10.4 Religious Freedom: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Explain two contrasting views about whether religious freedom should ever be limited by law. Refer to a religious and a non-religious view in your answer.

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 This question is about religious freedom. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question.

(a) State what is meant by the right to have no religion. **(1)**

(b) Give two ways a person's freedom of religion or belief is protected in UK law. **(2)**

(c) Explain two religious teachings about the freedom to choose one's own beliefs. Refer to a sacred text in your answer. **(4)**

(d) Explain two contrasting views about whether religious freedom should ever be limited by law. Refer to a religious and a non-religious view in your answer. **(5)**

(e) Evaluate this statement: 'In the UK today, religious freedom should include an equal right to have no religion at all.' 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 · 10.4 Religious Freedom: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

view 1: religious freedom should be limited only in the rarest and most serious circumstances, oe **B1**

development: this view, held by many religious believers and by secular civil-liberties campaigners alike, treats freedom of belief and worship as foundational to human dignity, and points to how strongly Article 9 protects the right to simply hold a belief, oe **B1**

view 2: religious freedom, like other rights, must sometimes be limited where exercising it would seriously harm others, oe **B1**

development: this view, held by many non-religious and some religious believers, notes that Article 9 itself is only a qualified right when it comes to manifesting (acting on) a belief, explicitly allowing lawful, proportionate limits to protect public safety or other people's rights, oe **B1**

reference to a specific article, teaching or example made accurately, oe **B1**

Answer: Contrast: religious freedom should be limited only in the rarest and most serious circumstances vs religious freedom, like other rights, can rightly be limited where its exercise harms others (Article 9's manifestation is a qualified right).

Question 2

(a) the right, protected equally alongside religious belief, to hold no religious belief at all (e.g. atheism, agnosticism or Humanism), oe **B1**

(a) Answer: The right, protected equally alongside religious belief, to hold no religious belief at all, e.g. atheism, agnosticism or Humanism.

(b) Article 9 of the Human Rights Act 1998 protects freedom of thought, conscience and religion, oe **B1**

(b) the Equality Act 2010 makes 'religion or belief' (including lack of religious belief) a protected characteristic, so discrimination on this ground is unlawful, oe **B1**

(b) Answer: E.g. Article 9 of the Human Rights Act 1998 protects freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the Equality Act 2010 protects 'religion or belief', including lack of belief, as a protected characteristic.

(c) point 1: Muslims believe genuine faith cannot be compelled, oe **B1**

(c) development: Qur'an 2:256 teaches, 'There is no compulsion in religion', which is widely understood to mean belief must be a free, uncoerced choice to be genuine, oe **B1**

(c) point 2: Christians believe humans were given free will to choose whether or not to follow God, oe **B1**

(c) development: this is reflected in Joshua 24:15's call to 'choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve', which presents the choice to follow God, or not, as belonging to each individual, oe **B1**

(c) Answer: E.g. Muslim teaching that there is no compulsion in religion (Qur'an 2:256); Christian teaching that individuals must freely choose whom to serve (Joshua 24:15).

(d) view 1: religious freedom should be limited only in the rarest and most serious circumstances, oe **B1**

(d) development: many religious believers, and many non-religious civil-liberties campaigners, argue freedom of belief and worship is foundational to human dignity, and should be interfered with as little as possible, oe **B1**

(d) view 2: religious freedom, like other rights, must sometimes be limited where its exercise would seriously harm others, oe **B1**

(d) development: Article 9(2) explicitly permits lawful, proportionate restriction on manifesting belief for reasons such as public safety or protecting other people's rights, a position also held by many religious believers who accept reasonable limits, oe **B1**

(d) reference to a specific article, teaching or example made accurately, oe **B1**

(d) Answer: Contrast: religious freedom should be limited only in the rarest and most serious circumstances vs religious freedom can rightly be limited where its exercise seriously harms others (Article 9(2)).

(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 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, 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: Article 9 of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights explicitly protect the right to have no religion equally alongside the right to hold one, treating non-belief as a legitimate position rather than a lesser default.
- Agree: the Equality Act 2010 lists 'religion or belief' as a protected characteristic, and case law confirms this includes non-religious philosophical beliefs such as Humanism, so the law already extends equal protection.
- Agree: Qur'an 2:256's teaching that 'there is no compulsion in religion' logically supports the view that genuine religious freedom must include the freedom not to believe, since belief that is not freely chosen is not considered genuine faith.
- Agree: many non-religious voices, including Humanists UK, argue treating non-religious worldviews as equally legitimate (rather than as an absence of something) is essential for a fair, plural society where everyone's convictions are taken seriously.
- Disagree/debate: some point out that equal legal rights do not always mean equal practical representation, e.g. the 26 Church of England bishops who sit as Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords by right, a long-running and unresolved debate about UK constitutional reform.
- Disagree/debate: community schools in England and Wales are currently required by law to hold a daily act of collective worship 'of a broadly Christian character', though parents (and older pupils) can withdraw from it; this requirement remains a live, debated issue rather than a settled one, and does not itself deny the right to have no religion.
- A balanced answer would note that neither of these debates disputes that the right to have no religion is real and protected in law; the disagreement is about whether UK institutions have yet caught up fully in practice with that legal equality.
- A balanced conclusion might argue that the principle of equal religious freedom, including the freedom to have none, is well established and correct, while acknowledging that turning that principle into fully equal practice in every UK institution remains an ongoing, contested process.

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