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Examiners' Report
June 2010

GCSE Religious Studies 5RS09

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Introduction

This was the first year the new specification for Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed; it introduced new topics and new Assessment Objectives. This unit has proved to be popular with centres that have changed from the legacy Unit I: Christianity and also to those centres wishing to study Christianity from a faith and belief perspective as it addresses many of the moral and spiritual issues affecting young people today.

Part (a) questions ask for either a definition of a key word or examples related to a key word.

Part (b) questions only need the candidates opinion backed by two reasons.

Part (c) questions are either 'Explain why...' or 'Explain how...' questions, and are testing Assessment Objective 1.

Part (d) questions are divided into two parts, (d)(i) need the candidates opinion backed by reasons and (d)(ii) needs an alternative opinion backed by reasons. One of the reasons used in the whole of (d) must refer to Christianity.

Question 1 (a)

(a) Creeds are statements of Christian belief.

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Examiner Comments

This was an easy question to get full marks by using a glossary definition, as this candidate did, but most candidates were awarded 2 marks for using an alternative wording but still correct definition.

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Examiner Tip

Learn glossary definitions to help gain full marks on part (a) questions.

Question 1 (b, c, d)

(b) I think God is the creator of the world because the Bible said God created the world. The Bible says God created the world in six ~~days~~ days and rested on the seventh. I also believe God created the world because he is all powerful and can do anything.

(c) Love of others is shown in the life of a religious community in many ways. It is demonstrated by the soup kitchens run for the homeless. Another way love is shown for

others is when a religous community give money to charity. Love of other is shown specifically in a religous community by the work of the Salvation Army, they are a Christian group that was started in 1865 by William Booth. The Salvation Army help the poor and the needy. They also help by running day car centre's and giving clothes to the poor.

(d) (i) I do not agree that Jesus was only human because Jesus was God but in human form. He was more than human because he was God. Another reason would be that Jesus rose from the dead after being crucified on the cross, someone that was only human could not do that. Jesus also healed people and that is impossible for people that are only humans to do. It is written in the Bible that Jesus healed people.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me because although Jesus was God in human form he would have made mistakes when he was a child, such as sinning. They may also disagree with me ~~be~~ because they have a Liberal view on the Bible and they do not believe that Jesus healed people.

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Examiner Comments

Better candidates, like this example, recognised that this part (b) question was about God as creator and answered it from a personal perspective referring to Biblical evidence. Some answers discussed the science versus religion argument and gained fewer marks as they did not uses reasons which supported only their point of view.

Part (c) was generally well answered by most candidates. However, some candidates did not realise that this was about a religious community as per the specification definition for this unit and discussed love of others as shown in the life of a parish. It was also less well answered by candidates who did not read the question carefully and therefore described how love is shown rather than explaining why it is important to show love.

Most candidates responded well to the new layout of the (d) question and were able to state their own opinion and give reasons for it in (d) (i).

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Examiner Tip

In (b) questions start a new papragraph for each reason given.

Question 2 (a)

(a) Trinity it is three in one - God as a father
God as a son
God as a holy spirit

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Examiner Comments

This question was very well answered by candidates; most candidates who attempted it got full marks. This particular example gives one of the answers provided by the mark scheme although it is not the glossary definition.

Question 2 (b, c, d)

(b) I think people should always love their Neighbor because in times of great need they can help you. In the Good Samaritan Jesus tells us that even the most unlikely person on the planet may be the most important if you are hurt, it also tells us that our Neighbor could be anyone. you should also love your Neighbor because he or she may have been horrible to you but if you love them, you will be rewarded in heaven.

(c) Christians believe that Jesus is the son of God because he was born by the virgin Mary, this is called the virgin birth, It Means that Jesus was concieved without sexual intercourse because God used the holy spirit to impregnate

Mary. Futher more it tells us in the Bible that Jesus performed a number of different miracles, for example feeding the five thousand and raising lazarus from the dead. He could only have done this if he was God's Son. In the Old Testament many of the prophets profecised that the messiah was coming. They later to go on to Say it is God's Son coming to Save us from ourselves. When Jesus was being put on trail, Some one at the trial Said that Jesus could destroy the Temple and rebuilt it in three days. what they didnt Know was that Jesus was the temple, So when he died he rose from the dead three days later, thus proving he was Gods Son.

(d) (i) I don not agree with that Statement because if Christians only loved God then they couldnt follow one of the Greatest commandment, which is love thy neighbor as thyself. Also if we are only to love God then when do we have time to do Gods work and help people in need.

(ii) Some people might disagree with me because God is the almighty and he loves us no matter what we do. He forgives us when we have done some thing wrong. He also Sent Jesus, his only Son to Save us from Sin.

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Examiner Comments

Part (b) was a well answered question. Most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give two reasons for it. Better candidates answered the question and provided two reasons which they then exemplified.

Part (c) was also well answered by candidates, many of whom, like this example, gained full marks by using Biblical evidence to answer the question. Many candidates gave four separate reasons to gain maximum marks. Less able candidates described incidents from the life of Jesus such as the baptism and so went off the point of the question and could not gain higher marks.

Most candidates answered part (d) of this question well, although some candidates were unable to develop reasons why Christians should love God. Some candidates did not recognise that the alternative argument could be that Christians need to love others.

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Examiner Tip

Ensure that candidates refer to Christianity in the (d) question to access all six marks for this question.

Question 3 (a)

(a) Celibacy is where people of the church decide to live the life of Silance and prayer.

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Examiner Comments

Although very few candidates knew the glossary definition of celibacy there were many good full mark answers, where the candidates clearly understood celibacy. These candidates usually used an alternative wording to that provided in the specification glossary. However, there were some candidates, such as this example, who had no understanding of this concept.

Question 3 (b, c, d)

(b) I think the bible is the word of God because, if ~~the~~ ~~God~~ ~~was~~ the bible wasn't the word of God then we still wouldn't be reading it today. Also if it's the word of God then everyone should follow it.

(c) A preist or minister is important for most christians because they are like Gods deciples. They deliver Gods messages and they are like your talking to God. ~~Christians also belive that if~~

(d) (i) I agree that all christians should do what ~~they~~ the Church tells them because, if you are following the church then you will be free of sin, there would be peace and all christians would live a happy, free life. The teachings of the church are also what Jesus taught us, so it would be the right path to get to heaven.

(ii) Some Christians may disagree with me because if everyone followed the teachings of the church, then we'd all be the same.

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Examiner Comments

In part (b) of this question most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether the Bible is the word of God and then give a reason for it. However, some candidates contradicted themselves in their response and this led to confused and lower mark answers.

In part (c) many candidates were able to answer this from an experience based perspective and these candidates generally achieved high marks. Some candidates answered in the form of a list and these answers often gained lower marks. In addition, many lower achieving candidates wrote completely descriptive answers.

Part (d) of this question caused problems for those candidates who, like this example, had not thought about this beforehand and tried to answer this question from the perspective that they should do what the minister/priest tells them rather than what the Church teaches.

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Examiner Tip

Use the specification as a revision aid. Try to imagine each bullet point in the specification being used as a (b) (c) or (d) type question.

Question 4 (a)

(a) Ordination is someone becoming a priest through the sacrament of Holy orders.

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Examiner Comments

This example uses the glossary definition for the answer and so gains maximum marks. The vast majority of candidates doing this question achieved full marks by also using the glossary definition. Other responses usually achieved partial marks as they did not realise it was an event rather than just being a priest/minister.

Question 4 (b, c, d)

priest to the church

(b) No, because ~~despi~~ although he is very important to the Roman Catholic's and follows the word of God; he is still human and can make mistakes, also we lead our own lives and get the help and support from God by believing and praying.

(c) because it allows the local community to come together and worship the Lord. Also it can provide groups to the local community like 'Mother and

baby groups and 'prayer groups' and things for the young people like 'Scouts' or 'Brownies'. The Church is also important to the local Society for Salvation from God and Support and advice from the Priest or Other Ministry members. The Church can bring people together and even turn non-believers into a Christian if it's a near by Church.

(d) (i) yes, because the bible tells us God's 10 Commandments which our every day instructions to becoming a good Christian. Also it gives us morals and advice through the Stories and teachings from Jesus.

The bible is also needed to be a good Christian because of what it Says about the Creation of the world, Jesus dying for us and rising again and life after death in heaven and hell. This gives us great understanding and enrichment of christianity.

(ii) People may disagree due to the ways ~~the~~ Christians read the bible. Some may be Liberal or Conservative and not take it literally and use it as a guide. People also might believe that Just Prayer and faith allow them to be a good Christian and not reading and following the bible.

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Examiner Comments

In part (b) candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give at least two reasons for their opinion. These reasons were frequently based on faith affiliation, while this is perfectly acceptable, development of reasons such as 'I am a Catholic so believe this' does not always add to the understanding of the reason given and so usually gained no further marks. Candidates should ensure that development is about the issue in question and should also be aware that if they give three or four reasons for their opinion only two can be credited.

