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Examiners' Report
June 2011

GCSE Religious Studies 5RS01 01

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Introduction

This is the second year the new specification Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed and numbers have greatly increased from last year.

This specification introduced a few new topics and the weighting of the assessment objectives has changed from the legacy specification. The GCSE Religious Studies specification continues to be a very popular course as teachers and schools recognise the benefits of an examinable course that both interests and educates young people. The variety of choice within this new specification allows teachers to teach the course that most suits their students.

Unit 1 covers both Christianity and one other religion. This unit continues to be the most popular of the sixteen units. Many candidates sit this unit as a short course because it engages the interest of young people, it addresses many moral and spiritual issues affecting young people today and importantly it fulfils all the requirements for Key Stage 4 statutory Religious Education.

Question 1 (a)

Part (a) questions ask for either a definition or examples. Question 1(a) asks for a definition of omniscient.

It was easy to get full marks on this question by using a glossary definition, as in this example and most candidates were awarded 2 marks for an alternative but correct wording.

Write your answer here:

(a) The belief that God is all knowing, therefore knows what has and will happen.



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded full marks for saying 'the belief that God is all knowing'. They did not have to say anything else to get the marks.

This is an example of an incorrect answer, which would gain no marks.

Write your answer here:

(a) Standing in a church or at the bottom of stairs and believing there is something bigger.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has clearly confused the term numious with omniscient.



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Examiner Tip

It is important that candidates learn the glossary definitions thoroughly.

Question 1 (b, c, d)

Part (b) was about the scientific explanation of the creation of the world and led to answers using either scientific or religious theories about the creation of the world. Better candidates used the examples of the big bang and evolution to back up their reasons.

Part (c) was a question about the problem of evil. Some candidates did not link the problem to belief in God which meant that the question was not answered as well as it could have been in these cases. There were some excellent answers which referred to unanswered prayer, the number of people that suffer, innocent or religious people suffering as well as the classical argument.

The part (d) question required candidates to evaluate a statement about whether miracles are possible today. Most candidates responded well to the new layout of the part (d) question and were able to state their own opinion and give reasons for it in (d)(i). Better responses were able to give current examples in addition to religious ones.

This is an example of a candidate who read the questions carefully, understood the questions and applied their knowledge well, gaining almost maximum marks.

(b) I would agree that science proves God did not create the world, because firstly because of the theory of evolution. This suggests man evolved from ape-like creatures, and could well be true because fossil evidence has shown that other species have evolved from more primitive forms. God was supposed to ~~create~~ have created us in ~~his~~ ^{his} own image, but if we have evolved from something else than he didn't create us and so ~~did not create the world~~ ^{did not create the world}. My second reason is that other planets have now been found which are capable of supporting life. If this is true then surely God did not create all of those planets and leave them empty. We have models of planets forming at the beginning of new solar systems, and it is easier for me to believe that our planet was created in the same way than believe a God created it.

(c) Evil and Suffering may lead some people not to believe in God because God is supposed to be omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient and omnibenevolent (all loving). If God was omniscient he would be able to see humans

suffer and know what to do about it. If he was omnibenevolent he wouldn't be able to bear with human suffering. If he were omnipotent, he would be able to stop human suffering. However, people see evil and suffering in the world. They pray to God and nothing happens. They start to believe that maybe God doesn't exist or that if he does, he may not be as powerful as they thought. If God really was omniscient, omnibenevolent and omnipotent, then both him and suffering would not exist. Evil and suffering do exist, which leads them to think God does not exist or that he is not omniscient, omnibenevolent or omnipotent.

(d) (i) I agree that miracles cannot happen today. One of my reasons for this is that I do not believe miracles have ever happened. I think that many of the stories in the bible have been either exaggerated or made up. Another of my reasons is that it is in my belief that so called 'miracle workers' are dicking people. An ill person getting better could simply be the placebo effect. They believe that what the worker says will happen so much that their will power wins out over the disease. My third reason is that I do not believe in God, so why would I contribute anything that happens to being 'God's work'? I think people who believe in miracles are blindly being misled.

(ii) Many people would disagree with me. A Christian may say that a blind man suddenly seeing or a paralyzed man getting up and walking freely was an act of God. They would point to the bible, and all the things Jesus supposedly did, and say that they were miracles. They would probably tell me that the

Lord is with us all and that if we pray enough,
a miracle might happen to us or someone we
love some day. They would say that miracle workers
use their faith to cure people, and that these
were miracles too.



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Examiner Comments

In part (b) this candidate recognised that this was a question about what science says about the creation of the world and gave arguments which agreed with the statement 'God did not create the world'. They used two scientific theories which led naturally to two developed reasons.

For part (c) this candidate, like many candidates, was familiar with the inconsistent triad argument for evil and suffering. This was answered well as the candidate explained each part and then commented on unanswered prayer to gain full marks. It was less well answered by other candidates, who gave a very brief summary of the argument rather than taking it apart and explaining it fully.

In part (d) the majority of candidates were able to give reasons supporting their opinion even if they could not give reasons for the opposite opinion. In this case the candidate is able to give reasons for both views and develops them, using Biblical ideas which clearly identify a specific religion.



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Examiner Tip

Part (b) questions should begin with a statement which identifies that the answer is the candidate's own opinion. In this case the candidate says 'I would agree...'

It can help candidates if they start a new paragraph with each new reason they give on a part (c) question.

In part (d) candidates should ensure they identify a religion in their answer, as this is clearly asked for in the question.

This example shows that candidates should be encouraged to try all parts of the question using whatever knowledge they have.

(b) I think Science Proves god did not create ^{The} world because the big bang Theory seems very true compared to what the bible says and ~~the~~ part of the bible sounds like its been made up. IF god did create the world why would he make it with Faults Why not make it Perfect

(c) because some people might pray 24/7 and has never done anything wrong in lifes ~~when~~ ^{and} something bad ^{there} happens to them all

The time even though they never do anything wrong and ~~never~~ has never done anything wrong



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In their response to part (b) a personal opinion and one reason has been given. It has been developed by added explanation. The last part about faults is not about science and so could not be credited.

The candidate is able to give a reason in response to the part (c) question, they have not done evil things. It therefore reaches level 1. This is written in a coherent manner so gains 2 rather than 1 mark.

This candidate did not attempt (d) which meant that 6 marks could not be accessed.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Part (b) questions need two reasons to gain more than 2 marks.

Question 2 (a)

Question 2(a) on this paper asked candidates to provide a definition for the key word agnostic. This question was very well answered by candidates and most candidates who attempted this question achieved full marks.

Write your answer here:

(a) Agnosticism means a person is open to the idea of religion but doesn't know whether god exists.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate provides the correct answer at the end of their response. The answer 'doesn't know if God exists' is one of the correct answers indicated in the mark scheme so it gains 2 marks.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates are given 3 lines for part (a) questions, but they do not have to use all the lines.

Write your answer here:

(a) agnosticism is someone that doesn't know if they believe in a religion or not, they need proof to decide.



