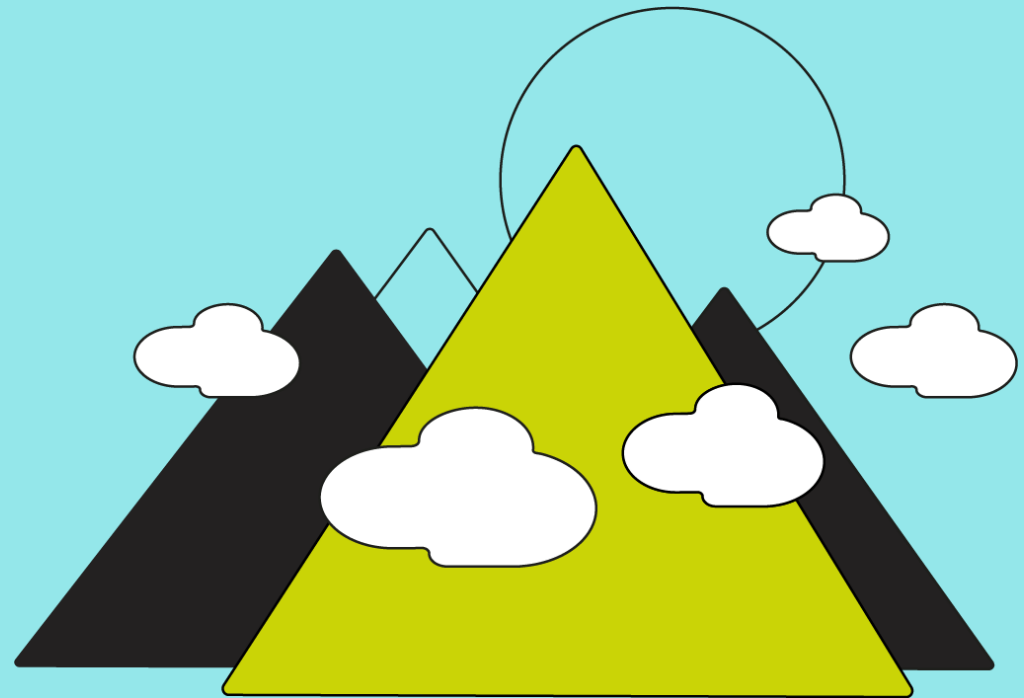


Pearson Edexcel A level Religious Studies: Summer 2022 Feedback

Susan Currey





Course description

This online event is designed for teachers who wish to receive feedback on the recent GCE Religious Studies 2022 exam series.

It will provide better understanding to centres with regards to the performance of key questions and advice provided will inform preparation for the 2023 series.



During this event

You will:

- receive a summary of key messages from the Principal Examiners' reports
- learn about student performance in the key questions in the series including what was done well and where improvements are needed
- leave with a better understanding of questions with examples from students achieving different grades, to inform their preparation for the 2023 series
- be provided with teaching ideas and strategies.



Overall Performance

Candidates were able to respond to the various question types and to the demands of the papers overall.

Candidates had been well prepared, and all met the different demands of AO1 and AO2.

The advance information had been used to prepare candidates effectively.



AO1 Performance

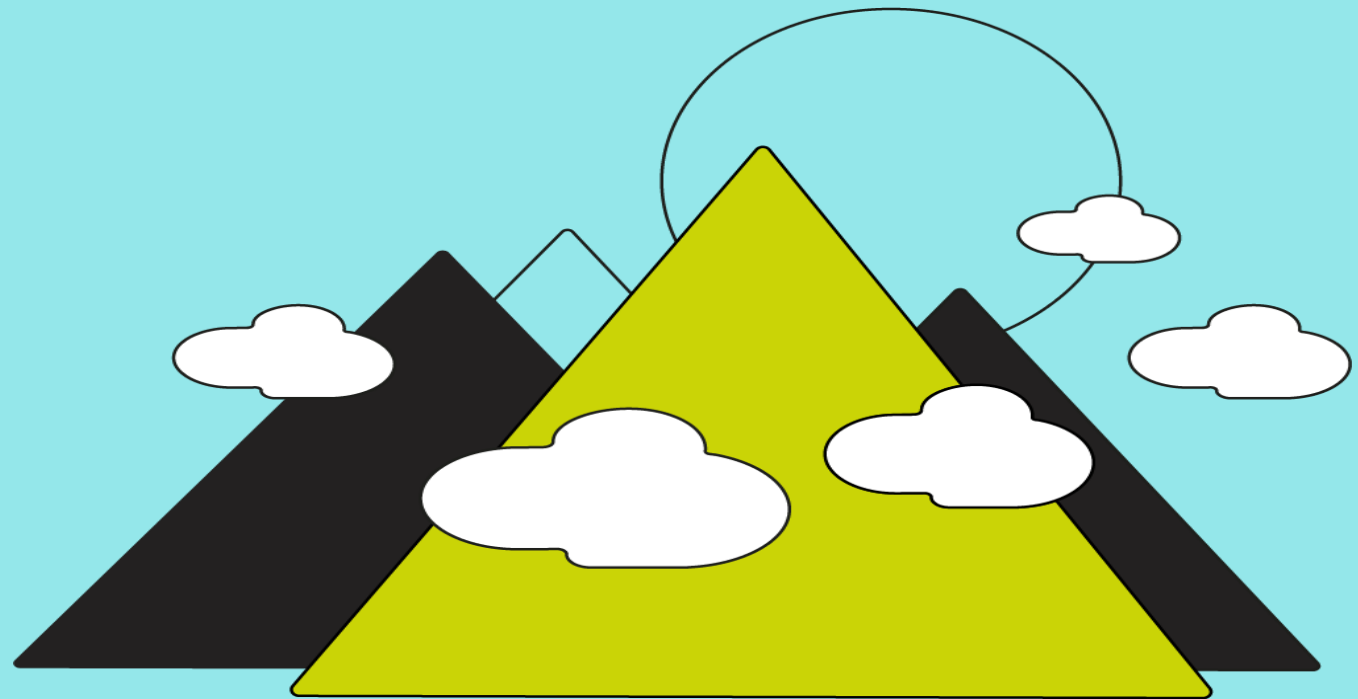
- 40% of the A level assessment
- Assessed in all questions to some extent

AO1 – Assessment Objective One (p.71 of the Specification)

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:

- religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching
- influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies
- cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice
- approaches to the study of religion and belief.

