



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies A
Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second
Religion
Option 2B – Christianity

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Religious Studies A Paper 2B: Area of Study 2 –Study of Second Religion: Christianity (Paper code: 1RA0/2B)

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award.

The assessment consists of two questions and candidates must answer all 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 Christianity as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

There are two sections:

- Beliefs and Teachings;
- Practices.

Candidates had studied Christianity within the context of the wider British society.

Please note: AO stands for 'Assessment Objective' SPaG stands for 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar'

Question 1a

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

The question asked was: 'State three religious traditions, other than Christianity, practised in Great Britain.'

Examiner comment: This question was answered well by candidates. The majority of candidates gained three marks.

Question 1b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

The question asked candidates to 'Explain two of the seven days of Creation.'

Bullet point 1.2 The creation of the universe and of humanity: **the biblical account of creation** and divergent ways in which it may be understood by Christians, including as literal and metaphorical; the role of the Word and Spirit in creation, including John 1:1–18 and Genesis 1–3; the importance of creation for Christians today. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

Examiner comment: Most candidates answered this confidently. Where candidates lost marks was when they named the day that something was created on and it was the wrong day.

Question 1C

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

Bullet point 1.1 The Trinity: the nature and significance of the **Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed**; the nature and significance of the oneness of God; the nature and

significance of each of the Persons individually, including reference to Matthew 3:13–17; how this is reflected in Christian worship and belief today.

The question asked was: 'Explain two beliefs about Jesus as the Son of God found in the Nicene Creed.' In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

Examiner comment: 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 quotes 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.

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.

Most candidates answered this question well. Candidates identified and explained many different examples of prayer requests that could be answered and how this might lead to belief in God.

Question 1d

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.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings

Bullet point 1.7 The problem of evil/suffering and a loving and righteous God: the problems it raises for Christians about the nature of God, including reference to omnipotence and benevolence, including Psalm 103; how the problem may cause believers to question their faith or the existence of God; the nature and examples of natural suffering, moral suffering.

The question asked was *(d) "Suffering shows God is all-loving."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

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

Examiner comment: In response to this question many candidates could give a well-argued Christian point of view for their being a loving God however reverted to non-religious arguments against the statement for the argument against. Non-religious arguments such as the inconsistent triad could not be credited as it was not asked for in the question.

Question 2a

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: practices

Bullet point 2.1 Christian worship: liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship, including activities which are informal and individual, with reference to the Book of Common Prayer; when each form might be used and why; divergent Christian attitudes towards the practices, meaning and significance of liturgical and non-liturgical forms of worship in Christian life today, with reference to denominations which worship with less structure, such as some Pentecostal churches. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was 'Outline three ways a Christian may choose to worship God.'

Examiner comment: Candidates answered this question well; candidates had been well prepared in types of worship within Christianity and were able to recall this

Question 2b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: practices

Bullet point 2.2 The role of the sacraments in Christian life and their practice in two denominations: the role of the sacraments/ordinance as a whole; the nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of baptism and the Eucharist in at least two denominations, including reference to the 39 Articles XXV–XXXVI; **divergent Christian attitudes towards the use and number of sacraments in Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions.** (*bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain two reasons why there are different numbers of sacraments in Christian denominations.'

Examiner advice: Refer to the specification bullet point and cover all the different parts of it. These bullet points are the basis of question setting.

Question 2c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.8 The role and importance of the Church in the worldwide community: **how and why it works for reconciliation** and the problems faced by the persecuted Church; divergent Christian responses to teachings about charity, including 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 25:31–46; the work of Christian Aid, what it does and why. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain two ways the Church works for reconciliation.'

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.

Examiner comment: Most candidates responded well to this question. Candidates were well prepared for this question and referred to sources of wisdom with confidence.

Examiner advice: Centres struggling to find sources of wisdom should refer to the specification and/or previous mark schemes.

Question 2d

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices

Bullet point 2.5 Christian religious celebrations: the nature and history of Christian festivals in the church year, **including Christmas and Easter**; the significance of celebrating Advent and Christmas; the significance of celebrating Holy Week and Easter, with reference to interpretations of 1 Corinthians 15:12–34. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was "It is more important for Christians to celebrate Christmas than Easter."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you must:

- refer to Christian teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

Examiner comment: This question engaged candidates of all abilities and produced a wide range of marks. All candidates should be encouraged to answer every question because every mark is important.

Key advice from the examiner:

- Centres must teach to the specification, making sure candidates are prepared for all parts of the bullet points in preparation for the questions
- When tackling a) questions, candidates should write three sentences containing one piece of information in each. There is no need for development: it will not receive credit.
- The explain questions require two developed points, however, students should also be prepared to describe where indicated on the specification.
- The (d) items need an understanding of religion and belief, as well as the ability to evaluate the arguments in order to reach a conclusion. Centres may wish to consider the differentiation of teaching to enable some students of different abilities to concentrate on learning the information needed before embarking on the evaluation.
- Candidates should be directed to read the bullet points in the (d) question and understand that they guide them to which viewpoints they should be providing. Centres may wish to consider identifying on the specification the different traditions/viewpoints within Christianity identified that could be used to answer these questions. The diversity

within the religion is the key factor in appraising the arguments. Why do they not all agree?