



Examiners' Report

June 2010

GCSE Religious Studies 5RS08



Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information, please call our GCE line on 0844 576 0025, our GCSE team on 0844 576 0027, or visit our website at www.edexcel.com. If you have any subject specific questions about the content of this Examiners' Report that require the help of a subject specialist, you may find our **Ask The Expert** email service helpful.

Ask The Expert can be accessed online at the following link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/Aboutus/contact-us/>



ResultsPlus is Edexcel's free online tool that offers teachers unrivalled insight into exam performance.

You can use this valuable service to see how your students performed according to a range of criteria – at cohort, class or individual student level.

- Question-by-question exam analysis
- Skills maps linking exam performance back to areas of the specification
- Downloadable exam papers, mark schemes and examiner reports
- Comparisons to national performance

For more information on ResultsPlus, or to log in, visit www.edexcel.com/resultsplus.

To set up your ResultsPlus account, call 0844 576 0024

June 2010

Publications Code UG024597

All the material in this publication is copyright
© Edexcel Ltd 2010

Introduction

The paper requires candidates to answer questions in ninety minutes. There was some evidence that, for some candidates, time became a limiting factor, with some suggestion of rushing in the final section however, the vast majority of candidates completed the paper. The space provided in the answer booklet was ample for most candidates.

The (a) questions will be readily recognisable to the students as their style has not changed from the legacy specification. They comprise 20% of the available marks per question for knowledge and understanding (A01) and require the students to define a keyword.

It should be noted that whilst many of the keywords for 5RS08 remain the same as those from the legacy specification some keywords have changed and some definitions have been amended. It therefore is of benefit to make sure current teaching materials are accurate with respect to the specification.

The (b) questions have undergone a dramatic transformation and now form part of the requirement for candidates to use evidence and evaluate personal responses (A02). They are the only part of the paper for which candidates give developed answers in order to achieve full marks. Many candidates find the development of their simple answers particularly demanding and this is an area of teaching where exemplification and practice will benefit the students.

The (c) questions are again likely to look familiar to the candidates. The biggest difference in the new specification is the use of this part of the question to consider the quality of written communication.

The work is marked according to the Religious Studies content and then given a final assessment of the religious coherence to determine the final mark.

The (d) questions again maintain the style of the legacy specification with a quote which the candidates respond to. The answer booklet has been made significantly clearer as (d)(i) requires the candidate to respond with their own personal view of the quotation and (d)(ii) asking them to give the reasons why some people would not agree with them.

The most straightforward way for candidates to achieve full marks is to give three simple reasons for (d)(i) and again for (d)(ii). Many students struggled to demonstrate their knowledge and also did not gain marks when following a format more appropriate to the legacy style quotation questions.

The individual questions are considered in the following report.

Example responses are given for each question.

Question 1(a)

Section 8.1 Religion: rights and responsibilities.

This section only requires candidates to study Christian attitudes.

Most candidates made a very positive start to the paper with the section 1 questions having the highest mean mark on the paper. However, in some cases spending a long time on section 1 had detrimental effects later in the paper.

(a) Conscience is an Inner feeling of the
~~the~~ rightness or wrongness of a situation.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response provides an example of a candidate who was familiar with the keywords and has scored full marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Although students are credited for alternative wording of a part (a) response, the easiest way for a candidate to achieve full marks is to know their glossary definitions which can be found on pages 119 and 120 of the specification.

Question 1(b)(c)(d)

(b) Humans should not be cloned. I think this because it is unfair on the clone, as it is proven that clones tend to have a shorter lifespan. Also there are a lot of mistakes made and life is thrown away if the cloning goes wrong. This is unfair because it's a waste of life.

(c) Situation ethics is when you ~~think~~ think about ~~what~~ what can happen if you make a certain decision. You think of all the possibilities, and then make your decision based on what helps the most people.

Some Christians do not use situation ethics, because they may find their answer in another way, for example the church, the bible, or their conscience. They may choose these because, because to them it is the most helpful decision maker.

Other Christians use situation ethics because they find it the most helpful for themselves and for others. They may find the church a little outdated, also the bible. And their conscience may be utterly unhelpful. Therefore, they choose situation ethics to find the answer.

