

Examiners' Report January 2012

GCE Religious Studies 6RS01 01

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January 2012

Publications Code US030828

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Introduction

Candidates who know their subject matter well were able to adapt it to the set questions in original and capable ways. Some candidates clearly demonstrated understanding of what 'evaluation' means.

Some responses did not address the set question.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates examined three of the five named aspects and some singled them out explicitly. Some candidates dealt with two of the three well.

General conclusions were drawn, centred around the fact that the design argument is empirical in origin and offers an a posteriori approach to the existence of God by using inductive reasoning, which strengthens the possibility of an existing God. Weaker answers sometimes misunderstood the word 'reason' to mean purpose and became confused with the teleological argument.

This question was structured to allow candidates more space to develop their understanding of the design argument.

Some candidates chose to ignore this.

i) The Design Argument (DA) is an inductive, A Posteriori argument, which is based on our experience of the world around us. The three following terms which are important in relation to the DA for the existence of God, are the analogy, the anthropic principle, and empirical evidence.

To conclude the Design argument at best can suggest the existence of God is probable. However due to it being an inductive argument there is no proof, therefore the existence of God is not logically necessary. Moreover the design argument can be seen as

a convincing argument for a theist, as it can strengthen their belief in God. However it can never change an Atheists view to believe in God. Therefore the question of the Design argument being a valid conclusion for the existence of God is due to your own individual beliefs.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate begins by setting out clearly where the answer is to go.

The candidate concludes part ii with a clearly set out conclusion.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

If you are clear where you are going you are more likely to get there.

Question 1 (b)

Many candidates linked Aquinas' first three ways to Leibniz and some explicitly drew the link between the principle of sufficient reason and the contingency of finite things. In some responses, the different forms of the argument were explained and supported with a depth of detail that was impressive. There were a wealth of scholars mentioned, from Aristotle to McCabe.

Overall the Cosmological Argument was handled well and some responses reflected competence and some insightful evaluations.

The idea that there must be a cause for the whole that explains the whole, which must be accepted for the argument to work, was set against Russell and Hume's criticisms, which maintain that it is a fallacy to assume that there is an explanation for the universe dependent on belief in God.

There seemed to be somewhat more candidates stressing the overall weaknesses of the cosmological argument rather than its validity.

This candidate deals thoroughly with the strengths and weaknesses of the cosmological argument of Aquinas and then comes to a conclusion.

The argument is based around the claim that God must exist due to the fact that the universe needs a cause. The existence of the universe requires an explanation and an active creation of the universe by a being outside the universe - God - is that explanation. The argument is based around a distinction between necessary and contingent existence. Plato established a distinction between necessary ~~and~~ existence and contingent existence which was later utilised by Thomas Aquinas in 'Summa Theologiae', illustrated in the third of his fifth way. Necessary existence being something that would exist regardless of anything else, with natural processes not leading to its cessation whereas contingent existence is being dependent upon something else to live.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate shows the relation between necessary and contingent reason.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Know the definitions of critical words.

Question 2 (a)

Some candidates were able to select and show an understanding of the conflict between the existence of natural and moral suffering with belief in the God of Classical Theism. Mackie's Inconsistent Triad was used to highlight the dichotomy between the benevolent and omnipotent God and the existence of evil. Candidates illustrated this further by discussing the Augustinian and Irenaean theodicies, commenting on their strengths and weaknesses.

Good answers were able to use another solution to assess the merits of the one used in part (i) and to evaluate why it was a better solution. It also allowed candidates to make good use of the Process Theodicy and using its inherent weakness (that it isn't really a theodicy because it denies the God of Classical Theism) to good effect when analysing its weaknesses, and showing how either the Augustinian or Irenaean Theodicies were more successful. Weaker answers tended to assert rather than evaluate.

This candidate, although only a level 3 in AO1, reaches into the top level in the AO2 section.

ii) The Augustinian Theodicy is weak as it depends on all humanity being sinfully present in Adam which is scientifically unlikely and disregards the process of evolution. Also, Angels falling seems unlikely to anyone other than a strict Christian. Moreover, it never gives a clear reason for the existence of evil ~~orig~~ originally as for Man and Angels to choose between right and wrong, there must have been a knowledge of evil before The Fall. Finally, it does not seem just that God gives people free will to choose to reject or accept him when he will punish all those who reject him. This then contradicts the theistic view of a loving, just God.

Overall, although they both have flaws, Process Theodicy is a better solution as it provides a far more conclusive argument and allows us to remain free of responsibility of original sin while maintaining a belief in the conservative theistic God.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate has given the strengths of Augustine in part i, now the weaknesses are examined before coming to a conclusion.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Stick to the structure of the question, where given.

