



Examiners' Report

June 2010

GCSE Religious Studies 5RS01



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June 2010

Publications Code UG024576

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Introduction

This is the first year the new specification for Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed; it has introduced new topics and new assessment objectives. The specification is a very popular course as teachers and schools recognise the benefits of an examinable course that both interests and educates young people. The variety of choice within the new specification allows teachers to teach the course that most suits their students.

Unit 1 (5RS01) has replaced Unit A (5561/62) as the unit which covers both Christianity and one other religion. This unit continues to be the most popular of the sixteen units, many candidates sit this unit as a short course because it engages the interest of young people, it addresses many moral and spiritual issues affecting young people today and importantly it fulfils all the requirements for Key Stage 4 statutory Religious Education.

Teachers and candidates should note these general points in order to help candidates in future years:

There is a choice of two questions per section, each contains four sub questions - (a), (b), (c), and (d). Candidates can either attempt all the sub-questions in the top question (odd numbers) or all the sub-questions in the bottom question (even number). Candidates who choose sub 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. 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 do write more than can be inserted into the allocated lineage they may be using up too much time on that particular question. 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 examination.

Question 1(a)

Part (a) questions ask for either a definition or examples.

(a) The choice that God gave us to make our own decisions



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Examiner Comments

The vast majority of candidates who attempted this questions gained full marks. This was an easy question to get full marks by using a glossary definition but like the example most responses were awarded 2 marks for an alternative wording.



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Examiner Tip

Learn glossary definitions to gain full marks.

Question 1(b) (c) (d)

(b) I think the universe was designed, by God, if surely the big bang could not have created this earth we live in, my explanation is that God created everything by hand, animals and people alike, though scientists say that the big bang created the ~~world~~ world, well it could've done, but God himself could have created the big bang after all. So I believe all in all God designed the earth/universe so I do think the universe was designed.

a. Free will is the right given to mankind by God to do as they please and be judged in the afterlife.

(c) Unanswered prayers can lead to disbelief in God because, some people think that God will always answer their prayers. If God hasn't answered them it can make

people think that there is no one there to answer their prayers therefore they think God isn't real.

(d) (i) I don't agree with this opinion because it shouldn't be up to a parent to choose their child's beliefs and ways of life it should be the child's decision. ^{even} on Christianity parents would ~~go~~ have their babies baptised, I don't agree with this because the young children are being straight away forced into a religion they don't want to be in at all, but because they are so young they won't have their say so it isn't really fair. So I don't agree because all in all you are in charge of your own life, not your parents.

(ii) I know, many of christian and other faith would disagree with me saying that "A child is too young to know what it wants and relies on the parents decisions" well this is true, but what happens when that child becomes older and can choose it's own way? they'll think they have to follow the religious chore for them when they were younger. Others would say they know what's best for their kids, they don't always, when they are young it's fine but when they are older they should know the right things on their own!



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Examiner Comments

In this response the candidate has answered part (a) under part (b) - this is a perfectly acceptable thing to do as long as the candidate indicates this on the paper. In question 1(b) more able candidates recognised that this was a question about the design argument and discussed the concept of a designer linked to purpose and complexity. Some 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.

Part (c) was generally well answered by most candidates. Some candidates gave the religious response to unanswered prayers, which was not asked for in this question.

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

Candidates should state their own opinion at the beginning of (b) and (d)(i) questions.

Question 2(a)

(a) prayer is a message to god thanking or asking him for something.


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Examiner Comments

This question was very well answered by candidates and almost all candidates who attempted this question achieved full marks.

This particular response 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 suffering proves God does not exist because if he is benevolent then why would he make people suffer. Also if he was omni-potent he would stop suffering.

(c) ~~There~~ There are 4 religious experiences that can lead to a belief in God. Numinous, conversion, answered prayers and miracles. A numinous experience is where you are in a holy place and you feel the presence of somebody of a greater power near you. This could lead you to believing in God. Conversion is where people from that religion ~~not~~ tell you that their religion is ~~right~~ right and you should follow it. After a while that persuasion makes you believe in God. ~~The~~ ~~the~~ answered prayers make people believe in God because it would make you feel that ^{there is} somebody more powerful than yourself which

must be God. This is the same case for miracles where by there must be someone more powerful to ~~per~~ perform a ~~miracle~~ miracle which must be God!

(d) (i) I don't agree with the statement because religion can explain how the world was created too. In Christianity the bible says that God made the world in 7 days. People would also say how could the big bang create something so nice as the Earth. Also as the Earth was designed, it must have a designer which must be God.

