

# Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE

## GCE Religious Studies (9562)

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## 6777: Philosophy Of Religion

In most cases candidates were competent in their understanding of the main philosophical concepts and arguments. Most problems were related to poor examination techniques, including lack of attention to the precise demands of the question. Examples of this problem are illustrated below.

### Question 1

This type of global 20 mark question enabled candidates the opportunity to use a variety of approaches. However, some were not able to structure their answers in a clear, coherent manner. There has been an improvement in recent years in terms of candidates selecting and adapting their material on this topic to the thrust of the question about the existence of God. Knowledge and understanding of the phenomena of religious experience was relevant provided it was focussed on an argument for the existence of God. For example, accounts of James and Otto were important in this context provided they were adapted to the question. Candidates scored well in their use of Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony that along with other approaches is relevant to this type of question. Some candidates made intelligent connections with related parts of the unit such as various strands of religious language.

Those centres teaching unit 3 from the new specification may find the material by Donovan, listed on page 73 of the specification, a useful background for a study of religious experience.

### Question 2

This question attracted a number of very high quality answers. These displayed evidence of a thorough understanding of a considerable range of scholarship coupled with an excellent proficiency in the use of technical language. As always, candidates must pay attention to the allocation of marks. In some cases candidates devoted far more time to part (b) with 8 marks at the expense of part (a) with 12 marks. On the other hand, some spent too long on part (a) and did not allow themselves adequate time for part (b). A number of candidates approached part (a) by means of a survey of scholars' contributions. This was acceptable provided sufficient attention was given to the thrust of the question that required an analysis of the key concepts.

The majority of answers to part (b) worked through the argument's features and then its strengths and weaknesses. This enabled candidates to score well if they focused carefully on the extent of argument's success or otherwise. The lower marks reflected work that engaged in a general discussion about the ontological argument rather than on the thrust of the question.

### Question 3

Some candidates excelled at this question with a thorough understanding of the key ideas. In some cases candidates were better at the first argument rather than the second one attempted. It was agreed at the standardisation meeting that the question did not require equal treatment of two arguments. The level descriptors reflected those instances in which negligible attention was given to the second argument. Examiners credited a wide range of arguments for the non-existence of God. A number of candidates used the problem of suffering and this was relevant, although it must be noted that to achieve the higher levels it was essential to make an explicit adaptation of this material to the demands of this question. This requirement is applicable to any exemplar used by candidates, such as psychological and sociological critiques of religion. In part (b) some candidates were vague about the term 'atheism' and tended to think it was synonymous with agnosticism. Part (b) was often a survey of the faults of atheism but lacked specific focus on the strengths/weaknesses of atheism. However, some answers did this very well with reference to topics such as Pascal's wager, balance of probability and eschatological verification.

### Question 4

In many cases this was very well researched and understood by candidates. Those candidates who provided a clear structure to their answer did well. Most set out the challenges to religious language for example from logical positivism and then set about refuting the challenge with reference to meaningful types of religious language coupled with a critical analysis. There were some very good responses and it was not necessary to cover a wide range of approaches to reach the top levels, although many answers did. The majority tended to focus on two or three exemplars such as Ayer and Flew; Flew, Hare and Mitchell; or Bultmann and Tillich. There were some particularly insightful studies of Wittgenstein showing an intelligent use of his aphorisms.

Those centres teaching unit 3 from the new specification from may find the material by A.J. Ayer, listed on page 73 of the specification, a useful background for a study of religious language.

### Question 5

Candidates displayed evidence of a sound knowledge of key concepts. In some cases however, candidates wrote extensively about the terms 'dualism', 'monism' and 'materialism' and although these are relevant, they did not make the explicit link to the precise terms used in the question. The weakest topics were rebirth and reincarnation whereby some thought these terms were interchangeable and synonymous. In part (b) it was important for candidates to address the question that the two topics present equally satisfactory accounts of life after death rather than merely consider them in isolation from each other. The better quality answers argued the case in terms of what constituted philosophically sound beliefs.

## **6778/01: Old Testament/Jewish Bible**

There were a number of excellent scripts and centres are to be congratulated on the high standard of preparation among their candidates.

Most candidates answered question 1, and either 3 or 4. There were very few answers to question 2.

More able candidates tended to make points concisely and were able to quote and use a range of scholarship. The level of background knowledge and understanding of the material was good.