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a partially correct response. The glossary definition is 'not being sure if God exists'. 'Not knowing' was accepted as alternative wording of this, however, this candidate refers to religion rather than God so can only be awarded 1 mark for a partially correct answer.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to learn the Edexcel keyword definitions found in appendix 4 in the specification.

Question 2 (b, c, d)

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give a reason for it. However, frequently candidates simply described a religious upbringing which did not answer the question set. Better candidates discussed why belief is engendered by a religious upbringing and developed their answers with examples from a religious upbringing.

Part (c) was generally well answered by candidates. They were able to name a programme and explain why the contents of the programme might affect a person's faith. However, it was less well answered by some candidates who described whole programmes or did not link them to how they might affect belief in God.

In part (d) many candidates did not realise that this question was about whether God designed the world and that led to some answers purely about creation, which did not answer the question set. This meant that such candidates who didn't analyse the stimulus quotation given before they started responding only achieved low marks.

This answer shows how a knowledgeable candidate (as shown in the part (c) question) can gain lower marks than expected by not reading the stimulus in the part (d) question.

(b) I think religious upbringing makes children believe in God because they get used to it as they grow up since it runs in the family.

It might also be that when they grow up their families ~~take~~ raise them under the roots of the religion and will not want to change it when they grow older.

(c) Television programmes ~~can~~ easily or films can easily ~~change~~ affect a person's attitude towards the belief of God for example the movie Bruce Almighty.

- the relationship between Bruce and God is very powerful that God spends most of his time with him. This might affect a person who has unanswered prayers as they see that God spends most of his time with one person.
- the image of God. In the film Bruce Almighty ~~to~~ their God is black. This can affect a person's belief for example a christian, the bible says that God was jewish this will make it seem as if the bible is a lie.
- the powers God gave Bruce. This will make it seem as if God allows evil things to happen as Bruce was given powers so he can punish all his enemies.
- In the film there is a part where Bruce rearranges the stars and pulls out the moon whenever he wants to. This might get people thinking and questioning their faith as the bible says God created the ~~heav~~ world which includes stars and moon (space). This will make people ~~so~~ start ~~beie~~ being agnostic as their not sure which one is the God.

(d) (i) I agree because in Christianity the bible says God created the heaven and the earth. It also says that he said "let there be light" and there was light.

The bible also says that when God created the world he created all mankind to take care of it.

(ii) Some people might disagree with me because they might not believe in Christianity or God.



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Examiner Comments

This answer to part (b) clearly states a personal opinion and gives one reason, which is not developed. The second reason is too vague to be credited so this answer is only worth one mark.

In part (c) the candidate gives four reasons, all using the example of Bruce Almighty. The answer is coherent so it gains 8 rather than 7 marks. Bullet points are totally acceptable as it is coherence that is being assessed.

This answer to part (d) is about creation but there is no indication it is about design so it gains no marks.



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Examiner Tip

It is good practice to use paragraphs for each reason given.

This is a good response as the candidate has provided examples and used paragraphs to indicate when a new reason is given.

(b) ~~For some~~ In some cases, I do think that religious upbringing makes children believe in God, as it is what they have grown up with ~~and~~ ^{and} are used to. Children from religious upbringings generally get taught about their parents religion from a young age, which could make them believe in God as they would not have been told differently.

On the other hand, a religious upbringing may also make children reject the idea of God as they could have bad experiences to do with religion, and could have seen conflict within religions.

(c) People all over the world watch television and films, so the same media is open to most people. Television programmes and films might affect a person's attitude

to belief in God in several ways.

Firstly, TV programmes can be very influential, so depending on whether a person watches an atheist or a theist programme would influence their attitude towards believing in God.

Television programmes such as 'The Vicar of Dibley' could have both a positive and a negative effect on the

viewer, as on one side it could be seen as comical, mocking religion, and on the other it could be said to open people's minds to Christianity and the beliefs, as the vicar is female.

As well as TV, films also influence the viewer attitudes toward believing in God. Films such as 'Bruce Almighty' and 'Evan Almighty' may inspire people to follow a religion as they show commitment and happiness, as well as valuing life.

As well as this, viewers may also become to believe in God, or a greater being than themselves, through 'Paranormal Activity', which might make people believe in the spiritual realm, and therefore God.

(d) (i) "The world is so beautiful it must have been designed by God."

I agree with this quotation, for several reasons. Firstly, the universe and the world is numinous which means that it is wonderful to behold. This supports the quotation because surely something this numinous could not simply happen by chance.

Secondly, everything has a designer if it has a purpose - like a watch, it is so intricately put together to serve ~~the~~^{the} purpose of showing the time that it could not have happened by chance.

(ii) Some people may disagree with my

opinion as they believe that ~~was~~ there was a cause, the cause being science. The 'Big Bang Theory' is the main argument against the Creation story, as it is said that the universe was formed by an explosion from a point of singularity. Even though this is a scientific explanation, many Christians agree to accept this theory.



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This candidate responds to part (b) with an answer which shows that they are undecided and gives two opposing reasons. It begins with a personal opinion and one reason which has been developed and then gives an opposite view which is clearly their own as they began with "in some cases". However, this second reason is not developed. The candidate is awarded 3 marks.

In their answer to part (c) the candidate gives a full mark response as they provide four reasons. The first part doesn't give a reason and therefore is not credited. The information that could be credited relates to specific examples - Vicar of Dibley is comical mocking religion and also could open people's minds, Bruce Almighty shows commitment, the Paranormal makes them believe in a spiritual realm. The answer is coherent so it gains 8 rather than 7 marks.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion with two valid reasons which are 'not by chance' and 'purpose'. The second reason is developed by the watch analogy, so the candidate is awarded 3 marks.

In (d)(ii) the response gives one reason which is then developed with the example of the 'Big bang'.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When studying film and TV programmes in section one, candidates should be looking for reasons why the programme or film could affect a person's faith, not simply describe the film.

Question 3 (a)

Most candidates knew the definition for euthanasia. However, there were some candidates who did not know the glossary definition which highlights the fact that a person must be seriously ill. These candidates used literal definitions such as 'an easy and gentle death' which did not indicate that a person must be seriously ill and so were awarded partial marks.

Write your answer here:

(a) Euthanasia is the painless ending of suffering often a person with an incurable illness, through death.



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Examiner Comments

This response gives a correct definition using alternative wording. It clearly includes a reference to a person who is seriously ill.



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Examiner Tip

Thorough learning of the Edexcel key word glossary would prevent candidates being confused by literal explanations of the meanings of words and ensuring they know how the word is used within the specification.

Write your answer here:

(a) A gentle and easy death.



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Examiner Comments

This is a definition of what the word literally means rather than a definition of euthanasia according to the specification. It was therefore a partially correct answer and was awarded 1 mark.



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Examiner Tip

Learn the glossary definitions from the Edexcel specification, they can be found in appendix 4.

