

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Religious Studies (Specification B)

Additional Specimen Questions:

Unit 4 *Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions*

- Immortality



There are 18 marks for each question.

4 Immortality

Read the statement below.

"All of a sudden I became aware of myself floating towards the ceiling. I could hear the nurses talking and rushing around. I saw a bright light at the end of the tunnel and I went towards it, feeling full of joy and peace. The next thing I knew, a nurse was trying to wake me up and I realised I was back in the hospital room."

(a)(i) What is meant by a 'Near Death Experience'? (2 marks)

(ii) 'Near Death Experiences prove that there is an afterlife.'

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

(b) Explain beliefs about reincarnation in **one** religion. (3 marks)

(c) Explain beliefs about resurrection in **one** religion. (4 marks)

(d) 'There is no evidence for life after death.'

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.

(6 marks)



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Religious Studies
Full or Short Course
Specification B

Unit 4 ***Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions***

Additional SPECIMEN Mark Scheme
Immortality

June series

4 Immortality**4 (a)(i) What is meant by a 'Near Death Experience'?****Target: Knowledge of key term 'Near Death Experience'**

Candidates may include some of the following points:

A Near Death Experience is an 'out of body' experience / experience of someone who has clinically died but later been resuscitated / detachment from one's body / feelings of extreme peace, warmth or security / light at the end of the tunnel, etc.

Award one mark for simple definition, e.g. an out-of-body experience.

Award second mark for development.

(2 marks) AO1**4 (a)(ii) 'Near Death Experiences prove that there is an afterlife.'****What do you think? Explain your opinion.****Target: Evaluation of whether Near Death Experiences prove there is an afterlife**

Levels	Criteria	Marks
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 one developed reason or several elaborated reasons.	3 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Near Death Experiences prove an afterlife as so many have described similar experiences / not all can be lying / can have life-changing effect on person / advances in medical technology mean more people have been resuscitated, giving more evidence that something happens / similar descriptions of experiences, e.g. tunnel of light/ sense of happiness / desire not to return.

Near Death Experiences can be explained scientifically / result of oxygen starvation/ person is not really dead / could be hallucinating owing to drugs given during treatment.

(3 marks) AO1

4 (b) Explain beliefs about reincarnation in one religion.**Target: Knowledge of religious beliefs about reincarnation**

Levels	Criteria	Marks
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	A sound knowledge and understanding.	3 marks

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Reincarnation is the belief that after death a person is reborn into another living thing / a person's soul (atman) lives a new life in a different body / can be animal or human / depends on karma achieved in previous life / idea that eventually soul will reach perfection and obtain release from cycle of birth, death and rebirth / also called 'transmigration of souls'.

(3 marks) AO1

4 (c) Explain beliefs about resurrection in one religion.

Target: Knowledge and understanding of beliefs about resurrection in one religion

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 explain beliefs about resurrection in Christianity, Islam or Judaism.

Candidates may include some of the following points:

Christianity

Jesus' resurrection / Jesus' promise to go to prepare a place for believers (John 14²⁻³) / belief that soul is resurrected and will be judged by God / go to heaven to live with God for eternity / be cleansed of sin in Purgatory / suffer eternal punishment in hell/ Judgement Day / Second coming of Christ / resurrection of the body/ restoration to glorified bodies.

Islam

Belief that soul (nafs) leaves the body at death / al- Barzakh (waiting) / sorting by crossing Sirat Bridge / physical resurrection, hence speedy burial at death / bodies resurrected on Judgement Day / Paradise / Hell.

Judaism

Jewish beliefs vary, but most believe in a physical resurrection of the dead at coming of Messianic Age / Judgement Day when called to account for actions before God / unrighteous sent to gehinnom (hell) to be cleansed of sin before entering presence of God.

(4 marks) AO1

4 (d) 'There is no evidence for life after death.'

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 claim that there is no evidence for an afterlife

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

No one has incontrovertibly returned from the dead / no proof of anything beyond this life / no evidence for soul / proof that bodies decay or are cremated / wishful thinking / space exploration shows no evidence of 'heaven up there' / legacies forgotten in time / evolution a matter of survival – no overriding 'purpose' in life other than passing on DNA.

Other views

Scriptures of different religions teach otherwise / scriptures recount events interpreted as showing life after death, e.g. Jesus' resurrection / accounts of experience of ghosts / hauntings / mediums contacting the dead / 'channelling' / near death experiences / historical belief in life after death in earliest societies / so many humans believe, there must be something in it / legacy in some sense proves we live on / atoms remain, even if no conscious life.

(6 marks) AO2