

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (SHORT COURSE)

J125

For first teaching in 2016

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 1 series overview

Centres have prepared their candidates well for this challenging examination. All three sections from the specification are covered in one exam. It requires a lot of learning for the candidates. The responses from the candidates, demonstrated a range of Christian/Islamic/Jewish beliefs, teachings and perspectives on topics. There were no accessibility issues with the paper. Clearly many centres have taken on board some of the points raised in last year's Examiners' Report. This has led to improved outcomes.

There were fewer timing issues, with candidates writing short, concise responses to the points marked questions allowing them more time to tackle the longer 6 and 15 mark questions. Many seem to be approaching the exam considering advice given that one should spend roughly "a mark per minute". Rubric requirements for Questions 4-9(c) and Questions 7-9(b) questions have been adhered to much more this year, though there are still some more successful candidates losing out on marks failing to include sources of wisdom and authority when required or considering that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse but mainly Christian.

It has been possible to award almost the full range of marks. The most popular combination of questions was Question 1, Question 2, Question 4 and Question 7. Christianity was the main religion studied, with Islam as the second most popular choice. A few centres chose Judaism as the second religion but they were in the minority.

There was some evidence of rubric infringement, in that a small number of candidates attempted a response to all nine questions on the paper, resulting in quality being sacrificed for quantity. Some candidates did not fulfil the rubric requirement required for Sections B and C about which religion they should choose to answer. Consequently, they lost a significant amount of marks. Some candidates confused facts between two religions, though there was sight of some good RS terminology.

There are different styles of questions for both assessment objectives, which require knowledge and understanding and skills of evaluation and argument. Some appeared to have knowledge but didn't use the knowledge effectively in response to the exact wording of the question. One or two questions did cause problems for a few candidates, for example Q7(b), Q7(c) and Q7(d). The words 'secularisation, intra-faith and values' were not understood by some candidates. Consequently, responses contained inaccurate detail which could not be credited.

SPaG was generally very good.

Note

Owing to insufficient script numbers, the following questions have been omitted from this report: Q5(a-d), Q6 (a-d), Q8(a-d) and Q9(a-d). For further information regarding these questions, please contact religious.studies@ocr.org.uk or call us on 01223 553998.

Question 1 (a)

1 Christianity

(a) Give **three** examples of moral evil.

[3]

This is a points marked question. Candidates should not be spending too much time answering these questions. The aim is to get into the exam quickly and feel confident that some points have been acquired. Simple statements or even one or two word answers will often secure marks.

There was a wide range of acceptable responses to this question. Credit was given for any response in which man's inhumanity to man was apparent. The most common examples given were 'murder, theft and abuse'.

Exemplar 1

Murder, bullying, stealing

This exemplar shows how short and succinct answers can achieve maximum marks.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Outline what Christians mean by the term 'incarnation'.

[3]

This is another points marked question. The command word is 'outline'. Candidates need to write short, concise sentences for such questions. There are different ways to secure 3 marks. Marks can be given for any combination of statements, development and/or exemplification.

Candidates needed to show some knowledge and understanding about the Christian term 'incarnation'. There was some common misunderstanding here about 'incarnation', with some confusing it with 'reincarnation or resurrection'. However, where candidates knew it referred to God becoming Jesus (1st mark) taking on human form (2nd mark) and coming down to earth, (3rd mark) they were able to gain all 3 marks.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Describe what Jesus tells us about Christian love (agape).

[3]

This is the third points marked question where candidates have to limit their time and focus upon describing briefly what Jesus tells us about Christian love. Like Q1(b) candidates could give a statement with development and/or exemplification or give three statements about it. This did not require a lengthy description to get 3 marks. A few students described agape as 'unconditional love'.

Considerable numbers used teachings such as 'Love your neighbour', 'love your enemy' or 'forgive one another' and some referred to it as 'sacrificial love'. Most candidates were able to score at least 2 marks, although some confused agape with marital love and wrote about marriage.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Explain how much the existence of evil and suffering is a problem for some Christians. [6]

In this question both assessment objectives are assessed but the balance of marks between the assessment objectives is different from those in Sections B and C. In Section A there are 4 marks for knowledge and understanding (AO1) and 2 marks for analysis and evaluation (AO2).

In this question candidates need to know about different types of evil and suffering, what the Bible and The Church teaches about evil and suffering and then consider how much it is a problem for Christians.

AO1: Most candidates referred to Irenaeus, Augustine and Mackie in their responses, but some only in a very superficial way. In order to secure high level marks for this assessment details about evil and suffering is needed. See the response below.

AO2: Some candidates did not focus on the phrase 'how much' in the question, and instead explained what the problem of evil/suffering is and how theodicies addressed this. This led to many candidates struggling to get into the higher band for AO2. More work is needed on the AO2 skills with such questions.

Exemplar 2

Firstly, it is a problem for some Christians such as Quakers. They believe that "God is love", and is therefore omnibenevolent. However, Mackie's Inconsistent Triad conveys a problem with this logic as it shows that God can not be omnipotent and omnibenevolent whilst allowing evil to exist. Hence, it is a great problem for some of Christians.

However, Protestants would not see the existence of evil and suffering as a big problem. This is because it can be explained by the Irenaean Theodicy. It is also known as 'soul-making' since it explains that God allows evil and suffering

to exist so that humans can choose and learn from right and wrong. John Hick, a Christian author, agrees with this. Therefore, evil and suffering is not a problem for some Christians.

Finally, Catholics wouldn't see evil and suffering as a problem. They explain it through the Augustinian Theodicy, which says that evil and suffering entered God's perfect creation due to free will. ~~At the beginning~~ This is backed up by the quote which says "sin entered the world through one man", referring to Adam.


In the exemplar provided much religious studies knowledge is evident throughout the response, as well as sources of wisdom and authority. The candidate clearly has in their mind the question 'how much' is evil and suffering a problem because they address that in each of the three paragraphs. This is a good example of full marks where both assessment objectives are assessed separately.

Question 1 (e)

(e) 'God cannot be one God and three persons at the same time.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Christianity
- Refer to sources of wisdom and authority.

 Spelling, punctuation and grammar

[15]

[3]

In all (e) questions in Section A there is a stimulus and a requirement to discuss the statement, analysing and evaluating the importance of common and divergent Christian, Islamic or Jewish views, with reference to sources of wisdom and authority. Sources of wisdom and authority can be scriptural texts as well as references to religions, customs, laws, creeds, denominational views or statements from prominent religious leaders.

AO1: Considering how long the Christian Church took to come up the doctrine of the Trinity, candidates grappled with this statement and the issue of a Trinitarian God and a monotheistic God being one and the same very well. Many candidates included details from the Nicene Creed or teachings from the Bible about the Trinity. Many recognised that the Bible never mentioned the Trinity as such but that there are examples in the Bible of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit evident at key times in the history of humanity. References to Genesis Chapter 1 and John Chapter 1 were common. Matthew 28 and John 14 16ff were used to explain the role of the Holy Spirit coming from the father. Common and divergent views between Christian denominations were evident. The importance to Roman Catholics and The Church of England of the Trinity was contrasted with the Unitarian or Christadelphian Churches, who do not accept the concept of the Trinity to describe God.

AO2: In order to secure higher levels to this question candidates need to analyse and evaluate various points of view across different Christian groups. They need to identify what is the issue and consider similarities and differences of views about the issue. There is not a requirement for a personal view, nor to include non-religious viewpoints. Time was lost where candidates included their own views or atheist's views, for example, which did not add anything to the quality of the response.

Many candidates understood the issue - how God can be one God and three different people at the same time. Almost all candidates successfully explained Trinitarian beliefs. They tackled the difficulty of explaining this, using analogies such as a clover leaf, or a triangle and contrasted this with the mathematical concept that $1+1+1 = 3$ not 1. Many more successful responses compared and contrasted Trinitarian beliefs with Unitarian beliefs backed with scriptural references or logic for each position. Less successful responses tended to be more descriptive about the Roman Catholic and Church of England teachings about the Trinity and little else. A few candidates focused solely on Trinitarian beliefs, and attempted to evaluate them in isolation, to varying degrees of success. There were a number of candidates who tried to make distinctions between Protestant and Catholic views on the Trinity, which were frequently incorrect. Some contrasted the concept of 'The Trinity' in Christianity with other religions, particularly Islam, which is not requirement of the question but demonstrated knowledge being transferred from another part of the specification which was relevant.