Question 2 (b)

There was some excellent use of Hume, Wyles, Vardy and Swinburne in examining the strengths and weaknesses. Some answers were also able to deploy evidence from the Scripture and from such places as Lourdes and Fatima. Weaker answers resorted to a descriptive explanation of miracle stories and offered two or three definitions of "miracle" at the start.

Good answers analysed the implications of both the soft and strong definitions; or discussed Aquinas' three types of miracle. They were clear on the differences between the definitions and how this shaped what constituted evidence.

Hume's criticism of miracles as accounts sourced from ignorant and barbarous people were offset against Swinburne's Principle of Credulity. The concept of a miracle being a violation of a law of nature by a supernatural being was used to point out that no single definition of miracle is without its flaws. Different examples of miracles were used to highlight their likelihood.

The key for this particular question is to see that definitions are in part ii, and reasons for belief are in part i.

If ~~we~~ we believe Tillich and Holland then there is almost no scope for ~~denial~~ denial of miracles, since we cannot disprove that God has revealed himself to the believer within their own mind. To the person with faith, the miracle

is ~~not~~ true and undeniable, not requiring proof of any kind. To the non-believer, it is an interesting statement ~~about~~ about the psyche of the believer and nothing more, but neither can they prove this. Even if a brain scan were to be able to show that the 'miracle' was in fact caused by chemicals and hormone release, the believer could still see these reactions ~~as~~ as the mysterious work of God. ~~This fact is~~

If we accept the 'strong' definition, it becomes almost ~~if~~ impossible to prove that a miracle has occurred, as Hume proposed that it would, and ~~there~~ the weaknesses of belief in miracles vastly outweigh the ~~strengths~~ strengths.

If we believe the 'contingent' definition, then the strength ~~of~~ or weakness of belief in a miracle depends entirely on the individual's subjective opinion and the debate cannot progress; perhaps this in itself is a weakness.



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Examiner Comments

This really tackles the issue of evaluation of miracles according to definitions.



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Examiner Tip

Spend time reading the question to make sure you know exactly what is required.

Question 3 (a)

Good answers demonstrated a good understanding of the historical developmental stages of utilitarianism, and revealed a good understanding of more modern scholars. They followed a logical line through the development of the theory into modern interpretations, such as Sidgwick, Popper, Moore, Hare and Singer as continuing adaptations suggesting at each point how those revisions strengthened the theory. They also made reference to the success of the theory in making changes to the attitudes towards the social condition of the poor in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Some candidates were able to make a reasoned and balanced argument that looked at how the strengths of Rule and Act Utilitarianism can also be the weaknesses. However, some answers just listed weaknesses and ignored the question.

The question does not ask for a history of Utilitarianism, it asks for its strengths, and especially how these strengths help resolve moral dilemmas. Some candidates simply wrote all they knew about Utilitarianism, which did not answer the question.

Utilitarianism was first introduced as a more democratic way to be moral. By being democratic this is seen as a strength as it takes the majority's opinion into account resolving any moral dilemmas although people have argued that the majority are not always ^{right} ~~the~~ and therefore can justify things like murder and rape which are seen as wrong. Another problem with utilitarianism and being a democratic approach is that it doesn't take the minorities opinion and therefore can not always resolve moral dilemmas.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate is clear about what the question is actually asking and so can answer it with confidence, getting into level 4 in both parts of the question.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When asked for strengths, just describing something does not answer the question.

Question 3 (b)

Many candidates were able to explore the historical background, Fletcher's theory and various case studies and included Robinson. Some candidates also included the religious background and examined the universal aspect of the theory effectively. However, some of the responses solely focussed on the principles and presuppositions. Some answers gave seven points without showing any understanding of them. There was occasionally confusion between utilitarianism and situation ethics.

Some candidates tackled the wording of the question well, including challenges from scholars, such as Barclay and the religious discontentment with the theory. The invitation to consider moral guidance has yielded some excellent answers and encouraged mature reflection.

The A02 asks for an evaluation of the connection between SE and moral guidance. Some simply evaluated whether SE "works", without addressing this particular concern.

Love is too vague to base an ethical theory on. Believers look to Dogma and Torah for rules, Pedestrians look to ~~grey~~ -high way code for rules, ~~Christians~~ where do Situationists look to? Therefore all these weaknesses highlight a main concern, what is love? How one measures love? But more importantly where to look for moral guidance? These weaknesses are



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This candidate faces the issue head-on and gets into level 4.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Answer the set question.

