

## Candidate 3 evidence

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies National 5 Resource Sheet	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
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<p>17p of car death alcohol and 34p of dv victims claimed the victimiser was alcoholed up</p> <p>The moral justification of alcohol consumption is widely debated, influenced by religion, ethics, and its societal impact.</p> <p>Many religions, such as Islam, Buddhism, and Sikhism, forbid alcohol due to its negative effects on judgment and morality.</p> <p>Christianity and Judaism permit moderate drinking, though some denominations oppose it.</p> <p>Alcohol-related harm, including addiction, domestic violence, and road deaths, raises ethical concerns about its acceptability, with statistics showing high rates of alcohol-related deaths.</p> <p>Some argue that alcohol provides stress relief and enhances social bonding. Utilitarianism suggests that if alcohol brings more happiness than harm, it can be justified.</p> <p>However, excessive consumption leads to major health and social consequences, weakening this argument. Religious teachings, particularly in Islam and stricter Christian traditions, emphasize discipline and the dangers of intoxication.</p> <p>The strongest argument against alcohol is the widespread harm it causes, outweighing its temporary pleasures. The weakest argument in favour is its role in relaxation, as there are safer alternatives. While some accept moderate drinking, its risks make it difficult to justify morally.</p>	

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N5 RMPS Assignment write up

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To what extent can the consumption of alcohol be morally justified?

This question divides people throughout the world as the earliest discovery of alcohol in 7000-6600 BCE meant that this colourless volatile flammable liquid which is produced by the natural fermentation of sugars can have a huge effect on the way humans think and behave. Many religions such as Islam, Buddhism and Sikhism forbid the use of alcohol completely due to its effects on a humans inhibitions and ability to make choices that produce positive and moral outcomes. However, Christianity and Judaism allows the use of alcohol if you do not become heavily intoxicated whilst consuming it. However, due to the statistics and rising cases of misuse of the substance within society, how far can consuming alcohol be considered morally acceptable when 13.9 people out of 100,000 die from alcohol related causes and activities in the UK each year, as well as 17% of all road deaths are from the use of driving under the influence of alcohol, and 34% of domestic abuse incidents the victims perceived the offender to be under the influence of alcohol. For many, alcohol makes them act immorally and can make you do illegal activities that can leave you with a criminal conviction and ultimately ruin many aspects of your life which is why this topic is hugely significant to me and others in society.

Alcohol has been used as one of the nations favourite stress relievers for centuries. Many would argue that the use of something which temporarily alleviates stress, or anxiety should never be seen as morally unacceptable as it can help people unwind in tense or difficult situations. This can lead to better emotional exchanges in social settings and enhance one's ability to empathise and connect with others. However, this does not supersede the alcohol related health issues, such as addiction or liver damage which are associated with too much enjoyment of the substance. This can raise ethical concerns about promoting substances that can harm the body. The moral duty to care for one's physical and mental well-being may conflict with the consumption of alcohol. Utilitarianism, founded by Jeremy Bentham is a nonreligious philosophical perspective which focuses on maximising overall happiness and minimising harm to the population. A utilitarian might argue that alcohol consumption is morally acceptable if it brings joy to people without causing significant harm. For example, many people enjoy drinking at social gatherings because it helps them relax and connect with others. However, the harmful effects of alcohol such as addiction, drunk driving, and health problems might outweigh its benefits, making it ethically wrong in cases where these

risks are high. A utilitarian would evaluate each situation to decide whether the pleasure outweighs the pain and then rate it morally acceptable on this basis, so for the majority, utilitarians would agree that it is morally acceptable if used sensibly. In my opinion, I can understand the utilitarian position but still find it hard to see the benefit in the practice when the risk of many health issues is so high for many. Statistics from the CDC shows that excessive alcohol use is responsible for 1 in 10 deaths among working-age adults aged 20-64 years in the United States, which shows that many are not able to employ restraint and increases the amount of suffering caused by drinking in the first place.

Another argument is that alcohol, when consumed in moderation, is often associated with social bonding, fostering a sense of community, and is used in many religious rituals and celebrations. In Christianity, views vary. Some denominations, like Roman Catholics, use wine in religious ceremonies, referring to Jesus turning water into wine as evidence that moderate alcohol consumption can be morally acceptable. Paul even advises Timothy to drink a little wine for his health in 1 Timothy 5:23. Wine is used in sacraments such as the Eucharist weekly and has significant importance for many as the symbolic, or literal, drinking of the blood of Jesus as told to his disciples during the Last Supper. However, other Christians argue that alcohol is dangerous. Bible verses like Proverbs 20:1 says "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise, to condemn its use." Some Christians like followers of the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter-Day Saints (LDS) or known as Mormons would agree with this teaching as they believe alcohol is sinful and leads to immoral and sinful actions.

Similarly to the LDS tradition, in Islamic cultures, alcohol is prohibited as it is believed to impair judgment and spiritual well-being, which goes against moral principles of self-discipline and self-respect. The Qur'an warns believers to avoid intoxicants because they lead to sin and harm. "You who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful" (Qur'an 5:90). This strict prohibition highlights the potential for alcohol to harm individuals and society, making it ethically unacceptable within Islamic teachings and practices. Muslims see intoxicants as a tool of Satan to distract people from moral righteousness, and when the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was given the choice between wine and milk, he claimed that wine would not please Allah. This is still practiced today as Muslims want to embody and emulate the prophet's teachings to establish themselves as worthy of jannah after judgement. As a Muslim myself I believe that alcohol is immoral as it is poisonous and does more harm than good and moral actions are important in our earthly lives as this is a test for the afterlife, and not drinking is a test of will, submission, and moral guidance.

In conclusion, I think that the consumption of alcohol is morally unacceptable because I am a muslim and feel that the Islamic teaching that alcohol can cause sinful behaviour to be true and this is also evident for non-muslims who do things they normally wouldn't under the influence. With the amount of bad judgements and crimes causes by drinking, I feel that we cannot excuse this behaviour as morally acceptable as it causes so much disruption.