Exemplar 3

Firstly, Jehovah's Witnesses would agree with the statement and reject the idea of the Trinity. This is because they see it as a polytheistic idea that goes against ~~God's teachings~~ the Bible's teachings. They use the fact that in the Bible, it says that Abraham came from "a polytheistic family", yet he rejected that idea and preached about ~~of~~ monotheism. Therefore, they would say that God can not be one God and three persons at a time. However, Catholics would disagree with the statement. They see the Trinity as three separate entities which are all God. In the Apostle's creed, they declare that "I ~~am~~ believe in Jesus Christ, the only son of God, our Lord,

conceived by the Holy Spirit". Hence, this shows the three distinct parts of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) to be essential for Christians and declaring their faith. This view holds more importance as a whole as it is shared by the vast majority of Christians. It is also emphasised in the Bible in Genesis where the Holy Spirit was described as "hovering over the water". Thus, the vast majority of Christians would disagree with the statement.

However, Unitarians would agree that God cannot be one God and three persons at the same time. ~~They say that~~ This is proven by the fact that the Bible does not refer to the Trinity explicitly at any point. As they see the Bible as "the [whole] truth" and "infallible", ~~they~~ Unitarians would reject any concept that is not explicitly outlined. Nevertheless, Protestants would say that God can be three persons and still be one God. This is because the Bible does allude to the presence of the Trinity. ~~For~~ For example, in the Bible it says that God made "mankind in Our image". Therefore, the use of the plural known confirms the concept of the Trinity. Overall, this is the superior view that most Christians hold due to the Bible's wording which suggests that the Trinity exists.

In conclusion, the view that God cannot be one God and three persons at the same time is highly disputed and disagreed with by the majority of Christians. The Protestant point of viewpoint and belief in the Trinity ultimately holds more weighting. This is because it can also explain God's many qualities that seem to be conflicting. For example, God can be both immanent and transcendent. ~~as due~~ due to the Trinity He is immanent due to Jesus' presence ~~of God~~ on Earth as God's incarnation, yet is still above all due to being the Father and the "creator of all things".

This is a response that secured full marks for both assessment objectives. It is clear the candidate has understood the issue, provided various viewpoints including evidence from different Christian groups. There is sound biblical knowledge about the Trinity; critical comments are made as the discussion unfolds and there is evidence of judgement and conclusion. One has seen better responses, but this is a good example of a full mark (e) question.

Question 2 (a)

2 Islam

(a) Name **three** of the prophets of Islam.

[3]

See comments made to Question 1(a). They also apply to this question.

Most candidates secured full marks for this question. Isa, Muhammad, Adam and David were the most common prophets. Romanised spellings, English spellings or Arabic spelling of any of the leading Islamic prophets were accepted.

Question 2 (b)

(b) Outline what Muslims mean by the term 'Aakhirah'.

[3]

See comments to Question 1(b). They also apply to this question.

There was a close link with this question and the Question 2(c). Candidates needed to know that the term referred to life after death. Some described it as 'coming home'. That was credited. Most went on to develop the link with hell or paradise following the Day of Judgement. Some candidates struggled to distinguish between Islamic beliefs and general Christian beliefs on life after death. A few candidates left this question blank.

Question 2 (c)

(c) Describe **one** Muslim belief about the Day of Judgement.

[3]

See comments to Question 1(c). They also apply to this question.

Many candidates were able to successfully explain beliefs about the Day of Judgement. The most common belief which secured 3 points was Allah will judge everyone (1st mark), both living and the dead (2nd mark) and that some will end in hell and some in paradise (3rd mark). Some candidates struggled to distinguish between Islamic beliefs and general Christian beliefs on life after death. Candidates particularly seemed to enjoy explaining beliefs on Israfil's role.

