



Examiners' Report

June 2018

GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 2B

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

Religious Studies A Paper 1: Area of Study 2 – Study of Religion Option 2B – Christianity.

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award. The assessment consists of two questions and candidates must answer both questions. The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification. Centres are to use this, rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

The content is divided into two sections

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

Question 1 (a)

Question Introduction

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.4, 'The last days of Jesus' life (...) crucifixion'

The question asked was 'Outline three events of the crucifixion of Jesus.'

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a list.

An example:

Outline 3 characteristics of God:

- God is creator (1 mark)
- God is creator, judge and lawgiver (1 mark for list or sentence)
- God is creator, busy and distant. (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)
- Busy, distant and **God is creator**, (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)
- Creator, judge, lawgiver (1 mark for list)
- Creator, busy, distant (0 Marks) (all three elements need to be correct for 1 mark)
- Creator, judge, distant (0 marks)

The candidate appears to have used all available space. If this happens, there is blank space below question (b) on this page. Candidates should continue the answer here and indicate it on the final line in the part (a) space.

Candidates should not attach extra sheets.

Jesus was arrested then he was placed on a vast cross by which nails ~~were~~^{bisected} his feet and hands, with a crown of thorns placed on his head. He was ~~the~~ crucified along side two men and was ressurected by his father and he ~~was~~^{was risen} to the heavens. ressurection and last supper also took place



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate writes three sentences, outlining three events.

3 marks

- Jesus carried his own cross on his back

- Secondly ~~the~~ Jesus was nailed through his hands and feet

- Thirdly Jesus cried out to god asking why he had been forsaken.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Bullet points are acceptable if followed by a sentence form answer.

The candidate writes three sentences outlining three events.

3 marks

Arrest whilst he was in the garden of Gethsemane.
(Betrayed by Judas)
His torture before the crucifixion by
Romans
When one of his disciples denied
knowing him.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate writes three sentences but only one is about the crucifixion.

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Read the question carefully

Question 1 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.2, 'The importance of creation for Christians today.'

The question asked was 'Explain two ways the creation account in the Bible is important for Christians today.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, quotes, or examples. The development must be of the reason given and for the question asked.

This question differentiated between candidates who had knowledge of the interpretations and understandings of the biblical creation account in modern world, and those who knew the story. Marks were awarded for candidates who chose an alternative understanding that could come from the creation account.

The creation involves the trinity; the Father, the son, and the holy spirit, this shows that God created the universe out of love and compassion and shows his power.

The creation account shows that God created humans in God image. So he loves ~~the~~ and cares for them. This teaches Christians, to care for each other as well as God's creation and the environment.



The candidate gives two developed ways.

First way: 'The creation involves the Trinity' (1) the development given is about the nature of the Trinity, not the way creation is important to Christians.

The next reason is about showing God's power and is not developed.

Second way: 'shows that God created humans in God's image' (1), which is a development of the way 'he loves and cares for them' (1)

There is a fourth reason given regarding care for the environment and this is not developed.

3 marks



Candidates should separate their reasons so that each is clear

It is important as they believe that the Trinity was present during this. This show that they work together.

They also understand that God has ultimate power and although it may be metaphorical, it helps them to understand what happened.

It helps them make sense that God has the power to end the world just as he created it, restoring their belief in the Day of ~~Resurrection~~ Resurrection.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This candidate gives two developed reasons.

Reason one: 'the Trinity was present during this' (1) developed by 'This shows they work together.' (1)

Reason two: 'it helps them understand that God has ultimate power' (1) developed by '..... restoring their belief in the resurrection.' (1)

4 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Alternative answers may still be credited

It is important for Christians today because
it teaches them about how everything was
created.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives one simple reason: 'it teaches them how everything was created' (1)

It does not matter how simple the reason is: it can still be credited.

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Always answer the question, even if it is a guess: sometimes an educated guess can gain a mark!

Question 1 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point, 1.1: 'The nature and significance of the Trinity.'

The question asked was 'Explain two beliefs about the Trinity.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, quotes, or examples. The development must be of the reason given and for the question asked.

The reasons should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom': this must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a source of wisdom

- The candidates do not have to reference a quote or quote it word-for-word.
- If the candidate states that it is in John 1:18 and then states another verse from John – then this can be credited. Candidates are not held to 'verses' but they must refer to the correct book.
- If the candidate gives the paraphrase and then puts (John 1:18) in brackets the paraphrase can have the mark and the bracketed reference is ignored.
- If a candidate quotes Jesus and it was Paul or vice versa; and the quote is not accredited to them, it is not credited.

