

Examiners' Report

June 2025

GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 1A

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Introduction

Introduction GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Religious Studies A Paper 1a: Area of Study 1– Study of Religion Option 1A – Catholic Christianity.

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall award.

The assessment consists of four questions: candidates must answer all four questions.

This area of study comprises an in-depth study of Catholic Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are four sections:

Beliefs and Teachings

Practices

Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification.

Centres are to use this, rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

In some questions, marks are available for correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Please note:

AO: Assessment Objective

SPaG: Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Question 1(a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings.

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of three marks

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a list.

An example:

Outline 3 characteristics of God:

God is creator (1 mark)

God is creator, judge and lawgiver (1 mark for list or sentence)

God is creator, busy and distant. (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)

Busy, distant and **God is creator**, (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)

Creator, judge, lawgiver (1 mark for list)

Creator, busy, distant (0 Marks) (all three elements need to be correct for 1 mark)

Creator, judge, distant (0 marks)

Bullet point 1.5 The Incarnation: Jesus as incarnate Son, the divine Word, both fully God and fully human; the scriptural origins of this belief, **including John 1:1-18** and its importance for Catholics today. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"Outline **three** beliefs about the Incarnation."

Many candidates were able successfully to outline three details of the incarnation of Jesus. Some candidates did not read the question carefully and gave three characteristics of Jesus.

The candidate receives three marks for outlining three correct beliefs about the incarnation.

1 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about the **Incarnation**.

(3)

one belief about the incarnation is that
Jesus is fully human.
Another belief is that Jesus is fully divine.
Finally one belief is that the Word became
flesh.



The three marks are given: one mark for each correct outline.

- Jesus is fully human (1)
- Jesus is fully divine (1)
- Jesus is the word become flesh (1)



Candidates should make sure they are familiar with the passages named in the specification.

Question 1(b)

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, two ways are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks.

If three reasons are given the best two are chosen to mark.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.2

Biblical understandings of God as a Trinity of Persons: **the nature and significance of God as a Trinity of Persons, including reference to the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13–17)**; the historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity, including reference to the First Council of Nicaea and the First Council of Constantinople. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** ways the baptism of Jesus shows God as a Trinity of Persons."

Many candidates were able to use the events in the baptism of Jesus to support the way they had given.

Some candidates did not fully understand the question and used wider teachings about the Trinity, such as Pentecost or the Creed.

This answer is given 4 marks because it gives two developed ways. The candidate uses events in the Baptism of Jesus to support the way given.

(b) Explain **two** ways the baptism of Jesus shows God as a Trinity of Persons.

(4)

One way the Baptism of Jesus shows God as a Trinity of persons is as the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, showing God as the Holy Spirit was present.

A second way the Baptism of Jesus shows God as a Trinity of persons is a voice came from heaven, the voice belonged to the Father who said "This is my son whom I love; with him I am very pleased". This shows God as the Father was present.



The answer has two developed ways.

Way One

- The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove (1) developed by
- showing God as the Holy Spirit was present (1)

Way Two

- ...a voice came from heaven belonging to the Father (1) developed by
- shows God as Father was present (1)

The candidate gives a source of wisdom but that is not needed in this answer.



Candidates should be familiar with the specification.

Question 1(c)

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two features are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must be of the feature given and to the question asked.

One of these then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the feature given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a source of wisdom

- The candidates do not have to reference a quote or quote it word-for-word.
- If markers of candidate work in centres are unsure if the quote will be accepted, use a search engine. Enter the gist of the paraphrase and 'Bible' or 'Christian teaching'.
- If the candidate states that it is in John 1:18 and then states another verse from John – then this can be awarded. We are not holding candidate to 'verses' but it must be the correct book.
- If the candidate gives the paraphrase and then puts (John 1:18) in brackets the paraphrase can have the mark and the bracketed reference is ignored.
- If a candidate quotes Jesus and it was Paul or vice versa; and the quote is not accredited to them, it is not awarded.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.6

The events in the Paschal Mystery: Catholic teachings about the life, death, resurrection and **ascension of Jesus**, including reference to Luke 24; the redemptive efficacy of these events and their significance for Catholics today.

(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** features of the ascension of Jesus. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority."

Those candidates who knew about the ascension were able to explain two features. Most said that it was witnessed by the disciples, that Jesus fully ascended and he is seated at the right hand of the Father. Some used the words of the Nicene Creed as a sources of wisdom, whilst others used it as a development.

A significant number of candidates did not give features of the ascension and instead wrote about the Commission or The Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The candidate gives two correct features and a relevant source of wisdom and authority.

(c) Explain **two** features of the ascension of Jesus.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One feature of the ascension of Jesus was that Jesus ~~does~~ not die he is taken up to heaven to live in the eternal glory of God. This is important because this shows Jesus' nature as a divine being.

Another feature of the ascension of Jesus was that Jesus is said to be seated at the right hand of the Father. This is important as it shows that all of the Trinity are equal as "begotten not made... Seated at the right hand of the Father".