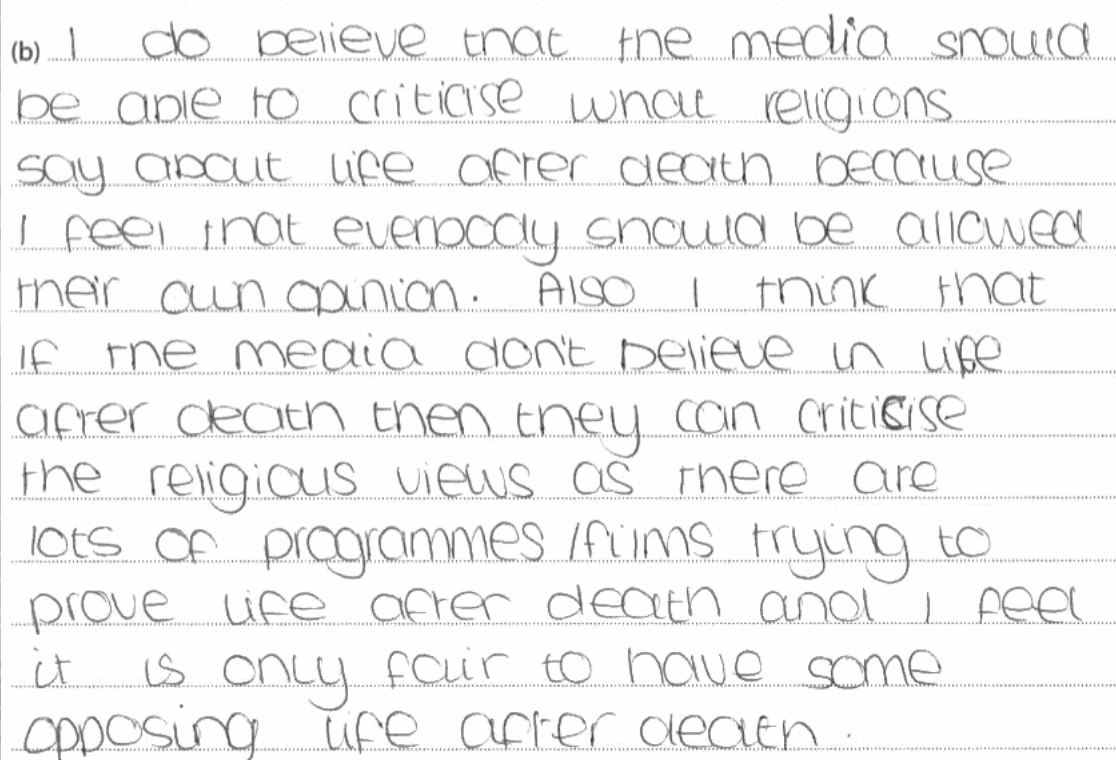
Question 3 (b, c, d)

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether the media should be free to criticise what religions say about matters of life and death and then give a reason for it. Some candidates were not able to develop their reasons. However, better candidates were able to refer to a film or programme to develop their answer.

The majority of answers to part (c) about non-religious reasons why people believe in life after death were very good and candidates were able to answer either by giving a number of non-religious reasons or by developing two or three reasons with examples. Lower achieving candidates included religious responses rather than non-religious responses in their answers.

In answer to part (d) it was clear that some candidates did not know the law about abortion in the UK. For example, many candidates thought that it was legal in cases of rape – without identifying the parts of the UK where this is the situation, and some thought a women was allowed freedom to choose. Better answers were given by candidates who responded either by giving a number of reasons or by developing two or three reasons with examples.

This is an answer which shows that marks are awarded for giving reasons, however, candidates must develop their answers to be awarded maximum marks.



(b) I do believe that the media should be able to criticise what religions say about life after death because I feel that everybody should be allowed their own opinion. Also I think that if the media don't believe in life after death then they can criticise the religious views as there are lots of programmes / films trying to prove life after death and I feel it is only fair to have some opposing life after death.

(c) Some non religious people believe in life after death because of the media. There is a lot of documentaries about life after death

and paranormal activities.

Also some people may have had a near death experience and believe that they had become a ghost, leading them to believe in life after death.

Some people claim to have seen ghosts or dead people alive again making them think it must be real.

Finally, some people may believe in life after death because they don't see any other options possible and believe that the soul lives on forever.

(d) (i) I do not believe that the law on abortion should be changed. I think that people should be allowed an abortion up to a certain amount of weeks pregnant. I believe this because if a woman has been raped, I believe that she shouldn't be forced to keep the child. Also if a person doesn't want the baby then I feel that it is

better to be aborted than brought into the world unwanted or unloved.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me because they think that abortion is wrong, whatever the case. Some Muslims believe that abortion is murder, -even if the embryo has not developed a nervous system yet - and should not be allowed.

Murder is against the Muslim religion and the law and because Muslims feel that abortion is murder then it is very wrong for them.



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In response to part (b) two reasons are given for 'everyone can have their own opinion' and 'it is fair'. Neither are developed so only 2 marks are awarded.

This answer to part (c) has four valid reasons given. The second reason given by the candidate is too incorrect to be credited as a reason. The answer is coherent so it gains 7 rather than 8 marks.

In part (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion and the first reason given can be credited (limited to certain weeks can be linked to British law). The rest of the response does not answer the question set so 1 mark awarded. In (d)(ii) one way was given which was 'Some Muslims regard abortion as murder' however second paragraph is incorrect so 1 mark is awarded.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Reasons need to be developed in part (b) questions to gain full marks. This is easy to do by giving an example. Candidates should read questions carefully for example in 3(c) to check whether it says religious or non-religious reasons are required. For this part (d) question candidates need to be aware of the current laws on abortion.

In this example the candidate could have gained more marks if they had a better understood the requirements of the question.

(b) I think the media should be allowed to ~~criticise~~ criticise everything its freedom of speech and writing so yes I think it should be allowed to criticise what religions say on life and death. Also some people who didn't know or didn't realise their religion views on life and death may change religion and therefore the media criticism would be informative.

(c) Because no one knows what is after death so it's ~~not~~ explainable that non-religious people could believe in life after death there are thousands of theories of life after death not just heaven and hell. I myself am I non-religious person

and I believe that there is a spiritual place after death where your soul can roam around and your free to do whatever you like. There is also reincarnation and people who aren't Christian can still believe in life after death.

(d) (i) I don't agree that the law on abortion should be changed its a mothers choice whether she should keep her baby or not not religious. ~~Anyone~~ atheist would agree that the abortion laws now are fair and right.

(ii) Roman Catholics believe that all types of contraception including abortion are wrong and shouldn't be allowed to occur who also ~~some~~ ~~believer~~ believe that abortion is wrong if there is no real reason for the abortion.



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Examiner Comments

In part (b) the candidate gives their own opinion and two reasons. These are 'freedom of speech' and 'informative' but neither are developed so only 2 marks can be awarded. In response to part (c) only one reason is given. The rest of the response is description rather than reasoning so cannot be credited. But the answer is coherent so it gains 2 rather than 1 mark.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion but there are no reasons that can be linked to the law, so this means it does not answer the question set and is awarded 0 marks. Their response to (d)(ii) is too incorrect and contains nothing that can be linked to the law so again does not answer the question set and is awarded 0 marks.



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Examiner Tip

In part (b) questions candidates will not be awarded anything for just repeating the question, so make sure that reasons are given too.

In part (c) questions candidates do not need to give their own opinion.