To access the higher marks candidates should:

- Pace themselves properly and not spend too much time on their first question.
- Not concentrate too much on the factual aspect and display sufficient discussion and evaluation (AO2).
- Answer the question set rather than 'write all they know about...'

Candidates at the lower end of the mark range did not write in sufficient depth or detail and answers were sketchy, tending towards a simple re-telling of the biblical text.

### **Question 1**

This was the most popular question. The better responses displayed a detailed knowledge of the textual narrative, together with the views of scholars and clear evaluation. There was, as always, a heavy reliance on pre-prepared answers, many of which were too long. At the middle and lower end of the mark range, candidates relied too much on re-telling the textual narrative without detailed evaluation. The real discriminators were the amount of useful detail included in the answer, based on a sound knowledge and fluency of expression and argument.

### **Question 2**

This question was attempted by a limited number of candidates, most of whom knew the material very well indeed.

### **Question 3**

This was a popular question which attracted a range of responses. Part (a) was in general fully covered by the higher level candidates, who were able to be selective and discussed the issues well. It was sometimes used by less able candidates as an opportunity to write about Amos in general. Part (b) produced variable responses. Some did well, others however, speculated in their response rather than refer to text and scholarship.

#### **Question 4**

The many candidates that answered this question generally responded well. The finest answers displayed good textual knowledge and an appreciation of the background and symbolism. Nearly all candidates were able link Hosea's teaching with his personal life, though less able candidates tended to speculate.

#### **Question 5**

This was not a very popular question. The best answers displayed considerable knowledge of the text and an awareness of scholarship. Most of the less able candidates simply wrote all they knew about Jeremiah. As in the past, a small number were too heavily tied to their pre-prepared answers and these candidates were unable to make a useful evaluation of the issues raised and did not really address the question.

## **6778/02: Religious Ethics**

Overall, the standard of student responses was at a good level this year, with candidates scoring particularly well on questions 6, 7, and 9. As ever good responses to question 8 were less evident and generally responses to this question were less successful, despite the large number of responses to question 3 on paper 6782.

Candidates in most part wrote at length and were able to draw on a wide range of detailed material. However, there is still an overwhelming tendency for many candidates to substitute genuine evaluation for case study and anecdote, especially in response to question 9. This tended to limit candidates to level 3 even if supported by a reasonable level of theoretical material.

Overall, it is encouraging to see the level of achievement rising on this paper and it is hoped that this will continue to be evident in the new specification.

### **Question 6**

This has become exceptionally popular and well done. Candidates for the most part choose to write on Kant's moral argument, but others quite appropriately used variations of arguments to support a link between morality and the existence of God including Aquinas, Own, Trethowan, Newman, C S Lewis and Sorley. Critiques of the argument drew on the work of a range of scholars, and most candidates were able to offer a balance of information and evaluation of that information. Critiques of the link between morality and religion were also well handled, drawing on a wide range of sources including the Euthyphro Dilemma, Freud, Nietzsche, Marx, and Dawkins.

### **Question 7**

In most cases, candidates were able to keep the demands of the question in mind and referred to the wording throughout or at least at key evaluative moments. The key features of Kantian deontology are generally well known by the majority of candidates, but it would still be good to see candidates using fewer examples of moral dilemmas or ethical challenges to meet the demands of the question. Whilst a couple may be useful, candidates should be able to score at a higher level if they evaluate from a theoretical as well as a practical basis. It would be good to see this aspect developed for unit 3 of the new specification. Many weaker candidates ignored the wording of the question and stuck to a basic strengths and weaknesses format, which for some candidates seemed to have been pre-learned and applied whatever the question may have been.

### Question 8

There was a marginal increase in responses to this question, although many candidates struggled to offer much in the way of detail on the is-ought gap; some ignored this part altogether, whilst others just made something up. Stronger candidates embraced this section of the question, identified it as the naturalistic fallacy and explored ethical language, especially with reference to debates about 'good', verificationism, prescriptivism and moral obligation.

Responses to part (b) were by far mostly focussed on emotivism and in most cases based on genuine knowledge and understanding of the approach, although others lacked sufficient detail to move into the higher mark bands. Weaker candidates tended to focus on emotivism and the 'boo-hurray' theory, with an extended case-study, normally on abortion. Stronger candidates included quotations, references to Ross, Ayer, Stevenson and Moore. Outstanding answers included discussion on the nature and reliability of intuition as a basis for making moral decisions.