Question 2 (d)

(d) Explain the significance of the role of angels (Malaikah) for Muslims.

[6]

See opening comments to Question 1(d). They also apply to this question.

The question required the candidates to know and understand the role of angels for Muslims and also to evaluate how significant that role is to Muslims. Many candidates knew a lot of detail about angels.

AO1: Most candidates were able to explain the roles of the four main angels i.e. Jibril, Izra'il, Mika'il and Israfil in good detail. Some explained just Jibril's and Israfil's role, for example in considerable detail and able to secure Level 4 marks.

AO2: More successful candidates were able to explain how significant the creation of the Qur'an was for Muslims and link that to Jibril, or the importance on the Day of Judgement with Israfil's role in announcing this significant event. Less successful candidates didn't link their knowledge of angels to addressing the significance of the beliefs to Muslims. Many alluded to the significance in the opening sentence but did not develop sufficiently well why a particular angel was so significant for Muslims.

Question 2 (e)

(e) 'Allah cannot be both omnipotent and benevolent.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Islam
- Refer to sources of wisdom and authority.

 Spelling, punctuation and grammar

[15]

[3]

See the opening comments made to Question 1(e). They also apply to this question.

This was a question about issues related to the nature of Allah and how Muslims reconcile these attributes.

AO1: Many gave examples from the life of Muhammad or times in history when Allah revealed his omnipotence and benevolence. Many candidates knew that 'omnipotent and benevolent' are two of the 99 names for Allah and so all Muslims believe that Allah is both omnipotent and benevolent. More successful candidates made links with predestination (al-Qad'r), freewill, different schools of Islamic thought and differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims. They were able to show knowledge and understanding about different interpretations given to sources of wisdom and authority.

AO2: This was a difficult issue to grapple and unpick. Many schools of Muslims down the centuries have struggled to explain why and how Allah could be both omnipotent and benevolent in the light of what has happened to many Muslims in the world. Most candidates were able to argue why Allah can be seen as omnipotent and benevolent, but a sizeable minority struggled to find reasons to argue the opposing view, and often made inaccurate points in trying to write to a frame.

More successful responses explored the issues, through looking at the difference between Sunni and Shi'a views on predestination, and how that impacts their beliefs about Allah's benevolence and omnipotence. Some used the distinctly Christian Augustinian and Irenaean theodicies, and Mackie to formulate an answer to a question on the problem of evil; these responses had very mixed fortunes in successfully answering the question that was actually set.

Question 3 (a)

3 Judaism

(a) Give **three** examples of ritual Mitzvot.

[3]

See opening comments made to Question 1(a) as they also apply to this question.

The majority of candidates knew accurately what were mitzvot. However, there seemed to be a fairly even split between candidates who knew of the distinction between ritual and ethical mitzvot, and those who did not, with 'do not murder' being given frequently as a response. Those who knew what ritual mitzvot were tended to offer in their own words details about the first four of the Ten Commandments. Some gave detail about ways Jews dress for prayer or kept a kosher home. All of these were acceptable responses to the question.

Question 3 (b)

(b) Outline what Jews mean by the term 'covenant'.

[3]

See opening comments made to Question 1(b) as they also apply to this question.

Most candidates achieved full marks on the question, accurately describing what a covenant is. Most responses focused on a specific covenant with reference to Noah, Abraham and Moses, with one response even focussing on prophetic writings about the covenant to come.

Question 3 (c)

(c) Outline the principle of Pikuach Nefesh.

[3]

See opening comments made to Question 1(c) as they apply to this question.

Most candidates achieved full marks on this question, outlining Pikuach Nefesh to achieve 3 marks. Even among candidates who didn't achieve full marks for the question, it was clear that they knew what Pikuach Nefesh was, but simply hadn't sufficiently developed their responses.

Question 3 (d)

(d) Explain the significance of Mitzvot to Jews.

[6]

See opening comments to Question 1(d) as they also apply to this question.

