

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Religious Studies (Specification B)

Additional Specimen Questions:

Unit 3 Religion and Morality

- Religious Attitudes to Crime and Punishment



There are 18 marks for each question.

4 Religious Attitudes to Crime and Punishment

Look at the drawing of the 'scales of justice' below.



- (a) Explain briefly the meaning of the word probation. (2 marks)
- (b) Explain why many religious believers are in favour of probation. (3 marks)
- (c) 'Retribution is the most important aim of punishment.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

- (d) Explain why many religious people might not agree with the death penalty (capital punishment). (4 marks)
- (e) 'Committing religious offences such as blasphemy should lead to heavy punishment.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer. (6 marks)



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Religious Studies
Full or Short Course
Specification B

Unit 3 *Religion and Morality*

Additional SPECIMEN Mark Scheme
Religious Attitudes to Crime and
Punishment

June series

Religious Attitudes to Crime and Punishment

- 4 (a) Explain briefly the meaning of the word probation.

Target: Definition of a key term

Candidates may include some of the following points:

An alternative to prison where an offender has to meet regularly with a probation officer to ensure they do not reoffend. Movement may be restricted.

1 mark for a superficial comment or a single point.

2 marks for a developed answer or more than one point of view.

(2 marks) AO1

- 4 (b) Explain why many religious believers are in favour of probation.

Target: Understanding of why believers favour probation

Levels	Criteria	Marks
Level 0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.	0 marks
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit.	1 mark
Level 2	Elementary knowledge and understanding, e.g. two simple points.	2 marks
Level 3	Sound knowledge and understanding.	3 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Probation is non-custodial and therefore keeps families together / aimed at reform and prevention / punishment is positive / gives a second chance.

(3 marks) AO1

4 (c) 'Retribution is the most important aim of punishment.'**What do you think? Explain your opinion.****Target: To evaluate the relative importance of retribution**

Levels	Criteria	Marks
Level 0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.	0 marks
Level 1	Opinion supported by simple reason.	1 mark
Level 2	Opinion supported by one developed reason or two simple reasons.	2 marks
Level 3	Opinion supported by well developed reason or several simple reasons.	3 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

It has a deterrent value to offender and others / 'eye for eye', etc. / punishment fits the crime / society feels better because those who offend are made to suffer for their wrongdoing, etc.

Any of the other aims (protection, vindication, reformation, deterrence, reparation) can be argued to be more important than retribution.

Credit reasoning given for any of them / retribution infringes human rights / restricts forgiveness which is a religious quality / against religious teachings.

(3 marks) AO2

4 (d) Explain why many religious people might not agree with the death penalty (capital punishment).

Target: Understanding of why believers may oppose capital punishment

Levels	Criteria	Marks
Level 0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.	0 marks
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit.	1 mark
Level 2	Elementary knowledge and understanding, e.g. two simple points.	2 marks
Level 3	Sound knowledge and understanding.	3 marks
Level 4	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development or analysis.	4 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Answers may focus on sanctity of life, only God can take life, executor becomes as bad as the murderer, love neighbour, ahimsa, 'do not kill', etc.

Buddhism

The ideal way of punishment is to assist reform to improve karma / loving kindness (metta) and compassion (karuna) should be shown to the criminal so execution is unacceptable as nothing can excuse the taking of life / first precept is against execution (and also murder) / retribution is seen to be wrong / ideas about importance of life / teachings on karma and selflessness would lead to less readiness to blame individuals.

Christianity

Forgiveness and punishment to go together / reform and reconciliation is important / prison achieves the above but execution does not / "eye for eye; a life for a life" opposed by Jesus but some Christians accept it / sanctity of life against murder and execution / good conquers evil / chaplains appointed to help prisoners cope with prison and to reform criminals / executing could kill an innocent person.

Hinduism

Karmic effects of executing offenders / Gandhi opposed execution (ahimsa) / Brahmins cannot be executed so nor should anyone else / most important purpose of dandha (punishment) is reformation.

Islam

Prison rather than execution is an act of mercy or for compensation / only Allah can take life / deterrence, vindication and protection are important aims but imprisonment achieves this.

Judaism

Death penalty not supported in Israel as it does not give a chance for repentance / God will forgive a penitent murderer / prevention and rehabilitation are important / prison protects society / "eye for eye" is about fair justice not retribution.

Sikhism

Karmic effects / forgiveness and reform encouraged / Sikh teaching opposes capital punishment although some believe the threat is a deterrent / prison is supported to protect society.

(4 marks) AO1

- 4 (e) ‘Committing religious offences such as blasphemy should lead to heavy punishment.’

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the relative seriousness of religious offences

Levels	Criteria	Marks	Quality of Written Communication
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.	0 marks	The candidate's presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar seriously obstruct understanding.
Level 1	Opinion supported by simple reason.	1 mark	The candidate presents some relevant information in a simple form. The text produced is usually legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar allow meaning to be derived, although errors are sometimes obstructive.
Level 2	Opinion supported by one developed reason or two simple reasons.	2 marks	
Level 3	Opinion supported by one well developed reason or several simple reasons. N.B. Candidates who make no religious comment should not achieve more than Level 3.	3 marks	The candidate presents relevant information in a way which assists with the communication of meaning. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate not to obscure meaning.
Level 4	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	4 marks	
Level 5	Evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	5 marks	The candidate presents relevant information coherently, employing structure and style to render meaning clear. The text produced is legible. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently accurate to render meaning clear.
Level 6	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of two different points of view showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	6 marks	

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Agree

Religious crimes offend God who should be respected for many reasons, also cause deep offence to believers.

Other views

God cannot be offended because he doesn't exist, crimes against the person or property are more important because they have greater effect on more people / religion does not merit such protection / freedom of speech.

(6 marks) AO2