



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)  
June 2012**

**Religious Studies**

**RST3C**

**(Specification 2060)**

**Unit 3C The History of Christianity (*The  
Christian Church in the 20th century*)**

**OR**

**Religion and Art**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **General comments**

The majority of responses came from the Religion and Art section, but there was a significant minority of students who opted for the section on the History of Christianity, and many of these produced good answers.

The quality of answers covered the full range. AO1 answers often demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding using plenty of well-chosen evidence, and with reference to appropriate scholars. AO2 answers are sometimes limited by students taking a binary approach to the evaluation of a statement. At A2 level, a simple “Some may agree with this because...Some may disagree because...I agree/disagree because...” is inadequate for students to access the higher levels. Schools and colleges are reminded of the level descriptors for AO2, and the importance of analysis and reasoning.

## **Section A The History of Christianity (The Christian Church in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

### **Question 1 *Feminist theology***

**01** Few students reached the top levels on this question. Better answers focused on feminist interpretations of Jesus and related ideas to the writings of a range of feminist theologians. Weaker answers tended to lack both breadth and depth. In general the scope of all answers was narrower than the mark scheme anticipated, with the majority of students concentrating on Jesus’ ministry and death, but there was some depth in the best answers.

**02** The narrow approach continued in the evaluation, focusing mostly on how far the churches have adapted their language about Jesus. Students frequently mentioned the issue of women’s ministry but often did not make explicit the link between that and feminist Christology.

### **Question 2 *The Roman Catholic Church in the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century***

**03** There were some excellent answers, which showed knowledge and understanding of the Council documents, and of the effects of Vatican II on relationships with other churches. Some students conflated ecumenical and interfaith relationships, and as a result their answers contained substantial sections of irrelevant material. The best answers established attitudes to ecumenism before the Council and then examined a range of documents before summarising the long term effects of the Council. Weaker answers tended to focus on Vatican II in general, rather than on ecumenical relationships.

**04** Those students who included interfaith issues in 03 continued to address relationships with other faiths in this question. The lack of depth at AO1 limited the range of evidence offered to support arguments at AO2.

### **Question 3 *New forms of Christian fundamentalism in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century***

Relatively few students tackled this question, but there were some good responses.

**05** Most students were able to account well for the growth of independent evangelical churches. The better answers considered a range of social, societal and structural factors. Weaker answers focused only on the factors that make such churches attractive to the individual.

**06** Almost all responses to this question were satisfactory or better. Students were able to offer a balanced evaluation of the statement, mostly citing specific examples of ethical issues to as supporting evidence.

#### **Question 4 *Black-led churches in the UK today***

**07** Relatively few students tackled this question, but almost all of those who did produced answers that were Level 5 or above. Students were able to describe a good range of practices in black-led churches, using evidence from several different churches. There were examples of good development of the material in the best scripts.

**08** There were few very weak responses. Students were able to evaluate the effects of prejudice as a factor in the rise of black-led churches, and the contribution of other factors. Answers tended to be mainly formulaic in structure.

### **Section B Religion and Art**

#### **Question 5 *Iconography in the Orthodox Church***

**09** Some students were able to write clear and well-focused answers which showed a good understanding of the functions and the status of icons. Others showed confusion between function and status, and some interpreted the phrase “function and status” to mean “importance”. Such answers struggled to demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding to reach the higher levels. Very few students cited the use or status of specific icons as evidence, and even at the higher levels, there was little evidence of students knowing more than one or two icons.

**10** AO2 responses were, on balance, better than AO1 on this question. Even weaker students were able to focus clearly on an appropriate response to the statement.

#### **Question 6 *Protestant art of the Reformation***

**11** There were some excellent answers to this question, which cited a wide range of specific engravings, and were able to demonstrate knowledgeably a number of ways they contributed to the Reformation. Weaker answers often included works of art that were not engravings (e.g., Cranach's *Christ and the Adulteress*), and there was a pattern of weaker answers straying into AO2 evaluation, arguing that engravings did not contribute to the Reformation at all. Such material was irrelevant to the question set.

**12** This section also produced some excellent answers. These students were able to make a well-constructed response to the statement showing a good understanding of social, political, ecclesial and theological factors in the changes of the Reformation. There were fewer weak AO2 responses.

#### **Question 7 *Catholic art of the Counter-Reformation***

This was the least popular question on this section of the paper.

**13** There were a number of very good answers here, and relatively few weak ones. Most students had a clear understanding of Catholic teachings at the time of the Catholic Reformation. The best answers explained each teaching in terms of theology, and then showed how specific works of art upheld each teaching. Weaker answers were still good on the teachings, but failed to show that art upheld the teachings, usually by using too few, or in some cases, no specific works of art.

**14** There were few really good answers here. A large number of the students did not take a clear view on what “distinctively Catholic” meant, and this limited their ability to address the quotation critically with relevant evidence.

### **Question 8 Pre-Raphaelite religious art**

This was the most popular question on this section of the paper.

**15** This question attracted a full range of answers, including some which were very good indeed. The best answers identified and explained clearly specific examples of Biblical imagery in the chosen artwork, demonstrating an understanding of both illustrative and symbolic use of images. Weaker answers merely described a few specific Biblical images in the artwork.

**16** There were some very good answers to this question which considered a number of concepts for “relevant” and then evaluated examples of Holman Hunt’s religious art in the light of a range of understandings. There were several very weak responses which seemed unable to assess Holman Hunt’s art in either the context of his own time, or in a 21<sup>st</sup> century context.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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