



National  
Qualifications  
RESOURCE

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**X864/76/12**

**Religious, Moral and  
Philosophical Studies  
Religious and Philosophical Questions**

## **Marking Instructions**

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Please note that these marking instructions have not been standardised based on candidate responses. You may therefore need to agree within your centre how to consistently mark an item if a candidate response is not covered by the marking instructions.



## General marking principles for Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

*Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.*

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) Award marks where candidates give points of knowledge without specifying the context, unless it is clear that they do not refer to the context of the question. Award a maximum of **8 marks** where the candidate has not attempted either skill in a **20 mark** question.

In this question paper the following skills are assessed

- i. knowledge and understanding
- ii. analysis
- iii. evaluation.

**(i) Knowledge and understanding**

Knowledge and understanding involves presenting relevant and accurate content. Award a knowledge and understanding mark where a candidate presents a relevant and accurate point which may include

- accurate factual information
- relevant factual information
- reference to sources
- case studies
- examples
- viewpoints
- description of arguments.

**(ii) Analysis**

Analysis involves doing something with factual information, for example identifying parts, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the whole; drawing out and relating implications.

Award an analysis mark where a candidate presents a relevant, accurate and developed point which may include

- links between different components
- links between component(s) and the whole
- links between component(s) and related concepts
- similarities and contradictions
- consistency and inconsistency
- different views/interpretations
- possible consequences/implications
- the relative importance of components
- understanding of underlying order or structure.

**(iii) Evaluation**

Evaluation involves making a judgement or measurement based on an issue. Award an evaluation mark where a candidate presents a relevant, accurate and developed point which may include

- the relevance and/or importance and/or usefulness of a viewpoint or source
- positive and negative aspects
- strengths and weaknesses
- any other relevant evaluative comment.

Note: statement of arguments of different sides of an issue is not evaluation.

**Use of sources**

Award marks where candidates use a relevant source in support of their knowledge and understanding, critical analysis, evaluation or a reasoned view.

**Overview of detailed marking instructions**

**Knowledge, analysis and evaluation questions (20 marks)**

Award up to a maximum of **10 marks** for each developed point of knowledge used to support the analysis and evaluation.

Award up to **5 marks** for analytical comments and up to **5 marks** for reasoned evaluative comments.

Marking instructions for each question

Part A – Origins

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
1.	<p><b>How convincing are scientific explanations for origins?</b></p> <p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. A <b>maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge of scientific views on origins (life, universe or both).</p> <p><b>Possible Approaches</b> Candidates may take the following approach to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an explanation of scientific views on the origins of life and of the universe; a discussion of the extent to which each are convincing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Marking Instructions</b> Marks will be <b>capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>either analysis or evaluation</b>. <b>No marks</b> will be awarded for a list.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and Understanding – 10 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of scientific views on the origins of life</li> <li>• a description of scientific views on the origins of the universe</li> <li>• sources relating to these.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the scientific view on the origins of life is that all life evolved, over millions of years from a single cell, also known as the theory of evolution</li> <li>• the universe can be traced back in time to an originating single point which scientists refer to as a ‘cosmic expansion’</li> <li>• Darwin stated, ‘It is not the strongest nor the smartest species that survive, but the one who can adapt to it.’</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Analysis – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an analysis of scientific views on the origins of life and/or universe</li> <li>• an analysis of the evidence used to support scientific views on the origins of life and/or universe</li> <li>• an analysis of relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of analysis points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• this quote by Darwin shows how crucial that development over time was to our survival today and how this adaptability is how animals, such as chameleons, were made as they were suited to their environment over time</li> <li>• a result of similarities is that long ago we could have shared a common ancestor, and as we slowly adapted we drifted apart, with different species getting different mutations but linking us back to the same ancestor a long time ago showing that evolution is why we differ.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgement on the strengths/weaknesses of the scientific views on the origins of life and/or the universe</li> <li>• judgement on the argument that scientific views are most convincing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe that the scientific views are convincing due to the overarching amount of evidence and the theory of evolution has gone through rigorous verification and falsification from various scientists, eliminating all bias and highlighting it as cold, hard evidence</li> <li>• Darwin’s theory as a scientific view is the most convincing because it is the most accurate and concrete theory as it uses empirical evidence to support its claim.</li> </ul>

Part B – The existence of God

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
2.	<p><b>How convincing are non-religious challenges to the existence of God?</b></p> <p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation.</p> <p>A <b>maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge of non-religious challenges to the existence of God, analyse these and present reasoned judgements on whether these challenges are convincing.</p> <p><b>Possible Approaches</b> Candidates may take the following approach to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an explanation of non-religious challenges to the existence of God, analyse these challenges and present a supported judgement on whether or not they are convincing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Marking Instructions</b> A <b>maximum of 8 marks</b> will be awarded where candidates fail to include analysis or evaluation. <b>No marks</b> will be awarded for a list.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and Understanding – 10 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a description of a non-religious challenge to the existence of God</li> <li>• a description of an argument for the existence of God</li> <li>• sources relating to these.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas Aquinas states that the first way in which he can prove that God exists is the argument from motion. His second way is the argument from causation, and his third way is the argument from contingency and necessity</li> <li>• Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution provides a non-religious challenge to the teleological argument. He describes natural selection as the ‘. . . principle by which each slight variation (of a trait) if useful, is preserved.’</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an analysis of the arguments/viewpoints/evidence used to challenge non-religious ideas to the existence of God</li> <li>• an analysis of relevant sources.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Examples of analysis points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one implication of the theory of evolution as a non-religious challenge to the design argument is that it means that the life on earth has no clear purpose as it shows that there was no thought process to how life began</li> <li>• another implication of the Big Bang theory as a non-religious challenge to the cosmological argument is that it suggests that the universe started without a cause which goes against the idea that God created the world from nothing as described in the Bible.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• judgements on the strengths/weaknesses of the non-religious challenges to the existence of God</li> <li>• judgements and conclusions regarding an agreement, partial agreement or disagreement that the non-religious challenges are convincing</li> <li>• overall judgment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think the theory of evolution as a non-religious challenge to the existence of God is convincing to an extent because there is strong scientific evidence – both fossil and bio-geographical – to support Darwin's ideas</li> <li>• however, I think the theory of evolution also has limitations as it only tells us how life originated, it doesn't tell us why. It offers nothing for the greater understanding about the purpose of life which many people need in their lives.</li> </ul>

