



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies (1061)

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

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - June series

This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2009 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX
Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.

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

Section A *Christianity*

The most popular questions in this Section were Questions 3 and 4.

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

Question 01

Christian ideas about salvation appeared to have been studied either very well or very superficially. The better answers showed understanding of Christian views on the human condition and on the work of Jesus. The interesting and important questions about the sufficiency of faith were often overlooked by candidates. A significant number of candidates confined themselves to the question of whether baptism is necessary. Many candidates' responses tended to be centred on Jesus and were 'evangelical' in their approach, thereby suggesting that nothing beyond the idea that Jesus saves people from sin.

Question 02

Many candidates suggested that people were much better behaved in contemporary society and so salvation is not a necessity, or that people are just as bad as ever and so it is still required. Occasionally, there were rather one-sided responses which tended to agree with the statement, suggesting that people were unfit to enter heaven and so salvation is essential.

Question 2 (Topic 2 *Christian scriptures: nature and purpose*)

Question 03

This was the least popular question in the Christianity section. Some candidates who attempted this question were unable to *identify* different types of material found in the Christian Scriptures such as Law, History, prophecy, parables, epistles, etc. Even the better responses were often vague and lacked a depth of knowledge about specific biblical genres.

Question 04

Many candidates appeared to find the evaluation statement challenging. They did not address the main issue with examples of how people are inspired by the Bible as if it is the word of God and live their lives accordingly. Most candidates recognised that the Bible includes a variety of human compositions written under different circumstances. Some of the stronger responses indicated that this was compatible with inspiration.

Question 3 (Topic 3 *Aspects of Christian worship*)

Question 05

This was the second most popular question in the Christianity section. Most candidates tended to write about popular understandings of transubstantiation and contrasted it with forms of 'receptionism'. Some responses lacked reference to liturgical practice. The most common choice of denominations used by candidates to illustrate their responses to this question were the Baptist and Roman Catholic traditions; the best responses were characterised by having focus and accurate references to both practice and the reasons for these practices. Weaker answers appeared to be unaware of specifics of practice and within different traditions.

Question 06

Most candidates appeared to neglect the reference to remembrance in the question. However, there were some well-balanced responses where there was much support for the statement.

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

Question 07

Responses were generally executed well, though most answers focused on beliefs and not practices. Most candidates did recognise the high value placed on marriage as a publicly-affirmed lifelong commitment and the best environment in which to raise children. The rationale for the beliefs was not always explained. There were varying degrees of familiarity with the ceremonial elements of marriage. Some of the weaker responses were a little vague, and while they included the basics of practice, beliefs were seldom explored. A significant number of candidates included divorce in their answers.

Question 08

Responses ranged from the very good to responses more appropriate for GCSE Level. There appeared to be poor awareness of different stances on divorce and remarriage. Most candidates were undecided between the dilemmas: one can only credibly make a lifelong promise once, but if a partner commits adultery or is cruel, marriage might be untenable. In general, the questions which required reflection and evaluation of competing arguments tended to elicit lists of points for and against an issue.

Section B *Judaism*

Questions 5 and 7 were by far the most popular, with only a small number of candidates attempting Question 6.

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

Question 09

This was the most popular question in the Judaism section of the examination paper with some excellent answers on 'the chosen people', although many candidates over-emphasised the idea of it not meaning that Jews were special. Overall, ideas about the covenant were explored to a greater depth than those on 'the chosen people'.

Question 10

Good answers to Question 10 tended to refer to the holocaust and to a wider appreciation of Jewish history of divine intervention. There was some thoughtful and balanced analysis from many candidates answering this question. More able candidates expressed their understanding of history bearing witness to the problems Jews have had to face, whilst presenting the idea that God said he would never abandon the Jewish people.

Question 6 (Topic 2 *Scripture*)

Question 11

This was not a popular question, although many of those candidates who attempted it achieved good marks. Most candidates wrote much more on the use of the Talmud than on its nature.

Question 12

Candidates seemingly found Question 12 to be a challenging question and were only able to produce limited answers.

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

Question 13

This was a popular question in this section of the examination paper and candidates produced some excellent answers. The question was answered well by the more able candidates in particular, with clear reference being made to both beliefs and practices associated with Yom Kippur. Virtually all candidates examined the main features of Yom Kippur.

Question 14

There was some thoughtful and balanced analysis from many candidates who answered this question. More able candidates expressed their understanding of the benefits of the confessing of sins in Judaism and offered some balanced evaluative comment based on the idea that confessing sins is probably meaningless for many if some kind of reparation is not shown.

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

Question 15

This was not a popular question. Some candidates offered vague responses of a generalised nature with very few discussing the role of the temple and even fewer mentioning the Orthodox daily prayers for the re-establishment of the temple.

Question 16

Some candidates missed the focus of this question and produced simplistic arguments about Reform Jews not taking Judaism seriously. Therefore, the arguments had little substance beyond discussion of assimilation.

Section C Islam 1 *The Way of Submission*

Questions 9 and 10 were by far the most popular questions in this section of the examination paper.

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

Question 17

This was a popular question which was generally answered well. Candidates gained high marks for Question 17, although some found the idea of the Qur'an as a source of law challenging. There were a small number of good answers about Shari'ah, although many responses neglected the focus of the question and did not appreciate that much of Muslim praxis derives from different traditions and from different interpretations of the Qur'an.

Therefore, the Shari'ah tended to get a brief mention and often as the common law of Saudi Arabia.

Question 18

Candidates performed quite well in this part of the question. There were some good evaluative responses about the need for change. In some cases, the question was used as a pretext to write about Islam in general; candidates were clearly well-informed about the religion. Some of the stronger evaluative comments centred on such arguments as: 'if we believe that it is the word of God and want to change it, even for good reasons, we are still replacing the word of God with some human artifice'. Most candidates indicated that the Qur'an provides guidance about fundamentals and these have not changed. Better responses included the idea that there has always been a tradition of interpretation.

Question 10 (Topic 2 *The Five Pillars*)**Question 19**

This was the other popular question in this section of the examination paper, although some candidates found the 'concept' of pillar challenging and merely recited the five pillars, sometimes in an unusual order. The majority of candidates offered descriptions, in greater or lesser detail, of the five pillars, and consequently overlooked the significance of the word 'concept'. Better answers tended to focus on the nature of pillar and used the five pillars to explore this. A disappointingly small number of candidates responded to the actual question set and explained the point of each pillar; a high level of knowledge was displayed by these candidates.

Question 20

This evaluative question was answered well. However, some candidates answered a different question and one which did not feature the word 'all'. More able candidates argued that the basis of Islam was indeed the five pillars of faith, whilst acknowledging that there are many other important aspects of Islam, thereby ensuring their responses were well-balanced and thoughtful. Some candidates vacillated with many thinking that performance plus right intent was much more valuable than mere observance. Most candidates pointed out that following the Qur'an is also important.

Question 11 (Topic 3 *The doctrine of God*)**Question 21**

There were some examples of excellent answers to this question which focused on different kinds of tawhid and shirk. In contrast, however, some candidates offered either very general responses or did not address what shirk means. The better responses related shirk to tawhid. The outstanding responses often grasped the meaning of monotheism and identified a range of ideas and practices that are effectively idolatrous, notably today's 'celebrity culture'.

Question 22

Candidates responded well to Question 22 and offered competent answers. Most candidates argued that God is both just and merciful according to Islam. Unfortunately, many candidates did not offer detail about personal responsibility and freedom and therefore few exhibited the kind of argument required to access the highest levels of the mark scheme.

Question 12 (Topic 4 *Key beliefs*)

Question 23

This was a popular question with most candidates answering it well. Many responses were very descriptive about Heaven and Hell, but concentrated less on judgement. Other responses, however, contained some full descriptions and explanations about judgement and the afterlife. Responses to Question 23 were mostly descriptive, with quite eloquent descriptions of punishments that could be expected, and some candidates understood the point that the expectation of judgment implies that life is a test. There were not many candidates who observed that the descriptions are metaphorical, since this is an unknown.

Question 24

Most candidates found this question to be challenging with many neglecting to address the word 'unreasonable'. Less able candidates offered poor responses though most took 'reasonable' to mean 'fair' and responded accordingly. A small number of candidates observed that contemporary ideas about rationality may not be the whole truth.