The question required the candidates to know and understand Jewish beliefs and practices about ethical and ritual mitzvot and also to evaluate how significant mitzvot are to Jews. Many candidates knew a lot of detail about mitzvot.

AO1: Most candidates started by describing what mitzvot are, then chose to describe a couple of mitzvot in more detail. Details about how Orthodox and Reform Jews adhered to ethical and ritual mitzvot were explored. History behind the Abrahamic Covenant was described alongside the Sinai Covenant. Differences between ritual mitzvot that could only be followed in Jerusalem and those that Jews obeyed in their homes were another area that was explained.

AO2: More successful candidates were able to analyse the significance of ethical and ritual mitzvot to Orthodox and Reform Jews. This approach saw both the strongest and weakest responses to the question. One candidate used the idea of the significance of propositional or non-propositional approaches to the mitzvot to address the question. Less successful candidates did not link their knowledge of mitzvot to addressing the significance of the mitzvot to Jews. Many alluded to the significance in the opening sentence but did not develop that further.

Question 3 (e)

(e) 'It is impossible to understand fully the nature of G-d.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Judaism
- Refer to sources of wisdom and authority.

 Spelling, punctuation and grammar

[15]
[3]

See the opening comments made to Question 1(e) as they also apply to this question.

This was a question about issues related to the nature of G-d and how Jews really know what G-d is like.

AO1: Many candidates explored what is meant by terms such as G-d being be omnipotent and omnibenevolent or transcendent and immanent at the same time. Issues related to the problem of evil and suffering in their history such as the Shoah, were raised to address this question. Some candidates focused on the idea of the Shekinah, and interpretations of it. Some candidates utilised Job as a way to explore different elements of the nature of G-d.

AO2: Few L4 responses were encountered for this question, but equally, few L1 responses were seen either. Less successful candidates tended to make points about different attributes of G-d, without really addressing the issue directly. Some candidates presented an answer more suited to a question on the problem of evil, with limited success. More successful candidates argued that it was not for Jews to fully understand the nature of G-d, but rather, it was the need to fulfil the covenant relationship and live in the moment following G-d's ways. Many candidates knew religious studies knowledge around the topic, but some did not really comprehend the issue behind the statement.

Question 4 (a)

4 Christianity

(a) Outline **one** Christian attitude to civil partnership.

[3]

See opening comments made to Question 1(a) as they also apply to this question.

There were some candidates who did not know what this term 'civil partnership' meant and talked about how polite people should be to one another. Given that civil partnership is a specific term with a specific meaning in the specification, it meant that such responses were not creditable. Another misunderstanding of this term was with 'same sex marriage.' Frequently candidates would describe an attitude that was more befitting to a Roman Catholic view against same sex marriages than civil partnerships. Consequently, there were confused statements presented about Church of England and Roman Catholic views about civil partnerships.

Most candidates were able to either outline a positive or negative attitude with sufficient development to access full marks. The most common attitude was that Roman Catholics have a negative attitude towards civil partnership (1st mark) because it is going against biblical teachings about sexual relationships (2nd mark) and against the proper way to create new life (3rd mark).

Question 4 (b)

(b) Describe Christian teachings relating to the role of men in Christian communities.

[6]

AO1: The question required candidates to know about biblical and Church teachings related to the role of men in Christian communities. There were many different teachings that were referred to in this question. Some candidates described the role of men in families, some in Church communities and some in closed orders. All of which were valid interpretations of the question. The most common teachings used in the responses Genesis 1:27, Galatians 3:28, 1 Timothy 2:12ff and Colossians 3:18ff. Knowledge of Catholic and Anglican teachings was largely accurate, with some candidates choosing to discuss Amish practices as well. Candidates who described the complimentary view or egalitarian views about the role of men and women in communities, but focused upon the role of men only, credit was given. Unfortunately, many candidates saw this question as chance to reiterate previous rehearsed responses about the difference between men and women and their roles in families and societies. They were not addressing the wording of the question and detail about women and their roles were not credited. Most candidates' responses tended to be at in L2. Few responses in L3 were encountered. The best responses tended to link current practices to biblical teachings.