If a candidate needs more space they should write answers within the scanned areas in the space below.

There should be no need for extra paper: the question paper allows enough space for the necessary responses.

Firstly within the trinity there are three equal persons - the father, the son and the holy spirit, they are not the same and are distinct though are all considered three persons of one god.

secondly the trinity is something that has always existed and will always exist, i.e. god is eternal, this is proven through the verse 'and the word was god and the word was with god' showing that Jesus was the word had always been there since creation, further emphasizing the idea of the existence of the trinity.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives two developed reasons, with reference to a source of wisdom

Belief one: 'three equal persons' (1) this is developed by 'the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit' (1)

Belief two: 'has always existed.' (1) this is developed by 'word was with God' (reference to a source of wisdom) (1) 'been there since creation' (1)

5 marks

Question 1 (d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The candidates are being assessed on AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is '**Evaluate**': this statement requires **considering the arguments for and against** and reaching a **justified conclusion**. There must be some consideration of the arguments: appraise the arguments to reach the higher levels in the mark scheme.

This type of question is marked from a levels-based mark scheme: marks are awarded according to levels descriptors.

Many candidates provided excellent answers giving reasons for and against, but then did not analyse or evaluate them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments and thereby limited candidates' progression to the higher levels.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.6, Christian eschatology – 'divergent understandings as to why they are important for Christians today'

Please note that, neither in the bullet point, nor on the question, are candidates required to give a non-religious response. The inconsistency triad does not support this question effectively because it demonstrates a reason for the non-existence of God, which would not be a Christian viewpoint or teaching. Candidates must respond to the question asked.

The question asked was:

'Belief in heaven and hell makes sense of life'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion

Many Christians would agree with this statement and say how the beliefs in heaven, as a place of peace and being united with God, and hell, as a place of suffering and not being united with God, makes sense of life, as it gives people a purpose to be alive. As Christians believe in free will and how there is moral evil and natural evil in the world, they understand life to be a test, and that the life that they will live on the Earth will be judged depending on their good actions or bad actions, which will dictate whether they go to heaven or hell. It also validates how humans did not just come to be through nothing, and that life must have a purpose and an end ultimate goal.

Other Christians might disagree with this statement and say how they do not believe in heaven and hell as physical things but more as metaphoric or symbolical states of mind, and how one does not need to be a Christian to believe in heaven and hell, as some Christians believe that once they die they will be incarnated again back into this life. But also

Other Christians who agree with scientific evidence ^{would} ~~but~~ also be against this as they believe that it does not exist, but also how ~~could~~ if God is omniscient and all caring, he ~~would~~ not put ~~people~~ ^{people} into hell as he is forgiving, thus not making sense of hell being a real place, because other Christians believe that God will just reward those who do good but make ~~evil~~ evil doers non-existent, but not go to hell to suffer, to console, belief in heaven and hell does make sense of life as it gives people a sense of meaning and how this ^{life} ~~is~~ is a test for the next life

(Total for Question 1 = 27 marks)



The candidate reaches Level 2 because they:

- provide reasons for and against the statement, making brief (superficial) arguments on both sides
- demonstrate a limited understanding of the beliefs surrounding this statement
- do not attempt to appraise the arguments given
- do not offer any new information or evaluation in the conclusion

The candidate is awarded marks at the top of the mark range because some but not all of the demands of the level descriptor are met.

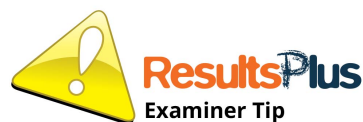
SPaG is awarded 3 marks, in this example, because they:

- spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy
- use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
- use a wide range of specialist terms appropriately

Response: 6 marks

SPaG: 3 marks

Total: 9 marks



Answer the question asked

Evaluate this statement **considering the arguments for and against**

To reach the higher level, appraise or consider the value of the arguments

Question 2 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.2, 'The role of sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations' (...) Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions'.

The question asked was 'Outline three sacraments in the Catholic Church.'

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a list.

An example:

Outline 3 characteristics of God:

- God is creator (1 mark)
- God is creator, judge and lawgiver (1 mark for list or sentence)
- God is creator, busy and distant. (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)
- Busy, distant and **God is creator**, (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)
- Creator, judge, lawgiver (1 mark for list)
- Creator, busy, distant (0 Marks) (all three elements need to be correct for 1 mark)
- Creator, judge, distant (0 marks)

Baptism

Eucharist

Confession



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate is awarded 1 mark for a correct list.

