

Religious Studies C

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1932**

Report on the Components

June 2008

1932/MS/R/08

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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General Certificate in Secondary Education

GCSE Religious Studies C (1932)

REPORT ON THE COMPONENTS

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1932/01 Jewish Studies

General Comments

The candidature for this specification is stable and the overall standard was once more very high. Written Communication was generally good and there were very few rubric errors. However, a number of candidates still disadvantaged themselves by running out of time and failing to complete a third question – this has become a persistent problem.

The many centres and teachers involved in the preparation of candidates for this examination are to be commended on the very high standard of most of the scripts submitted.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question 1

- (a) There were some very good responses to this question giving as much detail as is possible about Shavuot. Good use was made of the text given as a stimulus and, although this was the first time that a text had been used, it seemed to help students rather than hinder them.
- (b) There were many good responses dealing with family, community, the annual reminder of a faith and the importance of the Giving of the Law. Some combined this with the teachings of the Book of Ruth on faith and family loyalty.
- (c) In general candidates did not agree with the statement but were able to support an alternative view on the basis that all the Pilgrim Festivals were ordered in the Torah and so must be seen as being of equal importance.

Question 2

- (a) This was not particularly popular but those candidates who did attempt this question were able to give good descriptions of a mikveh and also to describe its use in detail i.e. including both women and men.
- (b) Apart from those candidates who understood this as asking for a description of a Jewish marriage ceremony most were able to explain the importance of Jewish marriage for the couple, the family, the community and the faith.
- (c) This was a straightforward question which produced some excellent responses. Candidates considered the type and nature of worship in both the home and the synagogue and were able to produce evidence and argument in support of both views.

Question 3

- (a) This question caused a problem for some candidates who knew that Yom Ha'Shoah was Holocaust Remembrance Day but did not associate this with the 27th of Nisan.

Since this was a genuine confusion caused by different practices examiners therefore accepted answers which dealt with Tish B'Av and the UK Holocaust Remembrance Day as well.

- (b) There were some very interesting answers to this question. Some responses were very general and dealt with the idea that the Holocaust had challenged belief in a G-d who

cared for the Jews. Others considered aspects of post-Holocaust Theology either generally or specifically.

Some candidates may give simple explanations of Post-Holocaust Theology are are likely to consider some of the main ideas:

- (c) There were many mixed answers to this question. Most were able to put two points of view and support them but reaching any sort of conclusion, whilst not required, was a challenge to many.

Question 4

- (a) There were some good detailed responses to this question. The majority of candidates focused on shaatnez and some wrote about religious dress. There were also good responses considering modesty for both men and women.
- (b) There were some very good answers concerning religious dress as well as dressing appropriately for worship. Some wrote about the requirements of head covering in particular.
- (c) Most candidates argued that, in the last analysis, this statement is probably true. On the other hand many felt that worshipping G-d was so important that it was not unreasonable for people to make an effort in what they wore.

Question 5

- (a) Some candidates were aware that there are three Covenants with Abraham and mentioned this whilst generally writing in detail about the Covenant of Circumcision. Some, unnecessarily, wrote about all three which could not gain them extra credit.

Some were only aware of the Covenant of Circumcision and therefore, properly focused on this.

- (b) For those who were only aware of the Covenant of Circumcision this question was essentially straightforward though some were confused, therefore, by the plural form in the question.
- (c) This statement produced an overwhelming amount of support from candidates though some were able to comment that the covenants did promise things in return therefore it was not unreasonable to expect at least what was promised.

1932/02 Jewish Texts

General Comments

The candidature for this specification is stable and the overall standard was once more very high. Written Communication was generally good and there were very few rubric errors. However, a number of candidates still disadvantaged themselves by running out of time and failing to complete a third question – this has become a persistent problem.

The many centres and teachers involved in the preparation of candidates for this examination are to be commended on the very high standard of most of the scripts submitted.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to recognise this as part of the Shema. There were good comments on tefillin and mezuzot and also the concern for educating children.
- (b) Many candidates were able to write good explanations of the importance of educating children in their faith for their own well-being, for their families, for the continuation of the community and also, of course, to worship G-d.
- (c) There were a number of comments about Human Rights and whether children should have the right to choose their own religion and not be influenced or, perhaps, indoctrinated by their parents. However, the majority conclusion was that children needed to be guided in their religious belief and practice by their parents so that they would form part of their community and also benefit from worshipping G-d.

Question 2

- (a) There were some good answers to this passage and many candidates were able to comment on each of these concepts and their relationship with Judaism. Better answers also provided good descriptions of the teachings in the second part of the passage in relation to the 'verdict of peace' and 'to adjudicate in your gates'.
- (b) Most candidates were able to explain how this particular paragraph might help in determining the way in which justice should be applied. They explained the significance of the words 'truth' and 'peace' and wrote competently about the instruction 'are you to adjudicate in your gates'.
- (c) The majority appeared to think that peace was the more important of the two concepts because of its wider ramifications. However, many were also able to consider the idea that peace without justice was problematic.

Question 3

- (a) The passage set was the whole of the Third Blessing and most candidates were able to write about the significance of the prayer for Jerusalem as well as for the city, the Temple, the house of David and Jews themselves.
- (b) Many candidates explained how this passage might strengthen the community feeling of Judaism by showing the relationship between Jerusalem and the other concepts

included. Some continued to explain that the prayer is asking G-d to help the Jews directly without assistance from others.

- (c) Many answers dealt with the idea that putting faith and trust in G-d is essential and that it is not sufficient to lead a good life. However, an alternative viewpoint was along the lines of 'G-d helps those who help themselves' and considered that people are required to make an effort and not just wait on G-d to sort things out.

Question 4

- (a) This was not a particularly popular question but those who attempted were generally able to give good accounts of the teachings about G-d and the Patriarchs and the relationship between G-d and the individuals. Some were able to link the idea of a Redeemer to the concept of the Messiah.
- (b) Candidates were able to explain that a Jew might thank G-d for the ongoing protection and love which has been shown to the Jews since the days of the Patriarchs. Some built on the idea of a Redeemer and showed that a Jew may thank G-d that the Messiah will eventually come.
- (c) Answers tended to focus on the Holocaust and whether it should be forgotten or not. Others looked back at Jewish history in general and a consideration of the way in which G-d has guided and safeguarded the Jews.

Question 5

- (a) This question did not give candidates the opportunity to write the whole of the story of Jonah. Good answers focussed on the actions of both Jonah in offering to be thrown overboard and also of the men for trying to save him. They continued by mentioning that although Jonah was unwilling to carry out G-d's wishes, the sailors were god-fearing and tried to make their peace with G-d.
- (b) Most candidates were able to suggest that the passage shows Jews that they must obey G-d's instructions and that they cannot hide from G-d. Some took this on to comment on the men's actions and suggest that people should always worship G-d.

Some candidates also suggested that the passage shows people that they should be prepared to sacrifice themselves for others.

- (c) Some candidates contented themselves with the idea that because the story of Jonah is in the Tenakh it must be true. Others were able to consider the view that it makes no difference whether the events happened or not, the importance is the teachings found in the story.

Grade Thresholds

General Certificate of Secondary Education
Religious Studies (Judaism) (1932)
June 2008 Examination Series

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Paper 1	64	54	48	42	36	30	24	18
Paper 2	64	60	54	48	41	34	28	22

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage in Grade	29.5	33.8	16.0	8.2	5.9	3.3	1.6	0.8
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	29.5	63.3	79.3	87.5	93.4	96.7	98.3	99.1

The total entry for the examination was 1,103.

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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