Question 4 (c)

(c) Explain the significance of Christian teachings in a Christian marriage ceremony.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer.

[6]

In this question both assessment objectives are assessed but the balance of marks between the assessment objectives is opposite to those in Section A. In Section B there are 2 marks for knowledge and understanding (AO1) and 4 marks for analysis and evaluation (AO2). To secure high levels in both assessment objectives candidates have to make the link between the various components of the question explicitly. The rubric attached to this question must be addressed. If the candidate does not provide any sources of wisdom and authority in their answer, they cannot get any marks for AO1.

Examiners accepted any response from many different denominations' marriage ceremonies. Christian teachings could be paraphrased in candidates' own words or quoted directly from the ceremony. The candidate had to know about different Christian teachings in a ceremony, (not in married life in general) and then explain how significant they are to Christians.

AO1: There were too many candidates who did not refer to sources of wisdom and authority. They did not fulfil the rubric requirement in order to help them to access the full range of marks. The most common teachings cited were Genesis 2:23ff and Mark 10:9, along with specific vows made to one another. Catholic views about the three way bond between the man, woman and God, were described. Candidates tended to focus mainly on the wedding vows, and how they represented Christian teachings. Less successful candidates described the bride being in a white dress or the bride's father giving away his daughter but did not connect this to Christian teachings. Little credit was given for just descriptions of a wedding ceremony. The focus was upon Christian teachings. Not all candidates appreciated this.

AO2: More successful candidates explained the importance of being married in the eyes of God, as well as to one another. The vows said were between themselves and God. Promises to have children and then to raise them in Christian home were explained. Most saw many teachings as being important in a marriage. Less successful responses were those which did not connect the ceremony to teachings or explain the significance of the teachings.

Question 4 (d)

(d)* 'It is wrong to discriminate on the basis of gender.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Christianity
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Christianity.

[15]

In all (d) questions in Section B and Section C there is a stimulus and a requirement to discuss the statement, explaining and evaluating the importance of different Christian views, drawing upon a course of study from beliefs and teachings in Section A. This is different from the rubric in Section A (e) questions.

As in Section A, teachings and beliefs do not just have to be based upon scriptural texts. Sources of wisdom and authority can include references to cultures, religions, customs, laws, creeds or denominational views or statements from prominent religious leaders.

This question is based upon the part of the specification that develops understanding about equality, particularly gender in this question. On the whole this was very well answered and was the best part (d) for many. Candidates had much say about gender discrimination and backed it up with adequate/good religious knowledge. Very few received less than L2 in both assessment objectives.

AO1: Candidates tended to use most of what they had used in answering 4b, to answer this question, where it was largely more relevant. Most candidates discussed the idea of complementarianism. More successful responses linked complementarianism to biblical teachings and denominations. Some discussed the inequality between genders that impact upon who is allowed to get married or not in Christian churches, or which denominations do not allow women to be priests. Low level responses tended to make vague points about Jesus and his disciples being men only.

AO2: More successful responses evaluated whether complementarianism was or wasn't discrimination. Candidates recognised the changing influence of culture and how things used to be traditionally and how things have changed in the 21st century. Discussion about how much the Christian Church should change its views and practices to match modern day attitudes and beliefs was the most common line of argument seen in the responses. Many mid-range responses talked about gender discrimination, and stated that it was wrong, without really building an argument. It seemed to some candidates that it was so self-evidently wrong that they struggled to answer the question.

Question 5 (a)

5 Islam

- (a) Outline **one** Muslim attitude to civil partnership. [3]

Question 5 (b)

- (b) Describe Muslim teachings relating to the role of men in Muslim communities. [6]

Question 5 (c)

- (c) Explain the significance of Islamic teachings in a Muslim marriage.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer. [6]

Question 5 (d)

- (d)* 'It is wrong to discriminate on the basis of gender.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Islam
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Islam.

[15]

Question 6 (a)

6 Judaism

- (a) Outline **one** Jewish attitude to civil partnership. [3]

Question 6 (b)

- (b) Describe Jewish teachings relating to the role of men in Jewish communities. [6]

Question 6 (c)

(c) Explain the significance of Jewish teachings in a Jewish marriage ceremony.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer.

