

COMPONENT 3 : An introduction to Religion and Ethics

MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

1. (a) Explain how, according to the Divine Command Theory, morality originates from God. [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points will be credited.

- The Divine Command Theory as a meta-ethical theory seeks to explain the nature of ethical properties. In the case of Divine Command Theory an action's moral status is dependent upon whether God commanded it.
- God is the origin and regulator of morality. Morality does not exist independently of God; therefore, God is not just enforcing a universal morality. Morality is purely determined by divine commands.
- God's command is the only reason an action can be deemed moral e.g. stealing is wrong only because God deems it to be.
- Right or wrong are objective truths based on God's will / command. Morality is not based upon human reason or experience.
- Moral goodness occurs only by complying with divine command; even if this does not seem rational. This point could be exemplified by one of the following passages (however other relevant passages must be credited): Genesis 22:2: Abraham is instructed by God to sacrifice his son Isaac. Human reason could dictate that human sacrifice is wrong, but Abraham is obedient to God because he knows that divine command is the 'only good'.
- Candidates may consider a particular version of the Divine Command Theory to exemplify their answer e.g. Robert Adams 'modified divine command theory' (however other relevant versions must be credited). Adams states that morality is based upon divine command because it is part of God's omnipotent nature.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.