Candidates should read the wording of the stimulus in the part (d) questions very carefully to ensure they correctly answer the question set.

Question 4 (a)

Near death experience is a new word for this specification and most candidates knew the glossary definition.

(a) A near death experience is where you have an outter body experience, and think you see God/dead realative etc.



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Examiner Comments

This is a partially correct answer as there is no reference to being close to death.



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Examiner Tip

It might help to have the glossary definitions from the Edexcel specification visible around the classroom for candidates to learn.

This is a clear example of a candidate who has not learnt the glossary definition for the term near death experience.

(a) near death experience is when someone is very close to dying but recovers from it.



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Examiner Comments

This is an incorrect answer because nothing about the actual experience is included. The candidate seems to be guessing based on the words within the key term.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates need to know the key terms not only because of the part (a) questions but also because the other questions may use the terms within their questions. If candidates do not know the key terms they may not understand the meaning of some of the other questions.

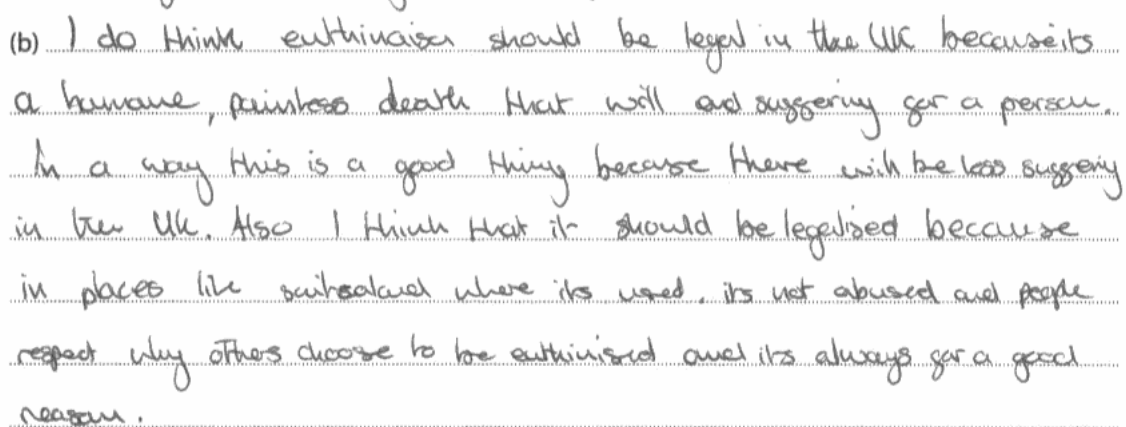
Question 4 (b, c, d)

In this part (b) question candidates were usually able to state their own opinion about whether they felt euthanasia should be legal in the UK and then give at least two reasons for this opinion. The reasons were frequently not religious reasons and this is perfectly acceptable. Candidates who did less well were those who discussed turning off life support machines, a form of euthanasia which is already legal in the UK.

This part (c) question asked why a religion other than Christianity might be against abortion. It was well answered by the majority of candidates, who usually used Islam as their religion other than Christianity, although quite a few used Hinduism or Buddhism. Most candidates were able to give several reasons why Muslims/Hindus/Buddhists are against abortion. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that included reasons why some people might be in favour of abortion. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully as to whether the answer needs to include reasons for, reasons against or both for and against as these may change from question to question.

Most candidates responded well to the layout of the part (d) question and were able to state their own opinion about whether life after death is possible and give reasons for it in (d)(i) and then give an alternative opinion in (d)(ii). Some candidates were able to give scriptural examples to develop their reasons why religious people believe in life after death. However, some candidates thought that only reincarnation and ghosts were part of life after death and did not think that the heaven/hell view of what happens after a person dies was part of life after death.

This example is from a candidate who achieves good but not maximum marks. More reasons would be needed for all the questions in order for them to gain the maximum marks possible.



(b) I do think euthanasia should be legal in the UK because its a humane, painless death that will end suffering for a person. In a way this is a good thing because there will be less suffering in the UK. Also I think that it should be legalised because in places like Switzerland where its used... its not abused and people respect why others choose to be euthanised and its always for a good reason.

(c) Muslims don't agree with abortion because it is killing a life, this is murder to them, and in the Quran it says murder isn't acceptable, otherwise the ~~death~~^{would} be sent to al Jannah (Muslim heaven). Also they believe the purpose of having intercourse is to conceive a child so

They believe killing the ~~gender~~^{gender} is against ~~the~~^{their} religion for that reason.

(d) (i) I don't agree that life after death is impossible because people have near-death experiences where they see themselves or see a light and on countless occasions the light is reported as where heaven is at that it's your soul escaping your body. Also the Christian beliefs of heaven and hell is described in the bible, and drawn in paintings so the image would have to originate from somewhere giving an idea that life after death could be seen as possible.

(ii) On the other hand others may believe that life after death is impossible, but because when a person dies their heart/brain, everything stops working, so how does the body live or somewhere else. Also because the body decomposes others say what will be there in the after life if there is, so is nothing there there can't be one. Then there is also the reason that there is simply no scientific evidence that an after life exists or is even possible.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate gives their own opinion and two reasons in response to part (b), the first of these reasons is developed so 3 marks are awarded.

In part (c) two reasons related to Islam are given and the first of these is developed. The answer is coherent so it gains 6 rather than 5 marks.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion followed by two reasons both of which are developed so 3 marks can be awarded.

In (d)(ii) two reasons are given, the first is developed by further description so 3 marks can be awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be aware on part (b) questions that if they give three or four reasons for their opinion only two will be credited.

This is an example of a response where the candidate clearly has some knowledge but should have added more reasons and examples to their answers.

(b) I think euthanasia ~~is~~ should be legal in the UK because it is a person's right to decide what they want to do with their life. I also think this because it can prevent people from having to live in pain and having a slow, agonising death.

(c) Some Christians do not agree with abortion. One reason why they do not agree with abortion is that it ~~can~~ be seen as murder. Another reason to ~~add~~ further develop the previous point is that the 10 commandments

tell us that we should not kill. Some ~~think~~ disagree with abortion because they think that it is God's will that a person has a child and in preventing the foetus would be to cheat God. Some people see abortion as inhumane.

(d) (i) I disagree because in Islam, the Quran and Muhammad say that there is life after death. I believe this also because the Sikh holy book teaches us of reincarnation. ~~A~~ further reason why I disagree is that there is no proof to say that life after death is impossible.

(iii) Some think that life after death is impossible because they think that it is not physically possible and that there is not any proof to say that it is possible.



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Examiner Comments

In part (b) the candidates' own opinion is given with two reasons but they have not developed either of them, so only 2 marks can be awarded.

This answer to part (c) should refer to one religion other than Christianity, but it refers to Christianity so does not answer the question set. As this answer does not gain level 1 it cannot be awarded any marks for coherence.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion is and then three reasons, so 3 marks are awarded. In (d)(ii) two reasons are given so 2 marks are awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to read through their work after they have completed it to check that they have written what they intended to write and that they cannot add anything else to their answers.

Question 5 (a)

Promiscuity is a new key word for this specification and most candidates knew the glossary definition.

