



# Examiners' Report

## June 2010

### GCSE Religious Studies 5RS03



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## Introduction

This is the first year the new specification for Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed. Unit 3 has replaced Unit C as the unit which covers Roman Catholic Christianity, and this unit continues to be a popular unit, addressing many moral and spiritual issues affecting young people today and importantly fulfilling all the requirements of the Bishops' Conference for Religious Education at Key Stage 4.

As already mentioned, this is the first year of examining the new specification and it was pleasing to see that generally candidates had been well prepared, taking into account the changes in content and approach. Despite the changes in the timing and structure of the examination, the majority of candidates coped well with these. However, a significant number did not recognise the difference of approach required in the (b) parts of the question, and to a lesser degree in the (d) parts.

The layout of the examination booklet allows more than enough space for candidates to write their answers. Where this was the case, candidates generally scored well. However, those who wrote at length frequently strayed from the focus of the question, and directed their answer to an aspect of the topic that was not required. Candidates need to recognise the need to keep to what is being asked for when answering questions.

The approach to individual questions is outlined later, with examples being given from candidates' responses in this year's examination where relevant. Please note that in some cases part answers only are given, not full answers. However, it is worthwhile at this point giving some general comments that apply across all questions.

Maximum marks on the part (a) questions are easily gained by learning the Edexcel glossary definitions and this is a constant feature throughout the paper.

The style of the part (b) questions has changed from the previous specification, with candidates now being asked to give two reasons for their point of view in response to a question. It is important that candidates are fully aware of the implications of both aspects of this change. These questions ask for two reasons, and therefore giving more than two will not gain any extra marks. Some candidates gave three or even four reasons, but could only gain two marks for what otherwise could have been high scoring answers. It is also important for candidates to realise that both reasons need to be developed for maximum marks to be awarded. The questions also ask candidates for their point of view. Simply stating that 'some people' or 'Christians' hold a particular point of view is not sufficient. It needs to be clear that it is the candidate's own point of view for marks to be awarded. 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 to develop each of the reasons with an example or a quote.

In part (c) questions there are 8 marks available within 4 levels, each with a range of two marks. Candidates can gain the higher mark within the level by writing coherently as this is where QWC (quality of written communication) is assessed. These questions assess AO1 and so candidates will be asked to either 'Explain how' or 'Explain why', and it is important that this aspect of the question is addressed. Simply giving a description, no matter how detailed, will mean that candidates cannot be awarded higher than level 1 for this part of the question.

The format of the part (d) questions has changed from the previous specification. 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 (d)(i) part and state reasons why someone might hold a different view in the (d)(ii) part, rather than mixing the two halves. At least one of the reasons given in either (d)(i) or (d)(ii) must refer in some way to Roman Catholic Christianity to go beyond 3 marks, and some otherwise excellent answers could not achieve full marks because of this.

### Question 1 (a)

The key element in this question was linking free will with being given choice, and this was generally answered well, with many candidates giving the glossary definition, although a significant number gave alternative wording, which still gained two marks.

(a) Free will was given to us by god to be able to do and think for ourselves.



#### ResultsPlus

##### Examiner Comments

This is an example of a correct definition of 'free will' although the candidate has worded it differently to the glossary definition. The candidate therefore received 2 marks.



#### ResultsPlus

##### Examiner Tip

The easiest way to get full marks for the (a) questions is to learn the glossary definitions.

**Question 1 (b, c, d)**

In part (b) better candidates recognised that this was a question about the design argument and discussed the concept of a designer linked to purpose and complexity. Some able candidates used Paley's watch but as the question asks for two reasons they ended up only giving one very developed answer that could not go beyond two marks.

In part (c) although stronger candidates gave good answers which clearly addressed the question, a number did not gain marks as they did not show how unanswered prayers may lead to not believing in God. Other candidates gave the religious response to unanswered prayers, which was not asked for in this question.

In part (d) most candidates responded well, with the best answers referring to marriage vows and promises made at the child's baptism in support of the statement.

(b) I do not think the universe was designed because scientists have proven that matter is eternal and so this means that matter did not need to be designed or created. Also

Scientists have also proven that evolution is what created the animals and the world for example we DNA is similar to that of a chimp because we evolved from them. The world was made from gas and matter exploding and was not designed.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In this (b) answer, the candidate has given two clearly developed reasons why they do not think the universe was designed. They have made it very clear where the second reason begins.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Starting each reason on a separate line, with a space between them, makes it easier to identify where each reason begins.

### Question 2 (a)

This question was very well answered, with most candidates recognising that prayer involves a degree of communication with God.

(a) Prayer is when you share your thoughts and worries to God.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This example is an alternative wording to a correct definition, and therefore receives full marks.



**Question 2 (b, c, d)**

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give a reason for it, though seldom developing the reason. Better candidates answered the question and provided two reasons which they then exemplified by one of the characteristics of God. In common with most of the (b) questions, some candidates simply stated the Christian position, while not making their own point of view clear.

Part (c) tended to be either well answered by candidates, who were able to describe different religious experiences and explain how they might lead to belief in God, or poorly answered by those who described different religious experiences but did not explain how they might lead to belief in God. Less able candidates simply described experiences which are religious, such as being baptised, which were not awarded marks.

Most candidates answered part (d) of this question well, although some did not know why science is a convincing argument and others did not find an alternative to the scientific argument for the creation of the world.

(c) ~~For example a religious~~  
~~family.~~ For example a  
religious family. the parents  
are catholic christians if

they were to have a child  
they would want it too  
be a catholic too, so they  
would get it baptised then  
have a holy communion  
and go to a catholic school  
were other children will be  
learning to believe in god  
and also they would go to  
sunday school at their local

church' where they will learn to believe in God and they will pray and look up to him.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

In this part (c) answer the candidate has written about experiences which are religious, such as being baptised and 'having a holy communion', and NOT about religious experiences, and therefore receives 0 marks.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

Make sure that you read the question carefully, and always remember in (c) questions to give reasons ('how' or 'why').

### Question 3 (a)

Very few candidates knew the glossary definition for reincarnation; there were many good answers where the candidates clearly understood what reincarnation was and the vast majority of candidates attempting this question gained full marks. However, there are some candidates who are clearly confused between reincarnation and resurrection, and thorough learning of key words could prevent this confusion.

(a) Reincarnation is when the soul is reborn into another body after you die.

(b) I do not think everyone should agree with abortion because everyone has free will and can have whatever opinion they want. Also people from different religions have been brought up to believe

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This response is, in effect, the glossary definition and therefore receives full marks.

**Question 3 (b, c, d)**

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about abortion and then give one or two reasons for the opinion. Some candidates became tangled in the first part of the question where it says 'Should everyone...' and this led to some confused and lower mark answers.

Part (c) was generally answered well, with most candidates able to give reasons based on Scripture and Church teachings for why Roman Catholics believe in life after death. However, candidates should be clear that the question was asked in relation to why Roman Catholics believe in life after death, and while some secular reasons may be valid, they can only be credited in so far as it can be justifiably stated that Roman Catholics would see them as a reason.

Part (d) of this question caused problems for those candidates who did not know that euthanasia is illegal in the UK (although turning off life support systems is legal). Better candidates were able to give examples from recent events in the news and indicated that they had personally considered the issue.

(d) (i) I don't agree because euthanasia is murder and murder is forbidden by the ten commandments. Also I believe in the sanctity of life so no life should be taken by a human. I also believe that there is always a possibility the person may change their mind and there would be no way of knowing that if they are given Euthanasia. Roman Catholics would believe that it would be wrong because who would decide if the person could have euthanasia.