Question 1
'Explore'
8 marks



Question 1

Candidates are required to demonstrate understanding by investigating different reasons, concepts and ideas.

They should provide a breadth and depth of accurate information to show that they understand the topic in the question.

Marks are awarded for:

- the range of information provided
- the application of specialist language and terminology
- the depth of understanding shown.

Recommended timings

8 minutes (AS)

10 minutes (A level)

Question 1: Where candidates did well

This question required candidates to:

‘Explore the contribution of symbol to debates about religious language’.

Better performing candidates were able to discuss the ideas of Tillich and link them to the wider area of religious language.

Candidates who achieved full marks

- Used the key terms thus addressed the question
- Wrote a detailed response
- Showed understanding of the demands of the question

Question 1: Level 3 – 8 marks

Specialist language
and terminology

Knowledge and
understanding

SECTION A

Answer ALL questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 Explore the contribution of symbol to debates about religious language.

(8) 8 Q01

Symbolic language was the term coined by Paul Tillich who believed he found a solution to the problem of religious language. Tillich argued that religious language is a symbolic participation in the ultimate reality - God. Tillich believed that God is the ground of being who is accessible to us through symbols.

Similarly, symbols are a participation in religious belief. Tillich argued that for example, participating in the eucharist, communion or reading of the Gospels is a participation of Christians in Jesus' sacrifice. He gave an example of an American flag and how this is a symbol that America participate in. It evokes an emotional response, unlike signs.

Finally, he distinguished between signs and symbols and argued that signs are conventional and simply point to something. They are not the thing itself whilst symbols open new levels of reality into our souls. Symbols cannot be replaced, they can only evolve, many times.

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks) 8

Knowledge and
understanding

Knowledge and
understanding

A depth of
understanding

Question 1: Where candidates did not do well

Weaker candidates were unable to discuss the concept of symbolism within the area of religious language.

Other poorly performing candidates may have included lots of examples of symbolism without discussing religious symbolism or included irrelevant information.

Candidates who failed to achieve full marks:

- Lacked knowledge and understanding
- Managed to only write a few lines
- Did not use the key terms

Question 1: Where candidates did not do well

1 Explore the contribution of symbol to debates about religious language.

(8)

Symbol by a large contributor to
debates around religious language as it is
a means of which people can associate
religious language empirically. The cross
for many doesn't represent the on

This candidate gained 1 mark as they gave a limited response that gave a narrow range of information to answer the question.

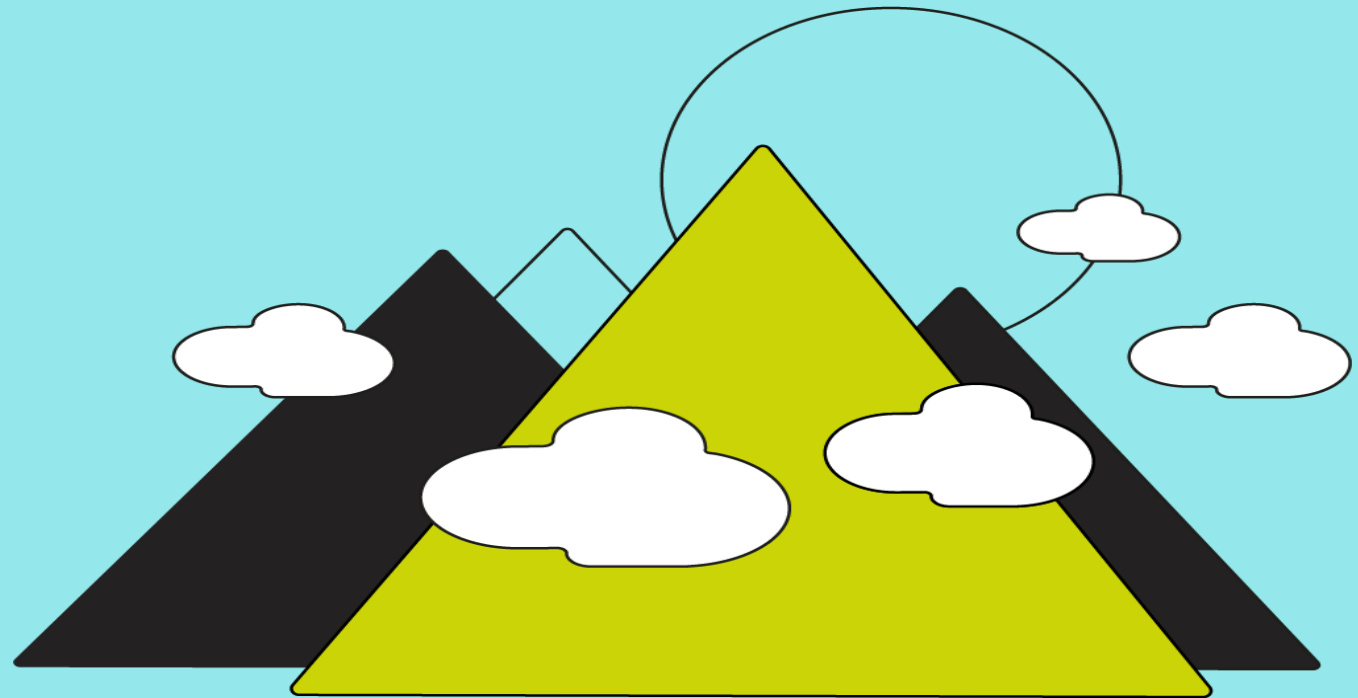
Key messages in the Principal Examiners reports on Question 1

- Candidates needed to select relevant material from the topic to address the question.
- Many candidates are still writing more than the time and space permitted for and, consequently, ran out of time on other questions.
- Responses that failed to achieve the highest levels were mostly off topic.
- The best responses understood the intended focus of the question.



Be focussed and tailor your answer to the question set.

Question 2
'Assess'
12 marks



AO2 Performance

AO2 – Assessment Objective One (p.71 of the Specification)

It requires candidates to:

- analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

It makes up 60% of the A level assessment.

It is assessed in questions 2, 3, and 4 to some extent.

Question 2

Candidates are required to demonstrate reasoned arguments of factors to reach a judgement regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.

Question 2 includes 4 marks of AO1 and 8 marks of AO2 therefore only one third of the answer should be knowledge and understanding and two thirds of the answer should be analysis and evaluation in the context of the question asked.

Marks are awarded for:

- the range of information provided
- deconstructing to religious information given
- judgements made about the religious information given.

