



National  
Qualifications  
2023

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# 2023 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

## Religious and Philosophical Questions

### Higher

## Finalised Marking Instructions

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## 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.	<p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. <b>A maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b>                      The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding of explanations for the origins of the universe and/or life, analyse these and evaluate their compatibility.</p> <p><b>Candidates should take the following approach to the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present religious and scientific views on origins, analyse these views, make a judgement on whether these views are compatible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific marking instructions</b>                      Marks will be capped at <b>8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>both analysis and evaluation skills</b>.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and understanding – up to 10 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of religious views on origins</li> <li>• a description of scientific views on origins</li> <li>• relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christians would look to the Genesis narrative to support their belief that God was the origin of the universe</li> <li>• liberal or symbolic Christians would argue that the Bible is a book of religious truths, guidance from God, it is not a scientific book and does not claim to be</li> <li>• the theory of evolution, as proposed by Charles Darwin states that all life forms have evolved from a chemical mix gradually and randomly over millions of years.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Analysis – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of religious views on origins</li> <li>• analysis of scientific views on origins</li> <li>• analysis of the evidence used to support religious and scientific views on origins</li> <li>• implications/interpretations of relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of analysis points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• this implies that the Bible is a handbook of faith, but we still need to use our intelligence and match religious claims with scientific findings – symbolically interpreting the creation story allows us to do that</li> <li>• a consequence of this viewpoint is the acceptance that both science and religion are answering different questions – science answers ‘how’ while religion answers ‘why’</li> <li>• an implication of this is that because of the proportions of Hydrogen in the universe today, we can deduce that the universe was ‘created’ by a Big Bang.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement on the extent to which religious and scientific views can be compatible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I agree with Einstein that science and religion can be both right and compatible about explaining origins because science cannot verify or falsify that the Universe and Life was or was not brought into being by any divine being such as God</li> <li>• this is because the idea of God is outside the reach of the scientific method and so science cannot make any valid claims about God’s existence or possible act of creation</li> <li>• likewise, religious teachings date back to a pre-scientific era, and so can only go so far in answering questions about how and why the universe was created – we have to rely on science for answers.</li> </ul>

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. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. <b>A maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to <b>both</b> the question and the answer.	20	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of this question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious arguments for the existence of God, analyse and evaluate these arguments.</p> <p><b>Candidates may take the following approach to the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present religious and scientific views on the existence of God, analyse these views, make a judgement on whether these views are valid.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific marking instructions</b> Marks will be <b>capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>both</b> analysis and evaluation skills.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and understanding – up to 10 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of religious arguments about the existence of God</li> <li>• a description of non-religious arguments about the existence of God</li> <li>• relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• religious arguments, such as the Cosmological argument, often appeal to logic and reason in drawing conclusions about the existence of God</li> <li>• some non-religious arguments, such as the Big Bang Theory, have the benefit of offering evidence for their conclusions</li> <li>• no non-religious argument can offer conclusive proof that God doesn't exist, only that the arguments used to prove he does are generally unsuccessful.</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of religious arguments on the existence of God</li> <li>• analysis of non-religious arguments on the existence of God</li> <li>• analysis of the evidence used to support religious and non-religious arguments on the existence of God</li> <li>• implications/interpretations of relevant sources.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Examples of analysis points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an implication of the Cosmological argument is that the Universe can't cause itself and thus that a cause out with the Universe is necessary therefore there must be a God</li> <li>• an implication of the Big Bang Theory is that the conclusion drawn by the Cosmological argument that God exists is an unsupported assumption</li> <li>• an implication of the design, order and purpose evident in the Universe is that the Universe too must have a designer.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement on the extent to which religious and non-religious arguments provide conclusive proof about the existence of God.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• while it makes sense to conclude that God may be the cause/designer of the Universe as he alone is not subject to the laws that the rest of the Universe is, both religious arguments fail to offer conclusive evidence of his existence</li> <li>• arguments based on science provide a better argument for the apparent design in the Universe than those supporting God, as they don't need to reconcile a perfect designer with an imperfect design</li> <li>• non-religious arguments have evidence for their conclusions, religious arguments jump to their conclusions.</li> </ul>

