

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (SHORT COURSE)

J125

For first teaching in 2016

J125/01 Summer 2024 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 1 series overview	4
Section A overview	6
Question 1 (a)	6
Question 1 (b)	6
Question 1 (c)	7
Question 1 (d)	7
Question 1 (e)	8
Question 2 (a)	9
Question 2 (b)	10
Question 2 (c)	10
Question 2 (d)	10
Question 2 (e)	11
Section B overview	13
Question 4 (a)	13
Question 4 (b)	13
Question 4 (c)	14
Question 4 (d)	14
Question 5 (a), (b), (c) and (d)	15
Section C overview	16
Question 7 (a)	16
Question 7 (b)	16
Question 7 (c)	17
Question 7 (d)*	17
Question 8 (a), (b), (c) and (d)	18

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. A selection of candidate responses is also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Would you prefer a Word version?

Did you know that you can save this PDF as a Word file using Acrobat Professional?

Simply click on **File > Export to** and select **Microsoft Word**

(If you have opened this PDF in your browser you will need to save it first. Simply right click anywhere on the page and select **Save as . . .** to save the PDF. Then open the PDF in Acrobat Professional.)

If you do not have access to Acrobat Professional there are a number of **free** applications available that will also convert PDF to Word (search for PDF to Word converter).

Paper 1 series overview

This is the Short Course GCSE in Religious Education. The paper has three sections. Each section contains three questions, one on Christianity, one on Islam and one on Judaism.

In Section A candidates are required to answer any two questions. Questions in Section A have five parts. Parts (a) to (c) are short response AO1 questions marked out of three, requiring knowledge and understanding. Part (d) is a longer, level marked AO1 question, requiring more detailed knowledge and explanation. Part (e) is an essay question assessed on both AO1 and AO2. Candidates are asked to respond to a stimulus statement and are required to refer to sources of wisdom and authority and to explain different opinions within the religion. SPaG is given out of three on both part (e) questions in Section A. In Section A, all the candidates in this session answered Questions 1 (Christianity) and 2 (Islam). As there were no responses to Question 3, no commentary on Question 3 has been provided in this report.

In Section B candidates are required to answer any one question out of the three (choosing one of the religions they chose in Section A). Questions in Section B have four parts. Part (a) is a short response question marked out of three and requiring knowledge and understanding. Part (b) is a longer, level marked AO1 question requiring more detailed knowledge and explanation. Part (c) is a longer response, marked according to AO2 levels. It requires explanation and analysis. Part (d) is an essay question assessed on both AO1 and AO2. Candidates are asked to respond to a stimulus statement and are required to refer to sources of wisdom and authority and to explain different opinions within the religion.

In Section C candidates are required to answer any one question out of the three (choosing one of the religions they chose in Section A). Questions in Section C have four parts. Part (a) is a short response question marked out of three and requiring knowledge and understanding. Part (b) is a longer, level marked AO1 question requiring more detailed knowledge and explanation. In Section C the (b) part question is common to all three questions and is concerned with the special status of Christianity in Britain as the established religion. Part (c) is a longer response, marked according to AO2 levels. It requires explanation and analysis. Part (d) is an essay question assessed on both AO1 and AO2. Candidates are asked to respond to a stimulus statement and are required to refer to sources of wisdom and authority and to explain different opinions within the religion.

There were no responses to the questions on Judaism (Questions 6 and 9) in sections B and C, and so no commentary on these questions has been provided in this report. Very few candidates (less than 10) responded to the Islamic questions (Questions 5 and 8) and so while some commentary has been provided, this is brief and all parts of the question are considered together. The report is focused almost exclusively on the Christianity questions in Sections B and C.

Candidates generally performed well. The standard of religious knowledge was good. Detailed advice for ways in which performance could be improved further is provided in the body of the report.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• read the question carefully and responded to the specific instructions given• compared and contrasted the arguments they used in evaluation questions, using genuine evaluation, rather than just stating contrasting points of view• were able to accurately compare different points of view within Christianity and Islam• understood and used technical terms effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• responded to the general topic rather than reading the question carefully• gave multiple responses to questions that specifically required only one• used phrases such as 'this is a strong argument' or 'this is a weak argument' in evaluation questions without genuinely explaining why this might be the case.

Section A overview

In this section candidates are required to answer any two out of the three available questions. All candidates answered Questions 1 and 2 (Christianity and Islam) and so no commentary on Judaism (Question 3) has been provided. Candidates generally performed better on Question 1 than Question 2, although Question 1 (e) did not generally gain high marks in comparison to Question 2 (e). There were no common misunderstandings. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and respond to the particular question asked. This was particularly important in Question 1 (e), which is only concerned with the responses of Christians to the teachings of Jesus; and Question 2 (a), which was clear in requiring only one reason for the importance of Ibrahim.

Question 1 (a)

1

(a) Outline what Christians believe heaven is like.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development and exemplification. This question focuses on what Christians believe heaven to be like. This could be drawn from Biblical description although common cultural examples (such as 'heaven is like a beautiful garden') were also credited. Since the question asks what heaven is like, responses that were concerned with beliefs about how to get to heaven (by being good, believing in Jesus, etc) were not credited and were discounted when the final mark was being decided. This question was well answered with most candidates able to gain full marks with a detailed description. Biblical knowledge, such as a place with no more sorrow or crying, were common.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Describe what Christians mean when they say God is monotheistic.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development, and exemplification. The question asks candidates to explain what is meant by monotheistic in a Christian context. A few candidates did not know the answer and guessed at a meaning (usually to do with the omnipotence or omnibenevolence of God) but the majority were able to explain that Christians believe that there is one God. Extra marks were gained by explaining the Trinity- that although the Trinity has three persons these do, in fact, constitute a single God. Many candidates also cited the commandment to 'have no other gods before me', which was also credited. Many candidates gained full marks on this question, and the majority gained at least two.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Outline the meaning of the term 'Messiah' for Christians.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development and exemplification. This question required candidates to explain what the term 'Messiah' means in a specifically Christian context. Candidates generally explained that Christians relate the term to Jesus, whom they believe to be the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Many knew that the term means 'anointed' and that it was applied to kings of Israel in the past to show that they had been specially chosen by God. As a result of this, the use of the term to apply to Jesus shows that God had chosen him for a role. Many linked that role to that of saviour. Some also explained that the Greek equivalent to 'Messiah' is 'Christ' and that this shows how closely Jesus is linked to this idea. All of this was credited. Where responses were not credited, it was generally because they were concerned with the divine nature of Christ, which is not linked to the understanding of the term 'Messiah'. Almost all candidates gained at least one mark, as they were able to link the term to Jesus. Most gained at least two marks. A few did not attempt the question or guessed that the term referred to a book.

Question 1 (d)

(d) Describe different Christian beliefs about the causes of evil.

[6]

This question uses the AO1 (knowledge and understanding) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across 3 levels of response. The question asks about different Christian beliefs, meaning that candidates who only gave a single belief were unlikely to reach Level 2. However, this question was generally well answered, with many candidates able to give detailed descriptions of the Augustinian and Irenaean theodicies. The Inconsistent Triad was not credited, as the question concerned the causes of evil rather than the philosophical problem of evil. Candidates generally did well on this question and were confident in their handling of the material. The majority of responses reached Level 2 with many achieving Level 3.

Question 1 (e)

(e) 'The teachings of Jesus are no longer relevant for Christians to follow in the modern world.'

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.

[15]
[3]

 Spelling, punctuation and grammar

This is an essay style question, which is assessed on AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation). There are three marks available for AO1, with one mark on each level. Candidates must make some reference to sources of wisdom and authority in order to move beyond Level 1 in AO1. There are four levels available for AO2, with a total of twelve marks available. In Question 1 there are also up to three marks available for spelling, grammar and punctuation. The question asks if the teachings of Jesus are still relevant to modern Christians. Candidates had little difficulty arguing for the relevance of Jesus' teachings. Most concentrated on the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, although other teachings were also used. Candidates were able to use these teachings effectively and explain various ways in which they were important to modern Christians. However, candidates struggled to provide counter arguments for a number of reasons. First and foremost, many candidates attributed Old Testament teachings to Jesus. These typically included the Ten Commandments and teachings about homosexuality. Also, many candidates argued for why the teachings of Jesus might be more generally regarded as irrelevant in the modern world, rather than why they might be less important to Christians. Many argued that the increase in secularism and decreases in the number of people identifying as Christian meant that the teachings of Jesus were less important. This, however, was not what the question was asking. Consequently, this question was not generally well answered. Many candidates gained Level 3 on AO1, but marks on AO2 were often in Level 2 because the candidate had not fully answered the question or had argued on the basis of teachings that were not those of Jesus. Where candidates were more successful, they often used Jesus' teachings on divorce from the Sermon on the Mount as an example of teachings that are controversial and contested in modern Christianity. This approach was generally successful with candidates accessing the higher marks in Level 3. As is often the case, it was unusual for candidates to access Level 4 at AO2, as this requires evaluation and comparison of the arguments used, rather than merely stating and supporting different points of view. Overall, this question was probably the least successfully answered of the evaluation questions on the paper.