1st feature

- Jesus did not die (1)
- was taken up to Heaven to God (1)

2nd feature

- Jesus is said to be seated at the right hand of Father (1)
- showing all are equal (1)
- begotten.. seated at right hand of father (from the Creed) (1)



Be careful not to repeat development as a source of wisdom.

Question 1(d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The candidates are assessed on AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The (d) question has a new mark scheme and the level marks have been awarded using this new scheme.

Candidates were assessed on Section One. Bullet point 1.4 The significance of the Creation account in understanding the nature of humanity: the nature and significance of the nature of humanity being created in the image of God, including reference to Genesis 1–3 and divergent understandings of **humanity's relationship with Creation** (dominion and stewardship); the implications of these beliefs for Catholics today. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"The most important message of the Creation account is that humans have a special relationship with the world."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

Many candidates knew humans have been given both stewardship and dominion over creation and this makes them different from other living things.

The more successful candidates were able to link this to the creation account and being made in the image of God, and being trusted to rule over creation. Some were able to use sources of wisdom such as Pope Francis and *Laudato Si'* as well, and also the work of CAFOD in its call for climate action.

Many candidates responded noting that there are other more important things about the Creation account such as the power of God, Adam and Eve's temptation, and the Fall.

Some candidates did not read the question correctly and did not address 'the most important message'. Therefore, they did not answer the question fully, instead giving reasons for and against having a special relationship with the world.

The specification is used to set examination questions. Candidates should be familiar with any named biblical references that might be used in assessment.

*(d) "The most important message of the Creation account is that humans have a special relationship with the world."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.
- Dominion
- Stewardship
- Nature of God
- Relationship

(15)

Some Catholics would agree with the statement because in the book of Genesis, we are taught to be made in the image of God (Imago Dei). This means we have a special purpose on earth through our dominion. We can harvest and use the earth God has created for us to provide and survive. However, some Catholics would disagree, because ~~since we are made~~ the Creation account also reveals the nature of God as: omnipotent; since ^{He} had the immense power to create everything, omniscient; since He had the absolute knowledge to perfectly design the world, and omnibenevolent; all-loving as he ~~even~~ created a world for us, his children, to live and dwell within. They believe this lesson is also important because by understanding and acknowledging His nature, we can both: use Him as a model of holiness on earth today, and to be inspired to teach others.

about His eternal nature.

Some Catholics would also agree with the statement, because since we are made in His image, we also adopt the attributes of benevolence and protection. With this qualities we are made to also sustain and protect the world for us with our Stewardship. We can maintain it through farming moderately and recycling.

However, some Catholics would disagree, because through the account of Creation, we are taught that God has created us because He wants a relationship with us. This ^{also} is important because through a relationship with God we can receive guidance, furthermore ^{be} inspired to go out and ~~make~~ ~~disciple~~ be fishers of men (Spread His glory on earth).

On the balance of the information, I believe the stronger argument is to disagree with the statement, as through the Creation account, in the book of Genesis, we are taught multiple lessons which are equally important to appreciate the attributes we share through His image, and to ~~for~~ understand our purpose on earth as the Children of God.



This response reaches Level 3, 9 marks, the highest mark within the level and 3 marks for SPaG.

This is because there is "a good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief such as being made in God's image and dominion".

This is counterbalanced with the natures of God being more important. In turn, this leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially-justified conclusion.

The answer does have an attempt at appraisal but this is still limited to Level 3 because the candidate has not fully-addressed the focus of the question. They have compared aspects of the creation account, rather than evaluating them.

To reach Level 4 they would need to:

- Address the focus aspect of the question using reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief.

The candidate is given 3 marks for SPaG, which is the highest level because they:

- spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy
- use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
- use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate

- * (d) "The most important message of the Creation account is that humans have a special relationship with the world."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Catholics may agree with the statement. They believe humans are created in God's image, therefore the relationship they have with the world are different to other creatures. In Genesis in the Bible, ~~for~~ it says God created men in likeness of His image, this means humans have some qualities of God: dignity, freewill and conscious, the ability ~~and~~ to receive and give love, and are creative and relatable to God. Humans are also rational. This is a valid source of authority because Catholics believe the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit, which means it contains truth. Furthermore, Catholics may believe the message itself suggest humans have dominion and stewardship. In the Bible, it says to let human till the earth and subdue it. ~~It~~ shows Catholics have power and authority over earth as God's chosen people, but also the responsibility to look after the earth's creation and make sure it's taken care of. This is shown by the phrase in the Bible which says God placed humans in garden to guard and cultivate it. Catholics believe the message that ~~for~~ humans have a special relationship with the world shows we have the obligation to treat ~~the~~ all creation equally and fairly. This can be applied to the modern world where Catholics should pursue justice and peace, and also help slow down global warming.

However, some Catholics may disagree because they believe the Creation account focuses more in revealing God's nature, instead of teaching humans their responsibility.

