



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCSE (NEW)
RELIGIOUS STUDIES – UNIT 1: CATHOLIC
CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM**

SUMMER 2019

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Unit 1	Page
Catholic Christianity and Judaism	1

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCSE (NEW)

Summer 2019

UNIT 1: CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM

General Comments

The paper appeared to be accessible to most candidates. However, there were several gaps particularly regarding key terms. I saw some very good answers to question 1(b) and (c). Question 2(a) and (c) were also particularly well answered. Many candidates failed to gain full marks in 2(b) as most candidates wrote about the characteristics of God rather than the teaching of the Shema. A common error in 3(b) was in the interpretation of the question. Many candidates referred to 'why' religious believers might support global citizenship rather than 'how' they might. Perhaps it is worth revisiting these trigger words with candidates and impressing upon them that 'how' needs to include 'by doing...' and 'why' needs to include 'because...'.

'C' questions appeared to be well answered with candidates being able to give knowledge and understanding from both religions. It would be beneficial to candidates if they clearly separated the religions and used terminology that is related to the specific religions. Evaluation answers appeared to be less dependent on formulas this year which was pleasing to see. However, it is important to stress to candidates that answer questions which include discussion of less points, are well developed and use sources of wisdom and authority, can achieve the higher bands far more readily than merely listing short versions of strong and weak arguments.

Comments on individual questions/sections

PART A – Core Beliefs, Teachings and Practices – Catholic Christianity

- Q.1 (a)** Generally answered well. Many candidates were able to refer to the forgiveness of sin through the death of Jesus. It was pleasing to see candidates making connections with other aspects of the course, the sacrament of reconciliation was referred to as well as Jesus being a 'bridge' between humanity and God.
- (b)** This question was mainly very well answered. Most candidates demonstrated knowledge of the work of CAFOD. Candidates were able to refer to relevant examples of the work. Good answers referred to the short-term and long-term work of CAFOD with examples to support both aspects. It was disappointing to see candidates refer to LECD countries as 'third world'.
- (c)** This question was mainly answered very well. Many candidates were able to use a wide variety of key terms when referring to beliefs about Jesus. The most common were Saviour, Messiah, Trinity and Incarnation. Excellent answers focused on explaining, in depth, how Jesus' earthly life demonstrated these beliefs. However, other answers which explained several beliefs about Jesus achieved high marks also. It was pleasing to see the extended writing in this question and centres should be congratulated on the way they have approached the specification. It was clear to see that candidates made links between the various sections of the specification.

- (d) Generally, there appeared to be a lack of awareness of the reasons for offering masses for the dead. Most candidates referred to funeral rites here rather than the practice of offering masses for the dead. Whilst reference to requiem masses was creditworthy, excellent answers tended to make links between beliefs about life after death and masses for the dead. Candidates who did exceptionally well offered a critique of the practice from a variety of perspectives including the perspective of purgatory, heaven, communion of saints as well as atheistic perspectives.

SPAG

It was evident that candidates had been advised to take great care with spelling, punctuation and grammar. Most candidates were able to gain between 3-6 marks.

PART A – Core Beliefs, Teachings and Practices – Judaism

- Q.2** (a) This question was answered very well. Most candidates were able to clearly identify what a *kippah* is and give a supporting statement.
- (b) Those candidates who knew the teachings described them well. However, many candidates wrote about beliefs about God from the perspective of Judaism rather than the teachings of the Shema. Some candidates mixed up the Shema with Shabbat.
- (c) Mainly answered well. Most candidates were able to identify the foods which are kosher, treifa and pareve. Many candidates were able to refer to sources of wisdom and authority (Leviticus 23:17) and how to keep a kosher kitchen. Good explanations focused on observing the rules found in Leviticus regarding which foods are acceptable to eat and which foods are forbidden. Those who focused on what was done in order to observe Kashrut achieved very high marks. Some insightful answers included reference to the different attitudes towards observing kashrut associated with Orthodox and Reform Jews.
- (d) Good responses included answers which demonstrated the importance of the role of a synagogue for faith and practice. Reference to the Torah was made from the perspective of the readings and teachings that are heard at synagogue which impacted upon the lives of the believers. The benefits of worshipping as a community were referred to as well as comparisons being made to worship in the home. Other good responses focused on the importance of the features of a synagogue which aid worship and remind Jews of their links with the Temple. Weaker responses focused on explanations of different viewpoints rather than a discussion of them.

PART B – Religious Responses to Philosophical Themes

- Q.3** (a) Answers which gained full marks focused both points on the concept of the soul. For example, the spiritual aspect of a person which is eternal.
- (b) Many candidates ‘explained why’ rather than ‘described how’. It was clear that candidates who did so knew what global citizenship is but lost marks because the focus of the answer was wrong. It would be beneficial for centres to do some further practice on the demands of the question and the difference between ‘how’ and ‘why’.

- (c) Answered very well with many candidates being able to gain high marks. Most candidates were able to explain Catholic beliefs about abortion very well indeed. Good answers referred to a variety of sources of wisdom and authority as well as referring to the principle of double effect. Many candidates were able to refer to different attitudes from within Judaism, for example the differences between attitudes from within Orthodox and Reform. Many candidates referred to the concept of 'pikuach nefesh'. Candidates who successfully separated Catholicism and Judaism gained high marks.
- (d) Commonly there was a misrepresentation of humanist and atheistic views with most candidates aligning these views with a particular attitude – usually one of not caring. Pupils need to move away from merely explaining different view point and enter in to a discussion about the issue and focus on moral reasoning. Pupils should be encouraged to develop reasoning of a few points rather than listing as many different points as possible.
- Q.4**
- (a) There were many gaps in candidates' knowledge and understanding in this question. It was poorly answered overall. Some candidates mixed this up with purgatory.
- (b) Most candidates were able to refer in detail to examples of forgiveness. Examples were wide ranging and included examples such as Biblical stories, Jesus' teachings, Jesus' example, a variety of personal examples and the sacrament of reconciliation. The level of description in many cases was highly detailed.
- (c) This question was answered well from a Catholic perspective. Many candidates were able to reference the notion that there had been a change of attitude within the Catholic Church regarding Capital punishment. There seemed to be less awareness of the different attitudes from within Judaism although some candidates were able to reference this. It is important to discourage candidates from missing both views together as this becomes difficult to assess fairly.
- (d) The question was not well evaluated and there appeared to be many gaps in attempts at the question. It is possible that candidates ran out of time. Many candidates listed or explained the different aims of punishment rather than evaluating the main aim of punishment. Candidates were keen to show knowledge and understanding rather than engage in discussion. This led to a lack of coherency and in-depth analysis of the statement. It was disappointing to not see more links with religious teachings - for example – reform and repentance. Those candidates that did link the teachings with the main aims and discussed this in the light of benefit to the person and society achieved the higher bands. It was disappointing and puzzling to see stereotyping of atheist and humanist views which were in many cases aligned with the aim of revenge.

Summary of key points

- It is important for candidates to learn the key terms/concepts definitions.
- Candidates need further practice regarding trigger words – ‘how’ and ‘why’.
- Candidates should in ‘c’ questions separate the two religions and give explanations relating to each one.
- Candidates should continue to be encouraged to ‘have a go’ at all questions.
- Candidates should continue to work on developing evaluation skills – especially developing lines of reasoning in relation to the question set.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk