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# Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In Religious Studies A (3RB0)  
Paper 1A Catholic Christianity

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## Introduction

### GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Short Course 3RB0 1A

#### Religious Studies B: Area of Study A Catholic Christianity - Religion and Ethics

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall qualification. The assessment consists of four questions, candidates must answer all 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.

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

In (b) items A01 is assessed and can be awarded a maximum of 4 marks. Candidates are required to give two reasons, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. An answer can be developed by giving a piece of extra information, a relevant quote/reference to a source of wisdom authority or a relevant example. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

In (c) items A01 is assessed 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 and authority'. If the 'reference to a source of wisdom' is credited as a development it cannot gain a further mark; it is in addition to the reason and development.

In (d) items the candidates are assessed on AO2: analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark for the paper.

The command word '**evaluate**' expects candidates to:

- interpret the given statement in order to consider different viewpoints relating to the aspects of religion or belief
- deconstruct the information/issue making logical chains of reasoning and connections between the different elements of the question
- arguments must be justified by the appraisal of the evidence leading to a justified conclusion.

These responses are level marked. A best fit approach, according to the level descriptors is taken when marking the student responses.

Centres are advised to refer to the level descriptors found in the sample assessment material or the mark scheme for this examination published by Pearson Edexcel.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q1a**

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** Catholic teachings about the resurrection of Jesus.'

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic Beliefs 1.6: the events in the Paschal Mystery – Catholic teachings about the resurrection of Jesus.

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

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q1b**

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways belief in the Trinity is used in Catholic worship.'

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic Beliefs 1.1: The Trinity – how the Trinity is reflected in worship.

The question is about how belief in the Trinity is used/reflected/shown in Catholic worship.

Many candidates were able to identify and explain two ways the Trinity is reflected in worship. Others just wrote about what the Trinity is or quoted the Nicene Creed; therefore, did not gain any marks on this question.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q1c**

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why it is important that humans are created in the image of God.'

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic beliefs 1:4: the significance of the Creation account in understanding the nature of humanity - being created in the image of God.

Candidates tended to focus on the 'image of God' meaning that humanity possess a special relationship with God but did not go beyond this and develop their answer by referring to what this means for humans e.g. can relate to God; and so highlighting the importance.

There were some good responses that linked 'the image of God' with the idea of gender equality from section 2.8 which is an appropriate and valid way of answering the question.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q1d**

The question asked was:

'Jesus is fully God.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.'

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Catholic Beliefs 1.5: The Incarnation: Jesus as both fully God and fully human.

A significant number of candidates did not answer the question within the context of Catholic teaching as directed by the bullet points and seem to be answering the question 'there is no evidence for Jesus being divine'. They often included non-religious arguments and other Christian viewpoints which cannot be credited in this question.

Many referred to belief that the Son, Jesus, was one Person of the Trinity and his ability to perform miracles, as indications of his divinity. Few referred to Jesus as God incarnate and the teachings of John 1:1-18; which are part of bullet point 1:5.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q2a**

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** Catholic teachings about divorce.'

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family 2: 6 Catholic teachings about divorce.

The question is asking for three teachings about divorce not annulment or remarriage.

Many candidates gave incorrect Catholic teachings and confused them with civil divorce or other Christian teachings about divorce. Equally, a significant number appeared to be confused over the difference between annulment and divorce.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q2b**

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why Catholics are against gender discrimination.'

Candidates were assessed on Section Two; Marriage and the Family 2:8: Catholic teachings about gender prejudice and discrimination – Catholic opposition to gender discrimination.

Candidates were asked to explain two reasons why Catholics are opposed to gender discrimination.

Many candidates could give valid reasons for why Catholics are opposed to gender discrimination but the development was not to the question asked.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q2c**

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways Catholics respond to the different types of families found in society today.'

Candidates were assessed on Section Two 2.3: Catholic teaching about the purpose and importance of the family – Catholic responses to the different types of family within 21<sup>st</sup> century society.

The specification names the types of families as nuclear, single parent, same sex parents extended and blended families. The example the student wrote about had to be recognisable as these type of families and not a description of a family e.g. large families.

Some of the source of wisdom and authority references were about marriage, divorce or sex outside marriage and not about families.

The responses needed to be based on current Catholic teachings, beliefs or actions and were often too generalised to be correct.

### **3RBO\_1A\_Q2d**

The question asked was:

'Sex outside marriage is always wrong.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Catholic teaching
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.'

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family 2:2 Catholic teaching about the importance of sexual relationships – Catholic teaching on sexual relationships outside marriage and non-religious attitudes to sexual relationships.

A significant number of candidates focused on sex before marriage and the impact of having children when the couple are not married this tended to limit a full evaluation of the statement.

The more successful responses also referred to extra martial sexual relationships this gave more scope to 'consider' different points of view.

In this question there was a tendency for responses to 'pigeon hole' different viewpoints. Often Catholic teachings about the purpose of sexual relationships were just seen as procreative. Similarly, non-religious views that were given often referred to seeing sex outside marriage as always being acceptable. Therefore, candidates are limited to the lower levels as their response is not underpinned by a sustained, accurate and through understanding of religion and belief.

## Summary

Based on the performance of candidates on this paper, the following advice is offered:

- In response to the (a) items use **three** full sentences when answering the question. Each sentence should make one point or give one piece of information.
- In (b) and (c) the reason/way can be developed by either giving extra information, an example or a quote/reference to a source of wisdom and authority.
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) items must be relevant to the question and used in the answer to support the point been made.
- The (d) items require candidates to evaluate the statement, after considering the evidence. The higher levels are achieved if the evidence/arguments given is 'considered' or appraised for its value as an argument this is part of reaching a **justified** conclusion.
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the response. Candidates should read the question carefully and ensure they include the viewpoints asked e.g. reference to non-religious viewpoints or different Christian points of view.
- Rather than use extra sheets candidates should write on the blank space below the lines.