National Qualifications 2024

2024 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Religious and Philosophical Questions

Higher

Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions

✕SQA

General marking principles for 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) Award marks where candidates give points of knowledge without specifying the context, unless it is clear that they do not refer to the context of the question. Award **a maximum of 8 marks** where the candidate has not attempted the skill in a **20 mark** question.

In this question paper the following skills are assessed:

i.   knowledge and understanding
ii. analysis
iii. evaluation.

(i) **Knowledge and understanding**
Knowledge and understanding involves presenting relevant and accurate content. Award a knowledge and understanding mark where a candidate presents a relevant and accurate point which may include:
- accurate factual information
- relevant factual information
- reference to sources
- case studies
- examples
- viewpoints
- description of arguments.

(ii) **Analysis**
Analysis involves doing something with factual information, for example identifying parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole; drawing out and relating implications.

Award an analysis mark where a candidate presents a relevant, accurate and developed point which may include:
- links between different components
- links between component(s) and the whole
- links between component(s) and related concepts
- similarities and contradictions
- consistency and inconsistency
- different views/interpretations
- possible consequences/implications
- the relative importance of components
- understanding of underlying order or structure.

(iii) Evaluation
Evaluation involves making a judgement or measurement based on an issue. Award an evaluation mark where a candidate presents a relevant, accurate and developed point which may include:
- the relevance and/or importance and/or usefulness of a viewpoint or source:
- positive and negative aspects
- strengths and weaknesses
- any other relevant evaluative comment.

Use of sources
Award marks where candidates use a referenced and relevant source in support of their knowledge and understanding, critical analysis, evaluation or a reasoned view.

Overview of detailed marking instructions

Knowledge, analysis and evaluation questions (20 marks)
Award up to **a maximum of 10 marks** for each developed point of knowledge used to support the analysis and evaluation.

Award up to **5 marks** for analytical comments and up to **5 marks** for reasoned evaluative comments.

Marking instructions for each question

Part A — Origins

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
1.	This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. **5 marks** are available for analysis and **5 marks** are available for evaluation. **A maximum of 10 marks** are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to **both** the question and the answer.	20	**Purpose** The purpose of this question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding about scientific explanations for the origins of life and to analyse and evaluate these arguments. Candidates may also present, analyse and evaluate religious explanations of the origins of life. **Specific marking instructions** Marks will be **capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks** if a candidate fails to attempt **both** analysis and evaluation skills. **Knowledge and understanding — up to 10 marks may be awarded for:** • a description of scientific explanations of the origins of life • a description of religious explanations of the origins of life • relevant sources. **Examples of knowledge points:** • The Theory of Evolution suggests that all living organisms have gradually adapted to their environments through a process called natural selection • when animals with advantageous traits have more offspring, those traits become more common in the population over time • evidence for evolution comes from various sources, including fossils, which are the remains or traces of ancient organisms that have been preserved in rocks. **Analysis — up to 5 marks may be awarded for:** • analysis of the evidence used to support scientific explanations of the origins of life • analysis of evidence used to support religious explanations of the origins of life • analysis of different viewpoints/relevant sources.

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
					Examples of analysis points: • one implication of the theory of evolution is that it removes the need for a creator God as life becomes a product of blind chance rather than intelligent design • a consequence of this is that life may be seen as lacking in meaning and purpose, which may lead to feelings of hopelessness. **Evaluation — up to 5 marks may be awarded for:** • supported judgements on the scientific/religious explanations for the origins of life. **Examples of evaluation points:** • I agree to an extent with the scientific explanation for the origins of life as it uses a range of empirical evidence for the diversity of species and the processes through which species have evolved over time • however, I have concerns around this theory as while fossil records provide valuable evidence for evolutionary patterns, there are gaps which cast doubt over the validity of this theory.