Recommended timings
10 minutes (AS)
20 minutes (A level)

Question 2

The mark scheme can be used to explain to students why they may not get high marks.

For the question: *Assess strengths and weaknesses of pacifism*, the mark scheme says:

Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.

Thus candidates who only provide knowledge and understanding will not get more than 4 marks

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).• Information/issues are identified (AO2).• Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).• Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).
Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).

Recommended timings
10 minutes (AS)
20 minutes (A level)

Question 2: Where candidates did well

This question required candidates to:

‘Assess strengths and weaknesses of pacifism’.

The better candidates were able to discuss both strengths and weaknesses then assess whether one outweighed the other. They used authoritative material to support their reasoning and judgements.

Candidates who achieved top levels

- Used the key terms, thus addressing the question
- Wrote a detailed response
- Showed understanding of the demands of the question

Recommended timings
10 minutes (AS)
20 minutes (A level)

Question 2: Level 3 – 12 marks

Range of knowledge,
specialist language and
terminology are
carefully selected and
used appropriately

Range of knowledge,
specialist language
and terminology are
carefully selected and
used appropriately

Critically
deconstructs
religious information

2 Assess strengths and weaknesses of pacifism. (12/1202)

+ tolerance - Just
- political realism - nihilism
style: vocabulary

Pacifism states that all violence is wrong and going to war is evil due to the large scale killing and the adverse meaning of life being important. There are many different kinds of pacifism, for example nuclear, realistic, active and absolute. Each argues for different things but all agree that the war is wrong as it is better for humanity to exist than not to exist. This movement gained popularity after the second world war and the cold war due to the extreme threats that were posed to human civilisation.

A strength of pacifism is that it promotes tolerance and peace within society. Bertram Russell created the campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) during a time when war posed a massive nuclear threat. CND wanted politicians to disarm their nuclear weapons and instead opt for a more peaceful way in solving conflict - for example through quiet discussion or agreements. There is no need for war which resulted in millions of innocent lives spared which could have been avoided if you took a pacifist stance. This therefore shows that pacifism has real world applications as it can make society a happier and better place for humanity to live in.

however, a weakness of pacifism is that it is not idealistic in today's world. Political Realists argue that countries are naturally at competition with each other so will inevitably go to war in order to increase their power / status in the world. Also countries are going to show preference to their citizens if they are under attack so will have a duty to defend them in the face of an even unjust aggressor. Absolute pacifism is unrealistic and instead countries should base going to war based on political or economic reasons not just because life has inherent value. Therefore pacifism has no place in war in today's day and age due to the complexity of the climate we live in.

However a strength of pacifism is support from Christians. God gave humanity stewardship over his creation so meaning that they have a right / duty to care for it as God made it for us. War inevitably lead to the destruction of the planet including of damage to human populations. For example, the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima in Japan. Christians would agree that to uphold this ~~pacifist~~ ^{stewardship} their God given stewardship a pacifist stance would be the best way. Quakers are a example of Christians who do this and then are actively campaigning for peace through protest or

Critically
deconstructs
religious
information

Critically
deconstructs
religious information

Recommended timings
10 minutes (AS)
20 minutes (A level)

Question 2: Level 3 – 12 marks

Critically deconstructs
religious information

negotiations. Due to their perfect stance they are given
what so neutral hosts in meetings after wars taking if any
wrong doing has occurred. This therefore lends credibility to
pacifism as Christians uphold its key values.

On the other hand, a weakness of pacifism is that it is too absolute
and other ways to minimise destruction of war may be better for example
Anglophone Just War Theory provides a moral framework for going to
war just allow it under conditions. This shows that war isn't always
necessary but if it is to happen then it must be fair and
not unjust. For example you need to have a just cause, last resort,
legitimate authority to name some of the criteria. This ~~shows~~ ^{makes} it
clear for how countries or to conduct themselves in war not
only this but it is a secular and ~~more~~ religious theory
which is widely upheld as the criteria for going to war by
many countries / states. This shows that pacifism isn't the
best option to go for in the face of war as that Just War
Theory is more practical and realistic in our day and age.

In conclusion, I believe that pacifism is an important stance to
take as it promotes peace within humanity however it
isn't realistic. Other options may be more successful in
allowing war in an ethical and controlled manner than
absolute position against the act of war.

(Total for Question 2 = 12 marks) **12**

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 20 MARKS

This candidate gained full marks as they gave a detailed and wide-ranging response that assessed and evaluated throughout.

They did not include any judgements that were not supported and the response used specialist terminology accurately.

Coherent and reasoned
judgement

Question 2: Where candidates did not do well

Weaker candidates were unable to able to discuss the concept of pacifism accurately and in detail. They were mainly descriptive in their response failing to address the AO2 objectives within the questions.

Other poorly performing candidates may have included lots of explanations of key terms without discussing the strengths and weakness.

Candidates who failed to the top level:

- Used only knowledge and understanding
- Managed to only write a few lines of assessment and judgement.
- Frequently included irrelevant or general information

Question 2: Where candidates did not do well

2 Assess strengths and weaknesses of pacifism. (12)

One strength of Pacifism is that you have
~~to~~ a range of different ideas and theories
you can take away with you

One weakness of Pacifism is that many
people go against it and do not agree with
it.

This candidate gained Level 1, 1 mark as they gave a limited response that gave a general response rather than one that provided detail and scholarly learning.