(iii) Some people might disagree and say that if a person has a poor quality of life they should not be forced to live. Some could say that Jesus taught we should have to sometimes choose the lesser of two evils. So if someone is in great pain it would be a kind thing to do to end their pain. Others might say that the sanctity of life can be broken by having life war anyway so why not allow euthanasia.


**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In this (d) answer the candidate has given three reasons in (d)(i) to explain why they don't agree with the statement and three reasons in (d)(ii) for why some people might disagree with them. They have also clearly referred to Roman Catholic Christianity and so are awarded three marks for each part.


**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Remember to refer to Roman Catholic Christianity at some point in your answer or else you cannot score more than three marks for the whole of question (d).

**Question 4 (a)**

Although this question was generally answered well, a number of candidates confused 'assisted suicide' with 'euthanasia', while others referred to killing people which could have been a description of murder. The important point is that assisted suicide involves the person helping someone to commit suicide or kill themselves.

(a) Assisted suicide is when you help someone take their own life. for example by giving them the drugs to have an overdose.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

The candidate here has clearly indicated helping someone to take their own life in their answer, and has shown this through the example they have given. This was therefore awarded full marks.

### Question 4 (b, c, d)

This question was the second most popular question with almost three times as many students doing question 4 than question 3.

In part (b) candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give at least two reasons for this. These reasons were frequently not religious reasons and while this is perfectly acceptable, those that gave religious reasons were usually more cohesive. Candidates should be aware that if they give three or four reasons for their opinion only two can be credited.

Part (c) of this question was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to give several reasons why Christians are against euthanasia. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that included reasons why some Christians might be in favour of euthanasia. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully as to whether the response needs to include reasons for, reasons against, or reasons both for and against, as these will vary from question to question.

(b) I think there can be a life after death because of people who have experienced near death experience. Also because of things such as the Ouijee board and ghost. Things like that can make you / people believe there is a life after death.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In this response to part (b) the candidate has given two secular (non-religious) reasons why they think that there is life after death - 'people who have experienced near death experience' and also 'things such as the ouijee board and ghosts ... can make you believe' in it. Because neither of the reasons are developed the candidate can only be awarded 2 marks.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Remember to only give two reasons and try to develop each of them to gain 4 marks.

**Question 5 (a)**

Many candidates did not gain full marks on this question because they did not indicate that adultery takes place in marriage. A very few candidates thought adultery was something to do with adulthood and gained no marks.

(a) having sexual intercourse with some  
one other than your partner

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This candidate has simply referred to a 'partner' without mentioning marriage. This answer is therefore only partially correct and was given just 1 mark.



### Question 5 (b, c, d)

Question 5 was answered by nearly twice as many candidates as answered question 6.

Part (b) proved difficult for many candidates, with them giving just two brief reasons for their point of view. A number gave simple 'social' reasons such as it helping to counter loneliness. Many of the higher scoring answers referred to the family as the basic unit of society and as the place where children learn right from wrong.

In part (c) there were some strong answers to this question, with those candidates who scored highest referring to the Bible and Church teachings to support their reasons. However, where attitudes were attributed to particular Christian groups these were frequently incorrect. Some candidates simply described different attitudes and therefore were only awarded level 1.

In part (d) most candidates were able to give reasons from Catholic teaching on contraception to support the statement, whilst citing free will and further secular or practical reasons for why some would disagree.

(d) (i) I do not agree. I believe that contraception should be used to allow people to enjoy sex without the worry of getting pregnant. I also believe that it is more responsible and kinder to use contraception to space out children - for financial reasons or so the children they have can get suitable love and attention. If you have too many children and too little money then the child's quality of life will be poor.

(iii) In the Roman Catholic wedding ceremony it says that the couple should be open to God's gift of children, if they use contraception to prevent children then they are rejecting God's gift. Also they are going against God's plan. If the couple does not use contraception they may/may not get pregnant - that is God's decision. If they do use contraception there is very little chance of pregnancy.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

This (d) response has been awarded full marks. In (d)(i) they have given two reasons, the second of which (about spacing out the children) is developed. In (d)(ii) they have also given two reasons, the second of which (about going against God's plan) is developed.

