

Candidate Style Answers

GCSE Religious Studies B

OCR GCSE in Religious Studies: J621

Unit: B603 (Christianity)

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

GCSE Religious Studies B

B603 Ethics 1 (Relationships, Medical Ethics, Poverty and Wealth)

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE 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.

8e) “Every woman has the right to have a baby.” Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner’s commentary</i>
<p><i>One of the purposes of a Christian marriage is for the couple is to have a family. Having a baby is considered to be the natural result of the couple’s sexual union.</i></p> <p><i>In biblical times if a couple did not have a baby then this was considered to be the will of God. The following quote from the Old Testament shows this “Hannah had no children ... because the Lord had closed her womb.”</i></p> <p><i>The key question is therefore if a couple are unable to conceive a baby naturally, whether other means to have a baby are acceptable such as fertility treatment, adoption or surrogacy.</i></p> <p><i>The Roman Catholic view is that babies</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This answer would score very high marks because the candidate has understood the key issue that, according to Christian teaching, children are a gift or blessing from God and cannot be treated as a possession. The candidate has included relevant information about fertility treatments and has explained what different Christian denominations think about this. The viewpoints are supported.</p> <p>The answer shows awareness of wider issues relating to fertility treatment and the effects it could have on society if not ethically regulated.</p> <p>The candidate’s personal viewpoint highlights the issue raised by the question and points to the stark reality that some couples might not be able to have a baby even with fertility treatment.</p>

are a gift from God and therefore that a woman does not have the right to have a baby. It is God who decides whether this will happen.

Roman Catholics do not approve of any form of fertility treatment with intervention e.g. IVF or donor eggs and condemns any procedure that involves conception without sexual intercourse. They do not believe that couples have a right to children. Roman Catholics do approve of childless couples adopting children.

Other Christian churches, such as the Church of England, do believe that intervention to assist with conception is the most loving way to behave. They see this helps to create further human life and saves couples from the unhappiness of being childless if they want a family.

There are lots of different types of intervention, but the general Christian view is that it is acceptable as long as the husband's sperm and the wife's eggs are used. Some types of interventions such as donor eggs or donor sperm may therefore not be acceptable to Christians. There is also the issue of what happens to any spare embryos and whether they can be disposed of.

My own view is that it is not a right for a woman to have a baby. Babies are not a possession like a house or car. Whilst I think that every woman should have the right to choose if they want to try for a baby, it is a natural process and some people will simply not be able to have babies even with fertility treatment.

It is sometimes argued that some people, examples include handicapped, older women or gay couples should not automatically have the right to be able to have a baby. At the extreme this could mean actually preventing some people from naturally conceiving (e.g. by sterilising them). Less extreme, would be to refuse intervention methods of fertility treatment to some couples.

My own view is that that fertility treatment on the whole is good and has helped millions of couples to have children. However, as a society we do need to make sure that the methods used are ethically sound. For example, there have been some interesting legal cases around the ownership of frozen eggs following a divorce or death of one of the couple.

8e) “Every woman has the right to have a baby.” Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Candidate style answer	Examiner’s commentary
<p><i>Having a baby is considered to be the natural follow on from getting married.</i></p> <p><i>The key question is whether it is acceptable for a couple who are not able to conceive a baby naturally, to use fertility treatments, adoption or surrogacy in order to get a baby.</i></p> <p><i>The Roman Catholic view is that babies are a gift from God and that a woman does not have the right to have a baby. It is God who decides whether this will happen. Catholics do not approve of any form of fertility treatment or contraception. Catholics do approve of childless couples adopting children.</i></p> <p><i>Other Christian churches, such as the Church of England, think intervention is ok. They see this helps create human life and saves couples from the unhappiness of being childless when they want a family. The general Christian view is that hospital treatment is ok as long as the husband’s sperm and the wife’s eggs are used. Some types of fertility treatment are not allowed like using a sperm bank.</i></p> <p><i>I think women don’t have a right to have a baby, some will try using treatment at hospital and still not have one. I think women should be able to try for a baby if they want but need to realise that not everyone can have one – they aren’t a possession you can buy.</i></p> <p><i>I think that fertility treatment on the whole is a good thing and has helped millions of couples to have children. Doctors need to make sure that the methods used are ethically sound. There have been some interesting legal stories in the newspaper recently around ownership of frozen eggs following divorce or death of one of the couple.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This is a satisfactory answer which recognizes some of the scope of the issues raised by the statement - for example the fact that babies are not possessions. Different Christian viewpoints are given and some explanation is included. The personal viewpoint shows that the candidate is aware of the wider issues surrounding fertility treatment. In order to improve the quality of this answer, more detailed reasoning about why the different Christian denominations find fertility treatment acceptable or not should be included, and some references to Biblical or Church teaching would also enhance it.</p>