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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies B (1RB0)
Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Religion and Ethics
Option 1B - Christianity

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1RB0_1B_Q01a

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs

Bullet point 1.5 - The nature and significance of salvation

The question asked was:

'Outline three Christian beliefs about salvation.'

It assesses Assessment Objective One and has 3 marks.

The candidates needed to provide any three beliefs a Christian might hold about salvation, they did not need to be biblical, although, naturally, biblical beliefs were acceptable.

Some candidates wrote in lists and gained one mark for a list rather than an outline.

Any Christian belief about salvation would have been acceptable however salvation seems to be a topic that candidates need to understand a little more accurately.

Examiner Tip

- Lists gain a maximum of 1 mark, candidates need to provide an outline, therefore they should write in full sentences. Candidates should make sure they provide answers in three distinct sentences rather than repeating the same information in three ways.

1RB0_1B_Q01b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs

Bullet point 1.8 – Divergent solutions offered to the problem of evil/suffering

The question asked was:

'Explain two solutions to the problem of evil given by Christians.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, in this question two solutions were required, and both needed to be developed to be awarded 4 marks.

Development could be a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must link to the solution given and to the question asked.

This question proved difficult for candidates who saw 'the problem of evil' and described the problem rather than providing the solutions asked.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates should ensure they do not use the same information twice; they will only be rewarded once for a specific piece of information.
- Candidates must ensure they follow the requirements of the question which asks for two developed solutions, some candidates gave lots of information which could not be credited.

1RB0_1B_Q01c

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs

Bullet point 1.1 – The Trinity

The question asked was:

‘Explain two Christian beliefs about the oneness of God.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain two’ on (c) items. Therefore, two beliefs were required, and both needed to be developed for 4 marks. Development could be a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote, or an example. The development must relate to the belief given in the answer and to the question asked.

The reasons then should be supported with a ‘reference to a source of wisdom’, this must support the belief given as a response and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if a source 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.
- If the candidate states that it is in John 1:18 and then states another verse from John – then this can be awarded. Candidates are not expected to know ‘verses’ but if it is mentioned then 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.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must learn sources of wisdom and be able to use them accurately and in context.
- Candidates should not attempt to 'shoehorn' in random quotes as sources of wisdom they must use them appropriately.

1RB0_1B_Q01d

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, including their significance and influence. AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

In the question candidates are asked to evaluate the statement considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion – there must be some consideration of the validity (appraisal) of the arguments used to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs

Bullet point 1.4 – The last days of Jesus' life.

The question asked was:

'His death fully explains the person of Jesus.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

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

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must ensure they address all the bullet points in the question.

- Candidates should not refer to material that is not asked for- if a question does not ask for a non-religious response and the candidate provides it this part of the answer will not gain any credit.

1RB0_1B_Q02a

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family

Bullet point 2.1 – The importance and purpose of marriage for Christians.

The question asked was:

‘Outline three of the purposes of Christian marriage.’

The candidates needed to provide any purpose of marriage that Christians would use. No marks were awarded for descriptions of the types of reasons Christians would not use e.g. to get money.

Examiner Tip

- An outline must be more than one word.

1RB0_1B_Q02b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family

Bullet point 2.2 – Christian teachings about the nature and importance of sexual relationships.

The question asked was:

‘Explain two reasons why some Christians allow sex outside marriage.’

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 may be one of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or an example. The development must relate to both the reason given and to the question asked.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates may use a source as the reason – however usually a source is accepted as the development of a reason.
- b) items provide marks for four points, 2 for reasons and 2 for the development of each reason.

- It helps to write answer which divide into 2 paragraphs each containing a reason and a development.

1RB0_1B_Q02c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family

Bullet point 2.6 – Christian teachings and attitudes towards divorce and remarriage.

The question asked was:

‘Explain two Christian teachings about divorce.’

Candidates needed to answer giving teachings specifically about divorce, they did not need to discuss differing views amongst Christian denominations however those that did were credited for this.

