



Pearson

Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies A (3RA0)
Paper 02 Study of Christianity

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2018

Publications Code 3RA0_02_1806_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2018

Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies
Religious Studies Short Course: 3RA0 02– Christianity

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall qualification. The assessment consists of two questions, candidates must answer both questions. The details of the assessment content is provided in the specification. Centres are to use this rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

The course is divided into two sections:

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

3RA0_02_Q1a

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

The question asked was:

'Outline three events of the last days of Jesus' life'

Candidates are asked to '**Outline**' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can't reach a maximum of three marks.

Overall candidates answered this question confidently and could identify the key events, some candidates did not state the event but rather how this is celebrated today, for example, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and therefore could not be awarded marks.

An example of how the marks were applied is as follows.

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)

Examiner Tip:

Candidates must write in sentences to gain full marks.

3RA0_02_Q1b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.2. 'The creation of the universe and humanity: the divergent ways in which it may be understood by Christians'.

The question asked was:

'Explain two ways the biblical creation account can be understood by Christians, including literal and metaphorical'.

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, a quote or example. The development must be of the reason given and to 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 know the story. Marks were awarded for candidates who chose an alternative understanding that could come from the creation account.

3RA0_02_Q1c

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.3. 'The Incarnation: the nature and importance of the person of Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God and its significance for Christians today.'

The question asked was:

'Explain two reasons why the Incarnation is important for Christians today.'

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, a quote or example. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

The reasons then 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 examiners are unsure they will use a search engine. Enter the gist of the paraphrase and 'Bible' or 'Christian teaching'.
- If the candidate states that it is in John 1: 18 and then states another verse from John – then this can be awarded. We are not holding candidate to 'verses' but it must be 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 awarded.

3RA0_02_Q1d

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 **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion** – there must some consideration of the arguments (appraise the arguments to gain the higher grades). Many candidates do excellent answers giving reasons for and against but not analysing or evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting student's progression to the higher levels.

We are now marking using levels and award a best fit according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.7. 'The problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God'.

The question asked was:

'God cannot be all loving because suffering exists.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

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 as 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.

3RA0_02_Q2a

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.1 'Christian worship: Liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship, including activities that are informal and individual'.

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** ways a Christian may worship'.

Candidates were not awarded for the places worship takes place. For example 'going to church' unless the way they worship when they get there was outlined.

The majority of candidates gained the marks for this question.

3RA0_02_Q2b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.6 'The future of the Christian Church: (...) the purpose of missionary and evangelical work'.

The question asked was:
'Explain two purposes of missionary work.'

This question was particularly well answered by the majority of candidates.

3RA0_02_Q2c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.3 'The nature and purpose of prayer: (...) set prayers'.

The question asked was:
'Explain two reasons why some Christians use set prayers.'
In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

Some candidates didn't answer this question well and confused answers with liturgical and non-liturgical worship.

3RA0_02_Q2d

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

The question asked was:
'Churches should only support their local community.'
Evaluate this statement **considering arguments for and against**.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- **reach a justified conclusion.**

Many candidates re-wrote this question to be about why a Christian needs a local church, what it offers for Christians rather than the general community. This was awarded as an alternative approach.

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, answer the question asked fully.