



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

**RSS08 Religion and Contemporary
Society**

Mark Scheme

2009 examination - January series

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS08: Religion and Contemporary Society

- 1 (a) **Examine changes which took place in the practice of Christianity in the United Kingdom during the 20th century.**

Answers may focus on a range of issues:

Decline in Church membership – evidenced both through decline in total membership and decline in actual practice – may refer to changing status of Sunday – consideration of whether this is cause or effect.

Loss of status of Christianity within society affecting levels of practice.

Changes in forms of practice:

fragmentation of Churches

and rise of new ‘house Church’ structures and the practices which go with these

new styles of Church practice

rise of charismatics

and influence of black led Churches.

Breakdown of some denominational distinctiveness – may refer to effects of ecumenical movement

new range of diversity – due to variety of forms of migration, etc.

Answers need to focus on practice.

If only decline maximum Level 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

- (b) **‘The practice of Christianity has changed because society has changed.’**

Assess how far this is true.

Agree

Patterns of ‘belonging’ have changed

Society – much more mobile

Working patterns have changed

Many people working very long hours

Generally there is less belonging – pattern found among many voluntary organisations

Social patterns have changed, and people’s activities found in a much greater variety of contexts

Long distance commuting and family break up also contributory factors.

Disagree

High level of commitment to both Sunday and weekday activities found among, for example, charismatic Churches and house groups.

Also high level of commitment to range of voluntary causes, e.g. peace, environmental activism, sport, etc.

Thus, basis of change must lie in some other factors, such as theological changes within the Church, impact of other changes, etc.

(15 marks)

AO2

2 (a) Examine the features and purposes of religious buildings which may be found in the United Kingdom today.

Answers need to identify the types of building which may be found.

Obviously a wide variety of different Christian Churches of different denominations, ages and styles.

Mosques, synagogues, viharas, mandirs and gurdwaras

Attention should be paid to whether these are new and purpose built, including, for example, Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden and Havelock Road Gurdwara in Southall, or whether they are older buildings converted from other purposes, including ones which may previously have been Christian Churches

Comment may be made on distinctive symbolism of architecture.

Purposes

may include those of worship

education within the faith

community gatherings

service to the wider community – meeting variety of community needs

teaching of language

meeting needs of new arrivals,

etc.

Maximum of Level 4 for those answers which do **not** examine the purposes. Purposes may be purposes of parts rather than of building as a whole.

For the highest marks, answers do not need to cover all six religions but there should be some range of coverage. Answers at Level 6 / 7 are likely to be able to comment on issues of culture and religion though full marks can be obtained without drawing this distinction.

(30 marks) AO1

(b) Assess how far the presence of religious buildings promotes social cohesion.

promotes cohesion

Obvious reminder of the presence of religion in the community

many buildings open their doors to visitors of all faiths and none

and thus provide opportunities for increased understanding

some Catholic Churches providing important meeting point for, e.g. Polish migrants.

Can argue that they enable cohesion within the religious group, by enabling members to meet together and share not only worship, but social concerns, as well as cultural life

Does not promote cohesion

May be seen as a visible reminder of potential divisions within society

Sometimes protests against the presence of religious buildings within particular communities

Can be seen as a gathering point for radical groups, e.g. publicity surrounding radicalised youths in certain mosques or groups which may be 'inward looking'.

(15 marks) AO2

- 3 (a) **Examine the ideas of 'identity' and of 'assimilation' with reference to one or more religion(s) you have studied.**

Identity

in broad sense – ways in which people define themselves – how they want to be seen in religion – at most basic level – how they will 'label' themselves on official forms may therefore have 'nominal Christian,' etc.

Part of personal life – 'who I am' part of what makes me 'me'.

In deeper sense defined by ways in which people dress, define their diet and especially the people with whom they will wish to associate ways in which people may want to keep 'separate' from the rest of society in some ways in order to maintain that identity.

Candidates may discuss particular issues of identity, e.g. as British Muslims / British Hindus, etc.

Assimilation

term most often found in Judaism – but applicable within any situation referring to the way in which a minority group is being increasingly integrated with the rest of society or a wider group to the point of potentially losing particular identity assimilation is not just about differing cultures, some Christian groups for example may be reluctant for their members to 'assimilate' with the wider society, or concerned about effects of ecumenism.

Candidates need to consider both identity and assimilation for marks over low Level 5, but it is likely that they will write more about identity than about assimilation.

Answers need to have reference to religion; otherwise maximum Level 3. Expect some definition of both terms, rather than simply examples.

(30 marks) AO1

(b) 'Assimilation poses a threat to the survival of any religious group.'

Assess this claim.

Agree

assimilation can mean a watering down
may encourage greater mixing with the wider community
mixed marriages
and thus children are less likely to be brought up within the faith
leading to loss of numbers of committed members
people not spending time within the community may mean a dilution of values
and lifestyles

Disagree

Assimilation can strengthen – may allow members of a faith group to be more fully
integrated with society
to gain successful jobs and roles within society
and thus to influence the wider community
This is not offered by members of the faith group keeping themselves separate
Candidates may cite examples of prominent members of faith groups who are also
maintaining important public roles
Religion itself may be strengthened by aspects of assimilation.

(15 marks)

AO2

- 4 (a) **Outline the theological and sociological factors which led to the rise of New Religious Movements during the 20th century.**

Theological

Breakdown of traditional religious groups
questioning of traditional beliefs
dissatisfaction with the answers provided by mainstream religions

challenging of traditional authority structures
in some cases attraction of the exotic

very definite belief systems
appearing to offer answers to all questions
often linked to rewards in an afterlife

thus compensating for hardships in this life.

Sociological

appeal of close-knit authoritarian groups
some groups based on 'communes' thus offering a total way of life
instant 'family' of the religious group
firm authority structure
desire to experiment with new life styles

consideration may be given to broader factors, e.g. ease of travel, general
disillusionment with society and its values.

N.B. answers need to focus specifically on New Religious Movements. Generalised
comments about change within mainstream religions can gain limited marks (maximum
Level 3 for comments of this sort).

Needs to be some range for Level 6-7.

(30 marks)

AO1

(b) 'The New Religious Movements of the 20th century have lost their appeal.'

Assess how far this is true.

Agree

certainly not as much in the news

limited attention in the media to issues of cult kidnappings

This may also be due to changes within the mainstream religions – new forms of community within for example the Christian Churches,

new charismatic styles and close knitness of the new evangelicals may be meeting the same needs

may also argue that there is evidence to suggest that it is easier today to take on a completely new religion than to resort to a 'variant' on an old one

Disagree

people still looking

focus of the new has changed

some of the cults and sects of the late 20th century have lost their impact but New

Religious Movement in the sense of new forms of spirituality very much around

'mind body and spirit,' emphasis

may reasonably argue that it is too early to make a judgement about the 21st century.

(15 marks)

AO2