Key messages in the Principal Examiners reports on Question 2

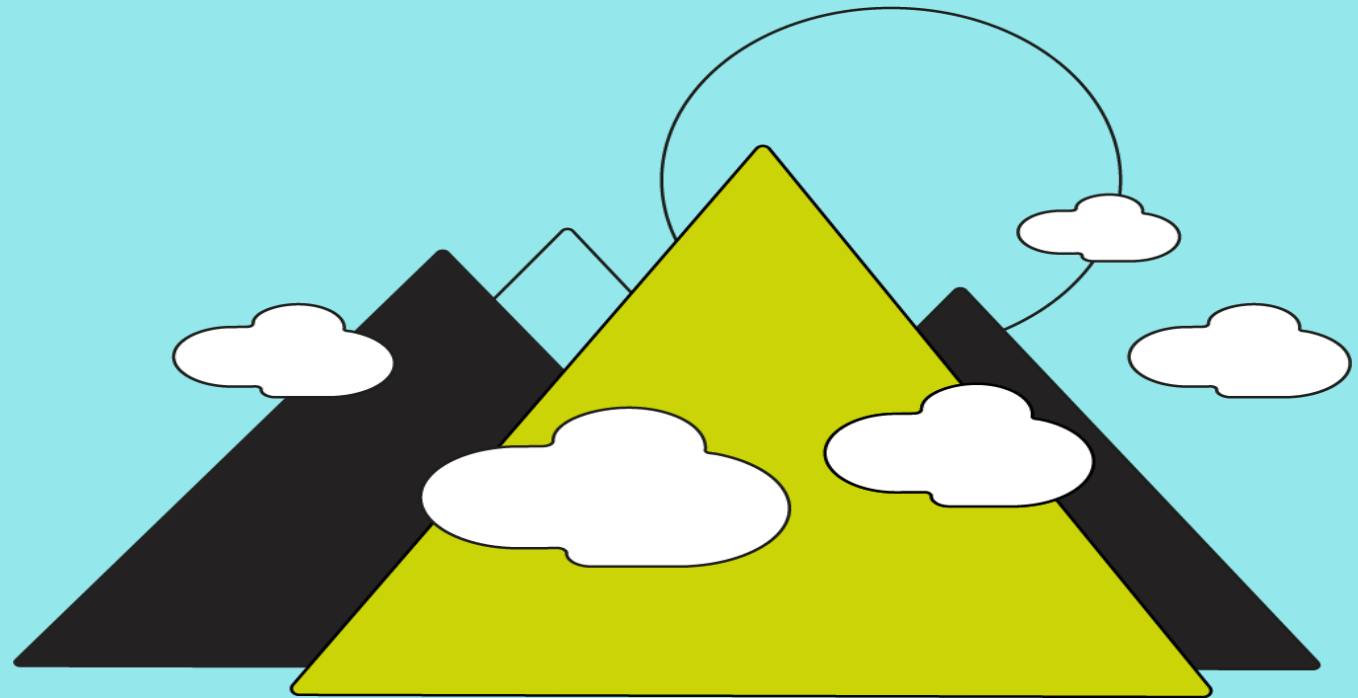
Candidates needed to:

- give a very clear and well organised response to the question
- work through a relevant answer in an orderly manner
- use authoritative and reliable material
- make judgements supported by logical reasoning
- arrive at a considered conclusion derived from the evidence.



The recommended time for this question is 20 minutes. Use the time effectively to ensure you are assessing and not just exploring the question.

Question 3a
'Clarify'
10 marks



Question 3a

Question 3 is divided into two parts.

3a uses a passage from the anthology and asks a question that the material in the passage should act as a stimulus for their response.

- The command word used in Question 3a is 'Clarify'.
- Candidates are required to identify key ideas and explain key concepts.
- It assesses AO1 only so requires knowledge and understanding.
- It can be awarded a maximum of 10 marks.

Question 3a: Where candidates did well

This question required candidates to:

‘Clarify the idea that the Believer’s original assertion has ‘died the death of a thousand qualifications’

The better candidates were able select relevant information from the extract and use this to explain their points in relation to the question.

Candidates who achieved top levels:

- Used the key terms, thus addressed the question
- Wrote a detailed response
- Showed understanding of the demands of the question

Question 3a: Level 3 – 10 marks

Linked to
references from the
extract

Knowledge and
understanding of
key religious
ideas

Linked to
references from the
extract

Knowledge and
understanding of
key religious
ideas

3 (a) Clarify the idea that the Believer's original assertion has 'died the death of a thousand qualifications'.

You must refer to the passage in your response.

(10)

The above extract is part of the debate between Basil Mitchell and Anthony Flew regarding whether religious language would pass the test of falsification.

Logical positivism and Anthony Flew developed on Karl Popper's idea of falsification which states, a statement is meaningful if and only if we know under what situation the original statement could be falsified. According to the Anthony Flew,

religious statements fail this test to retain meaningfulness. To illustrate this idea he used the parable of the Unseen Gardener originally told by John W. D. Two explorers came to a garden and one hypothesised that there is a gardener, while the other rejects the idea. Overtime they have 'set a watch' and concluded that the gardener is 'invisible, intangible, insensible to electric shocks'. To this conclusion the skeptic argued, what is the difference between a ^{Gardener} who cannot be empirically known and no Gardener at all? By saying amending the original statement

step by step, the original assertion would eventually be eroded and as Flew states, 'a fine brush of hypotheses may thus be killed by inches, the death by a thousand qualifications'. Qualification meaning the process of amending the original statement.

For Flew this statement parallel to the mirrors the mortality of religious believers, in which they agreed that the God of classical faith which cannot be known through empirical or scientific means and because the faith in God ultimately only rests on the individual's faith, nothing remains empirically true, ~~des~~ due to believer (the first explorer) in the parable still would not falsify his original belief. This assertion of there is an unfalsifiable God is meaningless and therefore believers of God should step out and reject accept reality. 'There is no gardeners' equates to there is no God, thus killed by thousand qualifications.

This idea is originally developed on the idea of Popper's theory of falsification in science.

Linked to
references from the
extract

Knowledge and
understanding of
key religious
ideas

Knowledge and
understanding of
key religious
ideas

Question 3a: Level 3 – 10 marks

Whilst it is completely valid as an alternative to induction, whether or not it can be applied to religious language is another question. Popper's idea of falsification is based on a paradigm shift as seen in history. We shifted from a geocentric worldview to a heliocentric worldview; this alternative hypothesis equates to the hypothesis that there is no God, and step by step the geocentric worldview is abandoned, as the sceptic asks, 'what remains of your original assertion?' The believer should therefore abandon this belief in God as ^{the} alternative (science) has killed the original assertion.

This answer gains full marks for the questions because it has a wide range of well selected information which it uses effectively to illustrate the key concepts.

It includes a broad range of ideas and is linked to the stimulus provided.

Question 3a: Where candidates did not do well

Weaker candidates were unable to discuss the stimulus material accurately and in detail.

They were unable to respond to the question given.

Other poorly performing candidates may have failed to recognise Flew's teaching or did not understand the word 'assertion'.

Candidates who failed to achieve a top level:

- Did not use the extract to point them in the right direction
- Wrote only a few lines showing a lack of knowledge

Question 3a: Where candidates did not do well

3 (a) Clarify the idea that the Believer's original assertion has 'died the death of a thousand qualifications'.

You must refer to the passage in your response.