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Write in full sentences to receive higher marks: do not list

Question 2 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.8: 'The work of Christian Aid, what it does.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, quotes, or examples. The development must be of the reason given and for the question asked.

The question asked was 'Explain two actions Christian Aid performs in the world.'

Candidates needed to distinguish between what Christian Aid does, and why.

Christian Aid helps countries who have suffered from natural disasters for example the earthquake in Nepal. They also provide facilities for poor countries. Christian Aid also raise awareness to people about poverty in the world.



Action one: 'helps countries who have suffered natural disasters' (1) developed by 'for example, the earthquake in Nepal' (1)

Action two: 'raise awareness of people in poverty around the world' (1)

3 marks

Christian aid provides water and food for the less fortunate. ~~and~~
Christian aid also provide shelter and a place to sleep for the needy. This is charity work which is a thing that was loved by Jesus Christ and ~~was~~ the one who is involved in this type of charity work would be granted a great reward.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

First action: 'provides water and food' – this is not developed by discussion of the objective of the help (1)

Second action: 'to provide shelter'. This is not developed (1)

2 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Make sure you answer all parts of the question

Question 2 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.7, 'The role and importance of the church in the local community.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, quotes, or examples. The development must be of the reason given and for the question asked.

The reasons should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom': this must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

The question asked was 'Explain two reasons why a local community needs a church'

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

This question could be answered in a variety of ways. The candidates answered this question well but not many were able to refer to a source of wisdom.

The church provides facilities for the local community such as soup kitchen for the homeless, youth clubs, sports etc. This brings the community together and also spreads the word of Christ. As Jesus said to his disciples 'Love your neighbours' (~~Mark~~). This shows that the church are obligated to help the community as Jesus commanded it.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Reason one: 'provide facilities for the local community' (1) developed by 'such as soup kitchens'. (1)

This is later developed by the source of wisdom 'love your neighbour' (1)

Reason two: 'brings the community together' (1) developed by 'spread the word of God' (1)

5 marks

Local communities need a church as it gives support to community as it would provide food and aid in natural disasters or a place to learn about the teachings of Jesus. Also it can provide ~~the way to~~ a way for Christians to perform Eucharist and ~~the~~ baptism which are the essential sacraments. This creates a Christian community so by being there can help people convert to the blessed path of Jesus Christ as Jesus said "Go out.... and fish for people" meaning bring them to Christianity for them to be apart of the sheep.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Reason one: 'gives support to the community' (1)
developed by 'provide food and aid' (1)

Reason two: 'provides a way for Christians to
perform baptism' (1) developed by 'this creates
a christian community' (1) and supported by a
reference to 'fish for people' (1)

5 marks

Question 2 (d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The candidates are being assessed on AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is '**Evaluate**': this statement requires **considering the arguments for and against** and reaching a **justified conclusion**. There must be some consideration of the arguments: appraise the arguments to reach the higher levels in the mark scheme. Many candidates provided excellent answers giving reasons for and against, but not analysing or evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments and thereby students' progression to the higher levels.

This type of question is marked from a levels-based mark scheme: marks are awarded according to levels descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices: Bullet point, 2.3 'divergent Christian attitudes towards the importance of each type of prayer for Christians today.'

Please note that, neither in the bullet point, nor on the question, are candidates required to give a non-religious response.

'Prayer is the most important thing a Christian can do'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- reach a justified conclusion

The answer begins by sounding extremely positive, however, ultimately it does not make sense.

Throughout time, the importance of certain actions and beliefs have been argued over thoroughly. "Faith without actions is dead". This statement was said by Jesus and this almost eliminates beliefs from the hierarchy of importance as actions are much more important to the word (Jesus) who is God. Furthermore, the fact that Jesus himself used to pray also signifies the importance of prayer. Prayer is also the main form of ~~spiritually~~ spiritually connecting / communicating with God. However some Christians may argue that they do not pray however their beliefs are enough to lead them to eternal paradise, which is partly true. God did say "ask what you please and I will respond". This also presents the importance of prayer, as the term ask refers to pray to me. Overall, I believe that prayer is the most important thing a Christian can conduct, as it pleases God, it was

conducted by Jesus himself and is the "gateway" to paradise. However some may disagree with the importance of prayer as they could argue that genuine belief, sacraments and events such as lent are not prayers but are still very vital and essential in Christianity as a whole.



