



RS.TE1 Religion and the Causes of Crime

AQA 8062 • Calculators not allowed • about 55 minutes

Total Marks

--

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

1 This question checks key vocabulary used when discussing religion and the causes of crime.

(a) State what is meant by crime. (1)

(b) State what is meant by sin, in a religious context. (1)

(c) State what is meant by civil disobedience. (1)

(d) State what is meant by a hate crime. (1)

(e) State what is meant by a contributing factor, when discussing why a person might commit a crime. (1)

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

2 Give three types of crime recognised in England and Wales.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

- 3** Explain two religious teachings about why crime is wrong. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

- 4** Explain two contrasting explanations, religious and/or non-religious, for why people commit crime. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 This question is about religion and the causes of crime. 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 one type of crime. (1)
- (b)** Give two factors that sociologists suggest can make it more likely that a person will commit a crime, without this making it certain that they will do so. (2)
- (c)** Explain two religious teachings on individual responsibility for wrongdoing. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. (4)
- (d)** Explain two contrasting views about whether individuals or wider society bears more responsibility for crime. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority or another source in your answer. (5)
- (e)** Evaluate this statement: 'Individuals, not society, are always responsible for the crimes they commit.' In your answer you should: refer to religious teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. (12)

(Total for Question 5 is 24 marks)

- 6** Explain two non-religious arguments about the causes of crime. Refer to Humanist or other non-religious beliefs in your answer.

(Total for Question 6 is 4 marks)

- 7** Give three reasons why understanding the causes of crime matters for how society responds to it.

(Total for Question 7 is 3 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.TE1 Religion and the Causes of Crime

Question 1

- (a) **B1** an action or omission that breaks the law of a country and is punishable by that country's legal system, oe
- (a) **Answer: An action or omission that breaks the law of a country and is punishable by that country's legal system.**
- (b) **B1** an act that breaks a religious law or goes against the will of God, oe
- (b) **Answer: An act that breaks a religious law or goes against the will of God.**
- (c) **B1** deliberately and openly breaking a law that a person believes to be unjust, as a form of peaceful protest, oe
- (c) **Answer: Deliberately and openly breaking a law that a person believes to be unjust, as a form of peaceful protest.**
- (d) **B1** a crime motivated by hostility or prejudice towards a person because of a characteristic such as their race, religion or disability, oe
- (d) **Answer: A crime motivated by hostility or prejudice towards a person because of a characteristic such as their race, religion or disability.**
- (e) **B1** something that can make an individual more vulnerable to offending, without making it certain that they will offend, oe
- (e) **Answer: Something that can make an individual more vulnerable to offending, without making it certain that they will offend.**

Question 2

- **B1** theft, e.g. taking someone else's property without permission, oe
- **B1** murder, e.g. the unlawful killing of another person, oe
- **B1** hate crime, e.g. a crime motivated by prejudice against a protected characteristic, oe
- **Answer: Any three: theft; murder; hate crime (also accept, e.g., assault, fraud, criminal damage).**

Question 3

- **B1** point 1: many Christians believe crimes such as theft and murder break God's commandments, oe
- **B1** development: the Ten Commandments include 'You shall not steal' and 'You shall not murder' (Exodus 20:13-15), oe
- **B1** point 2: many Muslims believe it is forbidden to take another person's life or property unjustly, oe
- **B1** development: the Qur'an teaches that whoever kills a soul unjustly is as if he had slain all mankind (Qur'an 5:32), oe
- **Answer: E.g. the Ten Commandments forbidding theft and murder (Exodus 20:13-15); the Qur'an's teaching that unjustly killing one person is like killing all mankind (Qur'an 5:32).**

Question 4

- **B1** explanation 1: some religious teaching emphasises personal moral responsibility, holding that people freely choose to give in to wrongful desire, oe
- **B1** development: 'each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then... desire gives birth to sin' (James 1:14-15), oe
- **B1** explanation 2: many sociologists and Humanists instead point to contributing factors such as addiction or poor mental health that can increase the likelihood of offending, oe
- **B1** development: this view does not claim any individual factor, or any social group, makes offending certain, only that some circumstances make it statistically more likely, oe
- **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe
- **Answer: Contrast: crime explained by individual moral choice and temptation (James 1:14-15) vs crime explained by contributing sociological factors such as addiction or poor mental health, understood as risk factors rather than causes.**