[6]

Question 6 (d)

(d)* 'It is wrong to discriminate on the basis of gender.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Judaism
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Judaism.

[15]

Question 7 (a)

7 Christianity

(a) State **three** ways in which religion influences public life in Great Britain.

[3]

See opening comments made to Question 1(a) as they also apply to this question.

Almost all candidates achieved full marks. The danger was candidates spending too long answering this question. It was sufficient for 3 marks to say, "bank holidays, education and politics.". The command word is 'State' so candidates should not spend too long describing in sentences when one word or short phrases will still secure the marks. There was a wide range of examples offered. However, where candidates stated 'Easter, Christmas and Good Friday', for example they were not credited 3 marks. These were deemed by examiners to be three examples of the same way i.e. festivals.

Question 7 (b) .

(b) Describe the effects of secularisation on the Christian religion in Great Britain.

In your response you must consider the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian. [6]

AO1: This question is very different from (b) questions in Sections A and B. There is a commonality of approach in the full and short course papers for this question in Section C. Reference to the fact that religious traditions of Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian is a subject level condition and thus a requirement in the response. It is not sufficient to just repeat the strap line at the start of the response. It must be incorporated into the response, linking the subject matter to the strap line. In this case candidates were expected to describe the effects of secularisation on the Christian religion bearing in mind that this country is still largely Christian and with many other diverse religious traditions. For details about how to make the link between the strap line and the subject matter of the question look at the mark scheme provided with the Question Paper on the OCR Website.

This is one question that teachers still need to address the rubric requirement and help candidates to incorporate the strap line into their response. Many candidates did not '**consider the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse but mainly Christian.**' This meant they could not access the full range of marks. Most responses were either at the top of Level 1 or the bottom of Level 2, as they tended to list aspects of secular society, rather than the effects of secularisation on Christianity in Great Britain. Where candidates could confidently describe the effects of secularisation on Christianity in Great Britain. it tended to be about the declining numbers of citizens claiming to be Christians, the debate about how much faith schools should still exist or the fight by Humanists and secularists to minimise the role of Bishops in the House of Lords and the laws of the land.

Some did not understand the meaning of secularisation and this had an impact on both this answer and part (d). See the exemplar below.

Exemplar 4

Firstly, the monarch is currently head of the Church of England. This shows that religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian. Moreover, the monarch holds the title of Defender of the Faith, referring to Christianity. However, as secularisation takes place, Prince Charles has expressed his intention to change the title to a Defender of Faith instead to be more inclusive of other faiths. Therefore, secularisation would reduce the dominance of the Christian religion in Great Britain.

Moreover, in the House of Lords, there are Anglican bishops. This shows the influence of Christianity over British politics. Secularisation would remove the influence of the Christian religion in British politics, meaning that there would be diverse representatives in the House of Lords.

Finally, secularisation would mean that faith schools would be less prevalent. Currently, one-third of primary schools are faith schools. Secularisation would lessen the influence of Christianity in education therefore, and would also mean that Religious Education taught in schools no longer has to be "broadly" of a broadly Christian nature" as outlined by the National Curriculum.

This response has been selected to show teachers how candidates can weave throughout the response the rubric requirement to 'consider the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian.' In this response the candidate has shown they recognise that Christianity is the predominant faith in Great Britain but the country does have many other faith traditions. They have understood what is meant by 'secularisation' and given several examples of how it could affect the Christian religion in this country. It secured full marks.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Explain the significance of intra-faith communication to Christians.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer.

[6]

See the opening comments made for Question 4(c) as they also apply to this question.

Candidates had to evaluate and analyse how significant or important intra-faith dialogue or communication is between Christians from various denominations. There were many good answers provided that the candidates had understood the correct meaning of the term 'intra-faith.' A significant number of candidates who had attempted all other necessary questions, left this question blank. It was also clear that many candidates either misread the question, or did not know what intra-faith meant and gave often quite detailed answers about the importance of inter-faith communications. These answers were often only tangentially relevant, and frequently received 0 or 1 marks for reasonably long and detailed responses.

