



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Religious Studies 4050

Unit 4: Roman Catholicism: Ethics 405004

Report on the Examination

Further copies of this Report on the Examination are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2012 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools and colleges 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 schools and colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the school and college.

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.

Unit 4: Roman Catholicism: Ethics

General Comments

The response from students to this examination was most encouraging. Students of varying abilities attempted all the questions set and there were very few blank spaces. It is clear that teachers are teaching the content well and that students are responding with interest and commitment. Schools and colleges are to be congratulated for this conscientious approach.

The AO1 skills of description, explanation, development and analysis were deployed by students to varying degrees across the ability range. There were many excellent AO1 answers which showed good knowledge and understanding of facts and Biblical references but there were some that did not. Some AO1 questions such as A3(a), A3(c), A4(a), B5(c) and B6(c) were not done well as the answers were often lacking in knowledge and understanding. Some students write excessively for some three mark questions and, as a result, they penalise themselves by running out of time before they have completed the paper. Students should be reassured by their teachers that it is possible to get full marks for a three mark question by writing only in the space provided.

The AO2 questions were generally well done and it was a pleasure to read some excellent answers. Some pupils felt so strongly about their own particular viewpoints, especially in questions A1(c) and A4(c), that they did not give alternative viewpoints and these answers could not achieve more than a Level 4. In most of the AO2 6 mark questions, students referred to Christian or Roman Catholic teaching and belief but a surprising number of students did not do this for A2(c) and their answers could not get more than a Level 3. Question A3(b) was well done but in answering A3(d) a number of students gave a list of lay peoples' duties rather than explaining whether lay people had a duty to share the work of the parish. Students responses to questions B5(b), B6(b) and B6(d) were generally very good but B5(d) differentiated between those who knew the Beatitudes and those who did not and as a result there were some very good and some very poor answers.

Part A

Question A1: Prejudice and Discrimination and Respect for Human Life

Answers to the first question showed that students had been well prepared on the difference between prejudice and discrimination. Part (b) was not answered well by a number of students who gave examples of discrimination rather than prejudice which the question required. Part (c) was very well done and students showed in their answers that they clearly understood the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on abortion and were able to support this with relevant Biblical teaching. Most answers presented arguments with reasoned consideration of two points of view and many also showed informed insights and wrote very interesting answers. Some students wrote about abortion in general rather than addressing the actual question. A number of students presented one sided arguments in favour of the mother's rights or the rights of the unborn disabled babies and as a result of this could not get more than a Level 4.

Question A2: Crime and Punishment

Part (a) was answered well. Many of the answers to this question showed sound knowledge and understanding of deterrence as an aim of punishment. Some students did not understand the meaning of deterrence and wrote about other aims. Part (b) the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant was well known and many students wrote excellent answers. Some

however, clearly didn't know this parable and wrote about the teaching found in the Parable of the Prodigal Son or the Parable of the Talents. In part (c) many students lost marks because despite having written excellent answers, they did not refer to Christian teaching and so could only reach Level 3 according to the mark scheme.

Question A3: Christian Vocation

In response to part (a), many students showed good knowledge, understanding and development in their answers to this question; however, a number of students had only a vague knowledge about it. Some struggled with the meaning of the word rite. Part (b) was well done by most students who had strong views on the issue of whether priests should be able to marry. For part (c) some students clearly knew the role of a deacon in the parish community, while many others did not and answers reflected this. In part (d) most students understood the term 'lay people' but the responses ranged from very good to quite poor. Some used the Parable of the Talents effectively to enhance their answers. The poorer answers simply listed some of the things that lay people can do in a parish without saying why they may or may not have a duty to do so.

Question A4: Christian Healing

Many students wrote excellent answers to part (a), clearly showing a sound knowledge, understanding and good development about how the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick helps those who are ill. A number simply described how the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is celebrated but did not actually address the question. A small number did not know the sacrament. In part (b) most students knew this term and the explanations given were very good. What was evident in part (c), unlike A2(c), was that the majority of students used relevant scripture references, referred to Roman Catholic teaching and gave two different points of view. Many students wrote excellent answers and the majority of answers were very generally very good. A small number of students examined only one point of view and although their answers were very good, they could not be given more than a Level 4.

Part B

The majority of students answered Question B5. Practically all students followed the rubric, answering only one of the two questions. A number of students tended to write very long answers and some of them lost marks because they did not finish all the questions.

Question B5: Christian Marriage and Christian Values

In Part (a) the majority of students had plenty of ideas as to why some marriages break down. However, there was a great difference in the quality of the answers. Some students gave a list of reasons but no explanation as to why these factors contributed to marriages breaking down. Many wrote excellent answers which were coherent, developed and showed good analysis. In Part (b) Roman Catholic teaching on marriage was well known and many students also supported their answers with relevant Biblical references. Most students referred to two points of view. Many stressed the importance of the marriage vows, the symbolism of the rings and the teaching of Jesus to support their arguments that marriage should be permanent and exclusive. Some of the arguments offered for the ending of marriage included adultery by one of the partners, violence, falling out of love and being forced to marry in the first place. This was a question that was done well by most students. In Part (c) there was a great difference in the quality of answers. The Commandments that some students chose, such as 'Do not kill' and 'Keep the Sabbath holy', made it difficult for them to really address this question. Many students did write answers that showed good knowledge, understanding and development. In Part (d) many of the answers were excellent and contained the criteria necessary for a Level 6, but also showed great maturity beyond

what is expected at GCSE. A number of students knew the Beatitudes and the Ten Commandments but struggled to explain the relative importance of either of these for Christian living. Others wrote answers without mentioning one Beatitude or Commandment. Generally, answers showed a better knowledge of the Ten Commandments than the Beatitudes.

Question 6: Christian Response to Global Issues

In Part (a) the Parable of the Sheep and Goats was well known by most students and students showed they understood Jesus' teaching about helping those in need. However, many omitted the punishment / judgement aspect of the parable and hence the seriousness of not responding to those in need. Others did not mention that in helping others Christians believe that they show their love for God. This was a question that was done well by most students. In Part (b) the question was reasonably well done. Students were aware of the serious difficulties facing charities like CAFOD and Trocaire in trying to reduce world poverty. Problems such as corrupt governments, natural disasters and lack of money, were some of the main ones highlighted. Students also mentioned the excellent contributions these organisations make to reducing world poverty and the educational programmes they have developed. Some students did not use any Christian teaching in their answers and this is necessary to reach Level 4. In Part (c) the quality of answers varied. Some students struggled with this question. The majority were able to mention some Christian teaching and support this with Biblical references relevant to the question but some failed to develop a reasonable response. Others misinterpreted the question and tried to argue from two points of view. A number of students did write coherent answers with good development. In Part (d) this question was answered well by most students and some responses were excellent. Practically all students knew what the term 'pacifists' meant and passages from the Bible were well selected to support answers. Most did express two different points of view and many used the Just War Theory effectively to support their argument that violence might sometimes be necessary.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [AQA results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion