



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCSE
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 1:
CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM**

SUMMER 2019

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Unit 1	Page
Christianity and Judaism	1

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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UNIT 1: CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM

General Comments

The questions were accessible to candidates. There were examples of some very good scripts, where candidates were prepared for the demands of the questions. However, it is important that candidates read questions carefully and draw upon the topics covered within the area of the specification when answering questions. There was evidence that candidates had been thoroughly prepared for the SPaG element of the assessment in question 1d.

It is also important that candidates are fully aware of timing, so they can respond to all questions fully.

Comments on individual questions/sections

PART A – Core Beliefs, Teachings and Practices - Christianity

- Q.1 (a)** Candidates responded well to this question. Most candidates scored the full two marks. Some candidates gave a detailed response about the Trinity, whilst some did not make a reference to God in their answer. It is important that candidates are taught clear and simple definitions.
- (b)** There was a range of marks for this question and some candidates did not attempt the question. Many candidates provided general ideas about Jesus, such as miracles, healing, being born in a manger and the incarnation. However, where candidates scored higher bands, there was evidence of excellent use of religious language which was used extensively, accurately and appropriately. Many candidates wrote about anointed one, atonement and saviour, which they did with accuracy.
- (c)** Candidates demonstrated good knowledge in this question. Many candidates gave a detailed description of the creation of the world. However, there were some candidates who did not respond fully to the question and provide a response about the creation of the world and human beings. However, where candidates did write about both, they were fully prepared for the question. These candidates referred to different interpretations of creation, such as literals and non-literals and were able to achieve the higher bands by using a range of religious language, which they explained, appropriately. There were some candidates who simply described creation and some included non- religious views, such as Darwin.
- (d)** There were a range of responses to this question. Many candidates did not provide detailed evaluation and unfortunately did not achieve the higher banding. These candidates did not fully develop their responses and were unable to link their answer to religious teachings. There were also some candidates who did not attempt the question or simply re-wrote the statement in their own words.

However, where candidates scored higher bands, they used religious teachings to support their answers. For example, many candidates wrote about stewardship, afterlife, religious duty and an alternative to working for a better world.

PART A – Core Beliefs, Teachings and Practices – Judaism

- Q.2** (a) Candidates responded very well to this question. Most candidates scored the full two marks. Some candidates developed their responses, explaining where and when kippah is worn. Some candidates referred to the kippah as being the mezuzah in their response.
- (b) There was a range of marks for this question and some candidates did not attempt the question. Some candidates provided very general ideas about the Shema and there was some confusion amongst some candidates who wrote that the Shema was a holy day. Many candidates wrote about where the Shema is found, without linking it to the question. A few candidates wrote that the Shema is a prayer and therefore did not fully respond to the question. However, where candidates scored higher bands, they wrote about the belief in one God, when the Shema should be said, where the Shema is found and children being taught it. In these responses, many candidates were able to use sources of authority to develop their description.
- (c) There were a variety of responses for this question. Some candidates did not know what kashrut was and wrote about it being a day of rest or a festival. There were also some gaps for this question. There was some evidence of candidates repeating the content of their response, without further development. However, when candidates were engaged with the question they wrote about the different foods that Jews can and cannot eat, how food is stored and prepared and references to shechitah. Some candidates included sources of authority in their responses.
- (d) There was a range of responses to this question. Some candidates did not fully engage with the question, so they did not achieve higher bands. There were some general responses where candidates showed a lack of evaluation but provided a detailed description. It is important that candidates reflect upon the statement in their answer. Some candidates wrote about other religions in their response, when this was not a requirement. However, where candidates fully responded to the question they used excellent religious language to evaluate the importance of attending the synagogue.

PART B – Religious Responses to Philosophical Themes

- Q.3** (a) Most candidates responded well to this question. Many candidates referred to the soul as being something inside that lives on after death. Some candidates gave weaker definitions and referred to the soul as being what makes you who you are.
- (b) Some candidates did not attempt this question. However, those who did wrote general responses about stewardship and caring for others. There was evidence of some candidates misreading the question, where they wrote about why they should support global citizenship. It is important that candidates read the demands of the question carefully.
- (c) There were a variety of responses for this question. Some candidates responded to this question using evaluation, therefore not fully responding to the demands of the question. Some candidates wrote about Christian and Jewish attitudes, without separating them. Where candidates responded well to the question, they were able to include sources of authority, such as 'do not kill', to develop their response.
- (d) There was a range of responses to this question. Some candidates did not fully engage themselves with the rubric question, so they did not achieve higher bands.

Some candidates wrote excellent religious responses to the statement. However they did do include non-religious beliefs in their answer, which meant they could not achieve the higher bands.

- Q.4 (a)** Most candidates responded well to this question. Many candidates achieved the full two marks for the question. Some candidates left the question blank and other candidates gave examples of a pacifist.
- (b)** There was a varied response to this question. Most candidates wrote about Jesus on the cross or Gee Walker as an example of forgiveness. Some candidates wrote about asking for forgiveness from God. Some examples gave many examples of forgiveness within the question.
- (c)** There were a variety of responses for this question. Some candidates responded to this question using evaluation, therefore not fully responding to the demands of the question. Some candidates included general religious teachings in this question.
- (d)** There was a range of responses to this question. Some candidates unfortunately did not answer this question. Some candidates gave very general responses about punishment although some were able to explain other forms of punishment.

Summary of key points

Q.1

- Learn clear definitions of the key concepts.
- Use ideas/topics within the whole of the Christianity section to build on 1d.
- Read the demands of the question carefully.
- Be aware of the banding.
- Be aware of the use of SPaG in 1d – the use of homophones and clear use of punctuation.

Q.2

- Further develop religious teachings/key concepts to access questions fully.
- Read the demands of the question carefully.
- Be aware of the banding.
- Link responses to the question.

Q.3

- Read the demands of the question carefully.
- Write Christian and Jewish teachings separately.
- Include non-religious beliefs in 3d, to achieve higher banding.
- Include sources of authority to back up responses.

Q.4

- Learn clear definitions of the key concepts.
- Read the demands of the question carefully.
- Include clear religious teachings.
- Be aware of the timing, ensuring evaluation questions are responded to.



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