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. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. <b>A maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to <b>both</b> the question and the answer.	<b>20</b>	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of this question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding about suffering and evil and arguments whether God and humans are responsible for it, analyse and evaluate these arguments.</p> <p><b>Candidates may take the following approach to the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present views for God and human being responsible for suffering and evil, analyse these views, make a judgement on whether these views are valid.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific marking instructions</b> Marks will be <b>capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>both</b> analysis and evaluation skills.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and understanding – up to 10 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of arguments that claim God is responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• a description of arguments that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some Christians say that God is all loving, all powerful and all-knowing but that God cannot be held responsible for acts of evil</li> <li>• some non-religious people, such as atheists, would say that existence of evil is enough to prove that God doesn't exist</li> <li>• Augustine's theodicy states that God created the perfect world but because God gave humans free will and when they choose to disobey God, they create an absence of good within themselves.</li> </ul>



Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Analysis – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of the arguments that claim God is responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• analysis of the arguments that claim Humans are responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• analysis of the arguments used</li> <li>• implications/interpretations of relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of analysis points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a consequence of the Christian belief about the nature of God is that his nature becomes inconsistent with the presence of suffering and evil in the world, an all loving God would not stand back and watch people suffer</li> <li>• Augustine’s theodicy implies that God cannot be blamed for the presence of suffering and evil as he makes it clear that God created a perfect world and humans are solely at fault for misusing their free will</li> <li>• some religious people, such as John Hick, would argue that God created the possibility of evil when he gave human beings free will.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement on the extent to which responsibility for suffering and evil lie with both God and humans.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I agree with the idea of the inconsistency of the nature of God in a world with suffering and evil because if someone had the power and ability to help those in pain then surely they would?</li> <li>• I believe suffering is a result of humans misuse of the gift of freewill from God and that God cannot be held responsible</li> </ul> <p>I believe that, however you look at it, God is at least as responsible, if not more so than humanity for the existence of evil because at the time of creation, God gave us our own ability to make our own choices.</p>

Part D – Miracles

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
4.	<p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. <b>A maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b>                      The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious views on miracles.</p> <p><b>Candidates may take the following approach to the question:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• present religious and non-religious views on miracles, analyse these views, make a judgement on whether these views are compatible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific marking instructions</b>                      Marks will be capped at <b>8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>both</b> analysis and evaluation skills.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and understanding – up to 10 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of religious explanations for miracles</li> <li>• a description of non-religious explanations for miracles</li> <li>• relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a miracle can be described as breaking a natural law</li> <li>• one example of a religious miracle is when God resurrected his son, Jesus from the dead</li> <li>• one example of a non-religious miracle is when a woman lost control of her car, died and firefighters only managed to find her unconscious daughter after hearing a voice shouting ‘help me, help me’.</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of religious views on miracles</li> <li>• analysis of non-religious views on miracles</li> <li>• analysis of the views used</li> <li>• implications/interpretations of sources.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Analysis – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of religious views on miracles</li> <li>• analysis of non-religious views on miracles</li> <li>• analysis of the views used</li> <li>• implications/interpretations of sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of analysis points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one problem with miracles is they generally do not have many rational witnesses which puts into the question the reliability of the event ever taking place</li> <li>• Hume argued that almost all religions have miracle stories however, they cannot all be right. Therefore, their different testimonies would cancel each other out</li> <li>• an implication of a religious miracle is that it strengthens faith as it reveals the true nature of God.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – up to 5 marks may be awarded for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement on how far religious and non-religious views on miracles be compatible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• religious and non-religious views on miracles may never be compatible as science would claim that miracles cannot be tested and therefore, they cannot be proven, whereas religious views on miracles would say that they are proven by faith as they are a sign from God</li> <li>• religious and non-religious views on miracles may never be compatible as non-religious people may question the nature of an all-loving God on why he isn't performing miracles on a daily basis to solve the world's problems and why they only happen to small numbers of people</li> <li>• religious and non-religious views on miracles could be compatible as some Christians may take a more scientific approach to their understanding of miracles and claim that they may have a rational explanation.</li> </ul>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]