On the other hand, some Catholics may argue ~~that~~ that message in the statement is ~~mostly~~ minor compared to the true purpose of the creation account. They may believe that the most important message is that it reveals the truth of the world, that it's created by an omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and eternal creator. In the Bible in Genesis, it says God created the world from nothing. This means God's presence is forever, that He existed before anything else did. Catholics believe by learning the qualities God has, it helps them build a closer relationship with him. Some Catholics believe by learning humans were created by God, it shows God is the Father - as evidenced by the Nicene Creed as well and that humans should respect and love Him. Additionally, the creation account also conveys the message that heaven exists. Some Catholics may believe it's evidence that life after death exists and that they may use it as an incentive to act good. All and all, some Catholics believe the creation account provides notes of God ~~and that~~ to help humans understand their originator.

In conclusion, the belief that the most important message is the revelation of God's nature proves to be more valid. Although, the creation account talks about the responsibility humans have to look after the world is significant, it's only a minor message. The ~~the~~ major message is that God created the world, and that the world belongs to us.

(Total for Question 1 = 27 marks)



This response is placed in Level 4, 10 marks, which is the lower end of the level, and given 3 marks for SPaG.

The response demonstrates:

- A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments.

To achieve higher in the level the response would need to show:

- A deeper appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

The response is given 3 marks for SPaG, which is the highest level because they:

- spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy
- use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
- use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate

Question 2(a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices. Bullet point 2.1

The sacramental nature of reality: Catholic teachings about how the whole of creation manifests the presence of God; the meaning and **effects of each of the seven sacraments**, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1210–1211; the practice and symbolism of each sacrament; how sacraments communicate the grace of God; divergent Christian attitudes to sacraments, including reference to Orthodox and Protestant Christianity. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"Outline **three** effects of the sacrament of confirmation."

This question was not particularly well-answered with many candidates simply outlining a feature of the ceremony of confirmation – giving an event or a feature, not an effect.

Some candidates confused confirmation with reconciliation and communion, and wrote about forgiveness of sin and how this allows a person to receive communion.

2 (a) Outline three effects of the sacrament of confirmation.

(3)

One effect was that confirmation makes the confirmed person a full member of the Church.

A second effect is that confirmation gives the person strength to live a Christian life.

A third effect is that it allows the person to follow priesthood and be ordained into the ministry.



The candidate receives 3 marks for outlining three correct effects of confirmation.

- 1st effect: makes the confirmed person a full member (1)
- 2nd effect: gives the person strength to live a Christian life (1)
- 3rd effect: allows the person to follow priesthood (1)



Write three separate sentences on three separate lines, to make your points clear.

Question 2(b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices.

Bullet point 2.2

Liturgical worship within Catholic Christianity: **the nature and significance of the Mass for Catholics, including its structure and the Eucharist as the 'source and summit of Christian life'**, with reference to Lumen Gentium paragraph 7; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practice and meaning of liturgical worship, including its significance for Catholics and the less structured worship in evangelical Christian denominations. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** reasons why Mass is the source and summit of Christian life."

This question was answered successfully, with the majority of candidates being able to explain two reasons why the Mass is the source and summit of Christian life, and a least one reason being developed.

The most frequent answers included that it is a place where the bread and wine are consecrated and it is a place to hear the word of God through the Liturgy of the Word.

This response has two developed reasons.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Mass is the source and summit of Christian life.

(4)

One reason is because we receive the Eucharist. This brings us closer to God as after Transubstantiation, the bread becomes the actual body of Christ and we consume it just as the disciples did at the last supper. Another reason is because ^{mass} ~~church~~ ~~spreads~~ ~~the~~ is a form of liturgical worship. ~~the~~ This means that it is done the same universally and therefore, it provides us with a sense of community.



The candidate receives 4 marks for giving two correct reasons, both developed.

1st reason

- brings closer to God (1) developed by
- the actual body of Christ (1)

2nd reason

- is a form of liturgical worship that is universal (1)
- developed by: provides a sense of community (1)

Question 2(c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 2.8:

Catholic mission and evangelism: the history and significance of mission and evangelism for Catholics; divergent ways this is put into practice by the **Church and individual Catholics locally, nationally and globally, and how this fulfils the commission of Jesus** and teachings of the Church, including Evangelii Gaudium Chapter 5. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** ways the Church fulfils the commission of Jesus. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority."

Many candidates were able to link the commission of Jesus to the Church offering baptism and spreading the Word through statements from the Pope etc.

Many weaker answers had no clear understanding of what the commission of Jesus was and gave answers about how the local church helps people – eg food banks and charity work.

This is an example of a full-mark answer.

Note that the reference to the source of wisdom should be part of the answer.

(c) Explain **two** ways the Church fulfils the commission of Jesus.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One way the Church fulfils the commission of Jesus is by baptising believers. This ~~follows Jesus' requests to~~ initiates people into the faith and removes original sin allowing them salvation. Jesus stated "make disciples of many nations". By baptising others the church ^{makes} ~~meets~~ people disciples and gathers people ~~into~~ as Jesus requested.

Another way the Church fulfils the commission of Jesus is by evangelising. This spreads the Gospel and introduces others into the faith, by sharing them the beliefs of the religion.



This response receives 5 marks.

It has two developed ways and a relevant source of wisdom and authority. The question is looking for ways, not reasons.

1st Way

- by baptising believers (1) developed by
- initiates people into the faith (1)
- Jesus told them to "make disciples of many nations" (1)

2nd Way

- by evangelising (1)
- spreads the Gospel and religion (1)

Question 2(d)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two.

Bullet point 2.7

Catholic Social Teaching: how Catholic Social Teaching reflects the teaching to show love of neighbour; Catholic teaching on justice, peace and reconciliation, *Evangelii Gaudium* paragraphs 182–237 – **The inclusion of the poor in society**; how these teachings might be reflected in the lives of individual Catholics, including reference to Matthew 25:31–46 (the Parable of the Sheep and Goats); the work of CAFOD, what it does and why. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

“Catholics should focus more on the inclusion of the poor in society.” Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against. In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

This question wants candidates to consider if Catholics should do **more**. Many candidates did not address the 'more' aspect of the question. Other candidates argued for and against helping those who are poor. Some often interpreted this as simply should Catholics help the poor, rather than focussing on the inclusion of the poor.

There was a significant number of candidates who gave incorrect knowledge, such as Catholics believe that the poor are being punished by God.

The responses that gained higher levels were able to evaluate why the poor needed inclusion and contrast it with the work already being done by Catholics.

A significant number of responses did not read the question and used non-religious and other Christian points of view that were not required by the question.

(d) "Catholics should focus more on the inclusion of the poor in society."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

doing God's work.

(12)

Firstly I agree with the statement because it is part of the Catholic social teaching to help the poor in society. This is a well grounded point because in the Bible it states to 'feed the hungry, clothe the poor...' with it being from the Bible which Catholics believe to be the word of God they must focus and follow it as it has authority. Also as it is part of the Catholic social teaching they should follow it to help society and the world.

Secondly I agree because Catholics believe by doing so they will go to Heaven. This is a strong point because in the Bible in the parable of the sheep and goat it teaches the righteous will go to Heaven and reunite with God and the evil and unrighteous will go to Hell. Being righteous especially in today's society ~~can~~ could be inclusion of the poor so the parable makes the incentive to live a good righteous Christian life. Although some could argue it is wrong to just help the poor and focus on inclusion ~~of~~ of the poor in society if it is only to care about getting into Heaven. It contradicts teachings of loving thy neighbors and ~~only~~ caring for others if it is only done for the sake of doing it.

Firstly I disagree with the statement because Catholics should focus on more personal things such as their own relationship with God. This is a strong point because it is important to have a ~~for~~ good relationship with God and to achieve this they should pray and worship Him to show complete love and devotion. Even during prayer ~~for~~ individuals could also go and God to help, guide and support the poor in society. However some Catholics may argue it is also better to do some physical work as God may not always answer prayers but also because we are here to carry out Christ's work.

Overall I believe Catholics should focus on the ~~most~~ inclusion of the poor in society because it is doing God's work on earth. It allows them to also deepen their relationship with God and live a good righteous Catholic life. Although it is also important to focus on other things such as individual relationships with God and even other world issues. However Catholics already do focus on inclusion of the poor through charities such as CAFOD.



The response reaches Level Three, 8 marks, which is the middle of the level because:

- It gives a good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief.

It uses examples such as the Catholic Social Teaching and the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, contrasted with they should instead build a relationship with God.

It gives a partially-justified conclusion.

To gain the higher mark within Level 3 the candidate would need to provide more reasoned judgements which are more clearly-linked to the analysis.



Read all bullet points carefully and check what the question wants reference to, eg Catholic, other Christians etc

Question 3(a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority. Bullet point 3.4

The Second Vatican Council: the nature, history and importance of the council; the nature and significance of **the four key documents** for the Church and for Catholic living: Dei Verbum, Lumen Gentium, Sacrosanctum Concilium and Gaudium et Spes.

The question asked was:

"Outline **three** areas of focus in the Second Vatican Council."

This question was well-received with many candidates being able to give three areas. A small number of candidates answered incorrectly that it allowed the Bible to be written in English.

3 (a) Outline **three** areas of focus in the Second Vatican Council.

(3)

one area of focus was the priest to face
the congregation

second area of focus was changing mass from
~~Latin~~ Latin to a language all people understood

a third focus of second vatican council was ~~celebrating~~
including the laity more



The candidate receives 3 marks for three correct outlines.

- Priest to face congregation (1)
- Mass changed from Latin (1)
- Including the laity more (1)



One mark is given for each way outlined – written in a full sentence.

Question 3(b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority.