### Question 9

This question was hugely popular alongside questions 6 or 7, and although broadly successful, there was an even greater tendency for candidates to use a case study approach, usually to homosexuality or abortion, rather than a theoretical evaluation. The difference in creditworthiness when candidates are able to evaluate using alternative or complementary theoretical approaches is considerable and which centres should bear in mind. Many candidates reproduced their best Natural Moral Law essay and stronger candidates tailored it to fit the demands of the question. Weaker candidates simply focused on one or two primary principles. Stronger candidates cited the primary and secondary principles, evaluated them in the light of examples they had studied in school and linked them in to Aristotle and Aquinas' development of the theory. The outstanding responses to this question gave a clear historical overview of the development of Natural Moral Law and compared it to other deontological and teleological theories before arriving at a conclusion to the question about 'convincing moral guidance'. Many candidates chose to ignore the specific demands of the question and attempted simplistic strengths and weaknesses answer.

### Question 10

There were very few responses overall to this question, although those centres which have made a special study of justice and/punishment emerge very credibly. Some marks could be gained from general responses to the topics, but they were limited in creditworthiness if they failed to take into account the instruction to refer to religious ethics. This can be any of the theories studied at AS or A2, but it must be evident. It is worth bearing in mind that a single area from their study, for example, capital punishment linked with objectivity or relativism, and taking religious ethical issues into account could yield a very fruitful response. Some candidates found it hard to decide exactly what they were being asked to do. Better answers selected closely related topics and enjoyed teasing them apart, so subjectivity and relativism, or objectivity and justice were paired up and tackled successfully. Some just wrote about two topics, while better answers compared and contrasted effectively. The strongest response cited Kant, Fletcher, Bentham and Mill in particular and included powerful modern case studies to illustrate their answers.

## **6779: New Testament**

There were a high number of excellent scripts and centres are to be congratulated on the standard of preparation among their candidates.

Candidates who achieved the highest grades generally made points crisply and were able to quote and use a range of scholarship. The level of knowledge and understanding of the textual and background material was good.

To access the higher marks, candidates should:

- Pace themselves properly and not spend too much time on their first question.
- Not concentrate too much on the factual aspect and display sufficient discussion and evaluation (AO2).
- Answer the question set rather than 'write all they know about...'

Candidates who achieved marks at the lower end of the mark range generally did not write in sufficient depth, with answers tending towards a simple re-telling of the biblical text.

### **Section A: The Gospel according to Luke**

#### **Question 1**

This was a popular question and well answered, though with a high number of pre-prepared answers. Most candidates had a clear knowledge and understanding of all the main elements, although some struggled to evaluate in part (b).

#### **Question 2**

This was well answered and with fewer candidates resorting to story-telling than in previous years. The more able candidates were able to examine the teachings and discuss their meaning. At the lower range of marks, most candidates stuck firmly to the textual narrative and offered little evaluation of the issues. Only the most able had a clear understanding in part (b) of the Jewish influences.

#### **Question 3**

There were relatively few responses to this question. Most mentioned parables and sayings and the higher range candidates discussed the differing views of scholars. Candidates in the middle and lower mark range were vague on what Jesus taught and there was a distinct lack of scholarship and critical awareness.

#### **Question 4**

This was a popular question and the more able candidates were able to discern the issues surrounding the relationship between Jesus and the authorities and linked scholars to the textual narrative. Candidates in the middle and lower mark ranges relied heavily on the textual narrative and few offered any in-depth analysis. In part (b) only the higher level candidates evaluated, most resorted to telling the story, with a number of vague and often unhelpful, references to the film 'The Passion of the Christ'.

### **Question 5**

This question was answered well at by the more able candidates, with clear examination and understanding of the symbolism and the Old Testament prophecies. The less able candidates simply retold the textual narrative. Part (b) was somewhat speculative, but generally well done, with those at the lower end simply re-telling the story.

## **Section B: The Fourth Gospel**

### **Question 6**

This was a popular question, with most answers offering a range of knowledge and understanding. Many answers were too long. Scholarship was evident and generally well-used but AO2 answers tended to be rather speculative at the middle and lower end of the mark range.

### **Question 7**

This was a popular question and many candidates scored quite well on the author's stated purpose, though less well on other possible purposes. There was some evidence of both scholarship and the textual narrative, together with useful background discussion. Less able candidates stuck closely to the textual narrative and were unable to offer in-depth analysis of important issues.

### **Question 8**

This was not a very popular question. Of those that attempted it, most candidates offered good knowledge and understanding of the principal teachings and could offer a good range of examples. However, a number of candidates struggled to score significantly at AO2. It was encouraging to see fewer candidates in the middle and lower mark range making sweeping generalisations.

### **Question 9**

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### **Question 10**

This question was answered well at by the more able candidates, with clear examination and understanding of the symbolism and the Old Testament prophecies. The less able candidates simply retold the textual narrative. Part (b) was somewhat speculative, but generally well done, with those at the lower end simply re-telling the story.

## **Section C: The early Church as reflected in Acts and 1 Corinthians**

### **Question 11**

This question was a popular one and was well tackled by most candidates and a range of useful information and scholarship was offered. Evaluation of the evidence was sometimes lacking in depth and rather speculative. Candidates at the middle-lower range relied too heavily on the textual narrative.

### **Question 12**

This was not a very popular question, but it was well answered by the more able candidates, who displayed considerable textual knowledge and scholarship and could relate Paul's teachings to the early Church. There were a few middle-range answers that emphasised the textual narrative and failed to evaluate.

### **Question 13**

This question produced a few very good answers, covering the full range of issues but most answers were lacking in depth, both in textual knowledge, and in the evaluation of the issues. Part (b) produced many speculative answers in the mid-range which drew little evidence from the text or scholarship.

### **Question 14**

This was a popular question and, although there were a number of pre-prepared answers, candidates were generally responsive to the material. There were some good scholarly responses at the top end, but rather a lot of guesswork at the lower end.

### **Question 15**

Most candidates attempted this question and in general candidates knew the material well, offering a range of knowledge, coupled with interesting scholarly evaluation and discussion. In the middle mark range, answers were rather speculative. At the lower levels, candidates relied on telling the story.



## 6780: Christianity

The number of candidates entered for Sections A and C was similar, fewer were entered for Section B. There were some excellent answers addressing the questions set. However, a significant proportion of candidates seemed to be using pre-prepared answers which did not answer the question set. For example, Question 7 was about the influences on the development of the Catholic Reformation but a large number of candidates seemed to be debating the Catholic/Counter Reformation question as a result their AO2 was disappointing.

Comments have been made on the most popular question.

### Section A: Church History and Christian Thought: The Reformation

#### Option A: England

##### Question 1

This was one of the most popular questions in this section. Good answers were able to give a detailed and balanced account of the events of the reign of James I explaining their significance for the development of the Reformation in England. Weaker responses were unbalanced referring only to non-conformity and sectarianism or Roman Catholicism or lacking in detail.

##### Question 2

This was the other popular question in this section. In part (a) more able candidates were able to refer to Laud's teachings as well as his attempt to impose religious uniformity. There was a tendency for less able candidates to repeat in part (b) material already covered in part (a).

##### Question 5

This question was answered by a number of candidates. Most tended to focus on 'externals' for example, the fact that members of the Society of Friends would not raise their hats without explaining the teachings and beliefs underlying the action.

#### Option B: Europe

##### Question 6

This was the most popular question in this section. There were some excellent answers giving an account of the spread of the Reformation *throughout* Europe, and not just the geographical spread but reference to the development of Reformation thinking. However, a significant number of candidates understood 'throughout Europe' as meaning France.

### **Question 7**

Better answers considered a range of influences on the development of the Catholic Reformation and assessed their significance for the development of the Catholic Reformation. Weaker answers considered only the Council of Trent or, in some cases, Ignatius Loyola and the Society of Jesus. As stated in the introduction many candidates took this as a question about whether the Council of Trent was an example of Catholic or Counter Reformation, whereas it was intended to be a question about the internal reform of the Roman Catholic Church.

### **Question 9**

Most candidates answered this question. Part (a) was answered well by most candidates but the answers to part (b) were usually disappointing because candidates repeated the material in part (a) and did little more than point out how Calvin's teaching was the same as or differed from that of the other reformers. Very few candidates traced the origins of Calvin's teaching in the New Testament and in Church teaching.

