



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Level Examination

# General Studies (Specification A)

# GENA3

## Unit 3 A2 Culture and Society

**Specimen paper for examinations in June 2010 onwards**  
**This question paper uses the [new numbering system](#) and [new AQA answer book](#)**

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| <p><b>For this paper you must have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an AQA 12-page answer book.</li></ul> |
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### Time allowed

- 2 hours

### 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 GENA3.
- Answer **all** questions in Section A, **one** question from Section B and **one** question from Section C.

### Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 70 (20 for Section A, 25 for Section B and 25 for Section C).
- This paper consists of **three** sections.
  - Section A** contains two compulsory questions based on source material.
  - Section B** contains four alternative essay questions based on culture.
  - Section C** contains four alternative essay questions based on society.
- Write your answers in continuous prose as if you are addressing the intelligent general reader. You will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.
- Where appropriate use examples to illustrate your answer.

# GENA3

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### Section A

Study **Extracts A, B and C** on **the role of religion** and then answer **Questions 1 and 2**.

Use your own words, rather than simply repeating those used in the sources, to show your understanding of the points being made.

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#### Extract A

Religion must be rescued from extremism and irrelevance, Tony Blair said last night, in his first big speech in Britain since stepping down as prime minister.

Blair, a Roman Catholic convert, made the remarks during a lecture on faith and globalisation at Westminster Cathedral, where he used to attend mass while in office. He used the 45-minute speech to highlight the work of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation which has its official launch next month and aims to help different faith organisations work together.

He said last night: "For religion to be a force for good, it must be rescued not simply from extremism, faith as a means of exclusion; but also from irrelevance, an interesting part of our history but not of our future. Too many people saw religious faith as stark dogmatism and empty ritual", he added.

"Faith is reduced to a system of strange convictions and actions that, to some, can appear far removed from the necessities and anxieties of ordinary life," Blair said. "It is this face that gives militant secularism an easy target."

He went on to argue that religion could help to advance humanity and end global poverty. One of his foundation's aims is to bring people of faith together in pursuit of the UN's millennium development goals, which include the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and combating diseases.

It was his first and most detailed public statement on religion, a subject his most senior advisers told him to avoid during his decade in Downing Street.

Source: *The Guardian*, 4 April 2008

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**Extract B**

Well known atheist Professor Richard Dawkins has described religious believers as sucking on dummies for comfort and said that giving children a religious education was comparable to “erecting a firewall in their minds” against scientific truth.

Debating in London on the subject “Are we better off without religion?”, he said religion was like “a child with a dummy in its mouth. I do not think it a very dignified or respect-worthy posture for an adult to go around sucking a dummy for comfort.”

When his opponents, who included Rabbi Julia Neuberger and philosopher Roger Scruton, argued that “the religious gene” is in all of us, and it was part of the human condition to search for meaning, Dawkins replied: “Speak for yourself. It is not a part of me. It is not a part of the great majority of my friends in universities in England and the US and elsewhere.”

The debate ranged from religious inspiration in art, to the human capacity for good and evil.

Source: *Times Online*, 29 March 2007

**Extract C**

The number of nonbelievers is much bigger than people think, and they desperately need encouragement to come out. Judging by the thanks that showered my North American book tour, my articulation of hitherto closeted thoughts is heard as a kind of liberation. Atheists, moreover, are too ready to observe society’s convention of according special respect to faith, and it goes along with society’s lamentable habit of labelling small children with the religion of their parents. You’d never speak of a “Marxist child” or a “monetarist child”. So why give religion a free pass to indoctrinate helpless children? There is no such thing as a Christian child: only a child of Christian parents.

Source: Adapted from Professor Richard Dawkins, *The Times*, 12 May 2007

**0 1** Compare the views on the role of religion and belief of Tony Blair and Richard Dawkins as expressed in the three extracts. (12 marks)

**0 2** What is your response to both the statements that religion is ‘simply a comfort’ or ‘a force for good’? (8 marks)

**END OF SECTION A**

**Turn over for Section B**

**Section B**

Answer **one Question** from **3 to 6**.

There are 25 marks for each question.

Where appropriate use examples to illustrate your answer.

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**EITHER**

**0 | 3** 'Sometimes the arts do not easily cross cultural boundaries.'

Discuss this view with reference to a range of art forms and cultures.

**OR**

**0 | 4** With reference to specific examples drawn from any art form, examine which criteria should be considered when deciding whether a work has the status of a masterpiece.

**OR**

**0 | 5** In recent years there has been a revolution in the way people have access to music.

Discuss what impact this has had on the listening preferences of young people.

**OR**

**0 | 6** Discuss the view that in a civilised society there should be no censorship of any kind.

## Section C

Answer **one Question** from **7 to 10**.

There are 25 marks for each question.

Where appropriate use examples to illustrate your answer.

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### EITHER

**0 7** Assess the effect the media's obsession with the cult of celebrity has on the political life of the United Kingdom.

### OR

**0 8** Examine the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a supra-national body such as the EU, NATO or the UN.

### OR

**0 9** 'The press has a responsibility to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.'

Discuss this view of the role of newspapers.

### OR

**1 0** Discuss the moral and ethical problems that have arisen in armed conflicts in the last 20 years.

## END OF QUESTIONS

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