They have also referred to Roman Catholic Catholicism ('In the RC wedding ceremony'), so they are awarded three marks for each part of the question.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Tip**

Make sure that you have shown clearly whether you agree or do not agree with the statement. The best way to do this is by starting (d)(i) with 'I agree...' or 'I disagree...', as shown in this answer.

**Question 6 (a)**

This was answered well, with most candidates recognising that procreation involves the creating of a new life.

(a) Procreation means when you start a new life as family by having children.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This is an extended correct definition and therefore awarded full marks.

**Question 6 (b, c, d)**

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether attitudes have changed, but some were unable to give reasons why which meant they achieved low marks. Similarly, candidates who said that homosexuals can get married were not credited. It is important that candidates know the facts rather than perceived wisdom about the issue.

Part (c) was well answered by many of the candidates, who were able to give several reasons why Christians are against sex outside marriage. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that also included reasons why some Christians might be in favour. It is not always necessary to give both opinions. As has already been stated in connection with 4(c), candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully as to where the response needs to include reasons for, reasons against, or reasons both for and against, as these will vary from question to question.

Part (d) this question caused very few problems for candidates, most of whom were able to give three reasons backing their view in (d)(i) and three reasons for an alternative view in (d)(ii). More able candidates used examples and quotations from Scripture and Church teachings to support their opinion.

(b) I think attitudes towards homosexuality have changed and people have become more accepting towards it. I think this because a lot more people are comfortable with admitting they are homosexual and homosexual couples have increased. Also, civil partnership is now a legal ceremony where homosexual couples can be given the same rights as heterosexual couples, like custody over children.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In this answer to part (b) the candidate has given two clearly developed reasons and so has been awarded 4 marks. They have also correctly talked about civil partnership, and not about 'marriage'.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Remember to make it clear that you are giving your own point of view by starting with 'I think...', 'I agree...', etc.

**Question 7 (a)**

This is a new key word, and it seemed to confuse a number of candidates. There are two key points to this definition. (1) It is about an ethnic group. (2) It is about a minority. Both elements need to be present in the answer for it to gain full marks.

(a) Ethnic Minority is when a ~~go~~ small group of people from different faiths and races are out numbered by a ~~majority~~ <sup>different majority</sup>

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This candidate has included different faiths but has also included races, and therefore can be awarded full marks.

### Question 7 (b, c, d)

This was the most popular question on the paper, being chosen by nearly 80% of the candidates.

In part (b) better candidates recognised that this was a straightforward question asking for two benefits of living in a multi-faith society and so they achieved good marks. Lower scoring responses mixed up multi-faith with multi-ethnic and so their marks were very low.

Part (c) was well answered by candidates who had learned the different types of Christian groups, their views on equality for women in religion and why these views are held. However many candidates simply described the views which limited them to level 1 and a maximum of 2 marks. Other candidates confused the Christian groups and gained very few marks. Some candidates ignored the 'in religion' part of the question and only referred to secular roles which meant that they gained no marks.

Most candidates were able to respond to the quote in part (d) but did not provide substantive reasons why religion might reduce (or encourage/tolerate) racism. Many candidates mixed up religious intolerance with racism and so could not achieve the higher marks.

(b) yes i do because foreign people are our nurses / doctors which are very important in our society. we have different foods. learn different languages. learn about different religions.



**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In this (b) answer the candidate has confused multi-faith and multi-ethnic. Most of the answer talks about aspects of a multi-ethnic society and it is not until the last sentence that they give a reason linked to a multi-faith society. This answer was therefore awarded only 1 mark for a brief reason.



**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Make sure you read the question carefully so that you are clear on what you need to write about.

**Question 8 (a)**

Candidates generally answered this question well, although some candidates did confuse religious pluralism with religious freedom.