Part B — The existence of God

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
2.			This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. **5 marks** are available for analysis and **5 marks** are available for evaluation. **A maximum of 10 marks** are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to **both** the question and the answer.	**20**	**Purpose** The purpose of this question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding about non-religious arguments against the existence of God, and to analyse and evaluate these arguments. Candidates may also present, analyse and evaluate religious arguments for the existence of God. **Specific marking instructions** Marks will be **capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks** if a candidate fails to attempt **both** analysis and evaluation skills. **Knowledge and understanding — up to 10 marks may be awarded for:** • a description of non-religious views which challenge the existence of God • a description of religious arguments for the existence of God • relevant sources. **Examples of knowledge points:** • Hume challenged the existence of God by saying that just because we can point to a first cause doesn't mean that this first cause is God • The Big Bang challenges the existence of God by identifying a starting point for the origins of the universe which does not require God. **Analysis — up to 5 marks may be awarded for:** • analysis of non-religious views which challenge the existence of God • analysis of religious arguments for the existence of God • analysis of different viewpoints/relevant sources **Examples of analysis points:** • an implication of all non-religious arguments is that science uses evidence that can be tested rather than relying on faith • an implication of the theory of evolution is that life on earth has no clear purpose as the theory shows there was no design process involved in the beginning of life.

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
					Evaluation — up to 5 marks may be awarded for: • supported judgements on the non-religious challenges to the existence of God. **Examples of evaluation points:** • I agree with non-religious arguments because the Big Bang theory offers an explanation for the origins of the Universe which doesn't rely on supernatural causes but has clear evidence to support it • I agree that arguments on evolution provide better evidence for the apparent design in the Universe than those supporting God, as they answer the question of suffering within the world without having to explain why a loving God would have made such a world.

Part C — The problem of suffering and evil

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
3.			This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. **5 marks** are available for analysis and **5 marks** are available for evaluation. **A maximum of 10 marks** are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to **both** the question and the answer.	20	**Purpose** The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding about responsibility for suffering and evil, analyse this and present a reasoned conclusion on whether responsibility lies with humans or God. **Specific marking instructions** Marks will be **capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks** if a candidate fails to attempt **both** analysis and evaluation skills. **Knowledge and understanding — up to 10 marks may be awarded for:** • a description of arguments that claim human beings are responsible for suffering and evil • a description of arguments that suggest that God is responsible for suffering and evil • relevant sources. **Examples of knowledge points:** • Augustine's theodicy states that God created the perfect world, but God gave humans free will and they chose to disobey God. • Much of the evil and suffering in the world, such as earthquakes and tsunamis, is clearly natural in origin. **Analysis — up to 5 marks may be awarded for:** • analysis of the arguments that claim human beings are responsible for suffering and evil • analysis of the arguments that claim God is responsible for suffering and evil • analysis of different viewpoints/relevant sources **Examples of analysis points:** • a consequence of the Christian belief that God has given humanity free will is that we must accept that people will act in ways which harm others and bring about suffering and evil • an implication of Augustine's theodicy is that it takes no account of the existence of natural evil, which is not a result of human choices.

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
					Evaluation — up to 5 marks may be awarded for: • supported judgements on the extent to which responsibility for suffering and evil lies with humans. **Examples of evaluation points:** • I disagree that human beings are responsible for evil and suffering because much of the suffering experienced in the world is clearly natural and thus not humanity's responsibility • I disagree that human beings are solely responsible for evil and suffering as if God is all powerful, all knowing and all loving, then surely God has to take some responsibility for the existence of evil and suffering.

Part D — Miracles

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
4.			This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. **5 marks** are available for analysis and **5 marks** are available for evaluation. **A maximum of 10 marks** are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.	**20**	**Purpose** The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding of non-religious views on miracles. Candidates may also present, analyse and evaluate religious explanations for miracles. **Specific marking instructions** Marks will be **capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks** if a candidate fails to attempt both analysis and evaluation skills. **Knowledge and understanding — up to 10 marks may be awarded for:** • a description of miracles • a description of non-religious explanations for miracles • a description of religious explanations for miracles • relevant sources. **Examples of knowledge points:** • miracles can be described as an event that cannot be explained by natural laws and which must have been caused by God • Hume argued that miracles cannot happen because they break the laws of nature, which is impossible. **Analysis — up to 5 marks may be awarded for:** • analysis of non-religious views on miracles • analysis of religious views on miracles • analysis of different viewpoints/relevant sources. **Examples of analysis points:** • an implication of modern understandings of how the world works is that miracles can often be explained by empirical evidence • one consequence of believing in miracles might be that people lose faith in God as scientific explanations remove the need for divine intervention.

Question			General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
					Evaluation — up to 5 marks may be awarded for: • supported judgements on non-religious views on miracles. **Examples of evaluation points:** • I disagree with non-religious views on miracles because while it is possible to explain a miracle using modern science, it is still God using his infinite power to bring about good • however even if we accept that some things seem miraculous, the non-religious view is more credible since it offers empirical evidence for its conclusions.

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]