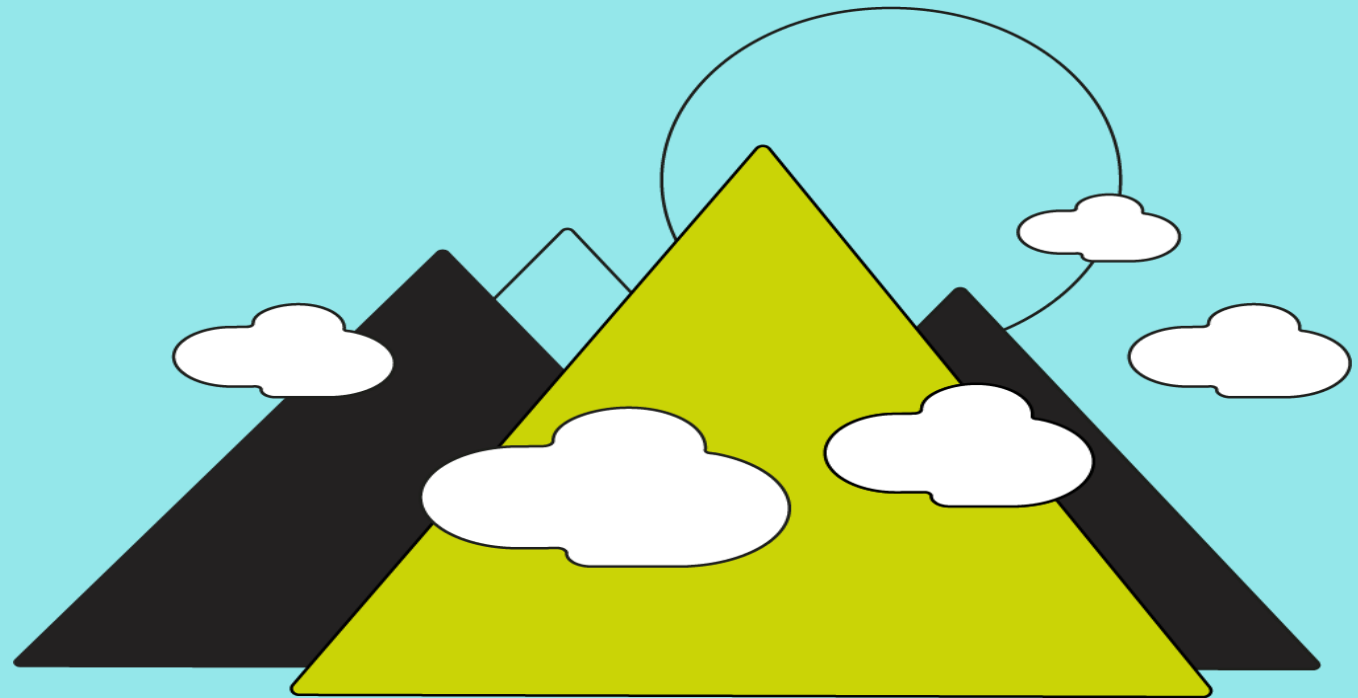
(10)

In the parable by John Wisdom
there is patch where one
gardener believed someone must
"tend" for the patch, but as
they dug out the gardener
can not be seen.

This candidate gained Level 1 as they gave a limited response that gave a description of one element of the stimulus.

They failed to broaden their answer or looks at any other part of the stimulus.

Question 3a
'Analyse'
20 marks



Question 3b

The command word used in Question 3b is 'Analyse'.

Candidates need to deconstruct information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning in order to make judgements regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.

It assesses AO1 and AO2 and can be awarded up to 20 marks. 5 marks available for AO1 and 15 marks available for AO2 so only a quarter of the answer should be knowledge and understanding.

If there is no AO2 in the response the marks are limited to level 1, 4 marks.

Question 3b: Where candidates did well

This question required candidates to:

‘Analyse the distinctive ideas contained in R M Hare’s and Basil Mitchell’s responses to Flew’s use of the Parable of the Gardener’.

The better candidates were able to explain and utilise Hare and Mitchell’s ideas they were able to deconstruct and analyse the ideas and to discuss which they felt were the more significant elements.

Candidates who achieved top levels:

- Showed a wide range of knowledge
- Accurately identified scholars ideas
- Used key terms correctly
- Deconstructed arguments
- Made judgments as to the significance of the materials used

Question 3b: Level 5 – 20 marks

A clear introduction,
Identifying main
points
to be considered

Excellent use of
specific,
authoritative
reasoning

(b) Analyse the distinctive ideas contained in R M Hare's and Basil Mitchell's responses to Flew's use of the Parable of the Gardener.

(20)

Hare - the analogy
of a gardener
Mitchell - the
analogy of a partisan
and a stranger

The debate of religious language is about whether we can talk meaningfully about God. There has been challenges from throughout the century, but the most damaging one, perhaps, is the first application of falsification to meaning of religious language. Responses to retain meaningfulness could be divided into two categories: cognitive (realist) and non-cognitive (anti-realist). However, do they ~~seem to~~ mean a meaningful preserve meaning in light of the attack from falsificationists?

The falsification principle could be summarised by: A statement is meaningful if and only if we know under what circumstances it could be falsified. Flew used Popper's idea of falsification and applied it to religious language as he illustrated with the Parable of the unseen Gardener, as the believer step by step qualify his original statement about God: the hypothesis that God is killed by inches and thus 'killed by a

thousand qualifications.

A cognitivist response to this challenge is to accept the criterion stated by Flew, and seek to retain its meaningfulness by finding out under what circumstances the religious belief could be falsified. For instance, Mitchell in the debate illustrated his idea by the parable of the partisan and stranger, the stranger gained the partisan's belief by doing something which showed that he is on the resistance side. However, he is also a spy of the other side which justifies his ambiguous behaviour. This parable mirrors the case of religious beliefs, ^{believers} ~~God~~ initially believed in God for some reason, and the 'problem of evil' seen as ambiguous behaviour, according to Mitchell, could potentially falsify the believers' belief in God, although not decisively. This seems to have overcome the criterion set by Flew, thus retain meaningfulness as it could be falsified under some circumstances.

However, a counter argument to this is that Mitchell did not say under what exact situation would the believers allow religious

An additional area of
study considered
showing a well selected
choice of content –
critically deconstructing
ideas

A clear conclusion to
this paragraph,
Identifying main points
to be considered –
coherent judgements

A counter argument -
coherent judgements

Question 3b: Level 5 – 20 marks

Critically deconstructs religious information leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning

A clear conclusion to this paragraph, Identifying main points to be considered – coherent judgements

Critically deconstructs religious information leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning

statements to be falsified. Although they do allow things (problems of evil) to count against their belief, it is unclear whether believers would actually falsify their belief at the first place. Thus so, despite ~~having~~ the existence of evil and the illogical trial as illustrated by Huckle, believers would still remain their faith in God. This was the case ^{during} the Holocaust in Nazi, whilst Jews are acknowledging evil and God is refusing to help, some would continue to qualify their belief to say it is God's plan to reinforce their faith. This arguably refutes the claim that religious statements are falsifiable as believers would always seek to qualify their ideas before actually falsifying.

