

## Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit 1H: *Religion and Contemporary Society*

Additional Specimen Questions



**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION  
ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY**



**RELIGIOUS STUDIES UNIT H                      RSS08  
RELIGION AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

**ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN QUESTIONS**

**For this paper you must have:**

- an 8 page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.  
The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is **RSS08**.
- Answer **two** questions.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 90.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- In each question, part (a) tests your knowledge and understanding, while part (b) tests your skills of reasoning and evaluation.
- You will be marked on your ability to use English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Answer **two** questions.

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- 1** (a) Examine the evidence for the decline of religion in Britain today. (30 marks)
- (b) How far can it be argued that the UK is no longer a Christian nation? (15 marks)
- 2** (a) (30 marks)
- (b) (15 marks)
- 3** (a) With reference to religions you have studied, examine the ways in which dress and diet help to maintain identity for members of that faith. (30 marks)
- (b) 'It is very difficult to maintain a faith when that faith community is in the minority.'
- Assess the truth of this claim. (15 marks)
- 4** (a) (30 marks)
- (b) (15 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**



## **GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN MARK SCHEME RELIGION AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY RSS08**

Mark schemes are normally prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. When published, a mark scheme normally includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in the examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of this year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

## RSS08: Religion and Contemporary Society

1 (a) **Examine the evidence for the decline of religion in Britain today.**

Statistical evidence in terms of membership of Christian Churches  
Expect some broad knowledge of patterns of membership and participation,  
e.g. decline in Easter day communicants in Church of England  
Decline in other forms of practice

Falls in Church attendance  
Evidence from the numbers of disused Churches, etc. being demolished or put  
to other use  
Falls in numbers of marriages and baptisms  
Changes in role and understandings of Sunday – Sunday trading, etc.  
Loss of the role and influence of Christian Churches as voice of authority

May cite drastic fall in the number of vocations within the Roman Catholic  
Church  
May cite decline within Judaism – and problems caused by loss of ‘critical  
mass’

This may be answered in breadth or depth. For the highest levels there needs  
to be some range of exemplification. Note that this is AO1 so it is only the  
evidence which is being sought.

**(30 marks) AO1**

(b) **How far can it be argued that the UK is no longer a Christian nation?**

**Agree with decline**

Use of evidence such as the above  
Plenty of indicators from all aspects of life  
Church irrelevant in many aspects of life  
Indications of decline in many areas of public life

**Disagree**

Significant rise in Charismatic elements within Christianity, and especially in  
newer forms of Church structures  
Vitality especially among black-led Churches  
New fervour in Catholicism where there is large Polish population  
Decline may be seen as a Judaeo-Christian phenomenon, vitality of religion in  
Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism  
The conclusions will depend on the particular examples chosen.

Better candidates may argue that it is the institutions which are in decline  
rather than religion itself, or that the processes which have already affected  
Christianity may affect other religions in a few years’ time. May look as well to  
the fragmentation of society and the ways in which other forms of voluntary  
groupings have suffered similar decline.

**(15 marks) AO2**

- 3 (a) **With reference to religions you have studied, examine the ways in which dress and diet help to maintain identity for members of that faith.**

A range of examples may be chosen, e.g.

**Islam**

Men

Requirement for modesty, covering from navel to knee

Adopting traditional loose fitting clothing

Pakistani Shalwar kameez

Or loose fitting gown

Reference may also be made to the beard.

Women

Stress on modesty – clothing must be loose fitting

Covering all except face

Use of the hijab

And niqab for some

**Sikhism**

5 ks

Though not all of these will be evident

Not all will wear all 5 ks

**Judaism**

Men – wearing the Kippah – some just for prayer – some at all times

Hasidic – orthodox men wearing traditional distinctive clothing including Tzitzit

Traditional orthodox women – wigs

Note that the question asks for religious identity – beware of generalised comments about culture. It would, however, be appropriate for candidates to talk about cultural influence on religious practice, or cultural variations within a religion.

**Diet**

May consider examples of halal foods, or foods which are prepared according to kosher laws, as well as other aspects of kosher laws.

May consider Buddhist principles and ways in which these influence diet.

Aspects of fasting within religion may also be considered.

No higher than low Level 5 if only one religion is covered.

For marks above Level 4, answers need to show application to ways in which these food and dietary laws help to maintain identity.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) 'It is very difficult to maintain a faith when that faith is in the minority.'**

**Assess the truth of this claim.**

**Agree**

Many practical difficulties

May take a lot more personal effort

Especially when practices are out of step with the rest of society

Some aspects maybe in conflict with law or accepted practice

**Disagree**

Differences sometimes make maintenance of religion attractive

If one is committed to a faith, the difficulties are insignificant

Within a pluralistic society, such difficulties are minimised

Family group or group of co-religionists make it easier.

Overall assessment – may be difficult – but not very difficult.

**(15 marks) AO2**