'
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]**

Features of stronger responses:

- Recognised the difficulties that religious believers might have in following a secular approach that prioritised happiness over spiritual concerns.
- Could consider what made an ethical theory 'practical' in the sense that it could be used effectively to make moral decisions in real life situations.
- Were able to recognise the value of this approach in running a multicultural / pluralistic society.
- Could consider the role of pleasure or happiness in religion and cite Mill as considering it an application of the Golden Rule.

Features of weaker responses:

- Gave general strengths and weaknesses of Utilitarianism with no reference to religious believers or practicality.
- Focused only on 'Utilitarianism' rather than showing an awareness of how Act or Rule approaches might differ in practical terms.
- Stated arguments without any engagement with the question or evaluation of the quality of the arguments.
- Missed the opportunity to consider whether there were more effective approaches for religious believers

Q.5 (a) Explain Divine Command Theory, with reference to Robert Adams.
[AO1 25]

Features of stronger responses:

- Were methodical in explaining Divine Command Theory, demonstrated the most relevant problem of arbitrariness and then explained Adams' solution.
- Understood Adams' modification in the context of the challenge of the Euthyphro dilemma.
- Understood the meta-ethical and normative approaches to Divine Command Theory.

Features of weaker responses:

- Took the examiner on a tour of all the material connected with Divine Command, without any discrimination regarding what was relevant.
- Muddled the two horns of the Euthyphro dilemma or gave very extensive explanations of it that detracted from the question.
- Struggled to exemplify their responses with examples of Divine Commands.

(b) 'Divine Command Theory does not help religious believers to make moral decisions.'
Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Features of stronger responses:

- Spent time considering issues such as pluralism or arbitrariness as problems that might challenge the religious believer
- Understood Divine Command Theory as a meta-ethical approach as well as normative one.
- Were able to consider examples of scripture where Divine Command Theory appears to conflict with God's omnibenevolent nature.

Features of weaker responses:

- Considered helpfulness of the theory in general rather than specifically for religious believers
- Muddled Divine Command with Natural Law and treated them as though they were the same
- Re-explained AO1 material rather than engaging with evaluation.
- There seemed to be a common misunderstanding, here and elsewhere in the paper, that Christians rather than Jewish believers were expected to abide by the 613 mitzvot.

Summary of key points

- Candidates must remain focused and not drift from the question set, which was an issue seen in some Part (b) AO2 responses. They would do well to prepare for key words such as 'effective' or 'practical' and ensure that they understand what those words mean.
- Candidates should avoid lengthy introductions, for example those setting out an introduction to the study of ethics. These do not address the question directly and often waste valuable time for the candidate.
- Conclusions are not required in a Part (a) AO1 response and are often repeating material that has already been awarded. They are very important in a Part (b) AO2 responses and should aim to make evaluative judgements regarding the question, rather than repeating points that have already been awarded.
- There is no required way to set out an AO2 response and a thesis statement at the start is not required but is one acceptable approach. The highest scoring responses for AO2 were able to critically engage with the question rather than listing a set of strengths and weaknesses of the theory and, most importantly, provided a supported judgement.



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