A potential response to this is the Mitchell distinction of three types of religious belief, (i) acknowledging evil and allowing belief to be falsified (ii) a significant article of faith and (iii) various formulae which cannot be falsified and therefore meaningless. Whilst Flew pushes believers to choose whether their belief is (i) or (ii), Mitchell argues that most

believers would see their beliefs as significant articles of faith, in which they have invested a lot in. Therefore would not easily allow it to be falsified. Ultimately ~~where~~ ^{is} the point when the belief will be falsified is a matter of personal world view as we have different criteria for that. Therefore, Mitchell's idea could be seen as successful in response to the falsification principle.

Another type of response are non-cognitive and anti-realist which means they would abandon meaningfulness in a cognitive sense and retain meaning in a personal sense. Hume's idea of blinks could be seen the most suitable candidate to this challenge. Developing on Hume's idea of natural instincts, Hume agrees that we perceive experiences through blinks, which are withdrawn before we developed when we were growing up. Test means, as illustrated by the problem of the undergraduate paradigm, blinks cannot be falsified no matter what evidence is put forward to go against

A clear conclusion to this paragraph, Identifying main points to be considered – coherent judgements

Critically deconstructs religious information leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning

Question 3b: Level 5 – 20 marks

Critically deconstructs religious information leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning

Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements fully supported by appraisal of evidence

the language used. The mirror the idea of religious beliefs. He agrees that religion in their mind cannot be falsified, but retain its meaning through the profound impact it has on the language user. This could be seen as an effective response as he argues he attacks all falsification which really only applies to cognitive scientific statements. By abandoning objective meaning, however, religious believers must make factual claims about God. By saying 'God exists' is more personal expression of worship and according to Flew would make all religious practice meaningless. Therefore, the idea of discarding non-cognitive, anti-realist understanding of religious language is severely weakened by the inability to make factual assertions about God.

There is a significant weakness in Flew's argument, however it is illustrated by his problem, the two explorers are disappointed whilst most religious

believers at the first place, deep into it and reason to belief in God. However it could be argued that the problem does not show enough similarities. Moreover, some exceptions in science cannot be falsified neither, for instance, dark matter, which theoretically exist and cannot be falsified. As science cannot overcome to challenge neither, it could be argued that the criterion is too demanding and unrealistic to establishing meaning beyond the scientific sphere.

In conclusion, both responses from Mitchell and Flew arguably serve a valid response to the challenge, whilst retaining meaningfulness. But we would have to see this idea to become

Critically deconstructs religious information leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning

Constructs coherent and reasoned judgement supported by appraisal of evidence

(Total for Question 3 = 30 marks) **30**

TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 30 MARKS

Question 3b: Where candidates did not do well

The weaker responses reflected confusion about the respective positions of Flew, Hare and Mitchell.

Whilst most weak responses handled the material on 'blik' with some success, a high number of confused, or very brief, responses simply presented developed versions of the parables of Mitchell's 'Partisan and the Stranger' and Hare's 'Lunatic and the Dons' with no attempt to develop these, or show how they countered Flew's use of Wisdom's parable of the gardener.

Candidates who failed to achieve a top level:

- Showed little knowledge and understanding
- Were mainly descriptive of the issue being analysed.
- Managed to only write a few lines of assessment and judgement

Key messages in the Principal Examiners reports on Question 3 (a and b)

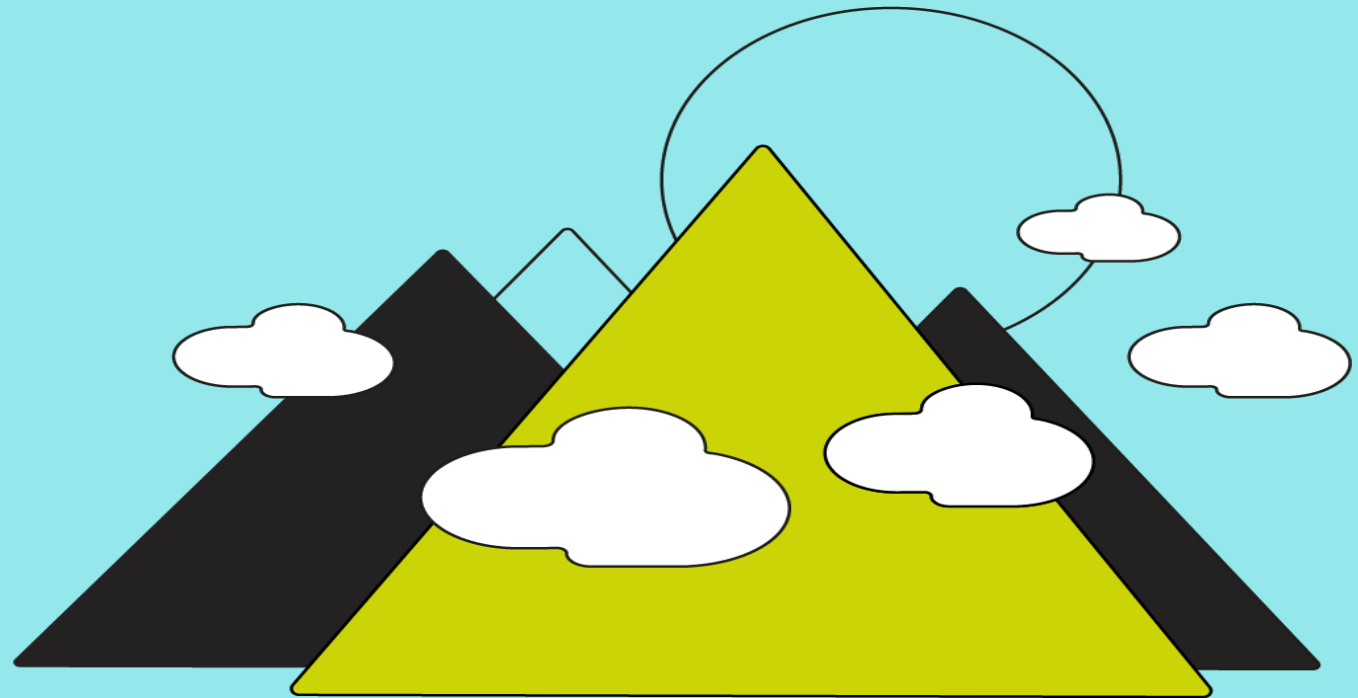
Candidates needed to:

- **3a:** Outline the ideas in the extract and explain the context using a wide range of knowledge of religious ideas
- **3a:** Fully develop ideas making links to the references within the extract
- **3a:** Make accurate use of specialist language throughout
- **3b:** Make judgements supported by logical reasoning.
- **3b:** Arrive at a considered conclusion derived from the evidence.