Assessment for learning



It is very important that candidates read the wording of the question carefully. In Question 1 (e) the question is only concerned with the relevance of Jesus' teachings to Christians. Some candidates missed out on potential marks here because they argued that Jesus' teachings are no longer relevant in a secular world where Christianity is less popular. This may be true, but it does not answer the question and these arguments did not gain marks.

Question 2 (a)

2

(a) Outline **one** reason why Ibrahim is an important prophet for Muslims.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available. Marks are given for an accurate point plus any combination of development and exemplification. However, care is required on this question as it asks for one reason why Ibrahim is important to Muslims. Once the candidate starts a second reason, no further marks can be given. It is important that candidates are aware of this when they begin their response. Reasons suggested by candidates were that he was the first to introduce the idea of Monotheism; that he dedicated the ka'bah; that he showed great faith in Allah by being prepared to sacrifice his son and that he was the father of the Arabic people. Some also mentioned that he was the author of a lost scroll. All of these were credited, but, as already stated, only the first of these given was credited, even if more detail was given on a subsequent idea. A reasonable number of candidates gained full marks on this question, but where they did not it was generally because they had given more than one reason.

Exemplar 1

2	a	Ibrahim is an important prophet for Muslims as he was the first prophet of God. He also taught Muslims to always have faith in God, as he was willing to sacrifice his son for God and was rewarded as a result. This helps motivates them
		to do what God wishes, as they will be rewarded like him.

The question requires only one reason why Ibrahim is important.

This response gained no marks because the first idea that the candidate expresses (that Ibrahim was the first prophet) is incorrect. It does not matter that the candidate goes on to give, and develop, an accurate response (that Ibrahim demonstrated faith in Allah by being prepared to sacrifice his son) as only the first response given can be credited.

Question 2 (b)

(b) Describe belief about divine justice (Al-Adl) in Shi'a Islam.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development and exemplification. The question asks specifically about Shi'a beliefs about divine justice; namely that actions are objectively right or wrong and that Muslims are able to distinguish between them using their conscience and the teachings of the Qur'an. Free will makes Muslims' decisions about right and wrong meaningful and means that Allah can judge fairly on the Day of Judgement. More general responses about Allah as a perfectly fair judge were also credited. This question was generally well answered with the majority of candidates gaining full marks.

Question 2 (c)

(c) Outline what Muslims mean when they describe Allah as immanent.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development and exemplification. The majority of candidates knew what was meant by immanent and were able to describe this well, many using the idea of Allah being 'closer than the jugular vein.' Many described Allah intervening in the world through miracles, angels and books, and explained how this could be a source of comfort and reassurance. Where candidates did not gain the full marks, it was often because they suggested that Allah was 'everywhere at once' or described something closer to transcendence. However, many candidates gained full marks on this question.

Question 2 (d)

(d) Describe the importance of belief in predestination (Al-Qad'r) for Muslims.

[6]

This question uses the AO1 (knowledge and understanding) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across 3 levels of response. The question asks about the importance of the belief in predestination. For this reason, responses that achieved the top of Level 2 or Level 3 focused on the importance of the belief, rather than just describing the belief. Candidates generally had a good level of knowledge, which they were able to use confidently, with regard to both Suni and Shi'a Islam. Many candidates were also aware of Asharite and Mutazalite schools of thought and were able to apply this knowledge accurately with regard to the question. The highest level responses discussed the idea of predestination as a cause of comfort as Muslims believe that everything is planned by Allah for the greater good, so no matter how bad things may seem they can have faith in Allah. Others centred the discussion around the idea of free will and so accountability on the Day of Judgement. The question was generally well answered.

Question 2 (e)

(e) 'Aakhirah is the most important belief for Muslims.'

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.

[15]

 Spelling, punctuation and grammar

[3]

This is an essay style question, which is assessed on AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation). There are three marks available for AO1, with one mark on each level. Candidates must make some reference to sources of wisdom and authority in order to move beyond Level 1 in AO1. There are four levels available for AO2, with a total of twelve marks available. In Question 2 there are also up to three marks available for spelling, grammar and punctuation. The question asks if belief in Akhira is the most important belief in Islam. Candidates generally displayed a good level of knowledge, with very few not aware of the meaning of the term. The majority of candidates contrasted belief in Akhira with belief in tawhid, which almost all candidates concluded was actually the most important belief. Some also discussed the belief in angels, prophets and books.

