

Examiners' Report  
June 2019

GCSE Religious Studies 1RA0 3C

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June 2019

Publications Code 1RA0\_3C\_1906\_ER

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## Introduction

This paper contributes 25% towards the overall award. 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 standard of candidate responses was similar to the previous series. Some candidates seemed to follow advice offered last year on the need for appraisal on (d) questions and as a result were able to achieve level 3. However, candidates were not as successful on (c) questions and many could not refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

## Question 1 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Arguments for the Existence of Allah and specifically, bullet point 1.6. 'Cosmological argument... what the cosmological argument shows about the nature of Allah'.

Candidates are asked to 'outline' on (a) questions and therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark. Any further development is not required.

Some candidates struggled with this question and were not able to focus their response on the nature of Allah.

Candidates are advised to write three different points, in three different sentences. One mark is awarded for each sentence identifying one correct piece of information.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

1 (a) Outline **three** things the cosmological argument shows about the nature of Allah.

(3)

\* He is outside of the universe.

\* He is (uncaused) has no cause.

\* He is timeless / forever.



The candidate writes three sentences outlining three different things.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

He is the causer of everything. He is all powerful.  
~~He is uncaused~~ enough to cause everything. finally  
he is uncaused so he is the beginning of everything  
and everything comes from him.



The candidate writes three sentences outlining three different things.



Development is not needed on (a) items.

## Question 1 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Arguments for the Existence of Allah, specifically bullet point 1.6. 'Miracles as proof of the existence of Allah...reasons why they might lead to belief in the existence of Allah'.

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

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** ways miracles might lead to belief in the existence of Allah.

(4)

One way miracles lead to existence of Allah is that it inspires faith in people when they see the impossible performed. For example ~~the~~ Prophet Isa performed miracles ~~granted~~ such as turning a staff into a snake. Scientifically this isn't possible therefore the only being powerful enough to do this is Allah hence leading to belief. Another way miracles lead to belief comes from the revelation itself. It is a miracle in its own form. It was read by Prophet Muhammad (saw) who was unlettered and didn't know how. Yet he was able to do so by the power of God and the words he read are still relevant today. This fact on its own is enough to lead to belief in the existence of Allah.



The candidate gives two developed ways miracles lead to belief in the existence of Allah.

Way one: 'inspires faith in people when they see the impossible' (1); developed by 'the only being powerful enough to do this is Allah' (1).

Way two: 'the revelation itself, it is a miracle'(1); developed by '...able to do so by the power of God' (1).



The candidate is credited for the explanation even though there are inaccuracies in the example given.

Miracles might lead to belief in the existence of Allah as miracles are impossible and nobody can perform miracles. Nobody but Allah can perform the impossible.

People may be in need of help and for example, a miracle saving someone's life would lead to belief in the existence of Allah as it shows that He is watching over us and protecting us.



This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

Because miracles are supernatural acts that only prophets can do with gods permission. So if there is a miracle that person must be prophet and therefore Allah exists. Secondly, ~~miracles~~ they show gods power because humans cannot perform these acts. So Allah must be real.



The candidate gives two developed ways miracles lead to belief in the existence of Allah.

Way one: 'supernatural acts' (1); developed by 'with gods permission' (1).

Way two: 'show gods power' (1); developed by 'humans cannot perform these' (1).



## Question 1 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Arguments for the Existence of Allah, specifically bullet point 1.1. 'Revelation as proof of the existence of Allah'.

Those candidates that answered this question well referred to the revelation of the Qur'an and direct and indirect revelation. Some candidates could not develop reasons and did not refer to a source of wisdom.

This candidate is awarded 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** ways in which revelation might prove the existence of Allah.

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

(5)

One way revelation proves the existence of God is through the fact that the Qur'an is the final revelation. Allah proves his existence ~~in the~~ through the Qur'an. He states "Today I have perfected your religion" which suggests that this is the final revelation and therefore proves God's existence as ~~it is his~~ it is his form of communicating with his creation.