(ii) People could disagree with me because there is no ^{physical} evidence in religion to back up the idea of God creating the Earth. There is the idea of the Big Bang and Evolution in Science. The Big bang created the Earth and Evolution made animals evolve to adapt to the ~~miracle~~ environment.


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Examiner Comments

In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give a reason for it. However, often the reason given was the entire inconsistent triad argument, this provided only one reason and it was lengthy to write out. More able candidates answered the question and provided two reasons which they then exemplified by one of the characteristics of God. This example did this but then did not develop each reason. Part (c) was well answered by candidates such as this example and these candidates were able to describe a religious experience and explain how it led to belief in God. Less able candidates often described experiences which are religious such as being baptised which could not gain any marks. Most candidates answered this part (d) well although some candidates did not know why science is a convincing argument and other candidates did not find an alternative to the scientific argument for the creation of the world.


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Examiner Tip

Start (b) questions with the phrase 'I think...' or 'I agree...'

Question 3(a)

(a) reincarnation is when the soul lives on and comes back to life as a human or animal.



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Examiner Comments

Very few candidates knew the exact glossary definition for reincarnation but there were many good, full mark responses, like this one, where the candidates clearly understood what reincarnation was. However, there were some candidates who were clearly confused between reincarnation and resurrection and thorough learning of key words would prevent this confusion.

Question 3(b) (c) (d)

be.
(b) ~~I~~ I do not agree with everyone should agree with abortion. ~~as~~ one reason is that if you're poor and don't have enough time, money and you can't ~~put~~ put enough effort into caring for that baby, then it's a helpless baby to you and you shouldn't let it suffer more than it can. another reason is that you have a free will meaning it's your life you choose the path your path your going to take. e.g. if you want to ~~be~~ ~~do~~ ~~do~~ about a baby then you have the write to say you want to and do it.

(c) muslims believe in life after death as they want to feel good about something before they die so they tell ~~themselves~~ themselves that a here going to come back better and done better also they might have some vision of maybe an old friend or someone that's died and thought to themselves that they can come back alive. they may have been brought up to believe that this is true and so they ~~no~~ know different to what they've been told.

(d) (i) ~~I~~ do agree with ~~abortion~~ euthanasia as the way ~~it~~ look at it if you don't like your life and got nothing out of it except for sadness then it's pointless living



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Examiner Comments

For part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about abortion and then give a reason for it. But 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.

Most candidates chose to answer part (c) of this question from a Muslim perspective, however there were some very thoughtful answers written from the perspective of other religions. Lower achieving responses were often completely descriptive answers. Better candidates were able to get to the crux of the question as to the reasons why followers held these beliefs.

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). More able candidates gave examples from recent events in the news and indicated that they had personally considered the issue.



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Examiner Tip

Try practising answering all parts of a question - (a), (b), (c) and (d) - in 20 minutes.

Question 4(a)

(a) Providing someone who is seriously ill with the means to end their own life

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

This candidate uses the glossary definition for the answer and so gains maximum marks. Many candidates answering this question achieved full marks which shows this quite difficult concept was known by the candidates. Typical wrong answers referred to killing people which could have been a description of murder and was therefore worth no marks.

Question 4(b) (c) (d)

(b) I think there is life after death because we all deserve to live in harmony right? and the world we live in now is NOT harmony in the slightest, God gave us free will on this earth, surely this life is the testing and judgement life, and the afterlife is where we can be judged and put into a decision whether we go to heaven or hell. I believe in the afterlife.

(c) Most Christians are against euthanasia simply because they believe it is not up to someone to decide to take a life of anyone. "This is God's job" they

would say, God decides when it's time for death and time for life, I mean who are we to play God right? Christians or most Christians would believe it is not a human's decision of life and death it is God's.

(d) (i) I agree with this opinion because, like euthanasia, it is taking someone's life when it's God's job to decide on life and

death. Though it's 'horrible', abortions I think are about more unfair than a euthanasia situation, with Euthanasia it's someone's choice and with abortions the baby obviously can't decide. Christians are against ~~the~~ abortions because they believe God had created a purpose for every living thing, they feel if they did have an abortion they'd be betraying God in a way. This is what I believe.

(ii) People would disagree with me probably saying they would choose and not let it be up to someone else ~~by~~ like God I imagine.



