

Candidate Style Answers

GCSE Religious Studies B

OCR GCSE in Religious Studies: J621

Unit: B604 (Sikhism)

These candidate style answers are designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Religious Studies B specification for teaching from September 2009.

GCSE Religious Studies B

B604 Ethics 2 (Peace and Justice, Equality and Media)

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GSCE specifications and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Qualification Manager, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a “good” or “excellent” response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded “medium” or “high” to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

6e) ‘All people must be pacifists.’

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Sikhism in your answer. (12)

Candidate style answer	Examiner's commentary
<p><i>Being a pacifist means that you do not believe in the use of violence to achieve your aim. Therefore you would not agree with any level of conflict from a personal quarrel to full scale war. Many people who follow the Sikh faith would agree with the fact that violence and war is wrong unless there are exceptional circumstances involved.</i></p> <p><i>In 1699 during the festival of Vaisakhi, the tenth and final human guru changed the Sikh religion forever by adapting the nature of their faith to include the need for self defence and protection as part of the Sikh Khalsa brotherhood. Guru, Gobind Singh recognised the need for a military style discipline for his followers and embarked on a regime to include new rules that encouraged Sikhs to take care of their bodies by avoiding alcohol,</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This candidate has demonstrated a clear understanding of the question by describing the word pacifist. The candidate gives a good account of the introduction of the Khalsa brotherhood and the use of action in respect of a just war.</p> <p>In this way a there is a clear reference to the religion studied.</p>
	<p>The candidate gives a good range of viewpoints including the adaptation of Sikh festivals to support the practice of military training and physical exercise.</p>
	<p>The candidate responds with their own personal point of view with a relevant argument to evaluate the meaning of the question.</p>
	<p>The information is presented in a clear and organised way with the specialist terms used</p>

smoking and drugs and by keeping physically fit. The kirpan, one of the 5 K's became an integral part of the Sikh 'uniform' and was intended to be used for defence and protection when violence was unavoidable for example, the increasingly organised attacks by the Mughal emperors. Guru Gobind Singh referred to the first Sikhs to adapt to his new rules as the Panj Pyare; he sometimes used the phrase, 'solder saints' to describe them. This indicates a sense of 'military organisation' amongst his followers. Guru Gobind Singh also used the festival of Hola Mohalla to hold martial arts competitions and display mock battles and sporting activities. This shows that the guru expected his followers to be prepared to fight under certain circumstances which means that they could not always expect be pacifists. Sikhs also follow a type of just war theory, they accept that fighting and violence cannot always be avoided. The rules state that a minimal amount of force must be used, that prisoners of war and their land and property should be respected and not harmed, that Sikhs should not seek hatred or revenge and that all efforts should be made to ensure peace for both sides as soon as possible. I think that a Sikh could only be a true pacifist if they decided not to join the Khalsa brotherhood as they would then not be bound to follow the code of practice set out by the final guru that includes carrying a kirpan to defend themselves and others when necessary.

appropriately.

This answer reflects the significance of the issues raised with few, if any errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

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Candidate style answer	Examiner's commentary
<p><i>Some Sikhs would say that they believe in equality and this means treating everyone the same, they would say that violence and fighting is wrong because by using violence you are not treating everyone equally.</i></p> <p><i>Other Sikhs would say that it is not always possible for them to be pacifists and if they are a Khalsa Sikh they would carry a kirpan [dagger] to defend themselves.</i></p> <p><i>A Khalsa Sikh would argue that the teachings of the tenth guru who was called Guru Gobind Singh, tells them to wear the 5K's and think about what they mean to the Sikh faith as they wear them.</i></p> <p><i>Guru Gobind Singh needed his followers to be able to protect themselves and their families against the Muslims who were attacking them at the time, he made the rule that fighting for self defence and protection was permitted, therefore a Sikh could not always be a true Sikh and a pacifist depending on the situation.</i></p> <p><i>I think that Guru Gobind Singh made a sensible decision with this rule because he knew first hand what it was like to lose members of his family to violence, his four sons and his father; the ninth guru had all died in a violent way. He would not agree that all people must be pacifists.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This candidate has demonstrated a satisfactory understanding of the question attempting to describe the Sikh views of equality and linking them to pacifism. They have therefore made an appropriate and clear reference to the religion studied.</p> <p>The candidate could have improved their understanding of the question by including more information about the festival of Vaisakhi and elaborating on the 5k's and the other measures introduced during this festival.</p> <p>There are some justified arguments and discussion demonstrating different points of view particularly in relation to the need for a Sikh to defend himself and the introduction of the kirpan as part of the Sikh uniform. The candidate could have gone on to mention the Sikh concept of a 'just war' or fighting for the army.</p> <p>The candidate has given evidence of a personal response with a possible reason for Guru Gobind Singh addressing the necessity for self defence and therefore advocating violence under certain circumstances.</p> <p>The information is presented in a structured format with specialist terms used appropriately and for the most part correctly.</p> <p>This answer contains a selection of relevant material with appropriate development with specialist terms used appropriately and for the most part correctly. There are occasional errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.</p>