Question 4 (a)

Good answers showed a clear comprehension of the historical development of the Just War theory, and offered good examples of the different kinds of pacifist stance. Other good answers wove the two strands together in an imaginative manner, clearly showing a comprehension of the links between the two. There was good use of Martin Luther King and Gandhi and some included references to Buddhism. There was a good basic knowledge of the aspects of the Just War, but some found difficulty in expressing them fluently without resorting to lists.

Some candidates delayed explaining pacifism in any great detail until the second half of the question. Some just explained why pacifists would be against war, as opposed to the principles of the Just War Theory.

The Just War and pacifism are big subjects. Key concepts mean a broad brush approach to them; long lists of criteria are not required. Level 4 is for those who can clearly identify the important features and offer a well structured account of the subject matter.

The early church followed the principle of absolute pacifism, based on the teachings of Jesus of non-retaliation. In 410, Rome was facing defeat by the Visigoths, and many believed it was the failure of Christians to fight which was weakening Rome's attack, and so the church turned away from absolute pacifism. This left the need for a moral guideline to justify war & state when it was correct to do so. This led to the development of the Just War Theory. The first part of the Just War Theory is Jus Ad Bellum, which concerns justifying going to war. The first principle of Jus Ad Bellum was put forward by

Augustine of Hippo, who stated that war should be declared by a legitimate authority. This was supported by the Catholic Bishops of the American Pastoral letter who stated that "war should be declared by those with legitimate authority, not by private groups or individuals". A famous example of where war was not declared by a legitimate authority is the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Here the candidate shows a good grasp of the historical circumstances that led to the need for a just war theory as a moral guideline and sets out the role of Augustine, giving a modern example all within a few lines.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

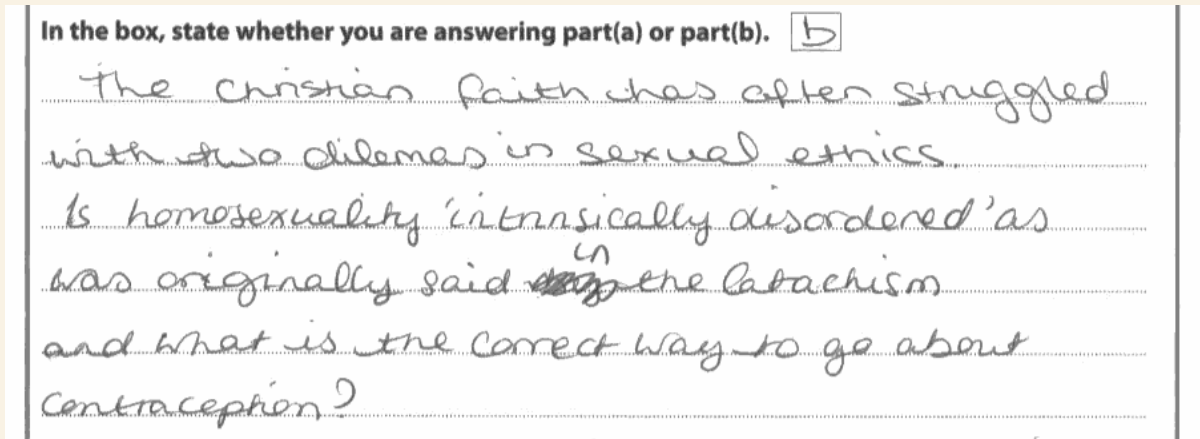
Learn to write densely with accurate and relevant detail.

Question 4 (b)

Some candidates were able to effectively identify dilemmas and explain the different views; the most popular was probably homosexuality. Good answers demonstrate understanding of what a sexual ethics dilemma is and adhered to the two dilemmas.

The impossibility of resolving the dilemmas, was ignored in some answers but good answers ranged from laws right through to laissez-faire. Applying different ethical theories to the debate was a fruitful venture. Some answered reasonably well with candidates demonstrating understanding of the conflict between religious beliefs and social attitudes.

The word 'dilemma' was clearly understood by some candidates. Some seem to believe that alternative ethical systems are dilemmas in themselves.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate here clearly set out the agenda, ie that there are two dilemmas: homosexuality and contraception.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

State the dilemmas and then how you are going to deal with them.

Question 5 (a)

Candidates were able to provide material relevant to the religious context prior to the time of the Buddha, rather than presenting a mere account of the life of the Buddha. Candidates had a sound understanding of a range of religious traditions and gave satisfactory attention to detail.

Part (ii) was well answered by some candidates, with sound evaluation of the view that Buddhism is the 'Middle Way'. Candidates demonstrated the ability to give key information and included an informed debate about the meanings of the 'Middle Way'. Short answers which did not explain key ideas or amplify significant points scored at the lower levels.

Telling the story of Gautama instead of looking at the religious context of the event does not answer the question.