(a) Promiscuity is having sex with a number of partners without ^{the intention} ~~thought~~ of being faithful.



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This is an example of a fully correct 2 mark answer which has almost the same wording as on the mark scheme.

This is an example of a partially correct answer.

(a) Having sex before getting married.



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This answer gained 1 mark as it gave an example of promiscuity rather than a definition of the word.



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Candidates can be awarded 1 mark for examples when definitions are asked for, so they should be encouraged to learn examples of all the key words as well as the definitions. It is also possible that examples will be asked for in the part (a) questions.

Question 5 (b, c, d)

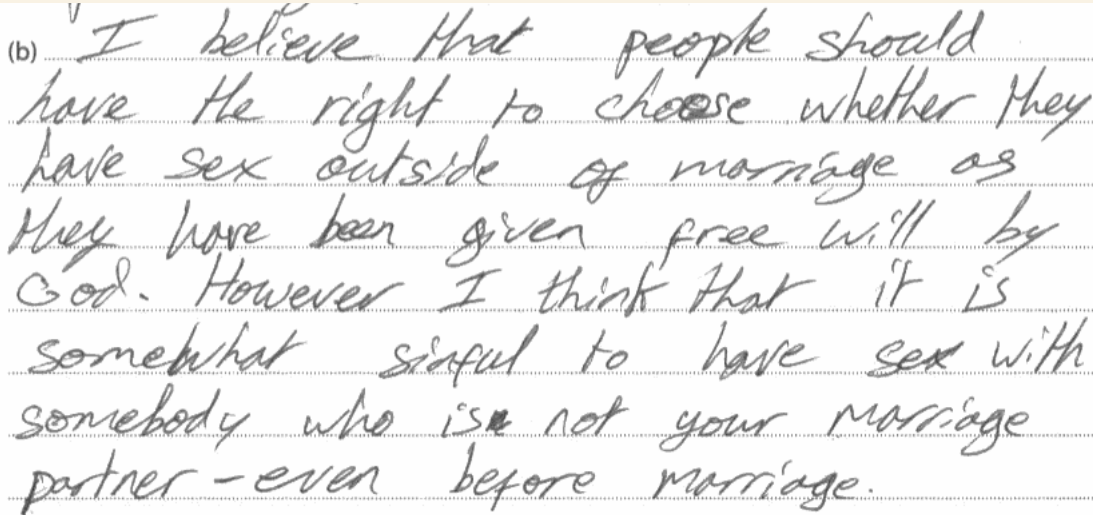
In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether sex outside marriage is acceptable. Most candidates gave two reasons about premarital sex, but some candidates gave one reason agreeing with pre-marital sex and one reason disagreeing with extra marital sex. As long as the candidate clearly indicates that both opinions are their point of view they could be credited. However, less able students in general could not think of more than one reason.

The topic covered in the part (c) question is a new topic to unit 1 and it has clearly been well taught by teachers. Most candidates were able to identify different Christian attitudes to homosexuality and give reasons for them. Lower achieving candidates wrote descriptive answers which could only be awarded a maximum of level 1. However, better candidates were able to explain reasons why Christians hold these beliefs and developed these reasons with quotes from sacred texts.

The part (d) question required candidates to include a reason based on one religion other than Christianity. It is important that candidates read all of the information in a question so that they do not assume that reference to any religion is acceptable.

Good answers to this question discussed issues such as multi-faith society, and interfaith marriages as well as using scriptural references to the role of the family often including the rewards religious people get for raising a family. However, some responses only gave descriptions of brainwashing and forced religious practice. It should be noted that cultural practices such as arranged marriages are not credited as being religious reasons.

This example is from a candidate who achieves good but not maximum marks, more reasons would be needed for all the questions in order to gain the maximum marks possible.



(b) I believe that people should have the right to choose whether they have sex outside of marriage as they have been given free will by God. However I think that it is somewhat sinful to have sex with somebody who is not your marriage partner - even before marriage.

(c) Some Christians accept ~~homosex~~ homosexuality as they believe that a person might be homosexual because that is the way that God

created them. They may think that if God created them homosexual, then why would it be a sin for them to be.

Some Christians believe that homosexuality is a sin as it says in the scripture that a man who lies with another man is a sinner and will be punished. Roman Catholics are the most recognisable Christian group who are strictly against homosexuality for this reason, but there are others.

Some Christians choose to ignore ~~or~~ these parts of scripture ~~or~~ interpret them differently as Jesus and God love all humans, so why should they discriminate against homosexuals.

(d) (i) I do not agree that a religious family is always a happy family as every family has good moments and bad moments. Some ~~1~~ ^{religious} families may find it difficult due to temptations brought by outside influence, and

brought by outside influence, and some families that contain a mixture of beliefs such as a Muslim ~~is~~ married to a Christian may have several differences.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me because there is data to suggest that religious couples will stay married for longer than non-religious ~~people~~ couples. Also, people may think that religious families are ~~are~~ likely to spend more time together at church or whilst praying, and may also have more traditional family values.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

In part (b) the candidates' own opinion is given and then followed by two reasons. The first reason is developed. The candidate has decided to agree and disagree in the same answer but has clearly indicated that both opinions are their own so both can be credited.

This answer to part (c) contains two attitudes, although it moves between them. It starts with a reason accepting and then gives a reason against before finishing with a second reason accepting. The answer included three reasons which means it is level 3. The answer is coherent so it gains 6 rather than 5 marks.

In their response to (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion followed by three reasons including a reference to Islam so 3 marks can be awarded.

In (d)(i) three reasons have been given and 3 marks are therefore awarded.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

In part (b) questions candidates should develop their answers so they give more information about the stimulus. General comments such as 'and all Christians should follow the Bible' or 'and all Muslims should follow the example of Muhammad' do not give more information about the stimulus and cannot be credited as development.

Responses to an 'Explain why...' question in part (c) which describes rather than gives reasons will not get beyond level 1 in the mark scheme. However, 'Explain how...' questions can be rewarded for description.

Candidates must separate the two opinions in part (d). If they mix them up, they will not be able to pick up as many marks.

This is an example of a question where the candidate has answered the questions but has not given sufficient reasons to get all the marks.

(b) I believe that sex outside of marriage is acceptable because it allows people to be together without having to become fully committed with to each other.

(c) Some Christians accept homosexuality and others are against it, one reason for this is how they interpret the Bible. The Bible says that God gave every body free will, this means that if a person

is homosexual then it is up to them if they want to show it, people cannot decide whether this is right or wrong as it is God's will, therefore some Christians accept it. Other Christians are strongly against homosexuality as they believe that the perfect family is represented as a nuclear one with parents and children, they believe that if a person is homosexual then they are going against God's will and are not becoming part of the correct nuclear family.

(d) (i)

I do not agree that a religious family is a happy one, in some cases religion can cause conflict within a family and can cause them to distrust the very religion that they have been brought up in. In some muslim families for example, children may not agree with the strict religion that they have been

brought up in and sometimes can even go against it because ^{as a consequence} of this.