Bullet point 3.2 Interpretation of the Bible: Catholic interpretation of the Bible and understanding of the meaning of inspiration; divergent interpretations of the authority of the Bible within Christianity: the literal Word of God, the revealed Word of God **and as source of guidance and teaching**, including 2 Timothy 3:16 and Catechism of the Catholic Church 105–108; the implications of this for Catholics today.

(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)

The question asked candidates to:

"Explain **two** reasons why Catholics believe the Bible is a source of guidance and teaching."

A significant number of candidates had good knowledge and understanding of the Bible and how Catholics use it as a source of guidance and teaching. Many were able to use examples to support the reasons given, such as the Ten Commandments and parables.

A significant number of candidates stated incorrectly that Catholics view the Bible as the literal/direct word of God.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Catholics believe the Bible is a source of guidance and teaching.

(4)

One reason is because it includes the ten commandments. This means people are able to learn and from their wrongdoings and lead a good life.

Another reason is because it states the Gospel. This means people are able to find hope in times of need, and learn about the Paschal mystery.



This candidate gives two short but developed reasons to achieve 4 marks.

1st Reason

- includes the Ten commandments (1) developed by
- learn and lead a good life (1)

2nd Reason

- states the Gospel (1) developed by
- people find hope in times of need (1)

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Catholics believe the Bible is a source of guidance and teaching.

(4)

Catholics believe the Bible is the inspired word of God; it is the word of God written by humans. Therefore any advice, guidance or teaching enclosed within, is God's direct command. Another reason is because the gospels write about Jesus' life, so anything Jesus said, like advice or commands such as "love your neighbour", will be contained inside.



This is an example of two developed reasons: 4 marks.

1st Reason

- inspired word of God written by humans (1) developed by
- with God's direct command (1)

2nd Reason

- Gospels write about Jesus' life (1) developed by
- with advice or commands such as 'love thy neighbour' (1)



Candidates need to know the divergent interpretations of the authority of the Bible within Christianity.

Question 3(c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority. Bullet point 3.6 The meaning of the four marks of the Church: the nature of the Church as one, holy, **catholic** and apostolic, including reference to the Nicene Creed and the First Council of Constantinople; how the marks may be understood in divergent ways within Christianity; why they are important for Catholics today. (*bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked:

"Explain **two** reasons why the Church is catholic. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority."

Many candidates were able to answer this using the term 'universal' and explaining the impact of this universality to develop the reasons given. Others were able to support the reason given using sources such as the Commission and the Creed.

Some candidates had not prepared for the question and provided a generic answer on the four marks of the church. A significant number of candidates incorrectly described the Church as being one.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why the Church is catholic.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One reason why the church is catholic is because Catholicism is being spread all over the world by evangelism. This is following Jesus' teaching in the Bible at the Great Commission where he said go and make disciples of all nations. This means the church is universal / catholic because there are literally Christians all over the world.

Another reason is because anyone can join Christianity. This is shown in the Bible when Jesus said that there are many rooms in my Father's house. This means that there are many rooms in heaven that anyone can go to, you don't have to be born Christian, making it catholic / universal.



This is a full-mark answer.

The candidate receives 5 marks for two correct reasons that are developed and gives a source of wisdom and authority.

1st Reason

- Catholicism spread all over the world by evangelism (1)
- Jesus said make disciples of all nations (1)
- as result there are Christians all over the world (1)

2nd Reason

- anyone can join Christianity (1)
- there are many rooms in my Father's house (1)



Study each of the four marks of the Church individually, as well as collectively.

Question 3(d)

Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority.

Bullet point 3.5: The Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God: **the nature and significance of the Church as the Body of Christ** and the People of God, including Romans 12:4–6 and 1 Corinthians 12; why the Church as the Body of Christ and the People of God is important for Catholics today; **divergent Christian attitudes towards these**.

The question asked:

“All Christians should hold the same views about the Church as the body of Christ.”

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against. In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

Candidates demonstrated very limited understanding of the Church as the body of Christ. Many did not read the question correctly and simply wrote about the Eucharist and not the Church as the body of Christ.

The question asked candidates to refer to different Christian points of view. Many candidates were not able to do this correctly, stating that only Catholics believe in the body of Christ.

Q03(d) also has 3 SPaG marks available.

*(d) "All Christians should hold the same views about the Church as the body of Christ."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Catholics Some Catholics would agree with this statement as they believe that the Pope is the head of the Church and that the rest of the body is made up by Catholics. This is said in the CCC where it says "the Church is the body of Christ." This means that they believe that only the Pope and Catholics are recognised as the body. This would apply to more Orthodox Christians who view Catholicism as almost superior to any other denomination. This could be seen as an invalid argument as it is excluding other denominations from the body of Christ but also getting other denominations to try and uphold this view.

In contrast other denominations, like Church of England Protestants, would disagree with this statement. This is because they recognise everyone's divergent views and also would accept them. The Church of England Protestants ~~believe~~ don't recognise the Pope as the head of the Church and they recognise all Christians as the body. This leads to more inclusion between the denominations which was something that was reinstated during the Second Vatican Council. This could be seen as a valid argument as it seems that they accept different views but also

include all Catholics in their own view.

