

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2012

GCE Religious Studies – Investigations
(6RS02)

Paper 1G The Study of Christianity and
the Christian Church

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UNIT 2: Religious studies - Investigations

Introduction

General Comments

This unit provides for a balance of teacher-directed and more independent student enquiry. This 'Investigations' unit offers the opportunity to undertake individual research into a topic of particular interest to the candidates. This is the reason why each question includes the expression, "with reference to the topic you have investigated". The ability to select and manage individual research material to fit into the demands of the question is an important discriminator in terms of assessment.

It is for this reason that the mark scheme for this unit is a generic one. There are no indicative mark schemes per question given the fact that there are so many legitimate ways of answering questions based on independent research.

The two assessment objectives should permeate this whole process. Candidates should determine whether there is sufficient material to access a variety of appropriate sources (AO1) and to evaluate alternative views (AO2). Candidates may monitor their progress with reference to the criteria in the level descriptors across both AO1 and AO2. The assessment criteria are always mentioned in each question. Typically this is achieved with the trigger words, 'examine' for AO1 and 'comment on' for AO2. The assessment of the candidates work is based on the application of these objectives.

Some candidates performed well on this unit. It was clear that some candidates had selected topics of genuine interest to them. There was evidence of substantial background reading which was used effectively in answers. Candidates presented well-structured responses based on the question and were able to use their knowledge to address the focus of the question. A feature of high quality answers was the ability to relate to the question throughout the answer. Candidates performed well across both assessment objectives with detailed content and cogent argument.

Some candidates did not select their material in accordance with the specific question. Some candidates could have adapted their same material so as to use it more effectively to address the question. In some cases the question was only briefly mentioned and in others there was limited reference to the question in the final few sentences. Some responses at the lower levels drew on sources that were below the standard required at GCE level. These tended to be descriptive and more narrative rather than analytical. Some responses at the lower levels were short and lacked elaboration and the substantiation necessary at this level.

Some centres chose to concentrate on the same topic for a number of candidates. This was useful when backed up with relevant sources, whereby candidates could develop their own slant and specialism on their selected topics. Occasionally, some responses became formulaic without targeted attention to the demands of the specific question. A key aim of this unit is to involve candidates as active participants in order to provide possibilities for open-ended enquiry and independent learning.

It is essential that candidates are entered for the area of investigation which is the best fit for the question on the paper. Candidates were not penalised if a cross was placed in a box that did not match the response.

Specific Comments – AREA 1G – The study of Christianity and the Christian Church

6RS02_1G_Q01 – The development of the Church up to and including the Reformation

Question Introduction

This was the most popular question, and quite a number chose Martin Luther, with a few opting for St Francis. Good answers were written with clarity and detail on Luther/ St Francis. These included the key facts and ideas, linked well with scholarly argument and debate. It was important to do more than just tell the life-story of the person chosen but to address the question of being a 'remarkable' person. Some answers wrote generally about Luther in largely narrative form, without effectively engaging in scholarly debate.

Exemplar 1

These are the final two pages of this candidate's work on Martin Luther.

Examiner Comment

The candidate has examined a number of key ideas and themes associated with Luther. At this stage the candidate brings these various points together and relates the material closely to the question.

I believe God chose his follower as Beacom ~~says~~ says, Luther was "spiritually the true creator, Reformation's most fertile mind." As I believe that without Luther the Reformation movement would never have happened and even more - so if Luther hadn't dedicated his life to God. The Reformation not only split the church but all changed the face of Christianity. After Luther the church began to reform and better itself. The Council of Trent started a movement ~~in~~ which meant all Christians would read the Bible and understand the Mass that the ~~mass~~ clergy preached. Even though the church is now split into many parts, all Christians try to stay on the ~~right~~ path of Christ.

Luther ~~is~~ ~~is~~ inspired many other revolts such as Calvin in France and Knox in Scotland. If it were not for Luther the church may never have reformed, as Luther simply followed God's word so all Christians could hear his word.

As Mc Grath says his "reformation was

a m^{pl}usive act in history, which shaped ~~the~~ the world of today." Luther changed the face of Christianity due to the faith he had in God, so I do believe that God chooses remarkable people to achieve his will as ~~if~~ ^{it was} not for Luther then the Reformation may never have happened and he wouldn't have ~~inspired~~ inspired so many people to become better ~~that~~ Christians, as in his own words; "even the ploughman should be able to recite the scriptures while ploughing."

6RS02_1G_Q02 – The Modern Period

Question Introduction

Only a few candidates attempted this question. Some good answers were on the impact of Vatican II and its effect on Catholicism, going beyond a narrative of Luther's life to the effect of Luther and the Reformation. There were also answers on changing views on homosexuality with sufficient scholarly depth, not relying on GCSE material.

6RS02_1G_Q03 – Christian belief and practice

Question Introduction

There were few answers to this question.

Exemplar 2

This is the beginning of the candidate's answer on homosexuality as the selected exemplar to this question.

Examiner Comment

The candidate provides a brief outline of the structure of the essay, indicating the range and complexities of this topic. In these opening paragraphs the candidate relates the material to the question.

In relation to the statement 'Christian practice often falls well below the standards demanded by Christian belief,' homosexuality is a topic that may seem to be the topic of homosexuality is fitting. In order to validate the ~~topic of~~ ~~the views of the~~ ~~extent~~ coherency of the practice and belief with homosexuality, in the Christian Church, we must consider the following factors: Biblical authority, modern day issues with the Church and homosexuality, old testament and new testament teachings and ^{believed} the causes of homosexuality. ~~Those factors are~~ The different denominations of Christianity all maintain varying views on these factors, creating this divide between liberal and conservative Christians, perhaps ^{attaining} for divergences between practice and belief.

The first factor that is important to analyse when determining if Christian practice really has fallen ~~to~~ well below of the standards set by Christian belief, is Biblical passages, and more specifically the 'lobber passages.' ~~THE~~

Genesis nineteen is the first passage that is needed for analysis, and in some sense it speaks explicitly of Christian belief on homosexuality. It explains the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and the two angels who visited Lot. "Bring them to us so that we may know them," the men of city ^{the key word} outside Lot's house when they hear of the angels arrival, and ~~this quote~~ ~~attains~~ ~~the~~ of the whole passage is the word

'to know', (whether it be in a sexual context or mean to make an acquaintance). The word to know is a translation from the Hebrew word 'Yada'. When attempting to understand the context of 'Yada', a ~~the~~ conservative Christian is likely to state it means is referring to sexual know someone, A. Mohler ~~the~~ wrote, "the sin of Sodom is undoubtedly ~~#~~ linked to homosexuality." It seems reasonable to understand the passage in his way, as Lot offers his daughters in an attempt to salvage the situation, "I have two daughters who have never known man, let me bring them to you so that you may know them." However, when ~~taking~~ interpreting the passage from a more liberal stance, perhaps as Derrick Bailey states, the passage is simply ~~stating~~ referring to how the men want to literally know the angels, "to make another acquaintance."

Another liberal stance would be that perhaps the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is rape, ~~as~~ as does David Barlett agree, "Bible passages do not always mean what they seem on face; and in order to really understand their meaning we have to consider different ~~of~~ meanings. To interpret the passage to be condemning rape is also consistent with other passages in the Bible, such as Deuteronomy 22.

Advice for candidates:

- Manage the material from the investigations to focus on the demands of the question
- Use appropriate sources
- Show an understanding of the topic
- Present a thoughtful analysis of the material
- Make effective use of evidence and argument
- Comment on alternative views
- Show a clearly expressed viewpoint.

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