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Examiner Comments

Candidates who attempted this question generally scored highly. It was also the second most popular question on the whole paper and almost three times as many students answered question 4 than question 3. 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 not religious reasons and while this is perfectly acceptable, those that gave religious reasons usually provided more cohesive responses. Candidates should be aware that if they give three or four reasons for their opinion only two can be credited and that time that could be used answering other questions. Part (c) was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to give several reasons why Christians are against euthanasia. This example however did not focus thereby reducing the marks they could receive. Answers that did not achieve full marks also tended to include reasons why some Christians might be in favour of euthanasia. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and identify where the response needs to include reasons for, reasons against or both for and against as these instructions will change from question to question. 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 (c) questions start a new paragraph for each reason.

Question 5(a)

(a) adultery is when you are unfaithful to your partner when you are married.

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Examiner Comments

Most responses, including this one, gained full marks. Some responses did not gain one of the two available marks because they did not indicate that this took place in marriage. A small number of candidates thought adultery was something to do with adulthood and therefore gained no marks.

Question 5(b) (c) (d)

(b) I think family life is important they are always there for you when you need a helping hand. Family is supportive and they know what's best for you.

(c) Catholics do not agree with divorce because they like normal people. Others agree as it doesn't make a difference.

- (d) (i) I don't agree that Christians should not use condoms, because it should be up to them. Some people even married should have a choice to have a baby or not.
- (ii) People may disagree with my point of view. As they have been taught in their religion that God may not agree with them.



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Examiner Comments

This question was marginally more popular than question 6 but candidates tended to score similar marks on both questions. In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether family life is important and happily most candidates seemed to feel that their families were very important to them. They were then usually able to give one reason for it. Less able students often could not think of more than one reason. In part (c) most candidates chose to answer from a Muslim perspective, however there were some very thoughtful answers written from the perspective of other religions. Lower achieving candidates wrote completely descriptive answers or gave a Christian response with a Muslim label on it. Better candidates were able to explain reasons why followers held these beliefs and to develop these reasons with quotes from sacred texts. Part (d) produced a mixed response from candidates with many unable to give any reasons agreeing with the question beyond 'it is natural'. Some answers went off the question which was about contraception and gave answers about STI's and pre-marital intercourse which could not be credited. Candidates should be reminded to make sure that they answer the question set.



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Examiner Tip

Catholicism is not a religion other than Christianity - this example could receive no marks for the c part of this question.

Question 6(a)

(a) Pro means good at something and creati
means your made. i think it means your made
to be good at something and specialize it.

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Examiner Comments

Candidates either knew what procreation was or they didn't, like this example, thus achieving either full marks or none. There were very few answers that gained 1 mark.

Question 6(b) (c) (d)

(b) yes i do think attitudes in the uk towards homosexuality have changed because years ago before we were even born people use to feel angry at those who were gay and that it was wrong also in those days homosexuals were not allowed in the same hotel rooms as each other but many religions thought it was wrong because sex was for men and woman for enjoyment and procreation but now no one really cares theres still jews who think its wrong but other jews and christians let the homosexuals get on with it, because theres no law over it.

(c) Some christians are against sex outside marriage because the men who are having sex with other women whilst being married are committing adultery this is the same if it was the other way round with the woman.

most christians are against sex outside of marriage because its also a sacred of the males sperm. christians also think that if your having sex ~~before~~ after marriage but with a number of people its wrong because you should be having sex only with your married partner and should be having sex for enjoyment and procreation, and you should be staying as a married couple and sticking to your vows to god

(d)(i) yes I agree that all religious people should allow divorce because if your partner commits adultery you should be able to end the marriage because you wouldn't be able to trust your partner again or you should have a divorce if your in a ~~abusive~~ violent relationship because you can't deal with the violence no more or you should allow a divorce even if you don't love your partner no more



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Examiner Comments

For 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 in this topic (which is new to this unit) candidates know the facts rather than perceived wisdom about the issue. This candidate answers the question and then continues by giving what they think is other people's views - this is not needed in (b) questions. Part (c) was well answered by the majority of 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 included reasons why some Christians might be in favour. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully and check whether a response needs to include reasons for, reasons against or both for and against as these will change from question to question. Part (d) of this question caused very few problems for candidates, most were able to give three reasons for backing their view in (d)(i) and three reasons for an alternative view in (d)(ii). More able candidates used examples and quotations to support their opinion.



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Examiner Tip

Part (b) questions only need a reasoned personal opinion not an alternative to the personal opinion as well.

Question 7(a)

Write your answer here.

- (a) That some races have higher minority.

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Examiner Comments

This is a new key word and many candidates did not get full marks. As shown by this example there appears to be a general misunderstanding as to what the words minority and majority actually mean.