(d) (i) I agree with this statement. I think that it contains some valid moral lessons, but it does not contain helpful information about the issues of today. Some Christians believe in the bible because it is their holy book, but personally, I feel that ~~it~~ it is outdated and is not all helpful for some decisions.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This example illustrates a part (b) response scoring full marks with two developed reasons. A similar pattern is seen in the part (c) response with a simple reason offered for why some Christians use situation Ethics and some do not. Some candidates found the concept of Situation Ethics difficult to grasp and confused it with the conscience.

In part (d) the candidate only offered one simple reason agreeing with the statement and one in disagreement. This could easily have been improved by the use of an example in both sections. Genetic engineering which is studied during the course as an example of an issue not dealt with by the Bible and the Decalogue as an example of God's standards which still apply today.

The part (d) questions require the candidate to mention "Christianity" (in this question) or "at least one religion" (in subsequent questions). This will normally require the candidate to give a specific reference to a named religion with vague mentions of "religious people" unable to score more than three marks from a possible six.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Remember to mention 'Christianity' or 'at least one religion' in at least one of the reasons given for part (d).

Question 2(a)

This definition, in particular, caused many candidates a problem. There are a number of keywords in the units which are not specifically addressed by the teaching of the bullet points. It is perfectly possible for a candidate to have studied Religion: Rights and Responsibilities without coming across the term "pressure group" as anything other than a keyword. Keywords need to be placed in context during teaching of the specification.

(a) A pressure group is a group of people who would like to achieve something, so they protest and create campaigns so they can achieve it.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

This provides an example of a partially correct response. The candidate has grasped the idea of campaigning for change but has not put their definition in a political context.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Tip**

If this response had read "So they protest to the government and create campaigns" it would have achieved full marks.

Question 2(b)(c)(d)

(b) Yes as then everyone will be treated fairly & equally & no-one would feel left-out or in-between. Jesus taught people to love your neighbour, so Christians believe this.

(c) Because then you have your own personal view on who runs the country, without anyone else knowing about it. This shows that you care about what happens in your country.

(d) (i) I don't agree as they believe that ~~god~~ God created everyone & it would be seen as 'playing God' & no-one would be different/ an individual.

(ii) because they don't believe in God & believe in the 'perfect human', but when everyone is perfect, no-one is perfect.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate exemplifies the very basic nature of many of the part (b) responses. However the candidate states an opinion clearly by starting the response with "Yes". This candidate would have improved their response by developing the reasons offered in part (b). The second point made in (b) could easily be developed by using an example from the life of Jesus to demonstrate how he always treated people well. This part (c) was very demanding for many students who struggled to provide reasons about why it is important to vote. Many gave examples of political decisions that religious people would not agree with but rarely managed to reach more than 4 marks. In part (d) a number of candidates confused genetic engineering with infertility treatment and therefore could not pick up marks. In the part (d) response the point against the quote could have been developed by some consideration of why it is important for people to be individuals. However the candidate did not address the part of the question specifically about Christian attitudes so mentioning that they might disagree because they don't believe in God was irrelevant.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Practice writing a reason and then adding some supporting evidence or an example to develop it.

Question 3(a)

Section 8.2. Religion: environmental and medical issues

Similar numbers of candidates attempted questions 3 and 4.

(a) Creation is ment by things being made such as when a baby is made it was a creation of another human



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This example illustrates the most common partially correct response which talks about the creation of a new life. Most candidates linked the keyword to the creation of the universe although often without reference to God.

It should be noted that this response contains two partially correct responses from the mark scheme, namely making something and the creation of a new life however these are not additive.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

With this keyword remember "the creation" is a single event rather than "creation" which is in common usage.

Question 3(b)(c)(d)

There was evidence of useful transferred knowledge from science lessons and many students used this appropriately. There was also evidence of some confusion about Global Warming with some candidates believing that the carbon dioxide given off by burning fossil fuels makes holes in the ozone layer that let the sun's rays through.

There also remains some confusion between transplant surgery, infertility treatment and plastic surgery with some students writing detailed answers about Christian attitudes to infertility treatments when asked to comment on transplant surgery.

A number of students found question 3(b) difficult. This question asked them if they should be able to sell their organs for transplant. Some candidates ignored the idea of selling them and focussed their responses on organ donation. It is vital that students read the questions carefully.

(b) Christians or muslims believe you should not donate ~~trans~~ organs because you are altering gods creation and committing sin ~~ee~~ against god. It is not pure to have another beings organs inside you because this is not how god ~~was~~ Created you.

9000 organ waiters are in the UK & only 3000 get organs a year while 1000 die waiting for an organ.

(c) Muslims should look after what god has ~~give~~ gave us and look after it, this ~~steward~~ is called Stewardship like muhammed (Pbuh)

he looked after the people around him and the muslim community and ~~go~~ all of ~~god~~ Allah's Creations and the world.

(d) (i) Christians should not support Infertility treatment because it is going against gods creations and it will not be a proper child of the parents. It will also cause concerns of strong (believers) & Christian community around them if they proceed.

(ii) People may disagree because everyone has rights to ~~be~~ have a child. It is up to the parents or guardians to use their conscience or situation ethics to decide if they want a child.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In part (b) those candidates who do not give their own opinion could not gain any marks. A number of candidates treated these part (b) responses rather like a legacy part (d) question and started their answers with "Christians would agree because...". The Christian reasons provided were often of high quality but could not be credited because there was no sense that this was the students personal opinion. Had this candidate started their answer with "As a Muslim I believe you should not donate organs because..." they would have scored one mark and could have developed it by adding that Muslims believe their body should be intact for Judgement Day. In part (c) candidates should be encouraged to divide their answer into separate reasons. For example this candidate could have started by saying that the earth was a gift from Allah, gone onto the idea that Muslims have a duty of stewardship and finished with the example of Muhammad to score 6 marks rather than 4.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Students should be encouraged to start their (b) responses with either "I agree" or "I disagree". It is also useful to say "Like Christians I agree with this statement" as this allows the candidate to use their religious knowledge as part of their personal opinion and thereby gain credit for it.

Question 4(a)

(a) Artificial insemination is fertilisation of an egg cell with donor sperm, often through mechanical means.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Many candidates found it difficult to provide an accurate definition of Artificial Insemination. The most common incorrect responses suggested that the egg was fertilised in a test tube. This was therefore a definition of In Vitro Fertilisation and, as a definition of a different keyword, scored no marks. This candidate clearly has learnt the definitions but the response had no sense of the fact that the fertilisation of the egg takes place in the uterus and therefore only scored one mark.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

Had the student inserted "in the uterus" into the response to this keyword this would have scored full marks.

Question 4(b)(c)(d)

(b) I do believe I can put a stop to global warming to some extent, for example using less electricity or using public transport would help to lower the carbon dioxide emissions leading to a cleaner planet. Although there is no way to stop some types of pollution e.g. accidental oil spills. Also you cannot reverse the current effects and damage of global warming ~~as~~ ~~is~~ on the planet and it will therefore never actually be stopped. But it can be limited.

(c) Some Christians do agree with transplant surgery because they are taught to look after the weak or ill in the bible. Transplant surgery is ~~the~~ taking

the organs of a dead body (Alive in some cases) and using it to help ill people. The reason they may agree with this could be because Christians are taught to always 'Love thy Neighbor' this means to be nice ~~and~~, kind and helpful to everyone. The kindest ~~thing~~ thing to do in this case may be to allow the transplant. Another reason they may agree with this may be because Christians believe that when you die your body is no longer needed and that it is only the spirit that lives on after death. It could also be down to situation ethics, the transplant could be seen as the most loving thing to do as it will save a life. 'What ever you did for the least of my brothers you did for me' meaning look after the ~~poor~~ weak.

(d) (i) I don't agree with the idea that 'religious people should not drive cars' because ~~as~~ ^{then} they should have the exact same rights to do things despite their religion. If they were told to never drive a car it may be against their human rights. It may also be seen as playing God as he intended you to walk.

(ii) Some people may disagree with this because of the idea of 'stewardship' this is that ~~g~~ God created the earth then passed it down to us so that we can care for it and pass it down to future generations. One cause for global warming is cars and the gases they produce. If a Christian helps contribute to the effects of global warming then they are not following God's rule of ~~looking~~ stewardship. This would also be the Islamic teaching of Khalifah which is that Adam was made a representative.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This provides an example of the work of a more able candidate.

In this part (b) response the candidate states clearly that whilst they can stop global warming to some extent they don't believe it can ever actually be stopped. It is perfectly acceptable for candidates to be undecided about their opinion as long as they make this clear.

In response to this part (c) question many candidates did not realise that the question only required reasons why some Christians agree with organ transplant and provided reasons both in favour and against organ transplantation. As a result these candidates rarely scored more than 4 marks.