## **Section B: Church History and Christian Thought: The Nineteenth Century to the Present Day**

### **Questions 12 and 17**

This question was answered by nearly every candidate in this section. There were some excellent answers but there are some candidates who still struggle with the concept of 'religionless Christianity' and do not make the connection with Barth's teaching and the situation in Germany at the time.

### **Question 19**

This was the other popular question in this section. Good answers were able to give an analysis of the development of Cone's teaching and a discussion of that teaching.

## **Section C: Christian Belief and Practice**

### **Question 21**

Many of the weaker responses were unbalanced focusing entirely on the development of Trinitarian teaching in the Bible and in the Early Church. Better answers considered one or more aspects of modern Trinitarian teaching.

### **Question 22**

Candidates considered a range of modern teaching in this section, some suggested in the specification, others not, but still perfectly acceptable.

### **Question 23**

Most answers referred to the various theories of atonement. Only very occasionally did answers refer to modern scholarship. The majority of responses gave an account of the teaching with very little attempt to discuss it, although there were AO2 marks available in part (a). There were some good answers to part (b) including reference to modern scholarship.

### **Question 24**

This questions was answered in a number of ways. Valid answers were given appropriate credit. Surprisingly few answers discussed the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection in releasing man from the power of sin and death.

### **Question 25**

This was a very popular question. More able candidates were able to analyse the main views with reference to scholarly opinion. Less able candidates tended to give an outline of the teachings.



## **6781: World Religions**

### **Section A: Buddhism**

#### **Question 1**

The better quality answers combined AO1 and AO2 effectively and focused on the precise wording of the question concerning Ashoka as the ideal Buddhist ruler. Some referred to similar ideas but did not explicitly address the question. A number of candidates had ample material and used evidence and scholarship well. Others had learnt scholars' views but were unable to use them to formulate relevant AO2 evaluation.

#### **Question 2**

A number of candidates had a substantial amount of relevant material. For example, many candidates adapted and selected material from various Pure Land and Zen traditions as a way of focussing on the question. In some cases there was an abundance of material that was spoilt by an elementary error of confusing China with Japanese traditions and vice versa. In some cases candidates did not differentiate between the different tasks in part (a) and (b).

#### **Question 3**

Candidates displayed detailed information about these key terms and many referred to the set texts as a good way of elaborating their material. The key problem was insufficient focus of the issue raised in the question about an explanation of how these terms are linked together. Some answers mentioned this in passing towards the end of their response. However, there were a few candidates who examined the relationship between the three concepts but lacked a sufficient analysis of the terms themselves. In part (b) candidates selected from the three terms and made a case for thinking the one they selected was fundamental for an understanding of the first noble truth. The most popular choice was anicca. The differentiation of marks was related to the way candidates argued their case and many candidates made very good use of the set texts.

#### **Question 4**

This question attracted high quality answers including excellent use of the set texts. Some focused on Theravada views whilst others referred to a range of Buddhist traditions and either approach was credit worthy. Some candidates presented good material on nirvana as the ultimate goal but were weaker discussing the expression that nirvana is 'unconditioned'. It should be noted that this expression is used in the set texts.

#### **Question 5**

This question produced a number of high quality answers. Candidates had substantial information about the distinctive features covering both detail and range of material. Candidates used the set texts to good effect. Part (b) had some excellent responses with evidence of reflective discussion. Some candidates spent too much time on details of the Bodhisattva path rather than explicit, selective analysis of the distinctive features of the doctrine.

## **Section B: Hinduism**

### **Question 6**

This was a very popular question among candidates. In most cases the two thinkers commented upon were Dayananda Sarasvati and Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and fewer candidates commented upon Sri Radhakrishnan.

There were many full and well considered answers. However, many candidates did not address the question of context particularly well. In some instances candidates presented contextual material in a simplistic manner in their introductions. Many answers were dependant upon biographical detail, at the expense of theology and philosophy. Some candidates presented debatable interpretations as if they were factual and straightforward. For example, some candidates portrayed Ramakrishna and Gandhi as both strongly anti-caste. Similarly, some candidates had a relatively unsophisticated concept of the Arya Samaj as a violently intolerant nationalist group. In most cases however, candidates presented high quality answers including sound critical debate of the contributions to Hinduism of the figure selected in part (b).

### **Question 7**

There were many exceptional responses to this question. In most cases the knowledge of the set text was impressive and the question demanded that candidates had to really use what they knew rather than simply repeating revision notes. In addition, a number of candidates showed an understanding of the distinctive contributions and the respective differences across the set texts. Sadly some candidates appear to have misread the question, or been unaware of what the set texts were, and attempted to deal with the issues with no reference whatsoever to the Katha Upanishad or the Bhagavad Gita.

### **Question 8**

A number of good quality scripts referred to a range of exemplars and detailed material in the set texts. Some candidates presented high quality work through their responses and coupled discussion of key figures with informed debates about topics such as caste.

### **Question 9**

This question allowed many candidates to exhibit an impressive knowledge and understanding of the classic Hindu ideas relating to the relationship between Atman and Brahman. However, surprisingly few made the links between belief and practice that would have allowed them to apply their theoretical knowledge to Hindu practice.

## Question 10

There were some splendid responses to this question, allowing students to combine their knowledge of the Bhagavad Gita with what they knew of the life and ideas of Gandhi. Some candidates coupled detailed analysis with informed debates often using a thematic structure within their answers. Many were aware of the links and also the differences between Gandhi and the Bhagavad Gita. However some candidates had relatively shallow or misleading information about Gandhi and/or an understanding of the Bhagavad Gita as a simple bhakti text that promotes a conservative attitude towards varnashrama dharma.

## Section C: Islam

### Question 11

This question was popular and candidates generally showed a good level of knowledge and understanding. In part (a) responses gaining the higher levels contained full information and analysis of the key features of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. They referred to particular caliphs to illustrate key features, whereas lower level scripts listed and described narrative features without a fuller analysis.

In part (b), higher level answers presented an evaluation of the statement that this period led to a transformation of Islam whilst weaker answers either repeated facts from part (a) or briefly supported the assertion. The critical point of differentiation across levels was an evaluation of the issue of 'transformation'.

### Question 12

This was another popular question and many answers to part (a) reflected good knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Sunni and Shi'ah Islam. Better quality responses compared and contrasted beliefs and practices across both Sunni and Shi'ah Islam. Lower level answers tended to describe the split in detail and made brief reference to other comparisons and contrasts. It was agreed at standardisation that there would be a ceiling of level 2 if there was no attention to a comparative study.

Part (b) provided some difficulty for a number of candidates who either described some Sunni and Shi'ah practices or else wrote all they knew about a particular Muslim state. Better quality answers focussed closely on the wording of the question discussing 'the implications of this division...'.

### Question 13

A few answers to part (a) failed to focus closely on the wording of the question and these candidates either wrote all they knew about the teaching about Allah or described the experience of Muhammad and revelation. Good answers used material carefully and focused closely on the question, showing the beliefs about the Qur'an as revelation from Allah and the significance of these doctrines. Effective use was made of the set texts in many of these good answers.

Part (b) provided the better answers from a greater number of students. Candidates should remember to check the balance of marks awarded and adjust their time accordingly. The answers in this section were sometimes much fuller than those in part (a).

#### **Question 14**

Both part (a) and part (b) were sometimes answered quite briefly. Some answers were very generalised and narrative and lacked specific reference to set texts. Some contained detailed quotes from the Qur'an but without adequate analysis, examination and discussion. A small number of better answers contained good reference to the set texts coupled with analysis and discussion.

#### **Question 15**

Good answers to part (a) reflected material that was developed well with a close focus upon the wording of the question. Too often candidates either did not make reference to the question concerning the appealing nature of Sufism or simply enclosed a statement relating to this at the end of the section.

Most answers to part (b) were at least competent, with students gaining marks for AO1 and AO2 material showing the criticisms that have been brought against Sufism. Answers achieving the higher levels clarified and assessed the criticisms brought against Sufism including consideration of the extent that the criticisms were justified.

#### **Section D: Judaism**

There were too few scripts to compile a report. However, it can be noted that the candidates were competent across both assessment objectives across all the questions. The responses were well-informed with sound evaluative skills.

## 6782: Synoptic

Candidates are to be congratulated on producing good quality answers that attempted to debate the various issues. Candidates had accrued ample information and displayed their evaluative skills in a clear manner. However many candidates need to improve their study skills and in particular examination techniques. Many responses in the past have contained first rate material to a question asked in previous years that has not been adapted to the specific question on the current paper. This year, the specific skill that required improvement was effective essay planning. In many cases candidates had a wide variety of relevant material but their answers lacked planning and coherence.

