



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 5061

**RS06 *An introduction to
Religion and Science***

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – June series

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

[Marks for 10-mark questions are shown in brackets]

Level	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks
5	Appropriate form and style of writing, clear and coherent organisation of information, with appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples.	13-15 [9-10]	A very good response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and arguments and are critically analysed. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate conclusion.	13-15
4	Appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information, mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / examples.	10-12 [7-8]	A good response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments and some critical analysis. A conclusion is drawn which follows from some of the reasoning.	10-12
3	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing, some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary. Satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing reasonable understanding.	7-9 [5-6]	Main issues are addressed and views are considered, with some supporting evidence. There is some attempt at analysis or comment. Evaluation may not be fully supported by reasoning or evidence.	7-9
2	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.	An outline account, including some relevant material. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding. Some coherence.	4-6 [3-4]	A simple argument, with some evidence in support.	4-6
1	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information. Slight signs of understanding.	1-3 [1-2]	A few basic points which are relevant, but no real argument.	1-3
0	There may be little clarity and coherence in organisation; little appropriate or accurate use of specialist vocabulary. The legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be very limited.	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0

RS06: An introduction to Religion and Science

1 Read this passage and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

‘The design argument seeks to answer the question ‘Why is the universe as it is?’ In particular, it examines the fact that the earth is suitable for human life. This could not have come about by chance, but by design.’

(a) Explain ways in which the earth appears to have been designed to be suitable for human life.

- Order – laws of nature / non chaotic (Paley)
- Benefit – achieves good ends (Paley)
- Purpose – Directed towards an end (Aquinas / Paley)
- Regularity – Swinburne (temporal / spatial), laws of nature

Maximum Level 3 if examples only are given.
 Level 5 for examples that are also explained as to why they suggest design.

(10 marks) AO1

(b) Explain why the fact that the earth is suitable for human life may not be evidence for the design argument.

- Alternative explanation better:
- Result of conditions rather than the purpose of conditions, e.g. ozone layer.
- Evolution and natural selection – life adapts.

(10 marks) AO1

2 (a) Explain what the scientific theories of the Big Bang and Steady State tell us about the origin and nature of the universe.

	Origin	Nature
Big Bang	explosion of space-time, 15 billion years ago, the cooling of the universe.	emergence of hydrogen and helium – expanding universe – cooled – no concept of “before” Big Bang as time began at that point.
Steady State	slow replenishment of matter in the universe – no moment of creation – always been.	will always exist – new matter (hydrogen) created at same rate as the expansion of universe – cosmic matter density remains constant – appearance of universe does not change.

Maximum Level 4 (10 marks) if only discussed either origin or nature.
 Maximum lower Level 4 if only discussed Big Bang.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) **Outline one religious understanding of ‘creation’, and assess to what extent a religious understanding of ‘creation’ conflicts with a scientific understanding of the origin and nature of the universe.**

May come from any tradition. Judaeo-Christian story based on Genesis. Idea of creation from nothing, deliberate and good, depends on God, ordered, establishes a covenant. Creation for a purpose. Man centred. More about relationship of God to universe than mechanics of how universe came to be (liberal). Literalists would argue for Genesis being taken in literal sense.

Maximum Level 2 if merely narrated a religious account (e.g. Genesis 1).

(10 marks) AO1

Conflicts

Denial of supernatural / God – explained by natural laws.

God in control of start and end.

Not Conflict

Asking different questions – how / why questions, e.g. the results of laws of nature / why there are laws of nature – what is in time / what is beyond time. Science incomplete – religion fills gap.

Non literal approach to religious accounts – make it consistent with scientific theory.

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) **Explain the following two definitions of ‘miracle’:**

**‘An amazing coincidence of a beneficial nature’, and
‘An event of religious significance’.**

The first definition involves natural explanations even though the coming together of events was extremely unlikely. The outcome was also beneficial in some way. Example should be given and explained how it illustrated the definition. This may suggest a non interventionist God, but not necessarily.

The second definition focuses on the subjective aspect where a religious significance is seen in the event. Therefore an amazing coincidence may not necessarily be seen as having religious significance. This is stronger than the first definition in terms of God’s involvement in the event.

An example should be given and an explanation of how it illustrates the definition.

Maximum Level 4 (10 marks) for only one definition fully explained and illustrated.

(15 marks) AO1

- (b) **Examine the challenges to miracles from science, and assess the claim that it is philosophy, not science, that poses the main challenge to a belief in miracles.**

Newtonian view that universe is explicable without the need for a divine being. The universe is mechanistic and clockwork and a closed system. Reality is adequately explained in terms of laws of nature. Miracles explained by our lack of understanding of some laws. Empirical knowledge is the scientific method – Science concerned with repeating whilst miracles are unusual and very infrequent happenings, so cannot be tested.

(10 marks) AO1

For

Philosophy is main challenge

Hume's arguments

Science not a challenge

New physics challenges scientific thinking

Science has limits of study

Different definitions of miracles possible which are not seen as conflict with science.

Against

Philosophy not a challenge

Weaknesses in Hume's arguments

Science remains main challenge.

(15 marks) AO2