In the box, state whether you are answering part(a) or part(b).

a

1. Prior to the time of the Buddha, India was dominated by an early form of Hinduism ~~Brahminism~~ called Brahminism. This was a polytheistic culture whose Gods ~~were~~ and Goddesses were aspects of ~~each~~ different aspects of nature and the teachings of Brahminism were revealed by the Vedas and their Vedic scriptures.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate clearly sets out the plan of the answer and proceeds to deal primarily with the teaching of reincarnation and sacrifice; other religious groupings; and other Vedic teaching. This was level 4 material.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Setting out a simple plan of your answer in the first paragraph helps you to think more clearly.

Question 5 (b)

Some candidates simply recounted the narrative for this question.

This question is designed to help the candidate see that it is the proclamation that is the focus.

In conclusion by calling Gautama 'The Buddha' it implies "wise one", and shows he achieved enlightenment. It also shows he is well known for his teachings to help others gain enlightenment as he did. It also makes him seem important and illustrates to Buddhism he is to be admired.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate outlines the life of Gautama and his enlightenment. He then begins to develop the meaning of this in terms of his teaching. This reaches midway into level 3.



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Examiner Tip

Be careful not to simply tell stories when dealing with historical events.

Question 6 (a)

Some candidates had a full and detailed knowledge of the Refuges in Q06a and focused their answers on Dharma. This same good standard of work was also applied to (ii) with regard to the Sangha.

Many candidates were at ease with the material in this question area and drew out the relationship between belief and practice in a number of ways.

The Dharma is a life path or life style that a person follows when applied and practising the teachings of the Buddha. The Dharma has three main meanings, a phenomenon and/or its properties, the universal laws of nature and the teachings of the Buddha.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate sets out the scope of the answer in three sections and then proceeds to take a paragraph explaining each of them.



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Examiner Tip

Paragraphs actually help you to think more clearly.

Question 6 (b)

Most candidates selected samatha and vipassana. Good answers were very well informed and used their information to focus on the question, giving attention to the significant differences between these types. This comparison was not a requirement of the question but when used by the candidates this approach was credit worthy. Some candidates displayed a good level of understanding of the various contexts of meditation and managed their material effectively so as to focus on the question. This understanding was useful in answers to (ii) concerning the evaluation of the different purposes of meditation.

Good answers showed an understanding of both method and outcome rather than a simple description.

ii) The main reasons why Buddhists meditate is because meditation is a key factor in attaining ~~enlight~~ enlightenment, as the Buddha showed when he followed the Middle ^{Way} ~~Path~~, the path between two extremes, which was done through meditation. For enlightenment to occur a Buddhist must follow the Noble Eightfold Path which involves 3 groups - morality, wisdom and meditation. ~~Transcendental~~ Meditation is a crucial part to the Noble Eightfold Path and it's split up into as Peter Harvey puts it 'the three tools of meditation', which are right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. If Buddhists put these 3 things into their meditation then it will help them to interconnect with the other two groups in the Noble Eightfold Path - morality and wisdom. Then with correct



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In part ii) this candidate gives reasons for meditation at the beginning and then proceeds to deal with the results of meditation at the end: peace of mind enabling one to step out of the circle of samsara. This was a level 4 evaluation.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to avoid simple description.

Question 7 (a)

The subject of this section is Bonhoeffer's writings and thinking about Jesus, not a description of the war scenes and his actions.

However, in 1943 although not agreeing with violence to make a point, he ~~he~~ became involved in an attempt to assassinate Hitler. This failed and so Bonhoeffer was imprisoned in prison because he was still considered a middle class German citizen, he was allowed visitors and received a better standard of living. This allowed him paper and pen to be able to think ~~thoroughly~~ thoroughly about his ideas, ~~he became~~ some of his best ideas and books were written in prison. Such as his idea of a religionless Christianity, stating that we cannot truly know God but to begin to understand him we should seek for ourselves before finding answers in the Church. Christ is for the community not for the individual and so we should be a part of a community to help understand God. Martin Buber



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Here the candidate shows the connection of Bonhoeffer's war action of the bomb plot to his writings and the phrase "religionless Christianity".



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Avoid long descriptive narrative.

Question 7 (b)

There were a number of candidates who chose the Early Church or the modern church to illustrate the social context. The former mostly centred in on the Arian controversy, the latter on Black power movements or Bonhoeffer.

The question demand is what a person or group taught about the life and work of Jesus, rather than their own life and teaching in general.