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain two’ on (c) items. Therefore, two teachings are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. They must also correctly use a source of wisdom in their answer, this must be identifiable, relevant to the teaching given and linked to the teaching given in the answer so they can then be awarded 5 marks.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must be prepared for the whole breadth and depth of the specification in order to achieve higher grades. It is best to check that materials used to teach students cover the entire specification.
- The source must be relevant and used as part of the candidates reasoning.

1RB0_1B_Q02d

The focus of the marking is AO2 on the d items. As explained in the specification this means: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence. AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question asks candidates to Evaluate a statement considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion – there must be some consideration of the validity of the arguments used to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate’s progression to the higher levels.

d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Marriage and the Family

Bullet point 2.7 – Christian teaching about the equality of men and women in the family.

The question asked was:

'Men and women should have equal roles in the family.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

Please note that candidates are required to refer to different Christian points of view, so they should recognise that different Christian groups have different views. However, the question does not ask for a non-religious response, the specification bullet 2.4 does not require study of a non-religious view and thus non-religious views would not be credited.

d) items are LEVEL marked they are NOT point marked.

This question does not have SPaG marks.

Examiner Tip

- There are many ways to answer d) items and gain marks, a template will not assure good marks.
- Teachers should not point mark d) item answers. They should be read completely and then assessed against the level descriptors to find a best fit.
- Appraisal shows: The value of the evidence provided / the strength of the answer / the validity of the chains in the answer/ a consideration of what is written in order to answer the questions (rather than which side they agree with) / a measurement of which side is more logical / an assessment of which is the more compelling argument / an understanding of which argument is more convincing or rational or cogent.

1RB0_1B_Q03a

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Living the Christian Life

Bullet point 3.8 - The role and importance of the Church in the worldwide community.

The question asked was:

'Outline three problems faced by the Church in the worldwide community.'

It assesses Assessment Objective One and has 3 marks.

The candidates needed to outline any three problems the Church may face in the world, the specification mentions persecution and reasons why they may need to work for reconciliation and do charity work, but there are many others that were acceptable. A popular response was opposition from non-religious people or other religions.

Some candidates wrote in lists and gained one mark for a list rather than an outline.

Examiner Tip

- Lists gain a maximum of 1 mark, candidates need to provide an outline, therefore they should write in full sentences.
- Candidates should make sure they provide answers in three distinct sentences rather than repeating the same information in three ways.

1RB0_1B_Q03b

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Living the Christian Life

Bullet point 3.7 – The role and importance of the local church

The question asked was:

'Explain two reasons why the local church is important in the local community.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, in this question two reasons were required, and both needed to be developed to be awarded 4 marks.

Development could be a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must link to the solution given and to the question asked.

This question proved straightforward for candidates who focussed on the local element of the question and linked to the work that is based in the local church/parish. Candidates who referred to the worldwide Church did not gain marks.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates could write their reasons in 2 separate paragraphs; this reminds them that they need to do two separate ideas.

- Candidates must ensure they follow the requirements of the question which asks for two developed reasons, some candidates gave irrelevant information which could not be credited.

1RB0_1B_Q03c

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Living the Christian Life

Bullet point 3.4 - Pilgrimage

The question asked was:

‘Explain two reasons why Christians may go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain two’ on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons were required, and both needed to be developed for 4 marks. Development could be a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote, or an example. The development must relate to the reason to go on pilgrimage given in the answer and to the question asked. The reasons then should be supported with a ‘reference to a source of wisdom’, this must support the belief given as a response and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if a source is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

Most candidates were able to link the places in Jerusalem to events in the life of Jesus, there were however many who mixed up Bethlehem and Jerusalem and these answers were not credited.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must use relevant sources of wisdom accurately and in context.
- Candidates should not attempt invent sources of wisdom they must be recognisable.

1RB0_1B_Q03d

The focus of the marking is AO2 on d items. The candidates are being assessed on their ability to analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

In the question candidates are asked to Evaluate the statement considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion – there must be some consideration of the validity (appraisal) of the arguments used to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the

argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

d) items are marked using levels, not point marking and is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Living the Christian Life

Bullet point 3.2 – The role of sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations.

