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Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies B (3RB0)
Paper 1F Judaism

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Introduction

Religious Studies B Short Course Religion and Ethics: Judaism

This paper was generally answered well. The candidates have a lot of knowledge about Judaism and used many specialist terms accurately. They had difficulty with the (d) questions, where many candidates gave a basic for and against with a conclusion rather than evaluating and appraising. This led to marks at the lower end on these questions. This will improve as the specification moves through its life.

3RBO_1F_Q1a

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** Jewish beliefs about life after death.'

The majority of the candidates used the specialist terms and spoke of Gan Eden, Gehenna and Sheol. Some candidates used purgatory. Where they said 'a purgatory-like place' or similar phrase they were given marks. If they said 'Jews believe in purgatory' they were not given the marks.

Examiner tip:

Write in separate sentences.

3RBO_1F_Q1b

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons the Covenant at Sinai is important for Jews.'

This question asked about the Covenant at Sinai. The majority of the candidates recognised this as the Mosaic Covenant although a few did confuse it with the Abrahamic Covenant. A number of candidates wrote about the Almighty helping the Jews escape from Egypt and this was not credited as part of the Covenant which happened after.

Examiner tip:

- Separate the two points into paragraphs. This makes it easier for the examiner.
- Exam technique is important - candidates must understand development.

3RBO_1F_Q1c

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why the Messiah is important for Orthodox Jews. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

This question was not answered particularly well. Some candidates confused the Christian ideas about the Messiah with the Jewish Messiah

and therefore did not get the marks. Many candidates assumed a divine nature for the Messiah. However there were some excellent responses where candidates wrote about the messianic age, peace, the rebuilding of the Temple and a return to the Promised Land.

Examiner tip:

Candidates do not have to write quotes word for word. If a quote or a reference to scripture can be recognised then it will be credited.

3RBO_1F_Q1d

The question asked was:

“The Almighty is best described as a Law-Giver.”

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion

Most candidates gave a for and against response, using the Almighty's other qualities as evidence that he should not be best described as a Law-Giver. These questions have 3 marks allocated for AO1 and the rest are AO2. Candidates need to be evaluating the arguments, appraising them, showing which are the stronger arguments and why. Many candidates were limited to level 2 as although their knowledge was excellent, they did not really address the question.

Examiner tip:

- The best (d) questions are not pages long. Candidates should answer the question and use their knowledge to back it up, rather than giving their knowledge but not really answering the question.
- Evaluation and appraisal

3RBO_1F_Q2a

The question asked was:

‘Outline **three** purposes of marriage for Jewish people.’

Most candidates answered this successfully. Where candidates did not perform as well was where they wrote a sentence with more than one purpose in it. Candidates need to write three separate sentences to get the marks available.

Examiner tip:

If candidates write a list with three purposes, where one of them is incorrect, they will get 0 marks. It is important to write them in separate sentences.

3RBO_1F_Q2b

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Jewish attitudes to homosexuality.'

Most candidates performed well on this question and understood that different attitudes means some do accept it and some do not. Some candidates however understood attitudes to mean reasons and gave two developed reasons for one attitude, limiting themselves to 2 marks.

Examiner tip:

Encourage candidates to write succinctly on (b) and (c) questions.

However, if they do need more space, tell them it is ok to write on the blank space underneath. It will be marked accordingly.

3RBO_1F_Q2c

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Jewish teachings about the roles of men and women in the family.

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

Some candidates lost marks for writing about religious roles, and many candidates wrote very generalised answers rather than teachings.

Examiner tip:

Candidates need to link their source of wisdom to what they are writing. A quote on its own will not get a mark, it has to support the point being made.

3RBO_1F_Q2d

The question asked was:

"Marriage should be for life."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

The best answers included teachings on marriage and divorce, a back and forth, with reference also to non-religious people and the modern world. Similarly to Q1(d), there were only few candidates, who evaluated or appraised. Some candidates did not include any Jewish teachings.

Examiner tip:

- Evaluation questions need more than a for and against response.
- A good conclusion can take an answer up a mark. Candidates need to show evaluation.

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.