For Cone, Jesus is the point of departure for all understandings such as God, humankind and the world. Clearly we see that Cone practises Christomonism, which is putting Christ ^{at} the centre of everything. This idea clearly links with Karl Barth's belief, which Christ is ~~the~~ God helping becoming human to help them in understanding God and Christ will become the main point for history. On the other hand, Cone believes

that Black Theology is to do something to the 'white Jesus' so that He could not stand in the way of their revolution. This is said because Jesus was once made as a tool of oppression by the oppressors. Malcolm X furthers this view by saying that the white Jesus made the blacks not to think about their social welfare and equal treatment. Thus, eisegesis ^{is} ~~was~~ allowed for the black theologians to interpret the work of Christ ^{according to the historical Jesus}. Albert Cleage adds ^{by saying that} Paul tailored Jesus to be white in order to suit the white greeks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate chose the context of American Black power movements and dealt with Cone's understanding of Jesus in relation to Karl Barth's. The candidate also dealt with Malcolm X and other less radical thinkers. This candidate gained level 4 marks for AO1. In AO2 the candidate demonstrated that Cone may have done some good by demonstrating that Christ is in fact universal.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The focus of this question was on what these people taught about Jesus.

Question 8 (b)

Most candidates chose two sacraments of baptism and eucharist in one Church. Good answers examined the practice and belief rather than simply described these.

The Book of Genesis stated very clearly in 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." This suggests the belief of creation out of nothing (ex nihilo). God was seen to speak things into existence for it to begin and to end. As seen later in the Bible, heaven and earth will fade but ~~for~~ His words will still remain, showing that creation is dependant on God for it to continue to be. As William Lane Craig supports this notion by saying "God is outside the eternal reality, and anything that has been brought about was willed by God."

However, Early Greek philosophers, such as Plato, rejected this idea and insisted that God should be seen as a craftsman putting pre-existent materials of the universe together and created order. This reflects the idea of a builder as written in Psalms (127:1). Even early Christian writers such as Theophilus from Antioch and Justin Martyr supported the Platonist idea because of the presence of evil which is caused by the poor quality material that God had to create the world. Finally modern day scientist put the



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Examiner Comments

This candidate begins with creatio ex nihilo and goes through early philosophers, discusses the unity of the Old and New Testaments and how this impinges on the Trinity, talks about Jeremiah's parable of the potter and then brings this all to a conclusion. The candidate scored level 4 marks for this AO1.



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Examiner Tip

Remember this is about concepts not narrative.

Note carefully that this is about belief and practice and not just practice alone.

However, this doctrine received heavy criticism from emerging Protestant thinkers during the Reformation due to its Aristotelian foundations whereby it was the "substance"; the essential nature that was transformed whilst the "accidents"; the outward appearance remained unchanged. Modern Roman Catholic theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx remarked this doctrine and came up with the terms "transsignificance" and "transfunctionalization" whereby it was the end purpose or end of the consecrated elements that changed, not the physical state. Schillebeeckx noted contributions from Piet Schoonenberg and Luchsius Smits on writer J. de Basciochi's concept of "transfunctionalism" but concluded that transformation of the consecrated elements were not arbitrary, as it was not Christ's intention to alter the metaphysical but to ensure his continuing presence in the church. However, members of the Catholic Church cannot partake in the Eucharist unless they have been baptized, which leads to the second point.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate is clearly in command of the material and can deal with a number of scholars briefly and succinctly. The candidate deals first with the Eucharist and then goes on to deal with Baptism. This was level 4 AO1.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Learn to write briefly on a scholar without necessarily quoting them.

Question 9 (a)

The use of bullet points in the question was utilised by candidates to structure their material using ample detail and excellent understanding of key terms. Some however presented generalised accounts of the Indus Valley culture that lacked focus on the question.

Part (ii) attracted very full and informed discussions.

Read the question carefully, as addressing a few points that can be fully developed may be better than writing very generally about the Indus Valley culture.

The Indus people were known to be defensive rather than offensive. This could be due to their belief in 'ahimsa' (Big Veda - Vasudeva kutumbaka - One world one family). This ~~part~~ tradition of non-violence is still seen today. Many modern Hindus are vegetarians due to their belief in ahimsa, or try to do as much charity as they can. This proves that ahimsa is significant for Hindus today.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate shows among other things that ahimsa could be a tradition dating from the Indus valley culture. The range of evaluation put this AO2 into level 4.



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Examiner Tip

Avoid generalised accounts of the Indus Valley culture.

Question 9 (b)

This was less popular than a) and some candidates knew a commendable range of material about Vedic practices with a corresponding evaluation of their significance for Hindus.

Question 10 (a)

There were few answers to this question.

Although not many attempted this question, there were some good answers.

