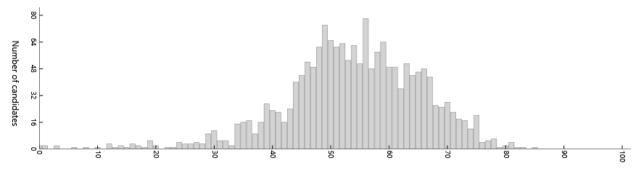




Summary report of the 2017 ATAR course examination: Religion and Life

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2017	1747	18
2016	1995	23

Examination score distribution



Summary

Attempted by 1746 candidates

Mean 53.81%

Max 84.55% Min 0.00%

The examination consisted of three sections with candidates being required to attempt all questions in Sections One and Two and to choose one of the two questions available in Section Three. The spread of marks ranged from 0% to 84.55% and the standard deviation was 11.98%.

Section means were:

Section One: Source analysis	Mean 56.66%		
Attempted by 1746 candidates	Mean 22.66(/40)	Max 35.24	Min 0.00
Section Two: Short answer	Mean 50.45%		
Attempted by 1736 candidates	Mean 15.13(/30)	Max 28.78	Min 0.00
Section Three: Essay	Mean 54.45%		
Attempted by 1721 candidates	Mean 16.33(/30)	Max 27.60	Min 0.00

General comments

Overall, candidates showed a solid grasp of syllabus concepts with some candidates demonstrating a capacity to think deeply and respond in an informed and critical manner. However, the religious inquiry and learning skills continue to challenge a significant number of candidates as does the concept of 'interplay', which was often treated in a one-dimensional manner. Some candidates also used overly-general, inaccurate or irrelevant information when attempting to support their answers. Related to this was a tendency for some candidates to produce pre-prepared content to questions, often triggered by a key term, rather than responding to the question that was presented. Many essay responses were broad and generalised without providing balance, evidence or appropriate reasoning.

Advice for candidates

- Attend to the whole scope of the syllabus in preparation for the examination and ensure that you understand the concepts and terms relevant to each syllabus dot-point.
- Know in detail information and examples relevant to each syllabus point.
- Read questions carefully and structure your answer accordingly. Address each part of the question and be guided by the directing verb in the question.

- Be familiar with how to write responses to short answer questions. Target all aspects of the question and write concisely, with accuracy and appropriate detail.
- Support your responses where necessary with evidence or rich and varied examples.

Advice for teachers

- Ensure that you cover all aspects of the syllabus with students and provide plenty of opportunities to engage with the religious inquiry and learning skills.
- Assist students in developing the skill of judging the relevance of information both in source material and in their own answers.
- Explicitly teach students how to construct responses for a range of higher-order verb demands in questions such as evaluate, analyse and examine.

Comments on specific sections and questions Section One: Source analysis (63 Marks)

Many candidates excelled in the lower order parts of each question but fewer candidates displayed an ability to engage with the higher order thinking required in the more analytical or evaluative question parts.

Section Two: Short answer (37 Marks)

Overall, candidates performed reasonably well on this section of the examination but some struggled with Questions 6 and 8 which involved concepts such as interplay and influencing factors.

Section Three: Essay (25 Marks)

Overall, the approach of candidates to writing essays with meaningful introductions and conclusions was very pleasing this year. It was also encouraging to see candidates structuring their essay with the use of paragraphs, but the technique of constructing meaningful paragraphing is still not evident in many responses. Understanding of key concepts varied greatly in this section and so too did the ability of candidates to provide supporting examples, make use of relevant terms, provide definitions, use relevant quotations or references and provide supportive descriptions.