AO1: Many candidates did not refer to sources of wisdom and authority, thus failing to fulfil the rubric requirement in order to help them to access the full range of marks. Those who did secure Level 2 marks referred to teachings such Galatians 3:28, John 14:2, or The World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Movement or communities such as Taize and Iona.

AO2: Those who did understand the meaning of the term intra-faith communication discussed the significance of ecumenism, and referred to a number of movements, as well as The World Council of Churches. Some candidates also talked about views on denominational exclusivism, with some interesting links made to congregational/non-denominational Christianity; one particularly good response talked about this in relation to the emergence of the United Reformed Church in the 1970's.

Question 7 (d)

(d)* 'Agreement between secular values and Christian values is impossible.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Christianity
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Christianity.

[15]

See opening comments to Question 4(d) as they also apply to this question.

There is a large section in the specification which expects candidates to have explored religious and secular values. The significance of these values and whether secular values should take precedence over Christian values should have been developed. Disagreements between Christian values and secular values or where there is agreement between the two should be explored.

Examiners accepted a wide range of values discussed. However, this question provoked the weakest responses. Responses to this question tended to be noticeably short. It was not clear that many candidates understood the distinction between beliefs and values, and some candidates seemed to confuse values with actions. Many candidates seemed to not know what secular values are. One saw many candidates ignore in their mind the word 'values' and it became an argument about how impossible it is to ever reconcile Christian and secular beliefs; thus altering the gist of the statement. Some candidates thought secularism was a religion.

AO1: The responses which achieved Level 3 and beyond were those in which they knew what the word 'value' meant and could distinguish it between beliefs and attitudes. For example, while Christians believe life comes from God and secularists believe life began through the Big Bang theory, both value human life agreeing that it should be treated with respect and dignity. Candidates recognised that there is a close link between beliefs and values but they are not the same thing.

Many compared areas where there was agreement such as love of the environment, caring for one another, ensuring equality and rights for all people, the value of education for all people and then contrasted how one puts into practice such values. Clashes included things like the value of the mother's life being more important than that of the unborn child, or same sex marriages not being valued by the Church as they are in civil law.

AO2: Many less successful responses focused on whether Atheists and Christians can agree, often with some very broad, slightly alarmist conclusions made. More successful responses tend to speak on values that informed beliefs on specific issues, such as same sex marriage, abortion and euthanasia. Many concluded that there was much that both secularists and Christians could agree upon but the depth of knowledge and understanding between Humanists, Secularists and Atheists and Christians was limited.

The specification does not articulate exactly which values one should study. It is for the teachers to explore these with resources they have available or can access on the internet. Questions on this part of the syllabus will always be general to allow for a wide range of material explored by centres. However, the wording of the questions will be around terms used in the specification. Therefore, it is important that candidates understand the terms in this part of the specification, so the candidates can access all questions meaningfully and positively.

Question 8 (a)

8 Islam

- (a) State **three** ways in which religion influences public life in Great Britain. **[3]**

Question 8 (b)

- (b) Describe the effects of secularisation on the Islamic religion in Great Britain.

In your response you must consider the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian. **[6]**

Question 8 (c)

- (c) Explain the significance of intra-faith communications to Muslims.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer. **[6]**

Question 8 (d)

- (d)* 'Agreement between secular values and Muslim values is impossible.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Islam
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Islam.

[15]

Question 9 (a)

9 Judaism

- (a) State **three** ways in which religion influences public life in Great Britain. [3]

Question 9 (b)

- (b) Describe the effects of secularisation on the Jewish religion in Great Britain.

In your response you must consider the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian. [6]

Question 9 (c)

- (c) Explain the significance of intra-faith communications to Jews.

You should refer to sources of wisdom and authority in your answer. [6]

Question 9 (d)

- (d)* 'Agreement between secular values and Jewish values is impossible.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

- Draw on your learning from across your course of study, including reference to beliefs and teachings within Judaism
- Explain and evaluate the importance of points of view from the perspective of Judaism.

[15]

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