



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

RSS10 World Religions 2

***Christianity OR Judaism OR
Islam 1 The Way of Submission***

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - January series

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RSS10 World Religions 2 Christianity OR Judaism OR Islam 1 The Way of Submission

General comments

There were few candidates for this paper and none attempted Questions 2 and 3.

Section A Christianity

Question 1 (Topic 1 Some beliefs about God: Trinity and salvation)

Part (a)

Candidates who attempted this question had, in the main, a good understanding of what is said about Jesus in the creeds.

Part (b)

This question was addressed poorly. There was a disappointing lack of consideration of the implications of the concept of monotheism which led to some unbalanced responses.

Question 2 (Topic 2 Christian Scriptures: nature and purpose)

No candidates attempted this question.

Question 3 (Topic 3 Aspects of Christian worship)

No candidates attempted this question.

Question 4 (Topic 4 A Christian way of life; initiation, marriage and death)

Part (a)

Key ideas associated with infant baptism were included though practices overshadowed beliefs in the responses.

Part (b)

Some balance in analysis was evident from the candidates who understood this question, but responses rarely accessed above Level 3 because of a lack of real depth.

Section B Judaism

Questions 5 and 8 were the most popular in this section of the paper. Two candidates attempted Question 6.

Question 5 (Topic 1 *God and his people*)

Part (a)

Some excellent responses were given from more able candidates, with a thorough examination of ideas of the nature of God in Judaism evident. The quality of some of the answers revealed a very thorough treatment of the topic which was pleasing.

Part (b)

Candidates' analysis of the statement that God cannot be both omnipotent and all-loving was strong. Answers were well balanced and evaluations exemplified.

Question 6 (Topic 2 *Scripture*)

Part (a)

A wide range of examples could have been considered in response to this question. Where an answer accessed no higher than Level 3 of the mark scheme, it tended to be as a result of limited expression of the way in which scripture can be used.

Part (b)

Answers were characterised by largely one-sided views in response to the evaluation statement. It should be noted that the command to 'assess this view' requires that candidates consider the reasons why statements might be true **and** also give alternative views.

Question 7 (Topic 3 *Aspects of worship and festivals: Shabbat, Yom Kippur and Pesach*)

Part (a)

Responses were, mostly, of a good quality and were characterised by clarity, focus and direction on the ways in which Shabbat is observed in the synagogue. This proved to be a very accessible question.

Part (b)

On the whole, candidates produced a good range of points in assessing the view that, there is little point in observing Shabbat in the 21st century. Good responses discussed how, on the one hand, Judaism has moved away from traditional rituals whilst, to many, Shabbat reminds Jews of their Jewish identity.

Question 8 (Topic 4 *Styles of Judaism: Orthodox and Reform beliefs and practices*)

Part (a)

This was the most popular question in this section of the paper. Candidates had clearly learnt about the role of women in both traditions and revealed some of the contrasts in a detailed, focused and well observed way.

Part (b)

Good ideas were presented, in the main. Many candidates explained articulately both sides of the argument with the focus being on the 'more important' aspect of the question. It was refreshing to see balanced and reasoned responses from the more able candidates and some supporting evidence used by the remainder of candidates.

Section C Islam 1 *The Way of Submission*

This was, by far, the most popular section of the paper, with Question 9 being the most popular question.

Question 9 (Topic 1 *The Qur'an*)

Part (a)

One apparent difficulty for candidates responding to this question was the intended focus of the importance of the Qur'an for Muslims. Disappointingly, candidates appeared to have prepared to discuss the use of the Qur'an. Whilst there were some implicit links drawn, the direction of the question required a different response. It would be helpful if centres could remind candidates of the importance of addressing the actual question set.

Part (b)

A good range of responses was seen to this question. Good answers offered a balanced assessment of the literary qualities of the Qur'an.

Question 10 (Topic 2 *The Five Pillars*)

Part (a)

Better responses to this question examined, in some depth, the significance of Zakah and Hajj for Muslims. Weaker answers tended to write about, and around, the general topic. Answers that were descriptive rather than focussed on assessing the significance of both aspects were restricted in the levels of the mark scheme that could be accessed.

Part (b)

Candidates who addressed niyyah (intention) in depth when considering the intention to worship accessed high marks. This question proved to be challenging to some candidates and weaker responses tended to neglect how vital worship is, as well as what it means to be a Muslim.

Question 11 (Topic 3 *The doctrine of God*)

Part (a)

Candidates appeared to find this question quite challenging, with many writing of absolute monotheism and rightly pursuing the relationship of God to man in Islam.

Part (b)

Some candidates dealt well with the evaluation that it is good to fear God. The best responses were balanced and thoughtful, and considered the implications of rejecting God.

Question 12 (Topic 4 *Key Beliefs*)

Part (a)

This was the least popular of the questions in the Islam section of the paper. Candidates generally accessed the highest levels of the mark scheme, although many, unfortunately, examined only the authority of the prophets in Islam, and neglected to also consider the nature of prophets.

Part (b)

This question was addressed reasonably well. Many candidates argued against the claim that belief in angels is vital for Muslims today, but felt that the presence of angels was a major part of Islamic faith.