Similarly, some more liberal Catholics may also disagree with the Statement. This is because they may believe the Catholic view due to them identifying as a Protestant but also accept other views. This conforms with how ^{God} Jesus wanted us to behave and live as it shows love and acceptance even though different denominations may uphold different beliefs. This could be seen as a valid argument as it means that Catholics are still loving and accepting each other even though they may have differences.

Finally, some Orthodox Protestants may ~~have~~ agree with this Statement. This is because they may disregard the Pope as they don't recognise him as the head of the Church but they may also expect Catholics to do the same even though he is the figurehead in a Catholic Church. This could be seen as an invalid argument as it means that people are expected to change their religious beliefs because of others.

To conclude, although both points are credible, it seems that disagreeing with the Statement is the most valid point. This is because it ties into what was agreed at the Second Vatican Council about the importance of working with and accepting other denominations of Christianity. This then means that it's valid for Christians to not all have the same beliefs as no Catholics should be forced to change what they believe intrinsically.



The response reaches Level 2, 6 marks, which is the highest mark in that level, and 3 SPaG marks.

It reaches Level 2 because it gives:

- A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements, which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.

The answer does fully engage with the concept of the Church as the body of Christ but does explore the problems of them all holding same beliefs within wider Christian beliefs.

To reach Level 3 the candidate would need to:

- provide a good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a correct and sound understanding of religion and belief.

The candidate is given 3 marks for SPaG which is the highest level because they:

- spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy
- use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
- use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate



Candidates should be familiar with the specification.

This is a top-end of Level 3 answer.

*d) "All Christians should hold the same views about the Church as the body of Christ."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

I ~~disagree~~ agree with this statement as the sacrament of baptism is what makes one a member, which is an ecumenical sacrament.

Others disagree with this statement due to Christians' varying ^{functions} ~~views~~ based on their authority. This is because the laity and the clergy hold different roles; the clergy are there to interpret the Word ~~and~~ and lead a Mass, whilst the laity are there to worship and receive the Word. As a result, some argue that all Christians do not hold the same views on the Body of Christ as ~~the~~ depending on ~~whether~~ their role in the Church, as they will view it in a different light based on this role and its function. However, this is a weak argument as it is assumed that as individuals, Christians have different roles within the Church, just as different organs have different functions in the human body. Thus, all Christians should view it as one Body, with a variety of functions.

I agree with this statement as baptism, an ecumenical ^{or} sacrament, ~~makes~~ initiation, makes a Christian a member of this Body. This is shown in the Bible, when it says that Christians 'are all baptized into one body'. Thus, it is shown that all Christians should view

This body, as they ~~are~~ all share in the way they joined it
as baptism ^{+ initiation} ~~is a~~ sacrament' throughout the
denominations. This is a strong argument as it shows that all Christians
should hold the same views on the Body as they are all equal within
it, through how they joined it.

I also agree with this statement as, as members, all Christians have a
shared duty to evangelise. Jesus told his first disciples to 'make
disciples of all nations'. Christians believe they make up Christ's living body,
and thus have an obligation to continue and live out his teachings, even
here to spread the word, ~~and share~~ with extra significance as it
was the first disciples' first command. Therefore, all Christians should
have the same view on the Body as, as members, they all share a
duty in evangelising. This is a strong argument as it highlights how
~~for~~ Christians make up Christ's living body and therefore must
live out his life and teachings, as Christians together.

To conclude, I agree with this statement as all Christians are
equal members of the Body and all have the same duty to live out
Christ's word.



The response reaches Level 3, 9 marks the highest mark within the level and 3 marks for SPaG.

The candidate response reaches Level 3 because they:

- Provide a good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.

To reach Level 4 they would need to:

- Discuss the focus aspect of the question more, using reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief.

The candidate receives 3 marks for SPaG which is the highest level because they:

- spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy
- use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
- use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate

Question 4(a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Forms of Expression of and Ways of Life.

Bullet point 4.4: The meaning and significance of paintings, fresco and drawings within Catholicism with reference to two specific pieces and Catechism of the Catholic Church 2502–2503: **the divergent ways these are used to express belief** by the artist and those who observe the art, and the divergent ways in which paintings, frescos and drawings may be used in church and other settings.

The question asked was:

"Outline **three** ways religious paintings might be used."

This question was answered well, with a significant number of candidates using examples such as art within churches, to aid prayer, and to support understanding.

4 (a) Outline three ways religious paintings might be used.

(3)

One way a religious painting might be used is to help in prayer. Another way a religious painting might be used is to depict a Bible story. Another way a religious painting might be used is to worship God.

The candidate gives three correct ways:

- to help in prayer (1)
- depict a Bible story (1)
- to worship (1)

4 (a) Outline three ways religious paintings might be used.