Part C – The problem of suffering and evil

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
3.	<p><b>How convincing are arguments to support human responsibility for suffering and evil?</b></p> <p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. A <b>maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to explain detailed arguments about human responsibility for suffering and evil; analyse these arguments and present a reasoned conclusion on whether responsibility lies with humans.</p> <p><b>Possible Approaches</b> Candidates may take the following approach to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an explanation of arguments that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil; analysis and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the views that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Marking Instructions</b></p> <p>Marks will be <b>capped at 8 knowledge and understanding marks</b> if a candidate fails to attempt <b>either</b> analysis <b>or</b> evaluation. <b>No marks</b> will be awarded for a list.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and Understanding – 10 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a detailed description of arguments that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• a detailed description of arguments that claim humans are not responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>• sources relating to these.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Examples of knowledge points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the free will defence argument states moral evil is not brought about by God but instead by the actions of free moral agents – humans who have free will</li> <li>the Irenaean Theodicy states that humans were not made perfect nor were they born into a perfect world. Humans can only develop morally in a world where pain and suffering is prevalent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an analysis of the views that claim humans are/are not responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>an analysis of the evidence used to support views that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>an analysis of the evidence used to support views that claim humans are not responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>an analysis of relevant sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of analysis points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>one implication of the freewill defence argument on humans is that it places the blame of all human action onto them and makes it clear that if humans were to make better decisions, moral evil may not exist</li> <li>one implication of the Irenaean theodicy lies within the idea that if humans are not born perfect, who is responsible to teach them to become perfect? How do humans know what is right and wrong?</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>judgement on the strengths/weaknesses of the views that claim humans are responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>judgement on the strengths/weaknesses of the views that claims humans are not responsible for suffering and evil</li> <li>overall judgement.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Examples of evaluation points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think that the freewill defence argument is a convincing argument for theists as it defends the God of classical theism, for example, all loving and all powerful meaning that the foundations of their religion is kept intact as God's nature is not questioned</li> <li>• I don't think that the Irenaean Theodicy is particularly convincing in supporting the claim that humans are responsible for suffering and evil as it does not give an explanation as to why God didn't create humans morally perfect, in fact, it leads some people to lose faith which does not teach a lesson in soul-making.</li> </ul>

Part D – Miracles

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
4.	<p><b>How convincing are non-religious explanations for miracles?</b></p> <p>This question focuses on knowledge, analysis and evaluation. <b>5 marks</b> are available for analysis and <b>5 marks</b> are available for evaluation. A <b>maximum of 10 marks</b> are available for knowledge and understanding that is relevant to both the question and the answer.</p>	20	<p><b>Purpose</b> The purpose of the question is to give candidates the opportunity to present knowledge of non-religious explanations for miracles, and debate how convincing these are.</p> <p><b>Possible Approaches</b> Candidates may take the following approach to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an explanation of non-religious explanations for miracles; a discussion on the extent to which each are convincing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific Marking Instructions</b> A <b>maximum of 8 marks</b> will be awarded where candidates fail to include analysis and evaluation.</p> <p><b>Knowledge and Understanding – 10 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• descriptions of non-religious explanations for miracles</li> <li>• sources relating to these.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of knowledge points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hume argued that miracles cannot happen because they break the laws of nature, which is impossible</li> <li>• according to Hume in ‘An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding’, ‘A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and . . . firm and unalterable experience . . . established these laws . . .’.</li> </ul> <p><b>Analysis – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an analysis of non-religious explanations for miracles</li> <li>• an analysis of the evidence used to support non-religious explanations of miracles</li> <li>• an analysis of relevant sources.</li> </ul>

Question	General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Specific marking instructions for this question
			<p><b>Examples of analysis points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regardless of what Hume argues, miracles are a matter of subjective understanding as an ‘event’ can qualify as a miracle for one person and not another, even when both are religious believers</li> <li>one implication for non-religious explanations for miracles is the idea that if there were any hard, factual evidence for them, they wouldn't be miracles but problems for science to solve.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation – 5 marks may be awarded for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>judgement on the strengths/weaknesses of non-religious explanations of miracles</li> <li>overall judgement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evaluation points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think non-religious explanations for miracles are convincing to a certain extent. One reason for this is that no miracle is supported by enough people to actually rule out the possibility that miracles could possibly be real</li> <li>another reason why non-religious explanations are convincing is that since every religion claims the truth of its own miracles as against the miracles of every other religion, for example what a Christian might consider a miracle would be considered ludicrous by another religion.</li> </ul>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]