I do not believe that religion must be a factor in a families' happiness.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me as they believe that religion strengthens a family and brings them closer together as a single unit within the religion that they are brought into. Some may say that a family that is religious is happy because they are brought closer to the feeling of peace that religion and a good afterlife brings.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In this response to part (b) the candidate gives their own opinion and one reason which is not developed so only 1 mark can be awarded.

In part (c) the candidate has given a reason why some Christians accept homosexuality but this is then developed incorrectly, so the development cannot be credited. Then they give a reason why some Christians do not accept homosexuality. This answer is coherent so will be awarded 4 marks rather than 3 marks.

In their response to (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion and one reason but the answer is very repetitive and doesn't give any developed reasons, explain anything more about the stimulus or give an example so only 1 mark can be awarded.

In part (d)(ii) the candidate gives one reason so 1 mark can be awarded.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should try to give as many reasons as they can in case one of their reasons is inaccurate.

Question 6 (a)

The key word civil partnership is a new word for this specification and many candidates knew the glossary definition. However, many candidates used the term 'gay marriage' which was only partially credited.

(a) a civil partnership is a legal binding between a homo-sexual couple giving them the same rights as a husband and wife.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an example of a correct answer, which gives almost the same wording as on the mark scheme.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It is easy to get full marks on the part (a) questions by learning the keyword glossary definitions.

This is an example of an answer which is incorrect, so it cannot be awarded marks.

(a) A Civil partnership is where two people are married.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an incorrect answer as a civil partnership is not a marriage and no mention of homosexuality is made to be able to award partial marks.

Question 6 (b, c, d)

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether religious people should accept divorce and give developed reasons linked to scripture and the nature of marriage. Some candidates were unable to give any reasons why religious people should or should not accept divorce other than 'everyone should be happy' which meant they achieved low marks. Similarly candidates who ignored the element in the question referring to 'religious people' achieved low marks.

This part (c) question was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to give several reasons why the followers of one religion other than Christianity are against sex outside marriage. There were some very thoughtful answers from candidates studying Islam and Hinduism, which used scriptural references. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that included reasons why some followers might be in favour. Candidates need to be aware that (c) questions may not always require them to give both opinions.

This part (d) question caused very few problems for candidates. Most candidates were able to give three reasons backing their point of view in (d)(i) and three reasons for an alternative view in (d)(ii). More able candidates used examples and quotations to support their opinion. Some candidates did mix this up with abortion and it is important that candidates learn specialist terms so this does not occur.

This is an answer which shows that many marks are awarded for giving reasons. However, candidates must develop both their reasons on (b) questions to be awarded maximum marks.

(b) I do because :

- if a woman is mistreated by her husband she should be allowed to ~~leave him~~ divorce him.
- you cannot force people to stay together ^{if} they have a hostile and negative relationship, therefore allowing divorce is the lesser of two evils, as a bad relationship could negatively affect any children that the couple may ~~have~~ have.

(c) Many Muslims do not accept sex outside of marriage because the Qur'an says it is wrong and Muslims follow the Qur'an's teachings as it is the word of Allah.

Muslims also believe that ~~sex~~^{sex} should be for the creation of children only, therefore you must be married to have sex, as you must be married to bring up children ~~well.~~^{well.}

Muslims also believe that adultery is ~~wrong~~^{wrong} as it is one of Muhammad's teachings, he is the perfect muslim, so other muslims follow his teachings.

Finally adultery is also against the shariah law, which is the law all muslims must follow, therefore sex outside of marriage, in the form of adultery, is ~~wrong~~ considered to be wrong.

(d) (i) I do agree because

- it helps to prevent the spread of diseases ^{for example HIV.} ~~eg HIV~~
- it allows people to manage the ^{size} ~~size~~ of their family so that all members have a good quality of life.
- if it would harm a woman to get pregnant it will help to prevent this, so the woman's life is not put at risk.

(ii) Some people may disagree as:

- Catholics believe sex should only be ~~for~~^{for} pro-creation
- The pope banned all forms of contraception
- ~~They believe life belongs to God~~ Life is a gift from God so ~~using contraception is like rejecting God's gift.~~ using contraception is like rejecting God's gift.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In this response to part (b) the candidate gives their own opinion and two reasons, the second reason is developed by an example so 3 marks awarded.

In part (c) the candidate gives four reasons related to Islam. The answer is coherent so it gains 8 marks rather than 7 marks.

The candidate gives their own opinion and three non-religious reasons in answer to (d)(i) so 3 marks can be awarded. In (d)(ii) the candidate gives three reasons including a religious one about Roman Catholics so 3 marks are awarded.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

In part (c) questions candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully as to where the response needs to include reasons for, reasons against or both for and against as these will change from question to question.

Question 7 (a)

Most candidates knew the glossary definition for discrimination. However, many candidates used the word discriminate within their definition which was only partially credited.

(a) Discrimination is putting prejudice into act and affecting a person wrong or differently because of a difference in culture, race or beliefs.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a correct answer, the candidate has used alternative but completely correct wording.

(a) Discrimination is when someone is racist to some one from another religion.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is partially correct as it gives an example - 'someone is racist.'



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

When definitions are asked for examples are credited as partially correct. The term racism usually refers to race rather than religion.

Question 7 (b, c, d)

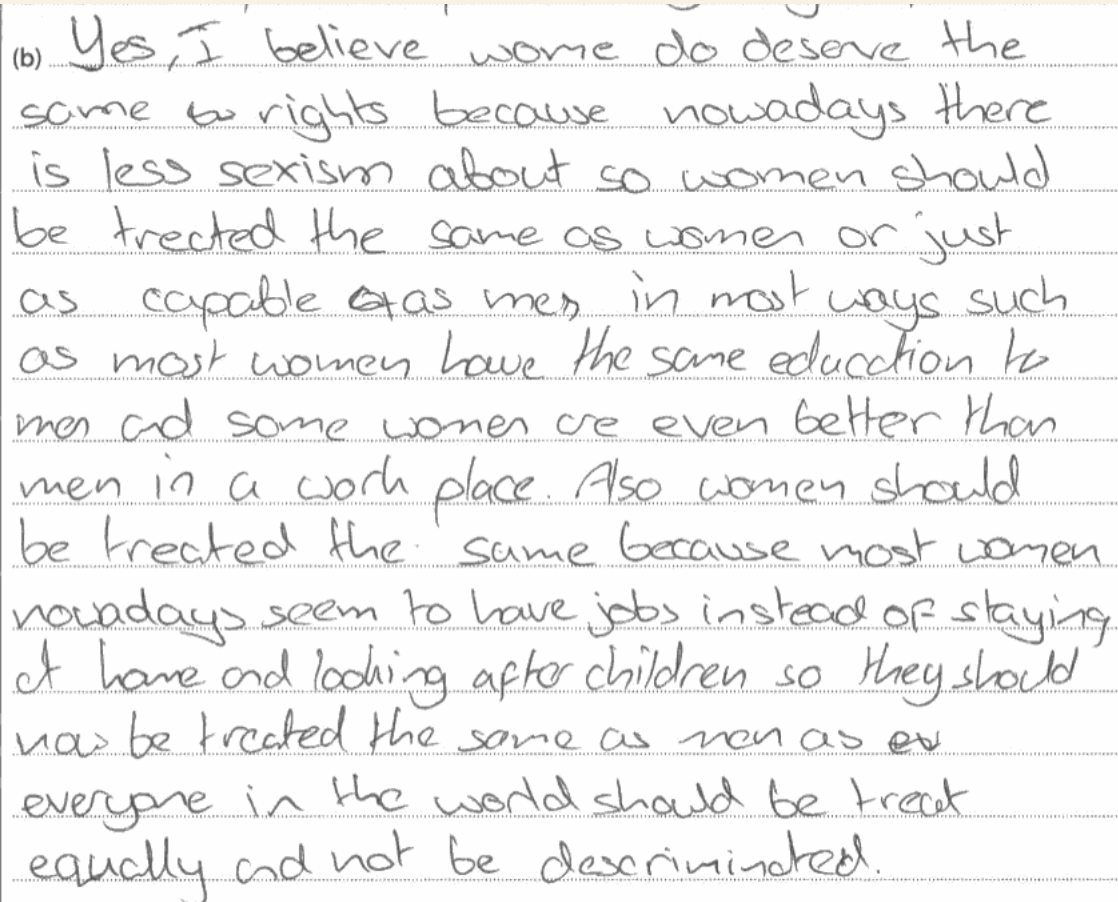
It was noticeable that many of the responses to questions 7 and 8 were not complete; candidates should be advised to spend about 20 minutes on each question.