Question 5(a)

Section 8.3 Religion: peace and conflict

Question 6 was significantly more popular than question 5 though the scores achieved for both remained comparable.

(a) The United Nations is an organisation set up to bring the world to peace (main aim) but it is also used to sort out any problems a country may face.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response illustrates an alternative wording for the question scoring two marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Encourage students to become really familiar with the definitions. For example keyword snap. The cards, once made, are a useful starter activity when it comes to revision season.

Question 5(b)(c)(d)

The structure of question 5(c) meant that students could choose a religion other than Christianity and explain why its followers may be for OR against war. The students grasped the idea confidently and produced some very sound answers although some candidates were very vague and described rather than explained.

(b) In my opinion it isn't always possible to forgive. I think this because some things can never be forgiven. Say someone murdered your family, you could never forgive them for taking something so special and fragile away from you, when ~~there~~ they are still alive all after killing a family member.

(c) I think Hinduism maybe for the war because of all the conflict between racial remarks from other ~~cont~~ countries.

like they live their life the way they were ~~pragt~~ brought up and they are just ~~as~~ the same as the white race. This may ~~cause~~ cause people to want war cause of bullying over their race or colour.

(d) (i) I think bullies deserve sympathy because people only bully when they are insecure about themselves or something is going on in your life you don't like talking about. So if they had sympathy of someone they may stop bullying. They only bully because they need someone to talk to by having someone there for you when you need advice makes them feel better about themselves and about others.

(ii) People may disagree because bullying is a nasty, provoked and horrible thing to do, so if you are being bullied you should get the sympathy and the bully should get punished for what they have done.

The bully knows it hurts the other person so they hit them where it hurts which is unfair.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

This part (c) example illustrates a common approach to this question with one reason and an example. The candidate chooses Hinduism as their religion other than Christianity and then goes on to give an answer which is based on race rather than religion and therefore scores 0 marks. In cases where 0 marks were awarded in a (c) question it was impossible to award Quality of Written Communication as there was no religious coherence. It is therefore vital that candidates carefully select the questions they choose to answer based largely on the (c) question.

The part (d) questions required the candidates to mention a religious perspective and many candidates having written considered and thoughtful responses did not gain marks because they didn't mention a religious perspective.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Tip**

A religious view in answer to this part (d) question could have included the Golden Rule or Jesus' teaching to love your enemies.

Question 6(b)(c)(d)

(b) I don't think there will ever be world peace because there will always be people who want power and will start wars and be against certain groups of people. Everyone has a different idea of what the world should be like and if they are so determined about their cause that they will not compromise for anyone and will end up in a dispute.

(c) Religion can cause conflict in families in different ways. A couple could raise a child who grows up and decides they don't follow the same religion as their parents ~~and~~ or that they don't follow any religion

at all and the parents could get upset that the child doesn't follow the same religion anymore, and the child could get upset at the parents for trying to get them back to their religion. If that child makes a decision that goes against ~~or~~ the parents' religion that could cause conflict within a family. If ^{someone} ~~a~~ child is in a relationship with someone who is a different religion than them and their family doesn't approve but the person refuses to break up with them then that is another reason as to why religion might cause conflict.

(d) (i) I do agree because nothing good ever comes out of war for soldiers, they quite often get killed. All Christians should follow Jesus and not want to kill or hurt anyone, not even if it is a just war.

(ii) People might disagree with me because if it is a just war then they have a reason to go and fight without going against their religion, for instance some Christians agree with just war.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Many students approached the 6(c) question with gusto giving relevant examples of how religion could cause conflict in a family although some got sidetracked by food laws. This candidate scored well in the part (c) question providing a number of relevant examples to illustrate how religion can cause conflict in a family. However, they struggled to gain marks in both part (b) and part (d).

In part (d), the candidate was clearly familiar with the concept of pacifism and the idea of a Just War. However, they did not use this knowledge to extend their answer.

Question 7(a)

Section 8.4 Religion: crime and punishment

Question 7 and 8 were attempted by roughly equal numbers of candidates and again the mean scores remained comparable. However, by this stage in the paper a number of candidates were clearly struggling for time. Candidates may benefit from regular timed assessments to give them an idea of what they can reasonably be expected to write in the 20 minutes available for each question.

