



GCSE EXAMINER'S REPORT

GCSE (LEGACY)

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES SPECIFICATION B:
Religion and Life Issues**

SUMMER 2018

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SPECIFICATION B: 4451- Religion and Life Issues

Unit 1: Religion and Life Issues

The examination paper was accessible with a range of marks used for all questions on the paper. A number of candidates demonstrated an ability to engage with the demands of this GCSE course and were able to include both relevant and contemporary evidence to support a wide variety of responses to questions. The stimulus once again appeared to be successful in helping the wide ability range of candidates access the range of questions. There were some outstanding answers, showing thoughtful and well expressed viewpoints, to the (e) questions. Some candidates demonstrated an excellent knowledge of two religious traditions and an excellent understanding of how religious beliefs and teachings make an impact on the lives of religious adherents in the (b), (c) and particularly (d) questions.

This year there were a number of candidates who made little attempt to answer any questions on the paper or give cursory and brief responses. It is always a puzzle when candidates do not appear to know the key terms used in the (a) questions. A significant minority did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of two religious traditions and achieved marks on only one response. Answers on the paper spanned the range of the six religious traditions, as stated in the specification, with Judaism and Islam the most popular choices.

Despite a clear requirement stated in the rubric for a response based on the views of religious believers in question (c), a number of candidates used an atheist perspective to attempt this question and received no credit. It is important all candidates follow the clear rubric instructions on the question paper.

Question 1

- (a) Very well answered by the majority of candidates. Many candidates gave examples of reconciliation found within marriage. A number of candidates explored the concept of reconciliation within the Catholic Church as an alternative approach.
- (b) Candidates approached this question in one of two ways. A number of candidates gave generic answers about how religious faith influences attitudes to family and family life. A number of candidates gave answers based around a specific religious tradition. Either approach is possible for this question.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question with reference to marriage in church. A number of candidates explained, in a sophisticated way, how religious believers would not expect people without faith to want to marry in a church.
- (d) The best answers demonstrated an awareness of the importance of celibacy for many religious believers, either within the context of religious orders or a personal life style choice. Unfortunately some candidates appeared to misread the question and wrote at length about teachings on contraception. Candidates should focus on answering the question and not simply writing 'everything I know about a topic'.

- (e) This was an accessible question for most candidates, although a significant number of answers were very short; short answers may disadvantage candidates. Candidates were able to access the range of SPag marks. The majority of candidates approached this question with reference to the Christian religion.

Question 2

- (a) Generally well answered with more able candidates expanding on a definition with a well explained example. A number of candidates misread the question and simply wrote about justice.
- (b) Many candidates correctly linked how holding a religious faith might have an impact on a person's attitudes to human dignity. There were a wide range of examples used to answer this question and all relevant answers were awarded marks.
- (c) Some candidates did not appear to understand the idea of charity beginning at home but nevertheless gave a range of responses about the importance of charity at home and elsewhere. All relevant answers were awarded marks.
- (d) Many candidates gained marks in the question by reference to attitudes and teachings about equality and how religious believers are expected to treat others. Answers included quotations from sacred texts and references to famous role models, including Jesus, the Prophet Muhammad, Martin Luther King and Ghandi.
- (e) The vast majority of answers focused on generic viewpoints regarding prejudice and the need for religious believers to stop prejudice. Some answers included examples of religious believers working to stop prejudice. Some candidates did not appear to understand the need for an evaluation style response to the question and gave simplistic responses on the topic of prejudice.

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates gave a very detailed definition and the best responses included examples of different communities.
- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. Some candidates gave a generic style response about funeral rites whereas some candidates gave a response based on a named religious tradition. Unfortunately a number of candidates gave answers related to visiting graves, headstones, and anniversaries; all of these are not relevant as funeral rites. This is an example where candidates must answer the rubric demand of the question. Any answer correctly related to funeral rites received credit.
- (c) Candidates answered this question mainly with reference to worship in church. A number of candidates once again explained, in a sophisticated way, how religious believers would not expect people without faith to worship God.
- (d) Answers were often very basic and brief. On occasion answers were no more than a list; the demand of the question is for an explanation. Where candidates gave full responses they included very specific religious teachings about the nature of God. The most popular choice was the Christian tradition.
- (e) This question was very accessible to most candidates and there were a range of interesting responses to this question. Lots of different examples were used to

support the argument, including references to the decline in religious belief in the last census.

Question 4

- (a) This was answered by the majority of candidates who recognised the term and were well prepared to give a simple definition. The best responses included examples.
- (b) Answers tended to be very generic. Many candidates referred in a general way to the idea of treating others as you want to be treated.
- (c) Many candidates gave generic responses and failed to focus on the idea of animal rights. Where candidates understood the issue, answers were often thoughtful and based on religious teachings.
- (d) The best answers involved a clear exposition of how using God-given talents is important for religious believers to live out their lives in a practical way. Many answers included examples of how religious believers might use their talents.
- (e) Some candidates gave answers based more on the detailed narration of a Creation story rather than focusing on the importance of such stories today.



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