(3)

One way religious paintings might be used is to help understand bible stories if a person is too young to understand.
Another way religious paintings might be used is to picture a scene you are praying to allowing for helpful reminders.
A final reason religious paintings might be used is to remember key stories and learn their messages like for example Jesus' parables.



The candidate receives 3 marks for three correct ways:

- help understand Bible stories (1)
- to help picture who you are praying to (1)
- remember key stories (1)

Question 4(b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Expression of and Ways of Life.

Bullet point 4.3 **The meaning and significance of sacred objects**, including sacred vessels, **sarcophagi**, and hunger cloths within Catholicism: the way these are used to express belief, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 1161, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** reasons why sarcophagi are significant to Catholics."

Those candidates who knew what a sarcophagus is, were able to explain why it is significant, using reasons such as:

- holds bodies of former saints
- the detailing on the stone
- its use as a prayer aid
- a way to bring people together to remember – eg a sarcophagus generates tourism and helps evangelism

A considerable number of candidates were unable to explain its significance and instead detailed information about burial and Jesus rising from the dead.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why sarcophagi are significant to Catholics.

(4)

One reason why the sarcophagi are significant to Catholics is because it helps them to reflect on the buried person and it serves as a focus for prayer and meditation for Catholics.

A second reason why ~~sarcophagi~~ sarcophagi are significant to Catholics is because they are mostly carved in the shape of the Bible. Catholics who couldn't read can then reflect on these drawings and understand what they are trying to show.



There are two correct and developed reasons – 4 marks.

Reason 1

- helps reflect on the buried person (1) developed by
- focus of prayer and meditation (1)

Reason 2

- covered in stories from the Bible (1) developed by
- helps them understand (1)

Question 4(c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Expression of and Ways of Life. Bullet point 4.1:

The common and divergent forms of architecture, **design** and decoration of Catholic churches: how **they reflect belief**, are used in, and contribute to, worship, including reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church 1179–1181. *(bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** reasons the design of a Catholic church is important. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority."

This question was well-received with many candidates being able to explain and develop at least one reason why the design is important. Many used examples such as the design showed the death of Jesus and developed this with the cruciform shape.

In this answer many candidates gave the development first and the reason followed.

(c) Explain **two** reasons the design of a Catholic church is important.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One reason

The design of the Catholic church is important because it shows the greatness and grandness of God, for examples ~~structures~~ ^{sculptures} and statues make the church more aesthetically appealing, this is important because "the church ^{design} should make visible the living church in this place" as taught by the CCC, as Jesus' consecrated ~~body~~ host is kept in the church.

Another reason the design of a Catholic Church is important because ~~it is the 'house of God' and must be treated and kept in a pristine state to reflect the omnipotence and greatness of God, allowing Catholics to~~ it can have symbolic meaning, such as walking past the baptismal font or the sanctuary being at the front of the church, to serve as points for Catholics to pray and understand the significance of their faith.

This response receives 4 marks for 2 developed reasons and a fifth mark for a source of wisdom and authority.

Reason 1

- shows the greatness of God (1)
- statues and sculpture make it more aesthetically pleasing (1)
- ... make visible the living church in this place (1)

Reason 2

- points for Catholics to understand their faith and pray (1)
- such as the baptismal font holds significant importance (1)

(c) Explain **two** reasons the design of a Catholic church is important.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

one reason is the cruciform design of the church.
This is the church as the shape of a cross. This is
important because it reminds catholics of Jesus'
suffering in his crucifixion and ~~how~~ how he died
for our salvation.

Another reason is the stained glass windows. These
are important because they depict bible stories which
help catholics learn the stories of the Bible and
are especially useful for people that are illiterate.



This response has two developed reasons but is without a source of wisdom: 4 marks.

Reason 1

- reminds Catholic of Jesus' suffering (1)
- this is shown in the church having the shape of the cross (1)

Reason 2

- depicts Bible stories to help people learn (1)
- shown through stained glass windows (1)

Question 4(d)

Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life: Bullet point 4.6: The purpose and use of symbolism and imagery in religious art: the cross, crucifix, fish, ChiRho, dove, including Catechism of the Catholic Church 701, Eagle, Alpha and Omega, symbols of the four evangelists; **the way this symbolism is used to express belief, and the divergent ways in which they may be used in church and other settings.** (*bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was:

“Symbolism and imagery in art are the best way to show belief.”

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

A noticeable number of candidates were able to use examples of art where imagery is shown such as the Creation of Adam and evaluate how this helps to show belief.

Many were able to contrast the use of art creating the possibility of breaking the commandment ‘do not worship false idols’.

Some more knowledgeable candidates detailed the dangers of the symbolism and images being misinterpreted and creating incorrect teaching.

Less-prepared candidates wrote isolated responses at Level 1 that often only referred to a simplistic understanding of art in generic terms.