Furthermore, revelations create a numinous feeling causing people to feel amazed. This allows them to feel a presence that is unexplainable and that unexplainable presence can be explained through Allah. Only he has the power to reveal such things and therefore he must exist.



The candidate gives one developed way with reference to a source of wisdom and offers a further developed way.

Reason one provides reference to a source of wisdom, the Qur'an: 'today I have perfected your religion' (1). This is developed by, 'suggests this is the final revelation' (1), and further developed by, 'his form of communicating with his creation' (1).

Reason two: 'causing people to feel amazed' (1). This is developed by, 'that unexplainable presence can be explained through Allah' (1).



The developed points should be supported by reference to a source of wisdom and authority for the (c) questions on this paper.

This candidate is awarded 5 marks.

One way revelation may prove the existence of Allah is that through recitation of the Quran ~~and~~ Muslims understand all his qualities and his name. This allows them to become closer to him. Allah confirms in the Quran that "this is the book in which there is no doubt", showing that everything mentioned has significance. Revelation of the Quran to Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel shows God's existence and provided them with guidance from which are directly from him.

Another reason revelation proves the existence of Allah is that it shows his quality of ~~transcendence~~ immanent that he is involved within the world and caretaker for his creation.



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The candidate gives one developed way with reference to a source of wisdom and another developed way.

Way one: 'understand all his qualities' (1), this is developed by, 'allows them to be closer to him' (1), further developed by reference to a source of wisdom Qur'an, 'this is the book in which there is no doubt' (1).

Way two, 'shows his quality of immanent' (1), this is developed by, 'he is involved within the world' (1).



It is good practice to separate the two points through paragraphs.

## **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.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Arguments for the Existence of Allah, specifically bullet point 1.7. 'Issues raised by existence of suffering and Allah as compassionate'.

The question asked candidates to evaluate the given statement, considering arguments for and against and referring to Muslim teachings.

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

Many candidates did offer responses giving reasons for and against but did not evaluate them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments and consequently restricted student's progression to the higher levels.

This candidate was awarded level 3 and was awarded 7 marks.

\*(d) "Suffering shows the compassion of Allah."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Suffering shows the compassion of Allah as ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> is through suffering a persons ~~the~~ rewards increase. For example, if a Muslim were to remain patient during hardship it ~~is~~<sup>is</sup> stated in hadith that Allah will ~~reward~~<sup>reward</sup> him <sup>more &</sup> with ease. This is a robust argument as it was also mentioned in the Quran that 'after ~~suffering~~<sup>hardship</sup> comes ease' & 'Allah doesn't burden a soul beyond its capacity', further indicating that Allah <sup>cares</sup> ~~cares~~ for his creation & ~~keeps~~<sup>tests</sup> them in ways they can handle.

Moreover, suffering ~~shows~~<sup>shows</sup> Allah's compassion as ~~it~~<sup>it</sup> is mentioned in the Quran that Allah wants what is best for his creation and He is the best of planners. This reinforces the idea that Allah will ~~will~~ may

cause you to suffer now but ultimately He's preparing for you better things in either this life or the next.

However, some may argue that suffering contradicts Allah's compassion as it eliminates the fact that he is benevolent as a creator. This is a weak argument as throughout Islam, life has been mentioned to be a test and you can only taste success if you strive and suffer.

Moreover, it could be argued that if you suffer one to suffer their entire life shows God's negligence & malevolence and that God may be just a creator and nothing more than that. However, this is also a weak argument as just as there is suffering God also promises reward & this can be identified within the Quran as God never mentions punishment <sup>in a verse</sup> without blessings & rewards after.