The term yoga derives from the term 'yuj' or 'yukta' meaning desire, united, harness and discipline. The practice of yoga became increasingly popular with the development of the doctrine of transmigration. This is where the atman leaves the body at death and enters a 'heaven' and 'glimpses freedom'. Then the atman returns to earth and inhabits another body. This is what is called reincarnation. The Vedas tell of one but in a 6th position. The atman in the human body is described as hidden 'deep in the bottom of the heart' and 'hard to understand' and so yoga became popular practice as it enables the devotee

discipline to form level an athletic life & see to when man learns and achieve results through this three lifetimes to overcome, hence his continuous cycle is called the wheel of Samsara. The Sekhwuctera Upanishad teaches that: 'Sankhya is theory and yoga is the practice.'



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate scored level 4 marks in both part i) and ii). The candidate begins by establishing exactly what the context of yoga is and then develops into its practices.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When there is so much material, a structured answer can help you get more down in the time.

Question 10 (b)

The question is about distinctive beliefs and the essence of the belief needs to be separated out from the narratives.

Stories may need to be referred to without there being long narrations.

The term 'avatar' means one who descends on Earth. Within Hinduism, it is very important to follow a certain pathway towards God. But, Hinduism is a highly pluralistic religions and thus there is more than just one way towards God. Even though in the Bhagavad Gita it says there are 4 main pathways to God "bhakti, karma, jnana and raja yoga". Krishna is the (8th) eighth avatar of Vishnu and Rama is the seventh (7th) avatar.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate gives a clear introduction to the term avatar, and then deals fully with both Krishna and Rama with several significant quotations. This was well into level 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Practice writing the stories in just a line or two.

Question 11 (a)

Some answers demonstrated a sound knowledge of life in Arabia before the time of Muhammad and examined the historical and social features in varying detail, drawing out relevant implications. Good answers reflected knowledge of the period and demonstrated how Muhammad had been exposed to particular influences and how these were adapted and reflected in Muslim belief and practices such as pilgrimage, clan, loyalty and practices adapted to the Muslim army and umma and the importance of the Ka'aba. Some candidates were also able to show how Muhammad's abhorrence of certain practices led him to emphasise particular teachings such as those relating to tawhid, shirk, umma and social ethics. Some answers contained only a few examples of social features, without adequate reference to the historical background, whilst others wrote generally about the period.

Some candidates found difficulties in suggesting the possible ways that these features influenced Muhammad and some added only brief or generalised comments relating to the influences. Some answers made reference to things accepted or rejected, rather than explaining why Muhammad did so.

This question only asks for historical and social background prior to the time of Muhammad, not the religious traditions.

The land was populated by ^{people who had} fairly established bases and wandering people who mainly occupied the deserts. The more established cities ^{were} ~~where~~ in the oases are hafiḡ. This is ~~were~~ Makkah and Madinah (Yathrib) ~~were~~ located.

Arabia was grounded in a complex tribal system which also incorporated a very polytheistic and animistic sense of religion. Books have described such practices as primitive and pagan. However this description is at best inappropriate as it reveals the lack of awareness in the society. Indeed the tribal system was built upon extended families and clans each led by a shaykh. The Arabs were democratic in appointing a leader who served to consult with the elders and other leaders.

It was a life of trading and raiding, a harsh life but not without moral principles. The Arabs had a rich heritage of oral traditions and social conduct. Ruthven writes "though without writing they had developed poetry into a refined and sophisticated art form"



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate deals with the historical and social background as the question dictates. It reached level 4 for AO1.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Clearly distinguish the three areas of historical, religious and social context so that you are prepared for a question that deals with only one or two of them.

Question 11 (b)

Some answers simply described Muhammad's life in Makkah in varying detail, whereas the higher level answers focused successfully on the question, selecting the material to examine the distinctive features of Muhammad's work and teaching.

Good answers dealt well with the importance of the period for Muslims.

This question is not seeking a biographical approach to Muhammed's time in Makkah. It is particularly focussing upon the distinctive features of his work and teaching there.

Muhammad's work was to tell the people in Makkah about his revelation which he recieved from the angel Jibraili (Gabrail) who is the leader out of all angels. The prophet recieved his first revelation in al-nur, a cave in Hira on a mountain just outside Makkah. This was in 610CE, believed to be the



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate begins well and knows what Muhammad's task is. This answer is not fully developed but it is just into level 3.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to avoid simply describing the life of Muhammad.

Question 12 (a)

Some candidates showed a good knowledge and understanding of the Six Beliefs and structured their answers well. These gave relevant detail quoting from both Qur'an and scholars. Other answers briefly outlined relevant teaching without attempting to give specific details or make any examination of these beliefs.

Good answers showed clearly how the topics chosen were essential to Islamic beliefs.