Explain the technical terms clearly, where relevant, to demonstrate your understanding.

Question 4
'Evaluate'
30 marks



Question 4

Candidates are required to demonstrate reasoned argument of factors to reach a judgement regarding their importance/relevance to the question context.

Question 4 includes 5 marks AO1 and 25 marks AO2, therefore only one sixth of the response should be knowledge and understanding and the vast majority of the answer should be analysis and evaluation, discussing the significance and relevance of the information used in the response.

Marks are awarded for:

- the range of information provided
- deconstructing to religious information given
- judgements made about the religious information given
- synoptic links.

Question 4

Command word

Question

Evaluate the view that ethical language is inherently emotive.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Religion and Ethics have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- New Testament Studies
- Study of a Religion.

(30)

30 marks available
– this is more than a third
of the whole paper
(30-80)

Bullets points
one of which
must be covered
in the answer

Unless one of these
bullets is covered
the marks are
limited to the top of
Level 4 / 24 marks

Candidates who only use AO1
will not be able to gain marks
beyond the top of Level 1 / 6
marks

Questions 4: Where candidates did well

This question required candidates to:

‘Evaluate the view that ethical language is inherently emotive’.

The better candidates were able to use a wide range of authoritative material to discuss the question.

Many candidates made clear judgements supported by use of synoptic knowledge from the Philosophy paper.

Candidates who achieved top levels on question 4

- Understood the demands of the question
- Wrote detailed chains of reasoning
- Constructed accurate arguments
- Included analysis of the questions throughout as well as in a conclusion

Question 4: Level 5 – 25 marks

Concise introduction,
Identifying key terms
and
Ideas to be considered

Excellent use of
specific,
authoritative
reasoning

Argument and analysis

SECTION C verification → synoptic link.
with the theory.

Write your answer in the space provided.

4 Evaluate the view that ethical language is inherently emotive.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Religion and Ethics have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- New Testament Studies
- Study of a Religion.

(30) 25/04

Emotivism was created by Hume and was developed and adapted by Ayer. ~~Ayer's emotivism follows that~~ if you are an Emotivist is a non cognitivist theory and believes that there are no moral truths in the world. They are also anti realist in saying that there are no moral facts everything we say are just subjective emotional responses.

Ayer's Emotivism standpoint takes influence from the verification principle. Ayer believes that there are no moral truths in the world everything that we say is meaningless. This can strike need debate between philosophers in saying what they believe in the truth with ethical language.

One strength in the view that ethical language is inherently emotive is that it can show why there are moral disagreements in the world. As it is just an argument between two people

with two different beliefs but as there are no moral truths there are no right or wrong. However many may agree to say that ~~why there is no~~ every argument we have on moral discussions are no meanings. As with Ayer's ~~of~~ emotivism there are no right or wrong answers. This may be a strong reason why many people will not think that ethical language is inherently emotive as our own opinions are now meaningless.

Another strength for why people may view that ethical language is inherently emotive is that that they might agree with Ayer as there are no moral truths in the world. Ayer's Emotivism doesn't fall into the trap of Hume's is-ought gap. As unlike ethical naturalism it doesn't try and bridge the gap between the 'is' and the 'ought'. However ~~this can be a weakness~~ of Ayer's argument does lead to ~~one~~ weakness over morality. As if there ~~was~~ are no moral truths and everything we say are just 'emotional ejaculations' then there would be no moral progression. With Ayer's emotivism there would be no changes in attitudes towards women's rights, race and LGBTQ+ people. As it would of just be seen as a meaningless argument and

Well selected choice
of content – critically
deconstructing ideas

Argument and analysis

A clear conclusion to
this paragraph,
Identifying main
strengths

Within Ayer's argument

coherent judgements

Question 4: Level 5 – 25 marks

Argument and analysis

Well selected choice
of content – critically
deconstructing ideas

Excellent use of
specific,
authoritative reasoning
from Hare

was it is just one view against another. This is a strong reason against the view that ethical language is inherently emotive as there would be no moral prescription.

Another reason why many would argue that ethical language is not inherently emotive is when we say statements we are not necessarily trying to influence others. For instance a muslim may say that he or she doesn't eat pork. However this does not mean that ~~there~~ the person is trying to influence others not to eat pork as well. As with emotive ethical language they believe that you are trying to persuade others when making your ethical statements but this is not always the case.

A much stronger argument is that ethical language is inherently prescriptive. Prescriptivism was created by R.M. Hare and is just like emotivism as non cognitive and anti realist argument. However Hare doesn't agree ^{with} the emotivism value ~~what~~ ^{what} moral values are and what they do. He believes that ethical language is action guiding as you are trying to recommend what you would do in the given situation. For instance when I ~~recommend~~ say 'murder is wrong' this is

saying that I wouldn't murder and neither should you.

One reason that people may argue that ethical language is inherently prescriptive instead of emotive is that he is not saying that all of our actions and moral decisions are meaningless unlike emotivism. He is saying just like emotivism there are no moral facts but ethical language is not meaningless as you can use it as an action guideline to ~~influence~~ say what you would do in a given situation.

Although the point above is strong it has its critics as people would say that it doesn't take into account vast decision making. As for instance I ~~could~~ could hurt a fly but I would not recommend it ~~as~~ usually. As most people would let out the fly. This is a reason for why people may argue that ethical language is not inherently prescriptive either as we as humans are not going to recommend the right action every single time.

An even stronger argument however for why people may say that ethical language is not inherently prescriptive is that it is subjective and could lead to morality problems. This is due to the fact that ~~the~~ saying, a person saying 'murder

Argument
and analysis

Argument
and analysis

Argument
and analysis

Question 4: Level 5 – 25 marks

Argument and
analysis

Well selected choice
of content – critically
deconstructing ideas

Synoptic information
highlighted

is wrong' is the same as someone saying 'I don't like mayonaisse'. They hold the same weight as 'I am just not recommending what I would do but they hold the exact same weight. This is where many may argue that ethical language is inherently naturalistic. This is because they are Cognitivists and hold that there are moral truths in the world.

