



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies Short Course (3RA0)

Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Catholic
Christianity

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Religious Studies A Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion Option 1A – Catholic Christianity.

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall award. The assessment consists of two questions: candidates must answer all the 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.

In some questions, marks are available for correct spelling, grammar and punctuation – SPaG

AO stands for Assessment Objective

3RA0_01_Q01a

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic Beliefs

Bullet point 1.6: The events in the Paschal Mystery – Catholic teachings about the resurrection of Jesus

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** events of the resurrection of Jesus'

In (a) items A01 is assessed and can be awarded to a maximum of 3 marks; one mark for each correct point identified.

A significant number of candidates wrote about other events in the Paschal Mystery and not the resurrection of Jesus, particularly the crucifixion and ascension.

Candidates are advised to:

- write three separate sentences
- use a technique such as starting a new line for each point, to outline three teachings/ways/reasons/beliefs

3RA0_01_Q01b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic Beliefs

Bullet point 1.8: Catholic beliefs about divergent Christian beliefs about life after death

The question asked was:

'Describe **two** differences in beliefs about life after death between Catholic Christianity and other forms of the main religious tradition of Great Britain.'

A01 is assessed in this question and can be awarded a maximum of 4 marks.

Candidates are required to recognise that Christianity is the main religious tradition of Great Britain. Candidates who do not consider different attitudes within Christianity cannot be awarded more than 2 marks.

Marks were awarded marks for describing a relevant Catholic belief; a second mark was available for a contrasting description from another Christian tradition. There was a maximum of four marks.

The question required a comparison between Christian beliefs about life after death. A number of candidates compared Catholicism with a world religion (mainly Judaism) and therefore the contrast could not be credited.

Many responses made reference to Catholic belief in purgatory, comparing it to divergent Christians who believe in only heaven and hell.

Examiner Tip

- Ensure that you plan for the * marked sections on the specification, which require candidates to know divergent teachings/beliefs
- Ensure that candidates know that the main religious tradition of Great Britain is Christianity.

3RA0_01_Q01c

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic beliefs

Bullet point 1:7: The significance of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholic beliefs about salvation.

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why salvation is important to Catholics.'

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

A01 is assessed in this question and can be awarded a maximum of 5 marks.

Candidates are required to give two reasons, both need to be developed for 4 marks and one of the reasons also needs to be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom'. If the 'reference to a source of wisdom' is credited as a development it cannot gain a further mark; a mark is given when the source is in addition to the reason and development.

Candidates tended to focus on being saved from sins before judgement, or the sacrifice of Jesus for salvation. Some candidates were able to link salvation being needed to restore peoples' relationship with God.

A significant number of candidates added a source of wisdom and authority; however, many of these did not match the reason or development given and simply served as an add-on.

Examiner Tip

- The source must be relevant and used as part of your reasoning.

3RA0_01_Q01d

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. Candidates are 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 1.5: The Incarnation: Jesus as incarnate Son, the divine Word, including John 1, both fully God and fully human; the scriptural origins of this belief, including John 1:1-18 and its importance for Catholics today.

The question asked was:

'The best way to understand Jesus is as both fully God and fully human.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

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

The question asks if it is the 'best' way. Many responses gave a for and against Jesus being fully God or fully human, arguing that he could only be one or the other, which is not Catholic teaching.

Those who understood the requirements of the question were able to argue why seeing Jesus as fully God and fully human is the best way and reasons why there are better ways, e.g. as the Son of Man or as a teacher.

Examiner Tip

- Remember to provide a comprehensive appraisal of all the evidence given.
- Read the question carefully to ensure you are answering the question set.
- Do not argue that the statement is true or false: say why the reasons given 'for' are the best and can be disputed by the alternative opinion.

3RA0_01_Q02a

Candidates were assessed on Section two: Practices

Bullet point 2.1: The sacramental nature of reality... the meaning and effects of each of the seven sacraments.

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** effects of the sacraments.'

This question was very well-answered, with most candidates being able to give three effects of the sacraments.

Candidates were not given credit for listing the sacraments.

Examiner Tip

- Write three separate sentences, to outline three ways/reasons/effects.
- An 'outline' must be more than one word or item of knowledge.

3RA0_01_Q02b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.5: The role and importance of forms of popular piety: the nature and significance of the Rosary.

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why Catholics use the Rosary.'

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

In this question, assessment concerns candidates' knowledge from bullet point 2.5 in the specification about the Rosary as a form of popular piety. Teachers should use the wording and specialist terminology in the specification to assist candidates in the understanding of questions.

Examiner Tip

- Reference to a teaching or scripture is a good way to develop a reason.
- Develop reasons, for extra marks.
- Write answers that divide into two paragraphs, each containing a reason and a development.

3RA0_01_Q02c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.7: Catholic Social Teaching: how Catholic Social Teaching reflects the teaching to show love of neighbour; Catholic teaching on justice

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Catholic teachings on justice.

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

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. Candidates must also use a source of wisdom correctly in their answer, which must be identifiable, relevant and linked to the way given in the answer.

Some candidates were not prepared for this question and gave teaching on judgement and revenge.

Examiner Tip

- Be prepared for the whole breadth and depth of the specification, in order to achieve higher grades.

3RA0_01_Q02d

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 Two: Practices

Bullet point: 2.8 Catholic mission and evangelism: divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church and individual Catholics locally, nationally and globally

Many candidates re-wrote this question to ask why a Catholic needs a local church and what it offers for Catholics, rather than linking their response to evangelism. Many

candidates had limited understanding of evangelism and the different forms that it can take. Many candidates argued for and against that evangelism is not needed.

The question asked was:

'Local churches should be responsible for evangelism.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

There are no SPaG marks for Question 2d. SPaG marks are only given for Question 1d.

Summary

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

- Answer (a) items in outlines, for example full sentences
- Provide three sentences for (a) items, each on a separate line
- (b) items should have two developed reasons and not more than two
- Development may be (1) examples, (2) quotes, (3) extra relevant material. Development must link to the reason given and still answer the question set
- (c) items are similar to (b) items but should also use a source as a fifth element. The source of wisdom may be a paraphrase but should be identifiable. The source of wisdom must be linked to the reason given
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the answer
- (d) items ask 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
- (d) items must show an appraisal of the argument and not simply rely on a set format
- (d) item responses must show AO2 skills to receive high marks
- Candidates should read the questions carefully, and answer the question asked, fully
- Do not attach extra sheets to your examination paper: write within the scannable pages, using the blank spaces