Many candidates were able to provide sound arguments for why Akhira was important, and also for why tawhid is the most important, being central to both Suni and Shi'a beliefs. Most pointed out that failing to respect tawhid is the only unforgivable sin in Islam and so this must be most important, often going on to point out that the response to tawhid is what makes Akhira possible, although some also suggested that the importance of tawhid is that it leads to Akhira, meaning that Akhira is, in fact the most important. In this way, many candidates achieved Level 3 at both AO1 and AO2. A few candidates did achieve Level 4 at AO2, usually by critiquing the idea of a 'most important' belief, arguing instead for a set of beliefs forming a coherent worldview that is supremely important to Muslims. Some responses also compared the beliefs of Suni and Shi'a with regards to judgement and the afterlife. Candidates were generally more successful with Question 2 (e) than they had been with Question 1 (e), providing clear supported arguments for and against the statement.

Exemplar 2

		suffering". Akhirah ^{arguably} is the reason as to why the religions are established in the first place – Islam teaches to do good solely because of their belief in Akhirah. It could also be argued that all other ^{key} beliefs are unimportant without the belief in Akhirah; for example, the belief in Tawhid exists because anyone who does not believe in it goes to hell the (Jahannam). Similarly, the Qur'an says "You have in the Prophet of Allah an an excellent model" in regards to Muhammad. However, he is only a model to live the most pleasing life to Allah in order to have a prosperous life after death.
--	--	--

This section shows evidence of genuine evaluation and allowed the response to gain Level 4 at AO2. Rather than giving reasons why Akhirah is important and different reasons why tawhid is important, in this section the candidate argues that tawhid draws its importance from belief in Akhirah as without the promise of eternal life tawhid would not be important. This could have been developed even further if the candidate had then used the counter argument that obedience to Allah should be important in its own right rather than in hope of a reward.

Section B overview

Section B contains three questions of which candidates are required to answer one. This must be one of the two religions they have attempted in part A. Almost all of the candidates chose to answer Question 4 on Christianity. Candidates generally did well in this section and were aware of most of the relevant key teachings and beliefs within Christianity. The questions were straightforward and there were no common misunderstandings. It is important that candidates read the question carefully and respond to the particular question asked. This was particularly important in Question 4 (a), which was clear in requiring only one reason why Christians might oppose cohabitation.

Question 4 (a)

4

(a) Outline **one** reason why Christians might be opposed to cohabitation.

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available. Marks are given for an accurate point plus any combination of development and exemplification. However, care is required with this question as it asks for one reason why Christians might be opposed to cohabitation. Once the candidate starts a second reason, no further marks can be given. It is important that candidates are aware of this when they begin their response. The majority of candidates were aware of what is meant by cohabitation in this context and were able to suggest that Christians might believe that marriage is a sacrament and as such the only acceptable context for a sexual relationship; or that sex is designed only for procreation, which should take place within a marriage. Some candidates discussed cohabitation in the context of homosexuality. Only one of these could be credited in any single response. A few candidates misinterpreted the question to be about Christians sharing space (such as the same communities) with non-Christians, and why this might be problematic. However, this was rare, and the majority of candidates who did not gain full marks did so because they included more than one key point in their response.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Describe different Christian attitudes to remarriage.

[6]

This question uses the AO1 (knowledge and understanding) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across three levels of response. Candidates generally had a good level of knowledge and were able to distinguish between different Christian approaches to remarriage. Most described Catholic beliefs in marriage as a sacrament that cannot be broken, even by a legal divorce, rendering remarriage adulterous. This was contrasted with various Protestant views of divorce as unfortunate but understandable in some situations, and so as remarriage as sometimes being the most loving thing to do. There was a tendency to spend more time concentrating on the differing attitudes to divorce rather than concentrating on remarriage as such, which limited some of the responses. Most did, however, give more than one Christian attitude and so were able to access at least the top of Level 2.

Question 4 (c)

(c) Explain how Christian teaching influences attitudes to celibacy.

