

# A Level Religious Studies

**May 2022**

**Guidance for the use  
of the anthology**



# Aims of the Religious Studies A Level

The aims of the Edexcel A level Religious Studies qualification are to:

- Develop interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world
- Develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- Adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- Reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

- The qualification's focus on scholarship allows candidates to understand a diversity of views, the developing nature of the subject throughout time and to develop their skills in critical evaluation.
- At Edexcel, we use the Anthology texts to support candidates' understanding; to develop their ability to comprehend scholarly writings and prepare them for their next steps in academic scholarship.
- This anthology is unique to the Edexcel A level qualification and enables teachers and candidates to have easy and instant access to the key texts, ideas and thinkers they need to study the course.
- The Anthology should be used as a 'starting point' for candidates and they should be encouraged to read and engage with the additional contributors listed within the specification.
- The use of the extract as part of the assessment helps candidates ground their knowledge in scholarship.

# How to use the Anthology

- The Anthology is not meant to be learnt by heart and there does not need to be time set aside to teach the Anthology discretely.
- The Anthology should be used to supplement the teaching of the Specification content. For example, when teaching Arguments from the Existence of God in the 'Philosophy of Religion' paper, one could use the Copleston and Russell debate to discuss the positions of theists and atheists in relation to the Cosmological Argument, the Teleological Argument or linking this to other arguments for the existence of God.
- The texts are meant to be used to support the teaching of the content; they are complementary to the specification and should not be seen as a separate part of the course.

# Using the extract to 'clarify' a view

- Candidates will always be provided with an extract of the Anthology text in the exam for Q3a so are not expected to know it by heart.
- This extract is designed to support candidates and acts as a prompt to 'clarify' an idea presented by the scholar.
- The candidate will be asked to clarify an idea that they have studied as part of the course.
- For example if candidates were asked to 'Explore ideas about 'love' in ethical decision making' in an 8-mark question (Q1), they would be able to draw on what they have covered within the specification to explain Fletcher's principles of Situation Ethics.
- If a similar question came up in a 10-mark question (Q3a) which asked candidates to 'Clarify ideas about love in ethical decision making outlined in this passage', they would be able to draw on the same knowledge to answer this question, but the extract supports them with reminders of key language and key concepts.

# How to use the extract in Q3(a)

3 (a) Example question:

**Clarify the ideas illustrated in the passage about euthanasia**

***You must refer to the passage in your response***

**Stage 1:** Candidates should read the extract fully.

A 'third party' in law refers to any agent other than the principal agent and in the case of euthanasia this would generally mean a doctor (sometimes also referred to as the 'physician'). For all practical purposes if euthanasia is to be justified at all it has to be considered as part of medical practice, for it is reasonably clear that any other practice of euthanasia would be almost impossible to control or regulate. Without regulation society would permit killing or murder and whatever moral code one adopts would be regarded as untenable. The consideration of 'euthanasia', at present, is rightly a medical issue. Put simply it is this: should a doctor kill his patients in some circumstances?

# How to use the extract in Q3a

## (Clarify the ideas illustrated in the passage about euthanasia)

**Stage 2:** Candidates should circle, highlight or underline key concepts or ideas that clarify the focus of the question as key ideas they can expand on.

A 'third party' in law refers to any agent other than the principal agent and in the case of euthanasia this would generally mean a doctor (sometimes also referred to as the 'physician'). For all practical purposes if euthanasia is to be justified at all it has to be considered as part of medical practice, for it is reasonably clear that any other practice of euthanasia would be almost impossible to control or regulate. Without regulation society would permit killing or murder and whatever moral code one adopts would be regarded as untenable. The consideration of 'euthanasia', at present, is rightly a medical issue. Put simply it is this: should a doctor kill his patients in some circumstances?

# How to use the extract in Q3a

**(Clarify the ideas illustrated in the passage about euthanasia)**

**Stage 3:** Candidates can take each point they have identified and explain these, developing them to demonstrate their knowledge of the topic.

Euthanasia is regulated by the law

There are challenges associated with how it would be regulated.

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Euthanasia raises questions about the role of doctors

Attitudes to euthanasia are constantly changing.



# How to meet level 3 criteria

## Key advice:

1. Select relevant information to answer the question (the extract can support this)
2. Show their knowledge in relation to the focus of the question
3. Use key terminology/language (the extract can support this)
4. Give detailed and developed answers – expand on their annotations from the extract. Fully explain each.
5. Link key ideas/concepts to references from the extract

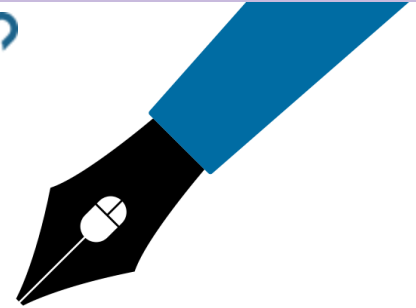
Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 3	7–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li><li>• Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed and fully developed (AO1).</li><li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are fully linked to references from the extract (AO1).</li></ul>

# Useful links

- GCE Religious Studies Specification: <https://bit.ly/3NnZLLq>
- Getting started teacher guide: <https://bit.ly/3G3puWT>
- GCE Religious Studies Anthology: <https://bit.ly/3NjfCL9>
- Approach to the Anthology: <https://bit.ly/3Ptfb2Q>

# Pearson Edexcel Religious Studies

For up-to-date information and support, please click the links on the right to sign-up to our newsletter, join our Pearson Religious Studies community and follow us on Twitter where we provide regular updates and information regarding further support.



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[teachingreligiousstudies@pearson.com](mailto:teachingreligiousstudies@pearson.com)