Question 5

- (a) **B1** any recognised type of crime, e.g. theft, murder, hate crime, fraud, oe
- (a) **Answer: E.g. theft.**
- (b) **B1** experiencing addiction to drugs or alcohol, oe
- (b) **B1** experiencing abuse or neglect during childhood, oe
- (b) **Answer: E.g. addiction; childhood abuse or neglect (also accept: poor mental health, peer pressure).**
- (c) **B1** point 1: many Muslims believe every person is personally accountable before Allah for their own actions, oe
- (c) **B1** development: the Qur'an teaches that every soul is held in pledge for what it has earned (Qur'an 74:38), oe
- (c) **B1** point 2: many Christians believe humans have free will and are personally responsible when they give in to sinful desire, oe
- (c) **B1** development: 'desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin' (James 1:15), showing sin as a personal choice rather than something forced on a person, oe
- (c) **Answer: E.g. personal accountability before Allah (Qur'an 74:38); sin as a personal choice arising from desire (James 1:15).**
- (d) **B1** view 1: many religious believers emphasise that each person freely chooses whether to sin, so the individual bears primary responsibility, oe
- (d) **B1** development: 'You shall not steal' and 'You shall not murder' (Exodus 20:15, 20:13) are addressed to individuals as personal commands, oe
- (d) **B1** view 2: many Humanists and sociologists argue that reducing crime means addressing the wider social and economic conditions, such as access to mental health support, that make offending more likely, oe
- (d) **B1** development: on this view, punishing individuals without addressing these underlying conditions is unlikely to reduce crime in the long term, oe
- (d) **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority or another appropriate source made accurately, oe
- (d) **Answer: Contrast: individual moral responsibility, addressed by commands such as Exodus 20:13/20:15, vs a wider social/sociological view that reducing crime requires addressing conditions that increase risk of offending.**
- (e) **L4** (10-12): 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.
- (e) **L3** (7-9): 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.
- (e) **L2** (4-6): 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.
- (e) **L1** (1-3): One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion.
- (e) **L0** (0): No relevant content.
- (e) **Indicative content:**
 - Note for markers: this question can be answered with either conclusion; credit any well-supported argument, whether it agrees, disagrees, or takes a middle position.
 - Agree: many religious believers hold that humans are given free will, so choosing to break a religious or civil law, such as 'You shall not steal' (Exodus 20:15), is always a personal choice regardless of circumstances.
 - Agree: some argue that treating crime as always caused by society removes an offender's moral agency and excuses harmful behaviour, which many religious traditions reject.
 - Agree: James 1:14-15 teaches that sin comes from being 'dragged away by their own evil desire', locating the origin of wrongdoing within the individual, not their surroundings.
 - Disagree: many sociologists and Humanists point out that some people facing addiction, poor mental health or childhood neglect are statistically more likely to offend, showing that circumstances play a genuine role alongside choice.
 - Disagree: most people who experience these contributing factors never commit any crime, so a balanced view holds that such factors influence risk without removing an individual's own responsibility.
 - Disagree: the Qur'an's teaching that every soul is accountable for 'what it has earned' (Qur'an 74:38) can be read alongside social context rather than instead of it, since Islamic teaching also emphasises social justice and care for the vulnerable.
 - A balanced answer might conclude that religious and sociological perspectives are not simply opposites: most agree that

Question 6

- **B1** point 1: many Humanists argue that crime should be understood using evidence, such as studies of what circumstances are statistically linked to offending, rather than through the idea of sin, oe
- **B1** development: this leads Humanists to focus on practical prevention, such as improving access to mental health and addiction support, rather than blaming individuals as inherently wicked, oe
- **B1** point 2: some non-religious criminologists argue that opportunity plays a role in crime, e.g. that crime is more likely where it is easier to commit and less likely to be detected, oe
- **B1** development: on this view, reducing crime is partly about changing situations and environments, such as improved security, rather than only about an individual's character, oe
- **Answer: E.g. an evidence-based, non-sin-based explanation of contributing factors; an opportunity-based explanation focused on situations rather than character.**

Question 7

- **B1** it can help policymakers design prevention programmes that reduce future offending, oe
- **B1** it can help courts choose a sentence, e.g. treatment alongside punishment, that is more likely to reduce reoffending, oe
- **B1** it can help society avoid an unfairly harsh or purely retributive response that does not address why the crime happened, oe
- **Answer: Any three: informs prevention policy; informs sentencing choices; avoids an unfairly harsh response that ignores the causes.**