

**Paper Reference(s) 9RS0/02**  
**Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE**

# **Religious Studies**

**Advanced**

**PAPER 2: Religion and Ethics**

**Text Booklet**

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### Question 3

Another **indirect** argument has a long tradition in Natural Law ethics and involves two kinds of intention. According to the double effect (DDE) argument there is a difference between foreseeing an event and directly intending or **willing** it to happen. The emphasis, therefore, is different from the act and omissions argument where the agent foresaw what was to happen and allowed it to happen. For instance, A defends themselves against an attack from B using reasonable force. They know that this **might** result in B's death but it is not their intention that this should happen. If B then dies as a result of A's defence the DDE does not hold A to be blameworthy for an act they did not intend. A doctor who subscribes to the DDE might argue that the principle is sound medicine (and as a well established principle in Natural Law ethics it is therefore acceptable in Roman Catholic theology). However, the term 'euthanasia' is resisted in the same way that 'abortion' is avoided for similar reasons. But is the DDE open to abuse?

## **SOURCE INFORMATION**

### **Question 3**

**Source:** extract adapted from **Issues of Life and Death** by Michael Wilcockson, Hodder 1999, Chapter 4, **Euthanasia and Doctors' Ethics**, Edexcel Anthology