In part (b) better candidates recognised that this was a question asking about women's rights in religion and they were able to gain good marks by developing using either scriptural examples or examples from the media, often the Vicar of Dibley. Lower scoring responses did not realise that the question was not a general one on women's rights in society and as such they did not answer the question set.

The part (c) question on community cohesion and the government is a new topic for this specification. This question was well answered by candidates who had learned reasons for government action. However, many candidates simply described the governmental action limiting them to level 1.

Most candidates were able to respond to the quote in part (d) but many did not give substantive reasons why conversion might be positive or negative. Some candidates gave very negative answers and were unable to think of any positives. It is important that candidates are encouraged to discuss the reasons why people might hold different views to their own.

In this example the candidate does not fully understand what the part (b) question is about and does not answer about religious rights. They also give insufficient reasons for the other sub-questions.



(b) Yes, I believe women do deserve the same rights because nowadays there is less sexism about so women should be treated the same as men or just as capable as men, in most ways such as most women have the same education as men and some women are even better than men in a work place. Also women should be treated the same because most women nowadays seem to have jobs instead of staying at home and looking after children so they should now be treated the same as men as everyone in the world should be treated equally and not be discriminated.

(c) The government encourages community cohesion as they believe bringing different races and religions together in one community could help reduce

racism as most communities would treat each other equally and not judge people by their race. They also believe that by ~~doing~~ encouraging community cohesion encourages racial harmony and religious harmony which brings different types of people closer together despite their different beliefs and different races. This could also help the religious minority feel more comfortable in their community as they would also get along with people from different races. Community cohesion could reduce the chances of discrimination as people would begin to treat each other equally and not be racist or sexist and so on because they will be used to all the different types of people living together.

(d) (i) I disagree because we believe religious people should be able to accept other religions and should ~~try to~~ agree that these other religions should coexist as well as their own. They should also accept that people have their own free will and should be able to make their own decision on what religion to be in

or to be atheists are to be agnostic.

(ii) ~~People~~ ^{People} may disagree with me as they may think that people from other religions should be informed about every religion so they can choose the religion they believe in themselves. People may also disagree because when a person from one belief finds out someone has different beliefs to them so this could then make that person want to persuade the other to join his religion as he may think that person may benefit from ~~this~~ this other religion.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In part (b) this answer is about women's rights in general and it therefore doesn't answer the questions set which is about religious rights. There is no information which answers the question so it cannot be awarded any marks.

In response to part (c) three brief reasons are given by the candidate. The answer is coherent so it gains 6 marks rather than 5 marks.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion and then gives two reasons so 2 marks can be awarded. In (d)(ii) only one reason is given so only 1 mark can be awarded.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates can develop a reason very easily in part (b) by giving a relevant example or scriptural quote.

Using a paragraph for each reason allows candidates to check they have written enough to gain full marks.

At least one reason in part (d) must be a religious reason.

This is an example of a candidate who gains almost full marks but does not develop their reasons so only gains 2 out of 4 marks in part (b).

(b) Yes, simply because there is no reason why they shouldn't. Some people may believe that women are more compassionate ~~the~~ than men so would therefore make better priests for example. Also women are just as capable as men. Marriage is a union where both genders join together and work equally as a team, so why shouldn't they in other religious ceremonies/jobs

(c) The government encourages community cohesion as it means that everyone can get along without hatred. Wars are started because

of people disagreeing over religion. So maybe the government don't want more wars to start as it probably can't afford it. The government may also want all cultures and races to live together happily as it is nice but also makes the country look good. Not only that but it enriches our society as other types of food are brought in and fashion so it gives people a more

variety. Also we can learn from other cultures and become more knowledgeable. It also gives people a satisfaction from sharing and introducing other people to new things. The government may want people to be happy as community cohesion is people different people living together happily.

(d) (i) I disagree with this statement as people have the right to choose their own religion and should not be forced into it by others. Also if you are forced into a religion without ^{fully} knowing about it then you are not a real believer, which is pointless. Christians believe that God loves everyone so don't try to force people into believing but others may want everyone to believe in their religions as they feel that it is right, but one person's right is another person's wrong. The world would not be a good place if everyone was the same.

(ii) Some people may disagree as they feel that everyone would get along if they all believed the same thing, which may be true to a certain extent but it would not be fun and there would be no diversity. Some Christians may feel that their religion is the

only way and therefore preach to people with leaflets and knocking on doors. Also if everyone was the same there would be less chance of war. Also if you have converted you will then want to convert others as it is new and fresh, so you will be excited and want others to feel the same.

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The candidate's own opinion and two reasons are given in part (b). The third reason cannot be credited as the question asks for two reasons and it is also not development of the first two reasons so this response is awarded 2 marks.

In part (c) four brief reasons are given and the answer is coherent so it gains 8 marks rather than 7 marks.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion and three reasons so 3 marks are awarded. In (d)(ii) three reasons are given so 3 marks are awarded.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should practice developing reasons. One way of doing this in class is by pairing candidates and asking them each to write a reason and swap with each other to and then develop the reason.

Question 8 (a)

Most candidates knew the glossary definition for Religious Freedom. However, a few candidates answered that it was the ability 'to do what ever you wanted' which could not be credited.

This is an answer which shows it is easy to gain full marks if the glossary definition is used.

(a) Religious freedom is being able to practice any religion you want.



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Examiner Comments

A correct answer is given which is the same wording as on the mark scheme.

(a) Religious freedom is where you believe in a God but don't pray to him.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is an incorrect answer which therefore cannot be awarded any marks.

Question 8 (b, c, d)

It was noticeable that many of questions 7 and 8 were not complete; candidates should be advised to spend about 20 minutes on each question

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion as to whether living in a multi-faith society causes problems and then give reasons for it. Most candidates saw it as a positive and gave examples from personal experience. However, some candidates confused multi-faith with multi-ethnic and therefore did not answer the question set.

This part (c) question was well answered by candidates who were able to use their biblical knowledge to give a number of reasons. Less able candidates either did not answer the question set or were unable to give more than one accurate reason. General secular based answers could only achieve low level marks.

Most candidates were able to respond to the quote in part (d) but did not give religious reasons why treatment is equal or unequal. A few candidates gave answers that were not based within the UK and so gained few marks.

This is an example of a candidate who, on this final question, gains maximum marks on part (b) but not on part (d). This might be because they had not left themselves enough time to answer this question.

(b) I do believe living in a multi-faith society causes problems for religious people as Muslims believe Islam is the one correct religion and therefore may feel they need to convert others as they believe other people who practice another religion would go to Jahannam as they were not muslim.

Also extreme believers of a faith may become terrorists as they believe the people ~~was~~ who do not believe their religions are bad or wrong.

Terrorism can cause discrimination against certain religions even though the majority of followers would not become terrorists.

(c) Christians should promote racial harmony as they are taught in church to treat

everybody as equals.

The bible ~~is~~ teaches that we were

all created ~~with~~ equal.

The bible also teaches to 'love thy neighbour'. This means they should ~~love~~ love everybody, and it doesn't matter what their ethnic background is.

Christians believe in the sanctity of life. They believe every life is a gift from God so they should treat everybody equally.

Christian such as Dr Martin Luther King Jr preached that everybody was equal and fought through peaceful protest for racial harmony. Many Christian nowadays ~~value~~ respect Martin Luther King and think he was right to fight for racial harmony.

(d) (i) I do agree that "Men and Women are still not treated equally in the UK" as there are still stereotypes ~~and~~ and rules which men and women are expected to follow. ~~Although~~

Although men and women are treated a lot ~~in~~ more similarly than they were treated in the past, I feel that women are expected to act in a certain way such as sitting with legs crossed. ~~on~~

I feel that some people in the UK, especially the older generations, still expect women to do housework and men work.

(ii) Some ~~Christian~~^{Muslims} would disagree with me as they believe that Men and Women are treated equally but have certain roles which they must do. Men are expected to go to the mosque and pray and teach the son to worship Allah. Whereas Women are expected to stay at home, ~~and~~ cook, ~~and~~ clean, and look after the family.

Despite these differences they would say that men and women are ~~not~~ treated equally but just with different roles.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In this response to part (b) the candidate gives their own opinion and two developed reasons and is awarded 4 marks.

In their response to part (c) they give four brief reasons and the answer is coherent so it gains 8 marks rather than 7 marks.

The candidate gives their own opinion in part (d)(i) as well as two reasons so 2 marks are awarded. In (d)(ii) they give one developed reason which is developed by an example from Islam so this is awarded 2 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In part (b) it may help candidates if they separate their two reasons by using a new paragraph for each one.

In part (c) examples can be used as development.

Candidates can use development and examples in part (d) questions to improve their answers.

This example shows how a candidate can be undecided in a part (b) question and gain more marks in a part (d) question by developing their reason rather than adding more reasons.

(b) I ~~do~~ think that a multi-faith society can cause ~~different~~ problems because there would be a lot of different ~~a~~ views of culture etc and opinions of different religions. But bringing together the expectations of religions and faithfulness ~~g~~ can give people a better idea of what they believe in and therefore they know which religion to follow.

(c) Christians should promote racial harmony because at this present time there is a lot of racism ~~g~~ going off around the world and discrimination

becomes a big part of this. If racial harmony got promoted then different religions would learn to treat everyone equally. Equality does become a big part of racial harmony because there are no people that can be more important to others. A lot of arguments around the countries are caused because of racism. If everybody had a fair say against racism then ~~there~~ ^{there} would be peace between many different cultures and religions.

(d) (i) I disagree with this because hundred~~s~~ of years ago men and women were treated differently whereas now it is more equal. For example women work now, not just men. And men are expected to cook and clean for their families. There are high expectations for men and woman to do ~~it~~ so they are treated equally and I think they are treated the same as well, with the same manner.

(ii) people may disagree with me because they ~~is~~ could think that men are ~~still~~ and woman are still treated differently in the UK. Christians could think that the men ~~are~~ still have high expectations of doing work correctly and might get more praises than women.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In their response to part (b) the candidate gives their own opinion and two reasons. The second reason is of the opposite opinion but it is clear that both views are those of the candidate so 2 marks are awarded.

The candidate only gives one reason in response to part (c). The answer is coherent so it gains 2 marks rather than 1 mark.

In (d)(i) the candidate gives their own opinion and one reason which is developed by examples, so 2 marks are awarded. In (d)(ii) the candidate gives no valid reasoning, so no marks can be awarded.

Summary

Candidates produced some very interesting answers to the questions posed. This indicated that they and their teachers had not only studied the topic but importantly had linked them to their everyday life and that reflected in the society around them.

Teachers and candidates should note these general points in order to improve candidate's achievement in future years:

There is a choice of two questions per section, each of these has four sub-questions, and candidates can either attempt the sub-questions in the top questions (odd numbers) or the sub-questions in the bottom question (even numbered). Candidates who choose questions from a mixture of the top and bottom questions will not receive marks for all their responses and as such are at a clear disadvantage.

Candidates are asked to indicate which question they have answered by putting a cross in a box at the top of the paper. Some candidates did not do this and they should be reminded to do this as part of examination preparation.

The amount of space on the question paper is more than adequate for candidates to achieve maximum marks. There is no need for candidates to write more than this. Almost all the candidates who used extra paper had already achieved the maximum marks of that question. Any candidate who needs extra space can use the space allocated to other questions as long as they clearly indicate on their paper that this is what they have done.

A number of candidates did not complete the final section due to timing difficulties. Candidates should be encouraged to spend about twenty minutes per question leaving ten minutes to check through their work at the end of the paper.

Some general points can be made on how best to answer the various question types:

Maximum marks on the part (a) questions are easily gained by learning the Edexcel glossary definitions.

Only the candidate's point of view is credited in part (b) questions. The easiest way to gain full marks is for candidates to concentrate on stating their opinion and writing two separate reasons for it, each in a distinct paragraph, and then to develop each of the reasons with an example or a quote.

Candidates can gain the higher mark within the level on part (c) questions by writing coherently. Part (c) questions test AO1 and so will either ask for candidates to 'Explain why' or to 'Explain how'.

Many of the part (d) questions this year produced interesting answers. However, candidates should ensure that they start by stating their own view and reasons for it in the part (d) (i) and state reasons why someone might hold a different view in (d)(ii) rather than mixing the two halves. At least one of the reasons given in either (d)(i) or (d)(ii) must be explicitly religious to go beyond 3 marks. The part (d) questions on this unit can ask for the candidate to refer to either one religion (i.e. any religion), one religion other than Christianity or can specify that Christianity is referred to.

Teachers who would like to learn more about the specification should attend one of the Edexcel training events, details of which can be found on the Edexcel website. Specific queries can be answered through the Ask the Expert service which can also be found on the Edexcel website.

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