6.7 Euthanasia: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Explain two contrasting beliefs, religious and/or non-religious, about euthanasia. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority or another source in your answer.

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 This question is about religious and non-religious perspectives on euthanasia. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question: parts (a) to (d) are worth 12 marks; part (e) is the 12-mark evaluation.

(a) State what is meant by non-voluntary euthanasia. **(1)**

(b) Give two reasons why the issue of euthanasia is difficult to resolve. **(2)**

(c) Explain two religious teachings about the sanctity of life in relation to euthanasia. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. **(4)**

(d) Explain two contrasting beliefs, religious and/or non-religious, about whether euthanasia can ever be justified. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority or another source in your answer. **(5)**

(e) Evaluate this statement: 'Euthanasia should be made legal in the United Kingdom.' In your answer you should: refer to religious teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. **(12)**

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(Total for Question 2 is 24 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.7 Euthanasia: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

belief 1: most Christians and Muslims oppose euthanasia in all circumstances, believing that life is sacred and that suffering should be managed through care rather than by ending life, oe **B1**

development: this is often based on sanctity of life teaching, e.g. Qur'an 17:33's teaching that life is made sacred by Allah, oe **B1**

belief 2: many Humanists, and some religious believers, argue that a person suffering unbearably from a terminal illness should have the right to choose the timing of their own death, oe **B1**

development: Humanists generally base this on the principle of personal autonomy, the right to make decisions about one's own body and death, combined with compassion for unbearable suffering, oe **B1**

reference to a source of wisdom and authority or another appropriate source made accurately, oe **B1**

Answer: Contrast: opposition based on the sanctity of life (Qur'an 17:33) vs support for a right to choose based on autonomy and compassion (a Humanist argument).

Question 2

(a) euthanasia carried out on a person who is unable to give or refuse consent, for example because they are in a coma, oe **B1**

(a) Answer: Euthanasia carried out on a person who is unable to give or refuse consent.

(b) there is disagreement about whether relieving suffering can ever justify deliberately ending a life, oe **B1**

(b) there is disagreement about how to protect vulnerable people from pressure while still respecting a person's own wishes, oe **B1**

(b) Answer: E.g. disagreement about whether relieving suffering can justify ending life; disagreement about balancing protection of vulnerable people with personal choice.

(c) point 1: many Christians believe life is a sacred gift from God, so no human being has the right to end it deliberately, oe **B1**

(c) development: Deuteronomy 32:39's teaching that God alone 'puts to death and brings to life' is used to support the view that ending life is not a human decision, oe **B1**

(c) point 2: many Muslims believe life is a trust (amanah) from Allah, to be protected and not deliberately ended before its appointed time, oe **B1**

(c) development: the Qur'an's teaching that Allah has made life sacred (Qur'an 17:33) is used to support opposition to euthanasia, oe **B1**

(c) Answer: E.g. life as a sacred gift only God may end (Deuteronomy 32:39); life as a trust from Allah, made sacred (Qur'an 17:33).

(d) belief 1: many religious believers, and some non-religious people, oppose euthanasia in all circumstances, believing that legalising it risks pressuring vulnerable, seriously ill or disabled people to end their lives, and that suffering can instead be managed through palliative/hospice care, oe **B1**

(d) development: this can be supported by sanctity of life teaching, e.g. Qur'an 17:33, alongside the practical concern that good end-of-life care can relieve most suffering without ending life, oe **B1**

(d) belief 2: many Humanists and some other non-religious people argue that a mentally competent adult with a terminal illness should have the right to choose the manner and timing of their own death, if suffering unbearably, oe **B1**

(d) development: this reflects the Humanist principle of personal autonomy, the belief that a person's own wishes about their body and death should be respected, alongside compassion for their suffering, oe **B1**

(d) reference to a source of wisdom and authority or another appropriate source made accurately, oe **B1**

(d) Answer: Contrast: opposition based on sanctity of life and protection of the vulnerable (Qur'an 17:33) vs support based on autonomy and compassion (a Humanist argument).

(e) **L4** A well-argued, balanced answer that considers more than one point of view in a developed way, using accurate and detailed references to religious teaching and/or scripture to support each point, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion. **10-12**

(e) **L3** A clear and reasoned answer that considers more than one point of view, supported by relevant references to religious teaching and/or scripture, though the justification of the conclusion may be less developed. **7-9**

(e) **L2** A reasoned answer that considers at least one point of view, with some relevant supporting evidence, but with limited or no consideration of an alternative view. **4-6**

(e) **L1** One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion. **1-3**

(e) **L0** No relevant content. **0**

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(e) Indicative content:

- Agree: some campaigners, including Humanists UK, argue that allowing a terminally ill, mentally competent adult to choose an assisted death under strict legal safeguards respects personal autonomy and can prevent prolonged, unbearable suffering.
- Agree: some argue that modern medicine can sometimes prolong the process of dying rather than genuinely prolonging a good quality of life, so a legal right to choose the timing of death could reduce suffering for the patient and their family.
- Agree: some point out that people who can afford it already travel abroad to countries where assisted dying is legal, which some see as unfair, since only those with the means to travel currently have that choice.
- Agree: some non-religious ethicists argue that a properly regulated system, with independent medical and legal checks, could minimise the risk of pressure or abuse while still respecting individual choice.
- Disagree: most Christians and Muslims teach that only God has authority over life and death, since life is a sacred trust; legalising euthanasia would be seen by many as going against this teaching (Qur'an 17:33; Deuteronomy 32:39).
- Disagree: many religious and non-religious critics share a concern that legalising euthanasia for strictly defined cases could, over time, be extended to a wider range of people, including those who are not terminally ill or who feel under pressure.
- Disagree: disability rights campaigners, both religious and non-religious, have raised concerns that legalising euthanasia could increase direct or indirect pressure on seriously ill, elderly or disabled people to end their lives so as not to feel a burden on others.
- Disagree: palliative and hospice care specialists argue that good end-of-life care can relieve most physical pain and much emotional distress without ending life, so some conclude legalising euthanasia is unnecessary if such care is properly funded and available to everyone.
- A balanced answer might conclude that the strength of this argument depends heavily on whether robust safeguards against pressure and abuse can be guaranteed in practice, a question on which people who share similar underlying values about compassion and the value of life can still reasonably disagree.

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