Ethical naturalism will say that moral statements become natural statements so become factual statements. Natural statements are ones that we can experience via through the senses. They will take the moral statement 'good' and reduce it to pleasure. So what ever brings us pleasure is good and whatever brings us pain is bad. However, Moore says that this commits a naturalistic fallacy and is a reason for why ethical language is not inherently naturalistic either. As if you take a moral property and make it a natural one you commit a naturalistic fallacy. As the term good is an open question according to Moore.

~~Thinking about my studies of philosophy~~

Thinking synoptically about my studies of philosophy the logical positivists would agree with the view

that ethical language is inherently emotive as Ayer takes inspiration from the logical positivists. Their view is that if your statement is not analytic or synthetic it is meaningless. Ayer takes this same approach and says that all ethical language is meaningless as it is not analytic (true by definition) or synthetic through verifiable checking. Ayer may call it the Boo theory though but this could be seen as a criticism of ethical language being inherently emotive. As you are just saying 'Boo' to stealing for instance and 'Hooray' to 'Charity' however this holds no weight as it is meaningless according to Ayer.

Overall the view that ethical language is inherently emotive is a weak one. As it would mean that everything we say is meaningless so there would be no point in moral discussions. Saying 'language is emotive' ethical language is inherently prescriptive is a lot stronger. As even though it has its weaknesses it holds a lot more moral value to ethical language than emotivism.

Argument and
analysis

Well selected choice
of content – critically
deconstructing ideas

A clear conclusion to
The essay
Identifying main
strengths
– coherent judgement
made

Question 4: Where candidates did not do well

Weaker candidates were unable to able to discuss ethical language accurately and in detail.

Those who did failed to make the link to it being emotive.

They were mainly descriptive in their response failing to address the AO2 objectives within the questions.

Candidates who failed to achieve a top level:

- Used only knowledge and understanding
- Did not dedicate the majority of their essay to assessment and judgements
- Did not include synoptic links
- Did not fully explain the points
- Did not include appraisal of arguments

Question 4: Level 1 – 5 marks

Introduction

Narrow range of knowledge

General knowledge

SECTION C

Write your answer in the space provided.

4 Evaluate the view that ethical language is inherently emotive.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Religion and Ethics have been influenced by one of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- New Testament Studies
- Study of a Religion.

(30) 5 Q04

Ethical language being inherently emotive can be discussed as correct or incorrect.

Ethical language reflects meaning behind statements which can influence the beliefs of believers. Emotivism reflects the description of depth to which statements are created. The concept of inherent reflects being passed down.

Atheists reject the view ethical language is inherently emotive as they may not understand or view language in that way. Ethical language can be taken in many ways in accordance to how people read the text.

To some people ethical language may have no meaning to them. They may reject that it is

inherently emotive

Ethical language has been explored by Wittgenstein who reflects language games and meaning behind it.

Agape refers to concept of love.

Ethical language covers acts that discuss what is moral and right or wrong. Ethical language is present everywhere which helps portray how people act. Meta ethics take a more narrow approach into what is morally right or wrong. There are 2 main views Realist & anti realist.

Emotivism reflects the emotions that infer choices made.

When looking into themes such as contraception Roman Catholics are fully against this concept as it is an act to prevent child birth by preventing it to grow this can be done in many forms such as condoms, morning after pill, implant etc.

Narrow range of knowledge

Key terms used

Narrow range of knowledge

Question 4: Level 1 – 5 marks

Narrow range of knowledge

moral ethics behind this may be to not have bad intentions when expressing love as Peter Vardy explains when he writes about the puzzle of sex. That sex is important mainly for procreation. Ethics show in modern society these contraceptives are morally alright & accepted in society all due to advancements childbearing can be pushed.

In conclusion ethical language can be shown as inherently ~~more~~ & not when considering moral facts and advancements in society and physics views.

A judgement made

Candidates may write a lot but unless it answers the question, contains accurate information and analysis it is not going to get high marks.

The bottom level refers to narrow knowledge and judgement and that is what this example shows.

Key messages in the Principal Examiners reports on Question 4

Candidates needed to:

- Give a very clear and well organised response to the question.
- The candidate works through a relevant answer in an orderly manner
- Use authoritative and reliable material.
- Make judgements supported by logical reasoning.
- Arrive at a considered conclusion derived from the evidence.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Don't be oblique about links with your other area of study. Make them obvious to the reader.



Teaching ideas and strategies

- **Prepare for exam questions - Use the specification terminology** in teaching and preparing candidates for examinations; the language in the specification will be used in the examination questions. (Bingo for specialist terms is a good starter /plenary)
- **Learn scholar's main teachings/facts** – produce a timeline for the classroom – make scholar top trumps with facts about the various topics
- **Encourage exam practice – use past exam questions**, give students the mark schemes and ask them to use the information to write a full mark answer and then peer mark
- **For AO2 skill practice** – copy a newspaper article and ask students to **critique** the journalists' arguments- highlight comments that are giving opinions – work out phrasing that naturally leads to assessment



Places to get Edexcel material and advice

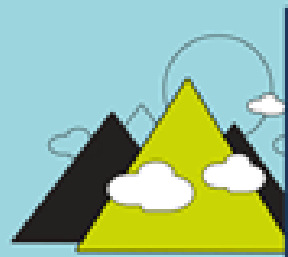
The Pearson Edexcel website contains lots of materials, which have been checked by senior examiners including:

- Course planners
- Exemplar material
- Explanation of command words
- Marking guidance, definitions of useful terminology, recordings of past training events, mapping when changing Awarding organisations and schemes of work.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/religious-studies.html>

Upcoming training events

For more courses see our [Pearson Professional Development Academy](#).



Professional
Development
Academy

Transforming
training for
everyone.

Religious Studies Subject Advisor

Susan Currey

Religious Studies

Email: TeachingReligiousStudies@pearson.com

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/EdexcelRS>

Phone: UK: 0344 463 2817
(Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm GMT)

- **Access the Religious Studies community**
- **Access the customer support portal**
- **Sign up to receive subject advisor updates**
- **Live chat via the 'contact us' page**
- **Find and book events**
- **Book an appointment with your subject advisor**





Pearson