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Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies A (1RA0)
Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second
Religion
Option 2A: Catholic Christianity

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Religious Studies A Paper 2A: Area of Study 2 –Catholic Christianity (Paper code: 1RA0/2A)

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award.

The assessment consists of two questions and candidates must answer all 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.

This area of study comprises a study in-depth of Catholic Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections:

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices.

Candidates had studied Catholic Christianity within the context of the wider British society.

Please note: AO stands for 'Assessment Objective'

SPaG stands for 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar'

Question 1 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

Bullet point. 1.7

The significance of the life, **death**, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholic beliefs about salvation and grace including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8– 12; the implications **and significance of these events for Catholic practice today**. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Outline **three** reasons why the death of Jesus is important.'

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)

Most candidates were awarded 2 marks. There was significant repetition in some answers. Candidates who answered the question by giving examples the resurrection and ascension were not awarded marks. A significant amount of answers incorrectly linked Jesus' death to freedom from original sin which is not a Catholic teaching.

Examiner advice: Candidates should write three sentences containing one piece of information in each. There is no need for development: it will not receive credit.

Question 1 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

Bullet point 1.3 Creation: the nature and significance of the **biblical account of Creation** including Genesis 1–3; and **how it may be understood in divergent ways in Christianity**, including reference to literal and metaphorical interpretations; the significance of the Creation account for Catholics in understanding the nature and characteristics of God, especially as Creator, benevolent, omnipotent and eternal. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked candidates to 'Explain two beliefs about the Creation account.'

Most candidates answered this confidently. Candidates were aware that there are different ways of interpretation such as liberal and literal. A minority of students compared the two creation accounts in Genesis. These were awarded positively. Weaker candidates simply retold the creation story.

Question 1 (c)

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**. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain **two** reasons why belief in Jesus as the Incarnate Son is important to Catholics. 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 for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. 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 markers of candidate work in centres are unsure if the quote will be accepted, use a search engine. Enter the gist of the paraphrase and 'Bible' or 'Catholic 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.

Most candidates could identify the importance of God's recognition of human suffering, often associated with the effectiveness of sacrifice on the Cross.

Question 1 (d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The 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 **considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion** – there must be some consideration of the arguments (appraise, judge the value of, the arguments to reach the higher levels).

Many candidates gave excellent answers citing reasons for and against but not considering the value of them or analysing/evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

Many centres had attempted to introduce a writing frame to encouraged appraisal, but the candidates did not appear to understand the demands of the skill required.

Some candidates wrote 'This is a strong argument because ...' and repeated the previous point or giving another point, or reason referring to the statement not the argument given.

In other examples, Candidates wrote 'This is a weak argument because...' and gave generic statements such as, 'it's not in the Bible'.

The majority of answers did not address the reasons for the diversity within the beliefs of Christianity.

In some cases, students focussed on the strength/weakness of an argument but had not demonstrated any understanding of religion and belief.

Examiner advice: centres should refer to training materials online. Candidates require the religious understanding of the diversity within the religious tradition, and the arguments for and against before they can begin to evaluate.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teaching

Bullet point 1.8

Catholic beliefs about eschatology: life after death; the nature of resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell and purgatory, including reference to John 11:17–27 and 2 Corinthians 5:1–10; **divergent Christian beliefs about life after death with reference to purgatory and the nature of resurrection; why belief in life after death is important for Catholics today.** (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was *(d) "The belief in hell influences a Christian's daily life."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

This question was accessible for all ability candidates. Almost all candidates could see that better behaviour might result from fear of condemnation, and many also knew that belief in Hell is not universal and that all are saved through Jesus' action on the Cross. Lots of correct references to Purgatory from more able. Some candidates did not read the question and gave non-religious view point, stating that God does not exist so nor does the after life and as a result they were not credited.

Question 2 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.3

The funeral rite as a liturgical celebration of the Church: practices associated with the funeral rite in the home, the church and the cemetery, including reference to 'Preparing my funeral' by Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster; **the aims of the funeral rite** including communion with the deceased; the communion of the community and the

proclamation of eternal life to the community and its significance for Catholics. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was 'Outline three aims of the Catholic funeral rite.'

This question was generally not answered with correct knowledge. Most answers referred to celebrating the life of the deceased, saying a final goodbye, and giving them a good send-off. Limited knowledge of purpose of religious funeral rite.

Question 2 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.1 The sacramental nature of reality: Catholic teachings about how the whole of creation manifests the presence of God; the meaning and effects of each of the **seven sacraments** including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1210–1211; the practice and symbolism of each sacrament; how sacraments communicate the grace of God; divergent Christian attitudes to sacraments, including reference to Orthodox and Protestant Christianity.

The question asked was 'Explain two reasons why the sacraments are important to Catholics.'

Generally, well answered with many references to particular sacraments with explanation of their purpose. For example baptism is important as it makes a child a member of the Catholic Church (1) *developed with* this frees them from original sin (1)

Some of the responses were generic comments on the eucharist and lacked evidence of Christian teachings.

Examiner advice: Refer to the specification bullet point and cover all the different parts of it. These bullet points are the basis of question setting.

Question 2 (c)

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, **peace** and reconciliation Evangelii Gaudium paragraphs 182–237 – The inclusion of the poor in society; How these teachings might be reflected in the lives of individual Catholics; the work of CAFOD, what it does and why.. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain two Catholic beliefs about peace. 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 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 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.

Most candidates were able to achieve marks on this question. A lot of reference to loving one's neighbour, supported by Catholic social teaching and occasional reference to the actions of Jesus, particularly after his arrest.

Examiner advice: Centres struggling to find sources of wisdom should refer to the specification and/or previous mark schemes.

Question 2 (d)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two. Practices

Bullet point 2.4 Prayer as the 'raising of hearts and minds to God': the **nature and significance of different types of prayer; the Lord's Prayer** including Matthew 6:5-14, set (formulaic) prayers and informal (extempore) prayer; when each type might be used and why; the importance of prayer and the importance for Catholics of having different types of worship. *(Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was "The Lord's Prayer is the only prayer needed."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

Candidates who did well were able to identify aspects of the prayer which emphasise different styles of prayer in order to show its comprehensiveness. Many also referred to it's being taught by Jesus in response to the request to be taught to pray. This was contrasted with the fact that there are other prayers and that these are also necessary.

Paper Summary

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

- Answer (a) items in outlines need to be full sentences. Incorrect words or sentences should be crossed out with one neat line through
- Provide three sentences for (a) items, each on a separate line
- (b) items should have only two developed reasons

- (c) items are like (b) items but should also use a source of wisdom and authority as a fifth mark
- (d) items should appraise the reasons given, for and against the statement
- Candidates need to know the command words, particularly describe
- Candidates need to read the questions carefully to ensure that they are answering the question set.
- Candidates need to look at the bullet points in the d style question to ensure that they are meeting all the demands of the question and to avoid adding alternative views that the question does not require.