To conclude, suffering shows Allah's compassion as life is a test & God is <sup>the</sup> best of planners. (Total for Question 1 = 27 marks)



The candidate gains level 3 because they use an accurate understanding of religion and belief to develop reasoning which addresses the issues raised by the statement. This response is presented in an accurate and coherent way. Logical chains of reasoning are identifiable on both sides of the argument. The candidate is starting to make judgements supported by some appraisal of the evidence, this can be seen at the end of each of the arguments made by the candidate. The candidate begins to appraise the point being made but also offers further knowledge in their attempt to appraise. The candidate meets the demands of the level 2 descriptor but does not fully meet the level 3 requirements and is therefore awarded at the lower end of the mark range.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar was awarded 3 marks in this example, because:

- The candidate spells and punctuates with considerable accuracy.
- The candidate uses rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall.
- The candidate uses a good range of specialist terms as appropriately.



The appraisal of evidence required for the higher marks can come at any point in the answer. Those who provide the best answers give one side of the argument and then use the opposing viewpoint to clearly indicate the weaknesses of the first side.



Some Muslims may agree with the statement 'Suffering shows the compassion of Allah' due to the following reasons. Firstly, Allah states in the Quran 'no soul shall be given a burden greater than it can bear' this means that Allah himself controls the burdens upon everyone, and as Allah is all loving, he would not harm any human being without their being a greater benefit. Secondly, suffering is a way that Muslims can get closer to Allah, for example, it is a common teaching that a person who is ill, Allah will answer their prayers, or an oppressed person, Allah will answer their prayers. Some Muslims may agree that this life is a test and suffering are the challenges Allah sets for us, he has given us the answers to the challenge - the Quran and sunnah, therefore is compassionate as he wants us to pass. ~~We shall test~~ 'certainly we shall test you'.

On the other hand, some Muslims may disagree with the statement 'suffering shows ~~Allah~~ the compassion of Allah' due to the following reasons. Firstly, moral evil is done by humans, humans have free will, therefore inflict evil and

suffering amongst each other, for example murder, rape or theft. ~~some~~ Some would feel it is unfair to blame Allah for these. Secondly Allah states in the Quran 'whatever that is good is from me, but whatever that is bad is from yourself', this shows that evil is not from Allah therefore it cannot show Allah's compassion. Allah's qualities are all merciful, all compassionate and all loving, many would feel that suffering is not something a God with these qualities would place upon someone.

Taking a detached critical overview, my critical judgement of the two arguments, is that the arguments against the statement are extremely convincing and use sources of authority and also the wisdom and logic of human understanding. However, I feel more convinced by the arguments for the statement as it is agreed with more Islamic teachings, more sources of authority; even though it goes against human logic, Muslims believe Allah is transcendent and All knowing and it is taught that Allah is beyond human comprehension, therefore that is the reason why suffering does not make total sense. Allah knows what's best for us, he is compassionate therefore gives it to us even if it is suffering - there is always a greater benefit.



The candidate gains level 3 because they use an accurate understanding of religion and belief to develop reasoning which addresses the issues raised by the statement. This is presented in an accurate and coherent way and logical chains of reasoning are identifiable on both sides of the argument. The candidate is starting to make judgements supported by some appraisal of the evidence, this can be seen at the end in the concluding paragraph where although it repeats more knowledge an attempt is made to judge the validity of the arguments. The candidate meets the demands of the level 2 descriptor but does not fully meet the level 3 requirements and is therefore awarded at the lower end of the mark range. Spelling, punctuation and grammar was awarded 3 marks in this example, because:

- The candidate spells and punctuates with considerable accuracy.
- The candidate uses rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall.
- The candidate uses a good range of specialist terms as appropriately.



Prepare students not to argue that the statement is true or false, but rather why the reasons given for can be disputed by the alternative opinion. Why do one group of Muslims say one thing and the other group say their argument is incorrect, or is weak?

## Question 2 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century, specifically bullet point 2.1. 'The importance and purpose of marriage in Islam'.

Candidates are asked to 'outline' on (a) questions and therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark. Any further development is not required.

