



National
Qualifications
2024

2024 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Advanced Higher

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2024

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by SQA appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

The information in this document may be reproduced in support of SQA qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is reproduced, SQA must be clearly acknowledged as the source. If it is to be reproduced for any other purpose, written permission must be obtained from permissions@sqa.org.uk.



General marking principles for Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) Where a candidate violates the rubric of the paper and answers both optional 30 mark questions in a section/part, all responses should be marked, and the better mark recorded.
- (d) Use the full range of marks available for each question.
- (e) The detailed marking instructions are not an exhaustive list. Award marks for other relevant points.
- (f) Award marks only where points relate to the question asked. Where candidates give points of knowledge without specifying the context, award marks unless it is clear that they do not refer to the context of the question.
- (g) In this question paper the following skills are assessed:
 - knowledge and understanding
 - analysis
 - evaluation.
- (h) For essay questions candidates must integrate these skills with their knowledge, in response to the question or statement. Essay questions may include the following command words:
 - 'How valid . . .'
 - 'To what extent do you agree . . .'
 - 'Discuss . . .'
- (i) For source questions candidates must demonstrate the skills of knowledge, analysis and evaluation in short responses. Source questions always use the following command words:
 - 'Describe . . .'
 - 'Analyse . . .'
 - 'Evaluate . . .'

| | 26–30 | 21–25 | 16–20 | 11–15 | 6–10 | 0–5 |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| Overview | The essay is clearly focussed on the question at all times. | The essay is clearly focussed on the question, but at times refers generally to the topic rather than the question. | The essay is focussed on the question at times but drifts into general comments about the topic. | The essay is focussed more on the topic rather than the question. | The essay is focussed more on the topic than on the question and has information that lacks relevance. | The essay lacks relevance to both the question and/or the topic. |
| | 9–10 | 7–8 | 5–6 | 3–4 | 1–2 | 0 |
| Knowledge and understanding | KU is consistently in depth, accurate and relevant. | KU is mainly in depth, accurate and relevant. | KU has inconsistent depth but is mainly accurate and relevant. | KU lacks depth overall but is mainly accurate and relevant. | KU lacks depth overall and has issues with accuracy or relevance. | KU is superficial and is not consistently accurate or relevant. |
| | There is clear evidence that the candidate has drawn together relevant and appropriate information from a range of specific sources or perspectives. | There is clear evidence that the candidate has drawn together mainly relevant and appropriate information from some specific sources or perspectives. | There is some evidence that the candidate has drawn together relevant and/or appropriate information but references to sources and perspectives tend to be more general and limited. | There is evidence that the candidate has attempted to draw together relevant and/or appropriate information but references to sources and perspectives are general in nature and limited. | There is some evidence that the candidate has attempted to draw together relevant and/or appropriate information but references to sources and perspectives are brief, undeveloped, and general in nature. | The essay lacks evidence of sources and perspectives and those used lack relevance and accuracy. |

| | 9–10 | 7–8 | 5–6 | 3–4 | 1–2 | 0 |
|------------|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Analysis | The analysis clearly identifies specific issue(s) related to the question. | The analysis identifies specific issue(s) related to the question, but the depth is uneven at times. | The analysis identifies a mix of specific and general issue(s) that are related to the question and there is insufficient depth and explanation of them. | The analysis identifies some general issue(s) related to the question and there is insufficient depth or explanation. | The analysis identifies a few issue(s), but they are not clearly related to the question and coverage is superficial. | Any analysis often fails to identify issues and those that have been identified are not clearly related to the question and superficial. |
| | The explanation of issues takes account of a range of clearly identified perspectives and demonstrates a clear understanding of their relevance to the question. | The explanation of issues takes account of some perspectives and demonstrates a good understanding of their relevance to the question. | The issues are explained and there is evidence of some understanding of their relevance to the question which at times is general in nature. | The issues are explained and there is evidence of some understanding of their relevance to the question at times, but which is generally superficial. | The issues are briefly explained but there is evidence of some understanding of their relevance to the topic but not to the question. | There is evidence of some understanding of the topic but not the question. |
| | 9–10 | 7–8 | 5–6 | 3–4 | 1–2 | 0 |
| Evaluation | The evaluation is insightful, valid, and clearly reasoned. | The evaluation is valid, may be insightful and is mainly clearly reasoned. | The evaluation is valid but not consistently and clearly reasoned. | The evaluation is valid but not clearly reasoned and lacks sufficiency. | There is limited valid evaluation, but it is not clearly reasoned and lacks sufficiency. | The evaluation either lacks validity or relevance to the issue/question. |
| | It has relevant judgements on the issues and/or perspectives on the issues. | It has mainly relevant judgements on the issues and/or perspectives on the issues. | It has some relevant judgements on the issues and/or perspectives on the issues. | It has relevant judgements on the issues and/or perspectives on the issues, however it is simply a judgement with brief reasoning. | It may have judgements on the issues but there is some brief reasoning behind them. | |
| | Conclusions have successfully been woven throughout the essay/drawn at the conclusion of the essay. | Mainly clear conclusions have been drawn. | There has been some attempt to draw conclusions, but they lack depth. | There has been some attempt to draw brief conclusions, but they lack depth. | Conclusions may be restricted to closing comments. | |

Marking instruction for each question

Section 1 – Philosophy of religion

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| 1. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kalam argument • Other Cosmological arguments • Philosophical responses • Scientific responses • Religious responses • Relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implications of Kalam argument • consequences of Kalam argument • connections between the different cosmological arguments • explanations of sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counterarguments • judgements • conclusions throughout • overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|---|
| 2. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments from intelligent design • Other Teleological arguments • Philosophical responses • Scientific responses • Religious responses • Relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implications of arguments from intelligent design • consequences of arguments from intelligent design • connections between the different teleological arguments • explanations of sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counterarguments • judgements • conclusions throughout • overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|--|
| 3. | (a) | | 5 | <p>This question requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective of the source.</p> <p>Possible knowledge and understanding marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate, relevant and developed points which demonstrate an understanding of the perspective, ie, what is meant by atheism.' <p>Candidates will be awarded 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible Response:</p> <p>Atheism means a lack of belief in God or gods. According to the 2021 census for England and Wales, 8% of the population said they were atheist. Atheists claim that everything in the universe is explained and things that we don't currently understand will one day be explained by science. They believe all of life's 'big, unanswered' questions are answered with the conviction that there is no God. Richard Dawkins in his book the God Delusion said, "We are all atheists about most of the gods that humanity has ever believed in. Some of us just go one God further."</p> |
| | (b) | | 5 | <p>Candidates demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible analysis marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate, through interpretation or paraphrasing, a clear understanding of the source. <p>Do not award marks for simply quoting points from the source. Candidates must paraphrase or interpret them to gain credit.</p> <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>There are many consequences to Dawkins' claim, one is that it dismisses a belief system held by billions of people around the world that a God exists and for which they hold as a fundamental truth in their life and as a result, have lived their life on the basis that God exists. It mocks the belief of an intelligent, loving and powerful being who, by its very nature, has given purpose and meaning to millions of people. Dawkins makes it clear that there is not even a small chance of any kind of 'supernatural power' behind the world by using words such as 'there is nothing beyond' and 'no soul' and 'no miracles.' His use of emotive language implies a lack of respect towards those who do believe in God with the use of the word 'lurking' which implies that the theist idea of God is a being who hides from his creation.</p> |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|---|
| | (c) | | | <p>Candidates assess the validity or invalidity of the perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible evaluation marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insightful, valid and clearly reasoned judgements on the source. <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>As a Christian, I disagree with Dawkins' quote. I disagree with the statement 'There is nothing beyond the natural, physical world' as my faith tells me that there is a heaven, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field.' (Matthew) and I believe that the Bible is the word of God. I also disagree with this statement as it gives life no purpose or meaning as it suggests that the only life, we live is the one we live on earth which goes against the idea of eternal life we are promised by Jesus, 'Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life' (John). I don't agree that that there is no 'supernatural, creative intelligence' as the world is so complex and intricately designed that it must have had a creative power behind it and that could only be God. Dawkins's comment 'no miracles' is also questionable as we read about miracles happening on a daily basis, eg, the healing power of the shrine at Lourdes and without the power of belief in a miracle, if you are religious or not, it offers people the sense of hope when all else is lost. From this quote, Dawkins, in my opinion, is simply making fun of people who believe in God, and I do not think that this is acceptable as there are many good people who believe in the presence of God who, as a result, carry out the true meaning of religion by offering love, compassion and support to those who need it.</p> |