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

[6]

This question uses the AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across three levels of response. Most, but not all candidates knew what was meant by celibacy, although a few thought that it meant promiscuity and so was condemned by Christians. The majority, however, were able to discuss the question effectively. Less successful responses were focused on celibacy before marriage but did not relate this to teachings and did not progress beyond this. The more successful responses tended to focus on the celibacy of Paul and Jesus, often citing Paul's teachings about the value of celibacy. Many also discussed the requirement for celibacy among monastics and Catholic clergy. Some were aware that the requirement for clergy to be celibate was originally a financial decision and so argued that it is not based on Christian teaching. Where candidates clearly related their responses to Christian teaching, they were able to access Level 3.

Question 4 (d)

(d)* 'Men and women should have equal roles in Christian communities.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

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

[15]

This is an essay style question, which is assessed on AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation). There are three marks available for AO1, with one mark on each level. Candidates must make some reference to sources of wisdom and authority in order to move beyond Level 1 in AO1. There are four levels available for AO2, with a total of twelve marks available. Candidates were generally able to construct sound arguments for and against the statement, often contrasting Roman Catholic and Protestant viewpoints. There was, however, a slightly simplistic tendency to assume that traditional gender roles were always associated with Catholicism. Many responses focused on roles within the family, although more successful responses also considered the roles of women in Christian communities, for example as clergy. Quite a few candidates discussed the relatively recent decision to ordain women as bishops in the Anglican Church. Most candidates were able to achieve Level 3 at AO2 by giving arguments for and against, but again, few went beyond this by evaluating the arguments. Those that did, often discussed the relevance of Biblical teachings written for a different society in the modern world.

Question 5 (a), (b), (c) and (d)

5

(a) Outline **one** reason why Muslims might be opposed to cohabitation. [3]

(b) Describe different Muslim attitudes to remarriage. [6]

(c) Explain why Muslims have different attitudes to celibacy.

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

[6]

(d)* 'Men and women should have equal roles in Muslim communities.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

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

[15]

There were fewer than ten responses to Question 5. Those that did attempt it sometimes did so as a rubric error. Responses to Question 5 were not generally strong, although some did possess genuine knowledge about Islam as distinct from Christianity. For example, candidates were sometimes aware that Islam generally encourages remarriage, and that celibacy is strongly discouraged. Responses to part (c) tended to focus on celibacy as a response to homosexuality.

Section C overview

Candidates often struggled with Section C relative to the other two sections as in previous sessions. However, the difference was less pronounced than in previous sessions. Responses for Part (d) in particular were stronger than has often been the case and candidates obviously had a good level of the teachings and arguments surrounding euthanasia. As with Section B, almost all of the candidates answered on Christianity (Question 7).

Question 7 (a)

7

(a) What is meant by the term 'agnosticism'?

[3]

This question requires a short response. There are three marks available, and marks are given for any combination of accurate points, development and exemplification. The majority of candidates knew what was meant by agnosticism, although they often did not go beyond the simple statement that it means not knowing if there was a God or not, and so gained only one mark. Where candidates gained two or three marks, they generally considered that it was not possible to prove or disprove God's existence based on evidence. Some then considered the effect that this might have on an individual's lifestyle. A significant minority of candidates thought that agnostics were people who believed in God but did not subscribe to any particular religion. Fewer candidates gained full marks on Question 7 (a) than on the other three-mark questions on the paper. There were some NR's (No Responses) to this question.

Question 7 (b)

(b) Describe attitudes that some Christians might have towards Church Schools.

In your response you must consider that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian.

[6]

This question uses the AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across three levels of response. The question was in general not answered strongly. Candidates were generally able to suggest that Christians would be in favour of Church Schools as they teach Christian values, however, most then went on to suggest why Church Schools might be irrelevant or undesirable in a secular world. This was not a relevant response to the question, which was about Christian attitudes. The majority of responses were in Level 1 or the bottom of Level 2. Stronger responses either gave various different reasons why Christians might support Church Schools or suggested that some Christians might prefer to teach children about Christianity at home. There were some NR's to this question.

Question 7 (c)

- (c) Explain why there are potential clashes between Christian teaching and secular laws about equality.

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

[6]

This question uses the AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation) level descriptors and requires a longer response, with six marks available across three levels of response. Again, this was not generally a strongly answered question. Candidates commonly confused secularism in general, and the decline of religion, with secular law. They considered generally how Christianity might be seen to be losing relevance. Stronger responses generally considered laws about gender equality or homosexuality and argued that Christians might object to these laws. A few knew that the Church has a legal exemption from employment laws about gender equality and suggested that this was not acceptable in a modern society.

