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# Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In Religious Studies B (3RB0)  
Paper 1G Sikhism

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## **Introduction**

This area of study comprises a study in depth of Sikhism, its beliefs and teachings on life specifically, within families and with regard to creation. This approach encourages students to reflect upon the links between beliefs and teachings of Sikhism and the topics of families and creation which are an important part of life today.

There are two sections: Sikh Beliefs and Marriage and the Family. 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 questions in Section 1, Sikh beliefs, were generally well answered, with sound knowledge and key Sikh terms used throughout, especially AO1 questions. The AO2 questions were not answered so much in depth, although the knowledge was there. The candidates need to start to critically analyse the statement using various techniques. Candidates should compare and contrast the areas of ethics within Sikhism and non-religious views when asked. Candidates should also look at divergent views within Sikhism in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed.

The questions in Section 2, Marriage and Family, were answered in a generic way. Candidates needed to use more Sikh appropriate knowledge to gain the higher marks. Sources of wisdom must be appropriate to the question and not just 'random quotes' that the candidate had learnt.

### **3RB0\_1G\_Q1a**

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Sikh beliefs. Bullet point 1.7. 'Sewa: the nature of sewa.....'

The question asked was:  
'Outline three ways Sikhs perform sewa.'

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark.

On the whole this was well answered with candidates including tan, dhan and man in their answers.

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)

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q1b**

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Sikh Beliefs. Bullet point 1.4. 'Sikh beliefs about life after death'

The question asked was:

'Explain two Sikh teachings about life after death.'

This again was well answered with key terms being used, such as karma, mukti etc.

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) 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 as quotes or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q1c**

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Sikh Beliefs. Bullet point 1.3 'The nature of human life'

The question asked was:

'Explain two Sikh beliefs about the nature of human life'

Some candidates did not specifically answer what Sikhs believe about the nature of human life, such as 'to unite with God' or escape the cycle of reincarnation'. Answers were not developed, and little source of wisdom was used. When the candidates understood the question, it was well answered.

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' of (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 as 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 examiners are unsure, they will use a search engine. Enter the gist of the paraphrase and 'Bible' or 'Christian teaching'.
- If the candidate gives the paraphrase and then puts (Guru Granth Sahib 15) in brackets the paraphrase can have the mark and the bracketed reference is ignored.
- If a candidate quotes Guru Nanak and it was Guru Gobing Singh or vice versa; and the quote is not accredited to them, it is not awarded.

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q1d**

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.

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. Appraised arguments will help to gain the higher grades. Many candidates gave excellent answers giving reasons for and against but not analysing or evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting the candidates' progression to the higher levels.

We are now marking using levels and award a best fit according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Sikh Beliefs. Bullet point 1.2. 'God as Creator'

Please note that, neither in the bullet point, nor on the question, are candidates required to give a non-religious response. Candidates must respond to the question asked.

The question asked was:

"God is best described as the Creator"

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

Candidates overall achieved level 1 or 2, they did not deconstruct religious information and critically analyse the statement throughout. Generic answers were given, and Sikh key words were limited. Those who achieved the higher marks within level 2 or at times level 3 analysed the Mool Mantar in more detail explaining what it says about the characteristics of God and related it to God as 'Karta Purakh' etc. This however was quite limited. Logical chains of reasoning throughout would benefit the candidates to achieve higher levels.

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q2a**

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family. Bullet point 2.8 Divergent Sikh teachings about gender discrimination

The question asked was:

'Outline three Sikh teachings about gender discrimination.'

There was some repetition in the answers, but overall it was well answered with candidates showing a clear understanding of the Sikh teachings related to gender discrimination. Some quoted from the Guru Granth Sahib 'Woman is our life-long friend and keeps the race going. Why should we despise her?'

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q2b**

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family. Bullet point 2.5 Sikh teachings on contraception ... attitudes to family planning'

The question asked was:

'Explain two reasons why family planning may be important to Sikhs.'

This question was poorly answered, with very few candidates relating their answers to contraception. They wrote about arranged marriages and planning a family to follow Sikhism.

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) 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.

### **3RBO\_1G\_Q2c**

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family. Bullet point 2.1 'The importance and purpose of marriage ... Sikh teachings on marriage, including the Lavan by Guru Ram Das.'

The question asked was:

'Explain two Sikh teachings about marriage.

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

Candidates who read the question achieved good marks and used quotes from the Lavan to develop their answers. On the whole candidates wrote about the purpose of marriage and did not to look at the teachings about marriage.

### 3RBO\_1G\_Q2d

The question is '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion**. There must be some consideration of the argument. Appraised arguments will help candidates gain the higher grades. Many candidates gave excellent answers for and against but did not analyse or evaluate them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidates' progression to the higher levels.

We are now marking using levels and award a best fit according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family: Bullet point 2.6: 'Sikh teachings about divorce: divergent Sikh teachings and attitudes towards divorce and remarriage...'.

The question asked was:

"Married people should never get divorced"

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Sikh teachings
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion'

This question was poorly answered with a lack of Sikh teachings and divergent views. Candidates should look at the statement and then critically analyse the statement. It is useful to deconstruct the religious information leading to coherent logical chains of reasoning that consider different points of view. The answer should be coherent and give reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question.

## **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) questions use three full sentences.
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in question (c) must be relevant to the question and support the reason given.
- The (d) questions 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) questions, the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the answer.