The candidate reaches Level 1 because:

- the knowledge and understanding are isolated (superficial)
- there is a simple 'for and against' argument given
- the judgements made are unsupported and generic, with no reasons or weak reasons, that are not supported or justified
- the full answer is summarised in the candidate's conclusion
- the conclusion is a repetition of an earlier point made

The candidate is awarded marks at the top of the mark range because most of the demands of the level descriptor are met.

3 marks



Always read through your answers

Prayer allows Christians to communicate with God and attain a close relationship with God. This is important in living a peaceful life. Jesus taught his disciples the Lords Prayer which is practiced by ^{the} majority of Christians and is important as Jesus taught it. It also symbolises unity and love in Christianity. Prayer allows Christians to be thankful to God; ~~and~~ intercede for others; supplicate and ask for forgiveness. This allows Christians to have hope and feel God's grace if their prayers are accepted.

However some may argue that other practices such as the Eucharist is more important. As it symbolises Jesus and the ~~is~~ sacrifice he done for humanity. This is reflected in (Luke) when Jesus says 'do this in remembrance of me'. This shows that remembering Jesus through the Eucharist is very important as Jesus commanded it.

Also some may argue that baptism is most important as Jesus was baptised by st Paul. Also, the trinity was present at the baptism as mentioned in (Matthew) 'the spirit of God descended like a dove'. This shows that baptism is very important as it cleanses you in the name of the trinity, which is an essential belief for Christian.

(Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 51 MARKS

In conclusion, prayer is an essential practice for Christians as it allows them to get closer to God, whereas some may argue that baptism and the Eucharist are just as important.



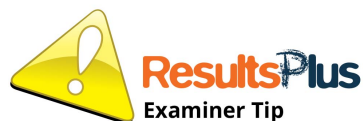
The candidate reaches Level 2 because they:

- give very good arguments for and against the statement, with one correct reference to St Paul
- do not go on to consider the arguments given
- provide reasons for and against the statement making brief (superficial) arguments on both sides
- demonstrate a limited understanding of the beliefs surrounding this statement

The conclusion offers an attempt at making a judgment, but this is not fully justified and builds on a limited range of elements in the answer

The candidate is awarded marks at the top of the mark range because most of the demands of the level descriptor are met.

6 marks



Candidates should review each argument given and **consider** their value in order to reach a justified conclusion – to evaluate the statement

Prayer holds great importance as it helps to have a personal and spiritual connection with God. This form of worship can differ as many Christians engage in different forms of it: liturgical, non-liturgical and individual ~~prayer~~ prayer. All forms are equally important, however some may be seen as more important and significant. When a Christian prays to God, they devote their time to either supplicate or engage in intercession, where they pray for someone else. This symbolises the fact that God created ~~us~~ ^{Christians} in his own image and therefore, ~~wants us to~~ wants humans to treat each other fairly.

However, some may argue this statement as by saying there are many other elements which hold great importance: Catholics and Orthodox Christians may devote more time to the seven sacraments and complete them rather than praying.

It is also arguable that God ^{is} all-knowing and omnipotent; he has the ability to understand our intentions, therefore, a Christian does not need to pray - he knows our intentions.

In conclusion, to this, prayer helps Christians to reach out to God personally and achieve a spiritual connection with him. He enables them to thank him, ask for forgiveness or wish for something. It is the most important thing as it builds trust with God and be ~~more~~ more thankful to him when he accepts their prayer.

The candidate reaches Level 2 because the:

- first part of the response does not answer the question. The reference is incorrectly attributed
- candidate does not attempt to appraise the arguments given
- candidate then provides reasons for and against the statement making brief (superficial) arguments on both sides
- the candidate demonstrates a limited understanding of beliefs surrounding this statement
- conclusion offers an attempt at making a judgment, but this is not fully justified and builds on a limited range of elements in the answer

Most of the demands of the level descriptor are met.

6 marks

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice :

- Do not attach extra sheets to your examination paper: write within the scannable pages using the blank spaces
- When answering the (a) items use three full sentences
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) items must be relevant to the question and support the reason given
- The (d) items asks for evaluation, after considering the evidence. The higher grades are achieved if the evidence/reasons given is 'considered' or appraised for its value as an argument as part of deciding the evaluation
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the answer
- Candidates should read the questions carefully, and answer the question asked fully

Grade Boundaries

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<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

