

# Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE O Level

## GCE O Level Religious Studies (7560)

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# O Level Religious Studies (7560) Report

## General remarks

It was heartening that there were very few rubric errors this year. However, a small number of candidates attempted to answer more than five questions, and a few attempted to respond to every question on the paper. It should be emphasised that no credit is given for additional responses, and that candidates penalise themselves if they waste time.

It would be very much appreciated if all candidates listed the questions answered, in the order in which they were attempted, in the boxes provided on the front of the answer booklet. There is no need for parts of questions to be listed separately.

The quality of papers was pleasing in general this year, with some candidates providing thoughtful and nuanced arguments in response to part c) questions. Most candidates had been well-prepared with the facts and implications thereof regarding their chosen units of study.

## Section 1

### Part (a): Abraham to David

This was more popular than the unit on Elijah to Jeremiah.

In Q1, most candidates could outline the bargaining between Abraham and the Almighty, although the start of the conversation was not always known in detail. While all candidates were seized of the importance of Lot to Abraham, the other factors affecting Abraham's view were not always appreciated.

In Q2, some answers lacked detail .

Q3 was popular and the story (including incidents not in the specification!) was obviously well-known. Some candidates did not address the question in part c, simply reiterating that Joseph was indeed mistreated without considering whether or not this was surprising.

Q4 answers sometimes lacked detail and clarity.

Few candidates chose Q5, and of those who did, a number were under the impression that King David marched people and / or animals two by two into the Ark of the Lord!

### Part (b): Elijah to Jeremiah

Few candidates attempted this section. Q6 was usually answered in reasonable detail, but many part c answers tended to be brief and generalised. Q7 was almost universally shunned. In Q8 and 9, candidates sometimes lacked a grasp of detail and did not appreciate the thrust of c parts. Q10 attracted very few answers.

## Section 2

### The Life and Teaching of Jesus

Q11 was popular and parts a and b were almost universally answered well. In part c, a number of candidates failed to address the issue of practicality.

In Q12, part a was usually answered well. For some reason, a number of candidates confused the shepherds with the magi! It was frequently stated in part c that rich people believe in the power of money, and that the poor believe in God because they have no money.

Q13 was popular and generally well-answered.

Responses to Q14 were mixed. Those who were familiar with the texts selected an appropriate narrative for part a and usually told it well. Others appeared to select a healing at random. In part b, Jesus' perceived threat to Pharasaic authority was not always appreciated. Some candidates misread part c and responded to the statement "Treat others as they treat you" - which was not the question set. It cannot be over-emphasised that it is essential to read the question paper with care. Parts a and b of

Q15 was usually addressed at least competently, but responses to c tended to lack both length and depth.

### Section 3

#### The Early Church

This section was much less popular than section 2. Q17 and 18 attracted few candidates. Q16, 19 and 20 were all, in general, answered well, although responses to Q20c tended to be clichéd.

### Section 4

#### The Qur'an

Q21 answers too often failed to fully address the question. In many responses, there was simply a list of prophets, little detailed understanding shown of Islamic teaching about holy books of other faiths, and in part c, universal disagreement but little reasoned argument.

Q22 answers tended to be couched in very general terms.

Q23 produced many good responses, abounding in detail and giving thoughtful responses to part c.

Q24 evoked little interest.

Q25 was well answered by most.

## Section 5

### Personal and Social Relationships and Problems

As usual, the most popular section on the paper, evoking some very good responses and usually handled competently by the candidates in general.

Q26 part c revealed that most have an extremely rose-tinted view of the joys of family life.

In Q28 part a, a surprising number did not appreciate that providing for one's own basic needs is usually regarded as legitimate, and, with regard to Q28b, candidates should note that engaging in crime does not constitute paid employment!

Q29 part a evoked the usual responses of prayer, study, charitable work and (occasionally) sport. Candidates might like to bear in mind that there are other permitted leisure activities.

Q29 part c evoked a variety of thoughtful and well-argued views.



## Section 6

### Some Other World Religions

#### Part (a): Islam

A much more popular section than the Qu'ran.

In general, candidates were well-prepared and encountered no difficulty in tackling any of the questions. There were some extremely good part c responses which evidenced critical analysis of the issues.

#### Part (b): Buddhism

There were relatively few candidates for this section, but in general candidates were well-prepared for parts a and b and able to respond appropriately and thoughtfully to part c questions.

#### Part (c): Judaism and Part (d): Hinduism

These questions attracted too few responses to enable valid comment.

## Statistics

### Overall Subject Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	66	58	51	46	41



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