(a) justice is when if you get comit
a crime you get a fair trile

Question 7(b)(c)(d)

(b) I don't think drinking alcohol is a sin. My first reason is that on Jesus's last supper, he offered his disciples wine (alcohol) and bread. Jesus was one of the best role models ever so if he drank alcohol, surely we should be able to drink it. Another reason is that alcohol in moderation is great for socialising and having fun. And as long as we are having fun we are going to be happy.

(c) ~~Muslims~~ The followers of Islam are for capital punishment. This is because they believe everyone who commits an unforgivable crime should have their life taken away.

(d) (i) I ~~disagree~~ disagree with this statement. I believe the only way to stop somebody doing a crime again is to be punished in a place where nobody can access them. In prison people can try to reform them and the punishment should hopefully deter them from committing a crime again.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me. Firstly because some people think that with the correct rehabilitation people can change into a better person. Another reason is that some people believe the criminals will be punished in time. "Those who draw the sword, die by the sword" (Matthew). Muslims believe that their fate will be decided on judgement day and if they have been a good person they will go to paradise and if they have been a bad person they will be sent to hell.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

In contrast to the candidate response illustrated in Question 6 this candidate scored well in questions which considered opinions and attitudes rather than those requiring more detailed understanding of the beliefs of another religion.

Question 8(b)(c)(d)

(b) No, I do not think it is always wrong because by breaking the law you could be helping a family member or saving a life and that is more important.

If breaking the law meant ~~for~~ feeding the hungry by stealing some food, that is doing more good than wrong.

Islam also believes that illegal drugs is Satan's way of clouding your judgement and stopping you going to prayer.

Muhammad saw illegal drugs as Haram (always wrong and punished by God.)

Muhammad is the perfect example and is always right so his example must be followed.

Muslims believed suicide is wrong because life is sacred and taking drugs is slowly killing yourself, this is the same as suicide.

(d) (i) NO, I do not think capital punishment should be legal in the UK because Christians believe Murder is wrong and by killing people as a punishment Christians would disagree.

I also disagree because killing a person for a crime can often be seen as an easy way out, many prisoners serving life sentences have committed suicide.

It also had a lot of guilt on the executioner if they have charged the wrong person for the crime.

(ii) Some people may disagree with me because the death sentence means it can stop that person from reoffending and being a threat to society.

They might also disagree because the death sentence can be seen as a good deterrent for other criminals.

The death sentence would mean there would be less people in the prisons so the people would have to pay less tax to keep people in there.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Comments**

In this part (b) example the student scored 2 marks for two simple reasons. The second reason could be read continuously with the first giving one developed reason with paragraph two providing an example for paragraph one. That would allow the student to give a second reason. The second reason could have used the idea of situation ethics developed by the idea that the law of God is more important than the laws of man.

In part (c) the candidate scored eight marks. The response was clearly divided into separate reasons with relevant simple religious content.

In part (d) two marks were credited for (d)(i) for the idea of capital punishment as murder which Christians wouldn't agree with. Had the student used the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of the Decalogue this would have been a full mark response.

In part (d)(ii) there are three brief reasons given - stops reoffending, acts as a deterrent and costs the tax payer less and therefore the candidate achieves three marks.

**ResultsPlus****Examiner Tip**

Many students made a real effort and scored marks consistently throughout the paper. They tended to lose marks on the (b) question, emphasising, the importance of students understanding how to develop their responses to score maximum marks.

A general summary of areas for improvement may prove useful to centres.

The only area of the paper where candidates need to show developed reasoning is in part (b) of the questions. In all other questions candidates can reach full marks with multiple simple reasons. Many candidates found it difficult to develop their reasons and focus on this area will improve candidate performance. The mark scheme shows examples of developed responses.

In part (c) questions the candidates are now assessed for Quality of Written communication. This judgement is based on the religious coherence of the writing, most candidates benefited from this approach.

In part (d) questions some candidates did not separate the arguments which agreed with their opinion and those that disagreed therefore choosing to use a format more suited to the legacy specification (d) questions. Candidates will benefit from practice of dividing up their answers in this way.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	80	66	56	46	37	30	24	18	12	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

Further copies of this publication are available from
Edexcel Publications, Adamsway, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 4FN

Telephone 01623 467467

Fax 01623 450481

Email publications@linneydirect.com

Order Code UG024597 June 2010

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit
www.edexcel.com/quals

Edexcel Limited. Registered in England and Wales no.4496750
Registered Office: One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH

Ofqual




Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