The report below refers to those questions that attracted more candidates than others.

### Question 3

This was characterised by full and well-learned detail applicable to AO1. Candidates were able to discriminate between a range of different types of language and their respective distinctive features and uses. In addition there was detailed attention to the contributions of a range of scholars. Those answers attracting higher marks analysed and debated relevant ideas about meaningfulness and meaningless language. In many cases candidates used ideas from Wittgenstein as a means of coming to a coherent conclusion. Several responses to this question typified poor essay planning. Those responses achieving lower marks sometimes had chunks of information following on from each other but without much explicit connection from one paragraph to another or from one part of an answer to another. There could have been improvements to AO2 particularly with reference to the requirement of the question asking 'to what extent' the view about meaningless language is valid.

### Question 4

Some candidates excelled in comparing and contrasting two ethical theories. However, in a number of cases this was bypassed with candidates presenting an account of two ethical theories separate from each other. Candidates adopted a variety of strategies such as comparing two ethical theories and then either separately, or combining both theories, discussed their application to a moral dilemma. Some candidates firstly outlined the moral dilemma and then analysed and debated the application of ethical theory to the dilemma. Any of these approaches was creditworthy provided the candidates fully addressed the total requirements of the question as they progressed through their answers. Some candidates were not as competent in terms of integrating ethical theory to a moral dilemma and at times ended up with a formulaic approach. In some cases candidates devoted too much time to a description of the dilemma rather than an analysis of the nature of the dilemma.

### **Question 5**

The better answers to this question presented scholarly analysis balanced with useful textual material. These answers presented a literate and critical discussion of the AO1 and AO2 aspects of the question. In some cases, lower marks reflected those answers that devoted too much time to philosophy at the expense of New Testament material.

### **Question 6**

Candidates had prepared well for this question although a heavier dependence on philosophy rather than an integration with New Testament studies remained evident. For example some candidates appear to be competent in evaluating philosophical argument but less so in debating New Testament scholarship. The less able candidates produced work that contained narrative material rather than analysis. Better quality answers used a range of philosophers whereas some lower level answers tended to stay with Hume.

### **Question 11**

In many cases the knowledge and understanding of beliefs about life after death in a religion was of a reasonable standard. Candidates may approach this type of question with a concentration on philosophical issues within one religion whilst others brought in some aspects of Western philosophy of religion. Either approach was creditworthy, provided the method was a philosophical examination and discussion. The question required an examination of the philosophical features of belief in life after death in one religion, rather than a mere descriptive and narrative account. Answers achieving higher marks clarified key concepts, the contributions of key thinkers, a philosophical analysis of seminal themes and debated differences of interpretation across the selected religious tradition. The better answers in AO2 paid clear attention to the point raised in the question about the importance of these features in the religion. Other candidates however, sometimes barely mentioned the issue of importance.

There were fewer responses to the remaining questions on the paper. The main features to note were that in many cases the candidates had mastered the relevant material well and adapted their content to the precise demands and focal points within a question. The areas for improvement were insufficient attention to the total demands of the question and limited use of scholarship.

## Statistics

### Unit 6777: Philosophy of Religion

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	29	25	22	19	16
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6778/01: Old Testament/Jewish Bible

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	24	20	16	13
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6778/02: Religious Ethics

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	25	22	19	17
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6779: New Testament

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	24	20	16	13
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6780/01: Christianity - Church History and Christian Thought: The Reformation

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	25	21	17	14	11
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6780/02: Christianity - Church History and Christian Thought: The Nineteenth Century to the present day

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	25	21	17	14	11
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6780/03: Christianity - Christian Belief and Practice

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	25	21	17	14	11
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6781/01: World Religions: Buddhism

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	25	22	19	16
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6781/02: World Religions: Hinduism

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	25	22	19	16
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6781/03: World Religions: Islam

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	25	22	19	16
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6781/04: World Religions: Judaism

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	40	28	25	22	19	16
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

### Unit 6782: Synoptic

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	41	36	31	26	21
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

### Notes

**Maximum Mark (Raw):** the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

**Boundary mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.



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