Part (c) was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to give several reasons why a church is important to a local area. A few candidates thought this question referred to the Church, possibly due to the reference in the question to a local area. Candidates need to be aware of the distinction between church and Church.

In part (d) most candidates, like this example, responded well to this question and were able to give their own opinion and give reasons for it in (d)(i) and to explain why people would hold an opposing view in (d)(ii).

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Examiner Tip

Ensure that you start a (b) question with 'I think...'. And remember that part (b) questions do not reqire an alternative viewpoint.

Question 5 (a)

(a) lent - the lead up to easter.

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Examiner Comments

Most candidates who answered this question gained full marks. Some, like this example, only gained one mark as they did not indicate that this was 40 days as per the key word definition and in the mark scheme and they simply said it is the time before Easter.

Question 5 (b, c, d)

(b) No I think that children should be baptised as well because when baby is baptised holy spirit goes through them and give to baby inspiration to life, babys should be baptised because the sin of the baby should be clean, for e.g if we baprised a baby and then the baby will die then the baby will go to heaven

(c) Easter is important for christians because Jesus died for our sins and Jesus was son of God so it is important in our life because many

Christians love ~~god~~ God, Easter is important for Christians because ~~the~~ Jesus ~~was~~ was ressurected and easter its time when we should go to church and pray, In easter Jesus died on a cross and next day he woke up so that was a miracle so it is important for Christians, Also Jesus body goes to a heaven and God showed ~~clear~~ us by that, that is his son, Easter its time when all Christians thinking about Jesus and God, Easter is important because he gave his son to the world and ~~showed~~ God showed us ~~that~~ that he exist.

(d) (i) "You do not need the Eucharist to get closer to God"

I do think we need the Eucharist to get closer to God because when we recive a ~~compass~~ holy communion it is when we recieving body and blod of Jesus and ~~so~~ then we are closer to God, the bible says we should recieving Eucharist, I think that the most Christian need the Eucharist and after they are closer to God.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me because they ~~don't~~ never recived eucharist or they don't believe in God.

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Examiner Comments

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether adult baptism is important. They also recognised that this was the adult versus infant baptism argument and used appropriate reasons. They were then usually able to give one reason for their opinion.

There were some very thoughtful answers to part (c) of this question especially related to the candidate's personal faith. Lower achieving candidates often wrote completely descriptive answers about how Easter is celebrated or were unable to give more than one reason.

Part (d) of this question produced a mixed response from candidates with many unable to give any reasons disagreeing with the question beyond 'it is a reminder of Jesus' actions at the Last Supper.' Candidates should be reminded to answer the question set as many candidates only answered the first part of the question ie. 'You do not need the Eucharist' and ignored 'to get closer to God'.

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Examiner Tip

Read the whole question carefully to ensure that you answer the question set.

Question 6 (a)

(a) A time of Spiritual preparation begor christmass

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Examiner Comments

Candidates either knew what transubstantiation was or they didn't, thus achieving either full marks or none. There were very few answers that gained only 1 mark. In this example the candidate did not know the key word.

Question 6 (b, c, d)

(b) I think Christmas has lost its actuall meaning. It should be about family, friends, being with them and giving to one enother. Now all people care about is presents and how much money they have spent and recieved from other people.
Another way it has lost its meaning is by that christmas is ment to be the birth of Jesus, now it is known for santa / Saint Nick to come to give us presents.

(d) (i) Conformation is more impertant becaue it is your decision not your parents weather you are conferred to the church and the belief. Where as infent baptism is your parents decition and it isn't what you nesseserly believe in.

(ii) People would disagree with no because they would argue that if your parents are christian ~~they~~ then you will be too. Another reason is that you are being washed of sin befor you even commit some so therefor you are already going to enter the kingdom of God.

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Examiner Comments

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether Christmas had lost its meaning. However, some were unable to give reasons why, which meant they could only achieve low marks. Many responses to this question were not religious and that is perfectly acceptable in part (b) questions as there is no requirement for reference to Christianity.

In part (c) the response in this example was unable to answer this question and it is important that all of the specification is taught to candidates as no part of the specification is optional. However, this question was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to explain why Roman Catholic churches have certain features. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that purely described the features within a Roman Catholic church without explaining why they were important. Similarly low marks were awarded for answers which were simply a list of features.

Part (d) of this question caused very few problems for candidates and most 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 referred to the Bible to support their opinion.

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Examiner Tip

There are no optional parts of the specification, so mark sure all bullet points are covered in the course.