Question 12 (b)

Some answers demonstrated sound knowledge of the Five Pillars and how these related to the idea of submission to God and identity with the Muslim Community. Higher level answers related closely to the question and carefully examined the pillars, explaining how their essence could be summed up as submission to God and identity with the Community.

Some answers were very brief, whilst others repeated facts already given or simply described the chosen pillar in detail. Good answers explained the significance of the pillar for an understanding of the Muslim Community by crafting relevant and detailed material to answer the actual question.

Good answers either went through the pillars and then examined their relation to the community, or did this as they went along. Either approach was acceptable.

However, the five pillars also identify with the muslim community, as they demonstrate a sense of unity, a unibond within the muslim brothers and sisters. As they share the same beliefs and practices they have a similarity in discussion at mosque, many mosques arrange iftar where they open their fasts together in Ramadhan. The five pillars build the togetherness in a community, they are striving towards the same goal and purpose in life which is to be closer to God. The five pillars bring a sense of belonging within the muslim community, a place where they feel at ease amongst others who share the same goals and

want to achieve the same things in life. In Salah, the unity of
 In Hajj the unity of the muslim community has been expressed
 where all muslim men wear a ihram, a white clothing. This
 demonstrates that in the eyes of God all are equal no one
 is superior than the other in terms of wealth, fame or
 knowledge. It builds a sense of community, the term commute
 means share, to respect each other and learn from each other.
 The Five Pillars are seen as the rock of Islam, they identify with
 the muslim community through the practices of the pillar Zakah,
 which means giving 2.5% of your wealth to the poor. Zakah
 identifies with the muslim community as it shows the love
 of brotherhood, the concern for each other and the poor.
 The concern about thinking about feeding the poor, those
 who are not that well fortunate, it creates unity amongst
 them, together in the of helping each other as this is what
 God wants us to do.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate examines the pillars separately first and then turns to the question of the Muslim community.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Evaluation is not just an opinion but the weighing up of differing opinions.

Question 17

The material on wealth and poverty is scattered throughout Luke's Gospel. Candidates must therefore be selective in their choice of material. There was a wide range offered from the parables, the sermon on the mount, as well as some interesting observations on the implications of less obvious material.

Question 17 (a)

Luke

Good answers were able to allude to spiritual wealth. Wealth and poverty answers were sometimes descriptive, with candidates citing relevant parables and teachings about the pitfalls of having wealth and wanting to get to heaven, eg the rich young ruler, and the parable of Lazarus and Dives. The controversial nature of these teachings was emphasised by comparing the views of the Jews towards Jesus.

Fourth Gospel

The "I am" sayings were generally done well, emphasising the significance and heavenly meaning of the signs, and confident in their understanding of the OT connection. The relevance to the purpose and ministry of Jesus as God's son and the way to the Father was offset against the Jewish background to the Gospel. Ideas of salvation through Jesus as the fulfilment of Judaism were brought out. Many candidates referred to Replacement Theology. Some simply rehearsed the narrative in which the sayings were quoted without meaningful evaluation.

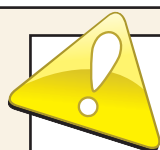
A great deal of background material from the Old Testament, as well as scholarly opinion was brought out.

Borrett Says that the phrase 'I am' is used in the old testament by God to show 'divine Self revalation'. However Brown states that this phrase is used to show the different perspectives of God 'a healer and bringer of Salvation'. Jesus used the the phrase 'I am' in the Gospel 26 times because it posses great Signifancee, this links back to Moses and the burning God 'I am who I am'.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This candidate begins by setting the perspective of the whole 'I am' sayings in the context of the self revelation of Jesus and the theophany at the burning bush. The candidate then goes through each of the two 'I am' sayings in greater detail.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Quotations by themselves do not necessarily show understanding; it is the way scholars' material is used that demonstrates this.

"Woe to you who are satisfied now, for you have already received your Comfort" Jesus also highlighted the fact that rich people will not be rewarded for the comfortable and often luxurious lives that they have led as they have no spiritual wealth.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate begins with the sermon on the plain, the beatitudes, then the woes and the parable of the shrewd manager.

There is no concluding summary gathering up all this material into a focussed summary.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The concluding paragraph is important as a focussed summary.

Question 17 (b)

The Old Testament background was a prevalent feature of many answers. Good answers went beyond mere description to engaging with some good hermeneutics, and yet also managing to keep to the focus of the question. Some candidates demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the miracles and their significance for the ministry of Jesus, emphasising their Christological and soteriological messages.

There were some good attempts showing Jesus having the power of God over the natural and spiritual world as well as demonstrating his authority; and that Jesus shows that God is a present reality and confirming that he is the Messiah, the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah.

In the Luke's Gospel question there are two healing miracles to deal with and the question asks what these incidents teach about the ministry of Jesus.

that Jesus' ministry was governed by the authority and power Jesus had during the time he was alive. They also show us that Jesus would act out of compassion and love and was not afraid to heal those who had been shunned from society, were ritually unclean or those who showed no initial faith.

Similarly in the healing of the widow's son we see Jesus perform a miracle after feeling empathy for the widow. As the woman's husband had died and so had her only son, the woman would have no financial stability and would probably have had to resort to prostitution to support her and provide her with the money she needed in order to live. Jesus tells the boy to "get up" and he gets up from the coffin. Judith Lieu comments that "there was no initial faith here, Jesus acts out of love and compassion". Both of these parables tell us



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Here the candidate goes to the heart of the matter and deals with each miracle separately but succinctly.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Learn to distinguish narrative from comment.

In the Fourth Gospel the two miracles are full of symbolism for the meaning of the ministry of Jesus. There are varying interpretations of these and all may be equally valid.

The two fish are representative of the two testaments the old testament and the new Testament suggest St Augustine, who also says that Jesus fulfils the old testament and brings out the new, showing the rising of new Israel. St Augustine also says that the two fish are representative of the two natures of Jesus human and divine, this shows how Jesus is completely holy as the son of God but completely human. The word fish - *ichthys* has been used as an acronym to mean Jesus Christ son of God saviour, however this has been misinterpreted as *ichthys* is the word for wet-fish while here it is *opsaria* which is dry fish.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Here the candidate takes the details of the two fish and the twelve baskets left over and offers symbolic interpretation of them.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Learn to deal briefly with a number of topics.

Question 18 (a)

Luke

Answers that addressed the Sabbath question usually did so competently. The practices of Judaism were identified by most candidates and the differences expressed in Jesus' teaching noted and, in some cases, analysed well.

Fourth Gospel

Some answers reflected good engagement with scholarly opinion and excellent connections with the Old Testament background of the conversations with the Samaritan Woman and Mary Magdalene. Some were able to set the conversations within the context of the time and hence looked at how women were perceived. Some responses reflected good knowledge and understanding of the significance of these conversations for Jesus' ministry. This then highlighted the difference when Jesus interacted with them.

There is scope for a number of different ways of interpreting these conversations.

would attend. As she was a Samaritan woman she was considered by many to be an outcast of outcasts. Jesus astounded his disciples when he asked the woman if he could take a drink of water from her bucket. In fact, everyone would have been astounded as you cannot drink from the same bucket as a Samaritan woman. Questions were asked and exchanged between Jesus and the woman until his messiahship was revealed. The woman, who went off to tell everyone in the village was of course met with disbelief - why would the Messiah

reveal himself to a woman? The answer is clear - to demonstrate equality. The disciples questioned Jesus - this is greatly significant as it shows a lack of belief from the disciples. Tasker notes that "being a Jew he could not drink from the same bucket as a Samaritan woman." This demonstrates how Jesus is breaking all the Judaistic legal codes to get to his ultimate goal of equality. This disclosure of messiahship is clearly gearing towards equality.



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Examiner Comments

In this example, the candidate seizes upon the theme of equality, even making the disclosure of Messiahship subservient to this theme.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Where two things are asked for, both need to be attempted.

Question 18 (b)

Many appeared to have a good working knowledge of 'discipleship' in terms of what Jesus demanded, and what the implications for those who became disciples entailed. Faith, relationship with Christ, humility, persecution, death, leaving ones family and carrying the cross were all highlighted as being the crucial demands of being a disciple. Some were able to refer to the post-resurrection command of spreading the word of the kingdom of God and performing miracles in the name of the Holy Spirit.

Many concentrated on describing the disciple's character and whether or not they were able to meet the demands asked of them. Examples of how they dealt with their role were alluded to, but some were generalised and did not fully engage with the question.

Discipleship may be understood in a variety of ways. Some want to emphasise the doing involved in following Jesus; others that believing is doing the works of God. Both are accepted as valid ways of answering this question.

i) Disciples are described by Marshall as those who stand in a personal relationship with Jesus. By this ~~you~~ quote, we see that they were very close to Jesus. ~~The~~ Disciples were those who had ultimate faith in Jesus and God.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate begins by declaring that relationship with Jesus is the key to understanding discipleship, and backs it up with a scholarly quotation.

Paper Summary

Candidates should:

- Always read through the questions carefully
- Structure your answer to fit the demands of the question
- Avoid lengthy descriptions
- In AO2 remember that quotations are usually AO1
- Evaluation means weighing up, not giving your own opinion

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