(d) "Symbolism and imagery in art are the best way to show belief."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must :

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

8
E
S
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C

(12)

One reason why is because ~~it~~ it helps Catholics to recognize their faith. This is because Catholics are able to embrace and recognize on the images ~~the~~ in order to get more feelings of worship. This is also illustrated in The Catechism where it says 'sacred art is true and beautiful'. This acknowledges how the art can be used for God's will and glorify His honour by doing it in favour of God. Furthermore it is also seen in Exodus 20: 18-20 where God requested to build a statue, ~~is~~ this validates how art should be done in a way that respectfully commemorates God and reveals His Omnipotence and Holy ~~eternal~~ presence. This symbolism and imagery can help embrace on God's ~~the~~ power and eternal presence to obey His commands. Furthermore it is illustrated in The Creation of Adam by Michaelangelo that helps us see how God and the angels are shaped in the form of a brain reaching out to Adam who's brain is vacant. This ~~the~~ imagery is used to show how God is going to transform Adam

from being vacant to full of life. Another reason why is because ~~it is~~ symbolism and imagery can be used to help ~~people~~ people who can't read or write. This shows how it plays a prominent role in helping those that are ~~so~~ disadvantaged to experience the same ~~worship~~ graceful experience as advantaged ^{Catholic} Christians do. However ~~the~~ Evangelical Protestants don't agree with imagery as they see it as a form of idol worship. This is because they don't associate with symbols and ~~not~~ imagery of Mary, the mother of God as they see it as a form of worshipping Mary. This is seen as The 10 commandments in the Bible state 'you shall only worship the Lord your God' and 'you shall not make for yourself any idols' connoting to the Monotheistic belief. This reveals how ^{Protestants} ~~they~~ don't align with anything that takes the place or ^{replace the} prominence of God and praise God.

In conclusion I agree that symbolism and art helps to show belief because it helps Catholics to focus their mind to God. ~~and~~ This helps Catholics to feel emotionally attached to God and keep Him in their minds. It is a form of raising one's mind and heart to God. This suggests as it helps evoke feelings of the Holy Spirit in honour and to praise God. (Total for Question 4 = 24 marks)



The response reaches Level 4, 10 marks, which is the lower value in the level because it gives:

- a sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief such as sacred art is beautiful and shows respect contrasted with the dangers of it creating idol worship.

This leads to reasoned judgements supported by some appraisal of arguments.

To achieve higher in Level 4 the candidate needed to give more sustained logical chains of reasoning that link back to examine the symbols and imagery, not only art.



Candidates should write a brief plan to help structure the essay.

(d) "Symbolism and imagery in art are the best way to show belief."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must :

- refer to Catholic teachings
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

Some Christians and Catholics see symbolism and imagery in art ~~the best way~~ as being the best way to show belief, whilst others argue against this.

Symbolism and imagery in art can be a significant way to show belief as symbolism and imagery both tell a story of things and events that took place in the bible for example the bath also help ~~the~~ Christians and Catholics ~~to~~ and even non Catholics to grow in faith by what is portrayed. Symbolism and imagery can help Catholics reflect and pray to themselves, as they might feel a sense of connection within the imagery.

However, some Catholics and Christians may think otherwise and argue against this, as ~~the~~ just doing the simplest of things, like saying your grace before a meal is a good way of not only showing your belief but

your gratitude for God blessing you with whatever meal he has blessed you with. In addition to this, by simply praying to God ~~whether~~ whether it's about something on your mind or something you're struggling with in life, it is showing that you believe in God and he will make a way for you. Moreover, simply attending church every Sunday, or spreading the gospel to people and friends is also a significant way of showing your belief in God, as you are fulfilling his wishes which is already enough. Also, some may view paintings as a bad way of showing. In conclusion, ~~there are~~ there are many other ~~more~~ ~~more~~ ~~more~~ good ways to show belief, even if it's just the minor things like belief as the Bible says to not worship images and things like that.

In conclusion, there are many other ways good ways to show belief other than just paintings, even if it's the minor things like praying or attending church when you're able to.



Level 3, 7 marks.

The candidate gains Level 3 because:

- they deconstruct the religious information leading to an accurate understanding of religion and belief.
- connections are made among many, but not all, of the elements in the question
- the candidate provides evidence suggesting the lowest mark of the level because judgements are supported by limited appraisal of evidence, some of which may be superficial, leading to a partially-justified conclusion.

The reason that it does not go beyond the lower of the Level 3 is because connections are not as developed as they could be and detail in the opposing view is not deep enough to move it up within the level.



Learn the whole of the specification, so there are no gaps in your knowledge.

Paper Summary

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Write **only** on the lines given for the question. The number of lines indicates how long the answer should be. Answers written anywhere else will **not** be seen
- When answering the (a) items use three full sentences
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) items must be relevant to the question and support the reason given
- The (d) items ask for evaluation after considering the evidence. The higher grades are achieved if the evidence/reason given is 'considered' or appraised for its value as an argument towards deciding the evaluation
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that will be required in the answer
- Candidates should read the questions carefully, and answer the question asked fully
- Candidates should attempt every question

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