The question asked was:

'Sacraments are the most important part of Christian life.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

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

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must ensure they address all the bullet points (elements) in the question.
- Candidates should ensure that they appraise the argument they have given looking at whether they have provided sufficient evidence and authority for it to be a valid one.

1RB0_1B_Q04a

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Matters of Life and Death

Bullet point 4.8 – Christian responses to issues in the natural world.

The question asked was:

'Outline three Christian responses to threats in the natural world. '

The candidates needed to provide responses to threats in the natural world. No marks were awarded for descriptions of threats the world might face or repeated information. The specification includes reference to pollution, global warming and use of natural resources.

Examiner Tip

- An outline must be more than one word, candidates should be encouraged to write three distinct sentences each including different material.

1RB0_1B_Q04b

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Matters of Life and Death

Bullet point 4.2 – Christian teachings about the sanctity of life.

The question asked was:

‘Explain two reasons why sanctity of life is important for Christians.’

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 may be either a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or an example. The development must relate to both the reason given and to the question asked.

Most candidates clearly knew what sanctity of life was, but after saying it means life is holy some candidates were limited in what they could say.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates may use a source as the reason – however usually a source is accepted as the development of a reason.
- b) items provide marks for four points, 2 for reasons and 2 for the development of each reason.
- Candidates should ensure they read the secondary command word in each question to see if it is ways, features, examples or reasons, in this case it is reasons.

1RB0_1B_Q04c

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Matters of Life and Death

Bullet point 4.1 – Christian teachings about the origins and value of the universe.

The question asked was:

‘Explain two Christian teachings about the origins of the universe.’

Candidates needed to answer giving teachings specifically about the origins of the universe. Responses about the origins of human life including reference to evolution were not credited. Candidates need to read the questions very carefully.

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two teachings are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. They must also correctly use a source of wisdom in their answer, this must be identifiable, relevant to the teaching given and linked to the teaching given in the answer so they can then be awarded 5 marks.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates do not have to give a reference word for word. Paraphrases are acceptable however they do need to be recognisable.
- The source must be relevant and used as part of the candidates reasoning.

1RB0_1B_Q04d

The focus of the marking is AO2 on the d items. As explained in the specification this means: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence. AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question asks candidates to evaluate a statement considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion – there must some consideration of the validity of the arguments used to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Matters of Life and Death

Bullet point 4.6 – Christian responses to non-religious arguments against life after death.

The question asked was:

'Christians are right to reject the non-religious arguments against life after death.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings

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

This question was answered well by candidates who were able to link non-religious views with Christian responses. They were able to assess their arguments and knew when they had given valid well reasons responses. Many candidates were placed in lower levels as they were able to provide responses but unable to assess the strength of their arguments.

Please note that as required in the bullet point in the question candidates were required to give a non-religious point of view. The specification bullet point is specifically about non-religious views, therefore non-religious views were credited in this question.

d) items are LEVEL marked they are NOT point marked.

This question does not have SPaG marks.

Examiner Tip

- There are many ways to answer d) items and gain marks, a template will not assure good marks.
- Teachers should not point mark d) item answers. They should be read completely and then assessed against the level descriptors to find a best fit.
- Appraisal shows: The value of the evidence provided / the strength of the answer / the validity of the chains in the answer/ a consideration of what is written in order to answer the questions (rather than which side they agree with) / a measurement of which side is more logical / an assessment of which is the more compelling argument / an understanding of which argument is more convincing or rational or cogent.

Summary

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

- Answer a) items in outlines i.e. full sentences
- Provide 3 sentences for a) items, each of a separate line
- b) items should have 2 developed reasons not more than 2
- 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

- d) item responses must show AO2 skills to get high marks
- d) items must show an appraisal of the argument not simply rely on a set format
- Level descriptors should be used to mark d items, not point marking