This question was answered well by candidates, with many able to outline three purposes of marriage.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

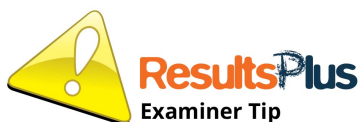
**2 (a) Outline three purposes of marriage in Islam.**

(3)

Marriage in Islam is 'sunnah' as it completes half of a muslims deen, as our prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did and muslims follow his actions. Marriage also connects a man and women together with the blessing of Allah with the gift of 'sex' for physical, emotional needs as well as for procreation. Lastly marriage is to have children and keep the Ummah stable in Islam. To raise their children as good muslims.



The candidate outlines three purposes in sentences.



Development is not needed on (a) items.

This candidate is awarded 3 marks.

One purpose is to complete half of a muslim's faith. Another reason is to increase the community and ~~is~~ through having children lawfully and finally to ~~guard~~ guard the man and women's chastity in the manner permitted.



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The candidate outlines three purposes in sentences.

## Question 2 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century, specifically bullet point 2.7. 'Muslim teaching about the equality of men and women in the family: divergent Muslim beliefs, teachings and attitudes about the role of men and women in the family with reference to the Qur'an including Surah 4 and the time of Muhammad'.

This was answered well by candidates who described the traditional role of Muslim women in the family. Candidates who explained the role of women outside the family or the role of men were not credited.

Candidates are asked to 'explain' on (b) questions and offer two reasons. Both reasons need to be fully developed in order to gain 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote, or examples. The development must relate to the reason given and to the question asked.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** Islamic teachings about the role of women in the family.

(4)

Islam teaches women that they should give guidance to their children from a very young age so that they can grow up to be pious adults. This is a very important role as the children are the future generation and should continue the message of Islam.

Another Islamic teaching about the role of women in the family is that while their husbands work, if they don't work, they should maintain the household and provide food for the family.



The candidate gives two developed teachings.

Teaching one: 'give guidance to their children' (1), developed by 'pious adults' (1).

Teaching two: 'maintain the household' (1), developed by 'provide food for the family' (1).



It is advisable to separate the two points into paragraphs. The role of men is not credited.

In Islam, the role of men and women are equal. They both have equal rights and opportunities. However their roles within the family differ. The primary role for a woman is to look after the husband's property and maintain the welfare of the house. Also it is to look after the kids with a good, Islamic upbringing, whilst remaining faithful to the husband. This is also sunnah for a man to do, but his primary role is to provide for the family.



This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

This candidate is awarded 4 marks.

One Islamic teaching is that women ~~are~~ ~~are sup~~ nurture and ~~sup~~ guide their children in the family. The ~~women woman~~ is often the mother in the family who is responsible for ~~for~~ bringing up her children in a moral and religious ~~hope~~ manner, teaching them right from wrong.

A further Islamic teaching is that women should support their husband, ~~and to take care~~ whilst also ~~maintain~~ maintaining the domestic household chores.



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The candidate gives two developed teachings.

Teaching one: 'nurture and guide their children' (1), developed by 'moral and religious manner' (1).

Teaching two: 'support their husband' (1), developed by 'maintaining the domestic household chores' (1).



## Question 2 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century, specifically bullet point 2.4. 'Support for the family in the ummah: how and why the community tries to support families, including through worship, rites of passage, classes for parents, groups for children and counselling'.

Less successful candidates could not develop reasons and few referred to a source of wisdom.

This candidate is awarded 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** ways Muslim families are supported by the ummah.

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

(5)

children and parents are offered classes where they are able to enhance their understanding about the Quran. For parents, they are able to discuss issues regarding the upbringing of their children. and for the infants, the recreational activities encouragement to come to the mosque for madrasah (school).

Also, counselling clinics are available as in the Quran it says: "Make peace between your 2 brothers and be mindful of God" so Muslims aid each other by talking to an imam and get help in resolving issues like ~~premarital~~ marriage advice and initiating divorce between a husband and wife.



The candidate gives one developed way and a further developed way with reference to a source of wisdom.

Way one: 'offered classes' (1), this is developed by 'able to discuss issues' (1).