Section 2

Part A – Religious Experience

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| 4. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• James’ ideas about religious experience• Otto’s ideas about religious experience• Swinburne’s ideas about religious experience• relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• implications of James’ ideas about religious experience• consequences of James’ ideas about religious experience• connections between other understandings of religious experience• explanations of relevant sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• counterarguments• judgements• conclusions throughout• overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|---|
| 5. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examples of mystical experiences • examples of other religious experiences and/or accounts • relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implications of faith perspectives • consequences of faith perspectives • connections between other faith perspectives and alternative accounts of religious experience • explanations of relevant sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counterarguments • judgements • conclusions throughout • overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|--|
| 6. | (a) | | 5 | <p>This question requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective of the source.</p> <p>Possible knowledge and understanding marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate, relevant and developed points which demonstrate an understanding of the perspective, ie, what is meant by 'scientific accounts of religious experience.' <p>Candidates will be awarded 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible Response:</p> <p>James' systematic categorisation of religious experiences has led to attempts to scientifically account for them through experiments which either empirically observe what causes religious experiences or what the impact of religious experiences are on the brain. One of the most famous experiments was the 'God Helmet' where Persinger tried to prove that religious experience could be induced. Further attempts have been made in neuroscience to observe what happens in the brain during religious experience, for example, brains have been scanned whilst people are praying or meditating to allow scientists to observe the impact of 'induced' religious experiences on the brain. It has been argued that there is a 'god spot' – a specific area of the brain which acts in a specific way when observed religious experiences occur.</p> |
| | (b) | | 5 | <p>Candidates demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible analysis marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate, through interpretation or paraphrasing, a clear understanding of the source. <p>Do not award marks for simply quoting points from the source. Candidates must paraphrase or interpret them to gain credit.</p> <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>This source means that neuroscience helps us understand religious experience better – either because we can observe the impact on the brain of a religious experience OR observe that the brain is causing the religious experience. An implication of this is that through brain imaging, scientists can see directly if experiences such as prayer have a direct impact on the brain, and this can then be studied to see why this happens. A contrasting implication lies with research into whether issues with individual brains cause the religious experience to happen such as in cases where hallucinogenics have been used. A further implication of this kind of research is that religious experience events can be observed, quantified, and ultimately explained and are 'real' enough to be studied. A consequence of neuroscientific research is that religious experience could be explained as natural phenomenon and so it could be concluded that these experiences are not religious at all.</p> |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|--|
| | (c) | | | <p>Candidates assess the validity or invalidity of the perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible evaluation marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insightful, valid and clearly reasoned judgements on the source. <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>I agree to an extent that neuroscience helps contribute to the process of understanding religious experience as it can help develop an understanding of how an experience affects different areas of our brains, and if certain stimuli can induce and influence religious experiences or the perception of having had an experience. I think neuroscience has the potential to prove whether issues such as temporal lobe epilepsy or other issues cause the religious experiences to occur within the brain. I think this objective approach would clearly contribute to a better understanding of religious experiences which are very subjectively described and categorised. However, I think neuroscience can only contribute to a limited extent as the research is very restricted as to what can happen in particular experiments in a lab. For example, most studies have involved prayer and meditation, some have involved hallucinogenic stimuli (which could account for some visions and mystical experiences) however neuroscientists cannot reproduce all religious experiences such as those that occur spontaneously, transiently, or even gradual conversions.</p> |