Question 7 (a)

(a) A religious community is ~~where~~ a community such as the church full of other people with the same religion as you

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Examiner Comments

This is an important key word and will appear in questions in other parts of the specification. The candidate in this example does not understand what is meant by a religious community according to the specification glossary.

Question 7 (b, c, d)

of other people with the same religion as you

(b) I think everyone should follow the Golden rule because God only Gave us two rules and they are very important and as a Christian you should be doing it anyway All he asks is for you to Love him with absolutly everything Just as he loves you. Also ~~we~~ Jesus ~~to~~ delivered us these and Said we should always follow them.

(c) The Salvation Army works to relieve Suffering and poverty in the U.K by setting up soup kitchens, Bringing people in off the Street and

giving them ~~Skelte~~ shelter, they also help people who are less fortunate with money and give some voluntry Jobs, they do this as God ~~taught us~~ teaches us to love others and one another. they also help put kids back into rightful education and help children with family issues if there are any.

(d) (i) I disagree because everyone is equal and people show their vocation in diggerent ways. ~~I~~ ~~I~~ ~~In~~ the teaching of Christs Body as the Church we learn that no part of the Body ~~o~~ can live without the others so they are all equal and equally needed as much and it is the same with people's vocation is, whatever your vocation you are needed for it as much as other people's vocations no matter what the ~~Paygd~~ salary diggerence is.

(ii) Other people might disagree as when you become a priest you devote all your time and eggort into teaching, loving and spreading God's word and God. Whereas in other vocations you are not as devoted to God as much. ALSO we go and listen to these priests, spread the word and give the Eucharist and they are important.

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Examiner Comments

Better candidates recognised that part (b) of this question was straightforward and about how to treat others. Lower scoring responses, like this example, were confused as to what the Golden Rule was and mixed it up with the Golden Commandment.

Part (c) was well answered by candidates who had learned about an organisation and why they did their work. However many candidates simply described the work of an organisation limiting themselves to level 1 and a maximum of 2 marks.

Most candidates were able to respond to the quote in part (d) of this question but did not give substantive reasons why being a priest might not be a good way to show a vocation and that there might be other ways. They were able to say that there were other ways but not why these were better than priesthood.

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Examiner Tip

Part (c) will be 'Explain how...' or 'Explain why...' but these require very different answers, so read the question carefully.

Question 8 (a)

(a) Sermon on the Mount means that you should love your God as yourself from all your heart, soul and power.

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Examiner Comments

Candidates who had learnt this definition from the key word glossary achieved full marks, whilst those who tried to do it from general knowledge like this example usually did not gain any marks.

Question 8 (b, c, d)

his followers

(b) people should not Suide others because it is wrong and we care on the Soul

we should not Suide others because it will go against what Jesus Said on the Sermon on the mount

(c) the ten commandments are the codines stan of moral Christians and Jews along with the sermon on the mount it is now

Christians should live these lives

they help guide us from what is wrong and right and in like the bible they are the direct words of God.

(d) (i) I agree because actions speak louder than words and it is always better to give your life divote your life to helping others

I like to worship God through my actions not by praying to him and you can show others what you do in to a place witer you are doing it

(ii) people may disagree with me because they think that god will save them and that praying to god is a better way to help him

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Examiner Comments

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give reasons for it. Better answers referred to the teaching of Jesus, however, there were many answers like this example, that did not do this and therefore gained few marks.

Part (c) of this question was usually well answered by most candidates (although not this example). Candidates were frequently able to give four reasons expressed in clear language using specialist vocabulary based on the Biblical teaching. Less able candidates either did not realise that part of the question refers to a 'guide for living' or were unable to give more than one accurate reason.

Most candidates had a clear opinion in response to the stimulus in part (d); this was usually in agreement with the quotation. Higher scoring answers were able to give three detailed reasons why, often referring to Biblical teaching or the actions of Jesus. When candidates had to consider that praying is good for the poor only the better candidates able to give substantive reasons.

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Examiner Tip

Ensure that on (b) questions candidates concentrate on a personal opinion and have thought about reasons for their opinion.

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

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

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 they should be reminded to do this as part of examination preparation.

The number of lines given in the answer booklet is 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 linage they are probably using up too much time on that particular question. Almost all the candidates who used extra paper had already achieved maximum marks of that question. Any candidate who needs extra space can use that space allocated to other questions as long as they clearly indicate on their paper that this is what they have done.

There was evidence that a number of candidates did not complete the final section 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 paper.

Grade Boundaries:

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	N	G	U
Raw mark boundary	80	68	57	46	36	29	23	17	11	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

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