



Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback  
Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In Religious Studies A  
Paper 2 Study of Second Religion  
2A Catholic Christianity

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Summer 2024

Publications Code 1RA0\_2A\_2406\_ER

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## Introduction

Paper details GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies A: Paper 2

Area of Study 2 – Study of Second Religion: Option 2A – Catholic Christianity

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award. The assessment consists of two questions and candidates must answer both questions. 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.

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

There are two sections:

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

Students will be expected to study Catholic Christianity within the context of the wider British society, the religious traditions of which are, in the main, Christian. Students should compare and contrast the areas of belief and practice within Catholic Christianity with wider Christian perspectives as outlined in the content below.

- Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance (1.8)\*
- The practice and significance of worship (2.2)\*

Please note:

AO stands for 'Assessment Objective'

SPaG stands for 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar'

### Question one

1a Outline **three** ways the characteristics of God are shown through the Creation account.

This referred to the specification:

1.3 - Creation: the nature and significance of the biblical account of Creation, including Genesis 1–3; and how it may be understood in divergent ways in Christianity, including reference to literal and metaphorical interpretations; the significance of the Creation account for Catholics in understanding the nature and characteristics of God, especially as Creator, benevolent, omnipotent and eternal.

The majority of candidates answered this well. Candidates lost marks outlining the creation account.

Examiner tip

Candidates should write in three sentences to outline rather than list their answer.

**1b** Explain **two** reasons why the death of Jesus is important for Catholics.

This referred to the specification:

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.

Candidates on b questions should give two developed reasons. The majority of candidates responded well to this question. Candidates who did not do so well had mixed up the death of Jesus with his resurrection.

**1c** Explain **two** ways God as Trinity is shown in the Bible.

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

This referred to the specification:

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.

Candidates on c questions should give two developed reasons, and one reason should include a reference to a source of wisdom. Candidates had a mixed response to this question. The best responses quoted from the Nicene Creed about God as Trinity. The weaker responses did not refer to the Nicene Creed but listed beliefs about God.

**1d “The life of Jesus is the reason why Catholics can seek salvation.”** Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Catholic teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

This referred to the specification:

1.7 - The significance of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus for Catholics; beliefs about salvation and grace, including John 3:10–21 and Acts 4:8–12; the implications and significance of these events for Catholic practice today.

The majority of candidates did well in answering this question, they compared the sacrifice of Jesus as a means to salvation. Some candidates were distracted by the living of a good life and discussed what made a good life and what did not.

## **Question two**

**2a** Outline **three** Catholic forms of popular piety.

This referred to the specification:

2.5 - The role and importance of forms of popular piety: the nature and significance of the Rosary, Eucharistic adoration and Stations of the Cross; how each of these might be used and why; the importance of having different types of worship for Catholics, including reference to Catechism of the Catholic Church 1674–1676; divergent Christian attitudes to these forms of piety.

Most candidates did well on answering this question using examples such as the Rosary and stations of the cross.

**2b** Explain **two** reasons why Catholics use different types of prayer.

This referred to the specification:

2.4 - Prayer as the ‘raising of hearts and minds to God’: the nature and significance of different types of prayer; the Lord’s Prayer, including Matthew 6:5–14, set (formulaic) prayers and informal (extempore) prayer; when each type might be used and why; the importance of prayer and the importance for Catholics of having different types of worship.

Candidates on b questions should give two developed reasons. Most candidates seemed not to know that different prayers allow a person to connect to God. Weaker candidates that did do well responded with examples of different prayers not why they are used.

**2c** Explain **two** reasons why Catholics evangelise locally.

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

This referred to the specification:

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.

Candidates on c questions should give two developed reasons, and one reason should include a reference to a source of wisdom.

The majority of candidates answered this question with general information about evangelism and did not address the demand of the question fully. Most gave a general reason such as people following the command from Jesus.

**2d** “Christians should be baptised as babies.” 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.

This referred to the specification:

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.

The majority of students answered this question confidently, comparing adult baptism like Jesus had, to infant baptism and its link to original sin. The new d mark scheme allowed candidates to gain higher marks.