Section 2

Part B – Medical Ethics

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| 7. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• treatment and use of embryos• sanctity of life• moral issues surrounding the treatment and use of embryos• religious/non-religious responses• relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• implications of religious/non-religious responses to the treatment and use of embryos• consequences of religious/non-religious responses to the treatment and use of embryos• connections between identified issues and the treatment and use of embryos• explanations of sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• counterarguments• judgements• conclusions throughout• overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| 8. | | | 30 | <p>Knowledge and Understanding may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forms of end-of-life care: medical and social care • sanctity of life • moral issues surrounding end of life care • religious/non-religious responses • relevant sources. <p>Analysis may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implications of religious/non-religious responses to end of life care • consequences of religious/non-religious responses to end of life care • connections between identified issues and end of life care • explanations of sources. <p>Evaluation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counterarguments • judgements • conclusions throughout • overall conclusions. |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|---|
| 9. | (a) | | 5 | <p>This question requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective of the source.</p> <p>Possible knowledge and understanding marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate, relevant and developed points which demonstrate an understanding of the perspective, ie, what is meant by 'organ procurement.' <p>Candidates will be awarded 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible Response:</p> <p>Organ procurement is a surgical procedure in which organs or tissues are removed from a body for reuse, either for transplantation to another person or for research purposes. Most countries require that the donor be legally dead before procuring their organs, whether this be cardiac or brain death. In Scotland, the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Act 2019, says that if you die and have not recorded your preference, it may be assumed you are willing to donate your organs and tissue. However, your family will always be asked about your latest views on donation to make sure it is what you wanted. There are also exceptions to this law such as adults without the capacity to understand the law, and children under the age of 16 – in which case it is up to their family.</p> |
| | (b) | | 5 | <p>Candidates demonstrate their understanding of the view or perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible analysis marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate, through interpretation or paraphrasing, a clear understanding of the source. <p>Do not award marks for simply quoting points from the source. Candidates must paraphrase or interpret them to gain credit.</p> <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>The source shows that the author believes there is an organ shortage because of the reluctance of the general population to think about death and the uncertainty around dying. The writer implies he thinks this is not a genuine fear by implying a 'substantial' number of people would get over it with only a 'modest' financial reward. It is reasonable to presume that he would support the legalisation of organ trade, where people – or their families – could be paid for their donation. However, by indicating that the incentive be 'modest' it implies that he would still want this to be a controlled situation rather than simply ignoring the black market. A potential consequence of this is that he could reject an 'opt in' system where people must have given their preference before dying in order to be an organ donor.</p> |

| Question | | | Max mark | Marking instructions for this question |
|----------|-----|--|----------|---|
| | (c) | | 5 | <p>Candidates assess the validity or invalidity of the perspective as set out in the source.</p> <p>Possible evaluation marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> insightful, valid and clearly reasoned judgements on the source. <p>Award 1 mark per point.</p> <p>Possible response:</p> <p>I agree with the source to an extent. No one knows with certainty if there's life after death and it can be very uncomfortable to think about this. Equally, there are many people in poverty and a financial reward for organ donation could help alleviate this. But I disagree because I think he is dismissive of people's feelings about death, for example, those who follow the Shinto religion believe that interfering with the dead would injure the relationship with the living which isn't a belief that's solved by money. Equally, those of no religion could just be very uncomfortable with the idea of their body being viewed as a collection of parts to be harvested and feel much more than a 'slight distaste.' Also, his conclusion would only be true for those who are in need of a 'modest' financial incentive, and ultimately is just abusive of the poor and those in need.</p> |

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]