(a) Religious pluralism means ~~many~~ <sup>many</sup> people from different religions living together happily in a society.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This is an example of an alternative wording of a correct definition and so is awarded 2 marks.

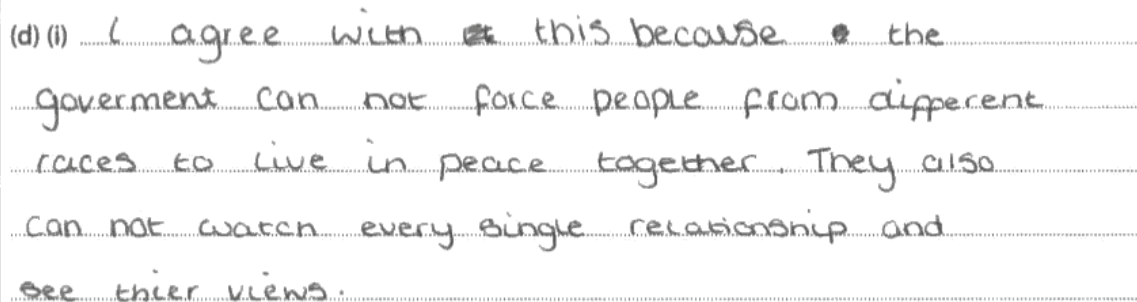


**Question 8 (b, c, d)**

There were some good full marks responses to part (b) and candidates seemed well prepared for this question. The majority of candidates concentrated on how the roles of women had changed, with men being mentioned in the context of women's roles now being equal to men's. It would have been good to have seen a wider response in which the changing roles of men were also outlined.

In part (c) many candidates were able to give good reasons for Catholics helping to promote racial harmony, with references to the Gospels and other Bible and Church teachings. Lower scoring answers tended to include more secular reasons, such as 'more people would be happy'.

Part (d) of this question seemed to cause more problems for candidates than any other. Many candidates seemed to be unclear as to what is meant by 'community cohesion' and particularly any Roman Catholic action or teaching in relation to it. Consequently, many did not score more than 3 marks for this part of question 8. All schools should now have a Community Cohesion Policy, and both the Bishops' Conference and the Catholic Education Service have produced documents outlining the Church's position.



(d) (ii) I agree with ~~it~~ this because ~~the~~ the government can not force people from different races to live in peace together. They also can not watch every single relationship and see thier views.

(iii) People may disagree and say that the government is in charge of the country and they can promote racial harmony in larger ways. They also think that governments should be able to sway the populations views. Therefore promoting racial harmony.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

This candidate has given two brief reasons in (d)(i) and two brief reasons in (d)(ii). Each part is therefore worth 2 marks. However, they have made no reference to Roman Catholic Christianity in the whole of their answer to (d) and so the maximum they can score is 3 marks.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Tip**

Don't forget that you must refer to Roman Catholic Christianity in either (d)(i) or (d)(ii). One way of doing this is by referring to something that Jesus has said or something that the Church teaches.

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

There is a choice of two questions per section, each as four sub questions - (a), (b), (c), (d). Candidates can either attempt all the sub-questions in the top questions (odd numbers) or all the sub-questions in the bottom questions (even numbered). Candidates who choose questions from a mixture of the top and bottom questions will not be able to receive full marks for all their responses.

Candidates are asked to indicate which question they have answered by crossing 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 number of lines given in the answer spaces are more than adequate for candidates to achieve maximum marks; there is no need for candidates to write more than this. If candidates write more than can be inserted into the allocated lineage may be using up too much time on that particular question and could place themselves at a disadvantage later in the paper. Almost all the candidates who used extra paper had already achieved maximum marks on that question.

There were a number of candidates who did not complete the final section of the examination this year due to timing difficulties. Candidates should be encouraged to spend about twenty minutes per question, leaving ten minutes to check through work at the end of the exam.

Grade boundaries:

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	80	72	61	50	40	32	24	17	10	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

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