Question 7(b) (c) (d)

(b) ~~Yes~~ Yes, as it can stop racism as people get used to living with different ethnicities. Also people that have come from other countries bring with them new skills that can be used here, they ~~can~~ also do some of the jobs we don't like to do. Having a Multi-faith society can teach us about different parts of the world.

(c) Some Christians ~~and~~ support rights for women, as it says in the bible, "God created man in his own image, man and woman he created them"

This shows God created both man and women equally, but St Paul's teachings say different "Women should stay silent in churches, they should not speak but stay in submission as

The law says (Corinthians).
This teaching has been listened to, as in the church of England women have only been allowed to be a priest in the last 14 years and women protestants still aren't allowed to be priests.

The story of adam and eve could make you think that men and women ~~are~~ aren't equal as Adam was created first and eve was made out of 1 of his ribs, but on the other hand eve persuaded Adam to eat the apple so you could say she had more power over him.

(d) (i) No, as even if every-one was religious, there would still be people that believe that they are better, that their faith and ethnicity is better. They could still be racist & and ~~believe~~ believe in a religion. & In the bible it teaches that men and women are equal yet St Paul still taught again that.

(ii) Muslims ~~to~~ don't believe in Christians, as the Quran teaches against it, and people like Muhamad was against it, The bible also teaches against racism. So you could argue that if everyone truly believed in there God then there wald be no racism.

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Examiner Comments

This was the most popular question on the paper; it was over five times as popular as question 8. There were timing issues for a large number of candidates with many not completing this question or question 8. In part (b) better candidates recognised that this was a straightforward question asking for two benefits in a multi-faith society. Lower scoring responses such as the example shown mixed up multi-faith with multi-ethnic. Part (c) was well answered by candidates who had learned about 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 the marks they could receive to level 1 (maximum of 2 marks). Other candidates confused the Christian groups and gained very few marks if any. Some candidates did not answer the 'in religion' part of the question which expected candidates to talk about women in the ministry and so they gained no marks. In part (d) most candidates were able to respond to the quote but did not give substantive reasons why religion might reduce (or encourage/tolerate) racism. Many candidates mixed up religious intolerance with racism (or other topics as in the example) and so could not achieve the higher marks.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Learn carefully the differences between multi-ethnic and multi-faith.

Question 8(a)

Write your answer here:

(a) religious pluralism is following the words of god.



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Examiner Comments

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

Question 8(b) (c) (d)

(b) When im be men or woman i want change in Uk that how in uk is alot of foreigners eg in london is a lot of black people when white people go to town where live a lot of people, but Black people fight so or black kill white people



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Examiner Comments

There were obviously timing issues for a large number of candidates. Many, like this example, did not complete question 7 or questions 8. In part (b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion and then give reasons for it, however often the reasons were simply a list of the changes that have occurred in women's rights which was then not linked back to the question and therefore gained few marks. Part (c) was well answered by candidates who chose one religion, usually Islam, and were able to give reasons why Muslims believe in racial harmony. Less able candidates either did not answer this question at all or were unable to give more than one accurate reason. In part (d) the government involvement in community cohesion is a new topic on this specification and although most candidates answered this question well, some did not know what community cohesion was (even though it is a key word) or what the government does to encourage it.

Candidates produced some very interesting answers to the questions posed. This indicated that they and their teachers had not only studied the topic but importantly had linked them to everyday life and that reflected in the society around them.

Some general points can be made on how best to answer the various question types:

Maximum marks on the part (a) questions are easily gained by learning the specification glossary definitions and this is a constant feature throughout the paper. Candidates who had learnt them performed to a high standard on these questions.

Only the candidate's point of view is credited in (b) questions. There is no reward for explaining other people's opinions in this question. 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.

Candidates can gain the higher mark within each level by writing coherently, as this is the part of each question where QWC (quality of written communication) is assessed. It is also worth remembering that part (c) questions tests AO1 and will either ask for candidates to 'Explain why' or to 'Explain how'.

Many of the part (d) questions produced interesting answers. However, candidates should ensure that they start by stating their own view and reasons for it in the (d)(i) part of the question and state reasons why someone might hold a different view in the (d)(ii) part rather than confusing the two halves. Teachers should be aware that templates used to answer questions in the legacy specification will not work with the new specification. At least one of the reasons given in either (d)(i) or (d)(ii) must be explicitly religious to go beyond 3 marks. It should be pointed out that (d) questions on this unit can ask for the candidate to refer to either one religion (i.e. any religion), one religion other than Christianity or can specify that Christianity is referred to.

Grade boundaries:

Grade	Max. Mark	*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw mark boundary	80	71	60	49	38	31	24	18	12
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

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