Question 7 (d)*

- (d)* 'Christians should always oppose euthanasia.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

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

[15]

This is an essay style question, which is assessed on AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding) and AO2 (Analysis and Evaluation). There are three marks available for AO1, with one mark on each level. Candidates must make some reference to sources of wisdom and authority in order to move beyond Level 1 in AO1. There are four levels available for AO2, with a total of twelve marks available. Almost all of the candidates knew what was meant by euthanasia. They were able to use Biblical teaching effectively, generally comparing teachings about the sanctity of life with those about compassion and love, suggesting that euthanasia is sometimes the most loving thing to do. Many candidates also contrasted Roman Catholic beliefs with those of Protestant denominations, which were understood to be more lenient towards those seeking euthanasia. Less successful responses contrasted Christian teachings with secular beliefs, arguing that Christian teachings were less relevant in the modern world. This was not generally credited as it was not relevant to the question as it was asked. Many candidates were able to give sound arguments on both sides and so to access Level 3 at AO2.

Evaluation is required for Level 4 at AO2

In order to gain the top AO2 level in evaluation questions it is necessary to evaluate the quality of the arguments used by exploring how they relate to each other. This is more than just saying that something is a weak or strong argument. For example, in Question 7 (d), candidates might argue that euthanasia is wrong because the Ten Commandments say not to kill. However, a better translation of this is not to commit murder and euthanasia, particularly done at the request of the person, is not murder, but an act of kindness. Alternatively they might suggest that God has a plan for every life, and counter this with the suggestion that this plan might include euthanasia. These are examples evaluation of various arguments used.

Question 8 (a), (b), (c) and (d)

8

(a) What is meant by the term 'agnosticism'?

[3]

(b) Describe attitudes that some Muslims might have towards Church Schools.

In your response you must consider that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse, but mainly Christian.

[6]

(c) Explain why there are potential clashes between Muslim teaching and secular laws about equality.

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

[6]

(d)* 'Muslims should always oppose euthanasia.'

Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:

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

[15]

There were fewer than ten responses to Question 8. Those that did attempt it sometimes did so as a rubric error. Responses to Question 8 were not generally strong, although some did possess genuine knowledge about Islam as distinct from Christianity. However, candidates tended to struggle with Question 8 (b), with many attempting to discuss Muslim attitudes to either Church Schools or Islamic faith schools. This was not required by the question. Question 8 (c) raised the same issues for candidates as Question 7 (c). Question 8 (d) was generally well attempted, although candidates tended to contrast Islamic ideas with secular ones, rather than to discuss differences of opinion within Islam.

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website [Teach Cambridge](#) to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Access to Scripts

We've made it easier for Exams Officers to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts'. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular professional development courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

[ExamBuilder](#) is a free test-building platform, providing unlimited users exclusively for staff at OCR centres with an [Interchange](#) account.

Choose from a large bank of questions to build personalised tests and custom mark schemes, with the option to add custom cover pages to simulate real examinations. You can also edit and download complete past papers.

[Find out more](#).

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals (examined units only).

[Find out more](#).

You will need an Interchange account to access our digital products. If you do not have an Interchange account please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username, or nominate an existing Interchange user in your department.

Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on
01223 553998

Alternatively, you can email us on
support@ocr.org.uk

For more information visit

 **ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder**

 **ocr.org.uk**

 **facebook.com/ocrexams**

 **twitter.com/ocrexams**

 **instagram.com/ocrexaminations**

 **linkedin.com/company/ocr**

 **youtube.com/ocrexams**

We really value your feedback

Click to send us an autogenerated email about this resource. Add comments if you want to. Let us know how we can improve this resource or what else you need. Your email address will not be used or shared for any marketing purposes.



I like this



I dislike this

Please note – web links are correct at date of publication but other websites may change over time. If you have any problems with a link you may want to navigate to that organisation's website for a direct search.



OCR is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored. © OCR 2024 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.

OCR operates academic and vocational qualifications regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA as listed in their qualifications registers including A Levels, GCSEs, Cambridge Technicals and Cambridge Nationals.

OCR provides resources to help you deliver our qualifications. These resources do not represent any particular teaching method we expect you to use. We update our resources regularly and aim to make sure content is accurate but please check the OCR website so that you have the most up to date version. OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions in these resources.

Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

You can copy and distribute this resource in your centre, in line with any specific restrictions detailed in the resource. Resources intended for teacher use should not be shared with students. Resources should not be published on social media platforms or other websites.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: N/A

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.