Way two: 'counselling clinics are available' (1), this is developed by reference to a source of wisdom, the Qur'an, 'make peace between your 2 brothers' (1), further developed by 'help in resolving issues' (1).



Some candidates attempted to force a source of wisdom that they had learned into every answer. This often meant they did not answer the question at all. The reference needs to be part of the answer.

## **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.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the 21st Century, specifically bullet point 2.2. 'Muslim teachings on sexual relationships outside of marriage'.

This question asked candidates to refer to non-religious points of view.

This candidate was awarded level 3 and was awarded 7 marks.

(d) "Sex outside marriage should never be allowed."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

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(12)

It can be strongly argued that sex outside of marriage should never be allowed. ~~in a Muslim~~ This is because it is haram, and forbidden by Allah, and therefore if a Muslim was to commit this act outside of marriage, they will be punished by Allah. This argument is strengthened by ~~the Quran~~ by sources of wisdom and authority in Islam which state: "those who engage in illicit sexual relations will be punished by Allah".

However, this argument can be weakened by the fact that some Muslims may disagree with the statement and believe that this view is outdated, and may have no place in contemporary society.

~~Others~~ <sup>Atheists</sup> may also agree that it is better for people to see it they are sexually compatible before getting married and having children.

This is because if a couple are later to find out they are incompatible, it would affect the children if the parents were to divorce, and would therefore side with the ethical teaching of the lesser of two evils.

~~He~~ <sup>He</sup> Atheists and other non-religious people would also agree with this and argue that sex outside of marriage is acceptable, as they do not believe the Quran in the words of Allah, and do therefore not believe it holds any authority.

However, other ~~a~~ non-religious people and Muslims

can agree that sex outside of marriage can lead to people ~~not~~ getting sexually transmitted diseases, and it would therefore be better to not perform this action before marriage.

Other critics may also accept that some people would like to wait until they are with the correct person, and married to have sexual relations, because it is an intimate thing and should only be shared with the person's spouse, which strengthens the argument that sexual relations should never be allowed outside of marriage.

→ It may also lead to adultery if a person is married. In the Qur'an it states "do not even come near adultery" and the Shari'ah Law has strict punishments for adulterers. ~~To do~~

To conclude, although the argument that sexual relations outside of marriage ~~can lead~~ should never be allowed may be accepted by few people in society, the argument that is stronger is that sex outside marriage should never be allowed. This is because it is mentioned in the Qur'an and the Qur'an holds supreme authority ~~in~~ in Islam, making it the stronger argument.

\* Also, if a ~~family~~ two people were to have a baby before marriage, that child may have an unstable upbringing, which is unfair on the child.

(Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)



The candidate gained level 3 because they use an accurate understanding of religion and belief to develop reasoning which addresses the issues raised by the statement. This is presented in an accurate and coherent way. Logical chains of reasoning are identifiable on both sides of the argument. The candidate is starting to make judgements supported by some appraisal of the evidence, this can be seen throughout the response where the candidate is offering lots of arguments for and against with some attempts to judge the evidence.

The candidate meets the demands of the level 2 descriptor but does not fully meet the level 3 requirements and is therefore awarded at the lower end of the mark range.



Simply stating an argument is strong or weak does not necessarily move a response to level 3, similarly, stating more knowledge or adding further arguments for or against is insufficient to achieve level 3.

There must be more robust appraisal of the argument/evidence as well as judgements made about the validity of the argument/evidence rather than generalisations, in order to access the higher marks for appraisal.

## 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 booklet pages using the blank spaces.
- When answering the (a) questions use three full sentences.
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) questions must be relevant to the question and support the reasons given.
- The (d) questions ask for an evaluation after considering the evidence. Higher marks are achieved if the evidence/reasons given, is/are 'considered' or appraised for their value as an argument.
- On (d) questions the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that will be credited in the answer, so candidates must respond to all aspects of the question.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully in order to ensure that their answer fully responds to the question being asked.

## Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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





