

Religious Studies Spec A

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8062)

Paper 1: Christianity

Marked answers from students from the June 2022 exams.
Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the students.

4 mark question

Question 1.3

Explain two ways in which belief in judgement by God influences Christians today.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies.

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a 'detailed explanation' the 'influence' of the way must be included.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Jesus died on the cross / for forgiveness of sins
- Christians believe that at some point they will die, or the world will end, and they will be judged by God / and will be rewarded or punished / this influences some to follow Christian rules to be rewarded.
- Christians believe that the reward is heaven, to be in God's presence / so they will aim not to sin, to lead a good life so that they are judged fit for heaven.
- Some believe in judgement to a literal hell / so they are influenced by fear to avoid breaking Christian rules.
- The Apostles' Creed teaches that God is the judge of both the living and the dead / so they may be influenced to hope that their friends and family who have already died will be sent to heaven.
- Some will be influenced to study the Bible to find out how to avoid judgement to hell / so they might look (for example) at Jesus' Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46) to find out what kind of behaviour leads to heaven or to hell.

- God judges peoples' actions during their lives / so they would try to please him / lead a moral life / worship God.
- Jesus is the Way / so they will evangelise (spread his teachings), etc.

Student responses

Response A

One way that belief in judgement influences Christians is that they will avoid sin, as they know their actions will determine their fate in the after-life.

Another way is they will be more forgiving as this is what Jesus said to do.

The answer clearly includes two ways in which belief in judgement influences Christians – they will avoid sin and they will be more forgiving. Both ways are explained well.

4 marks

Response B

Christians believe when you die, God judges whether you have been good or bad throughout your life as to whether you should go to heaven or hell.

1 mark awarded for 1 simple point. The answer does not include an 'influence' and so cannot achieve the second mark.

1 mark

5 mark question

Question 2.4

Explain two religious reasons why Christians celebrate Easter.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority.

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Christians celebrate festivals because they help Christians to remember / the important events underlying their faith / and to keep them fresh in their minds / collective declaration of faith.
- Easter is the most important Christian festival because it celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead / Jesus had conquered death.
- Paul mocked the power of death, saying that it no longer has the power to terrify Christians / because whereas that which is buried in the grave is perishable / what is resurrected will be immortal.
- Christian teaching is that death entered the world through the sin of Adam / Jesus' sacrifice on the cross atones for that sin / so humanity can overcome death through that atonement.
- Some will refer to the narrative of Jesus' crucifixion, and its emphasis that Jesus had really died and had therefore really risen from the dead.
- Some will refer further to the narrative of Jesus' entombment / the guard set on the tomb / and the resurrection on the third day / as evidence for the factual nature of the narrative and the reality of the resurrection / and the basis for celebration of that narrative.
- The resurrection of Jesus is seen by Christians as the fulfilment of scripture / and the whole focus of the New Testament narrative / Jesus as the Son was sent by God / to teach, preach and heal / and to show how believers should behave / in order to inherit eternal life / hence Easter celebrates the entirety of the Christian message.
- Some might refer to the resurrection narratives (eg Luke 24) and the Ascension as the 'proof' of Jesus having risen from the dead / and the fact that all of these sayings and ideas are at the heart of the celebration of Easter.
- Reference might be made to the 'why?' of the different celebrations of the Church within Easter, eg the eating of eggs to symbolise new life through Christ, etc.

Student responses

Response A

Christians celebrate Easter because it was the day that Jesus resurrected from being crucified on the cross. It is important to Christians because they believe that God can do anything even bring someone back to life which shows that God is omnipotent.

The first point is that Jesus was resurrected, which is developed with the explanation of his crucifixion (2 marks). The second point is also a detailed explanation of Easter showing God's power. No source of authority is included, so the 5th mark is not awarded.

4 marks

Response B

One reason why Christians celebrate Easter is that the crucifixion occurred during this period. This is when Jesus had to die on the cross for humanity to be allowed into heaven. Another reason why Christians celebrate Easter is the resurrection. In the Bible it says “I am the resurrection and the life”. This is when Jesus came back to life from the crucifixion which proves the power of God.

Two detailed explanations and a clear reference to a source of authority.

5 marks

12 mark question

Question 2.5

'Only adults should be baptised into the Christian religion.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Christian teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

Mark scheme

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10-12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7-9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4-6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1-3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- Most adults are able to make reasoned choices, whereas most children are not / so cannot make reasoned choices about baptism.
- The question supports believers' baptism and rejects infant baptism / given the importance of baptism as a Christian ceremony, adults should choose for themselves rather than let their parents or somebody else choose for them.
- Some might argue that what saves a Christian is not being baptised but living as Jesus commanded / that can be achieved only by understanding what Jesus taught / which cannot be done as an infant.
- The baptism of believers is more powerful than that of infants / because the ceremony underlines the importance of what the adult individual is choosing / which is to be fully acknowledged as a child of God / and to receive God's saving grace.
- Believers' baptism usually involves total immersion in water to symbolise the washing away of sins / which is hardly a suitable ritual for an infant / so it is best to avoid infant baptism and let children wait until they can decide for themselves.
- A ceremony with the importance of baptism will be more meaningful to the individual Christian if it is understood / only the mature individual can decide when it is understood fully.
- Without sincerity of belief in baptism, the ceremony has little meaning / sincerity can be judged by the individual's testimony during the service of baptism.
- Jesus himself was baptised as an adult / which is a clear indication that baptism should be chosen by adults, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- The fact that Jesus chose baptism as an adult does not mean that everybody should be baptised only when they are adults / Jesus did not specify when you should be baptised / infant baptism is not referred to specifically in the New Testament / but some biblical references imply that it happened (eg Acts 2:38-39).
- For many Christians, baptism is a sacrament: an outward sign of an inward grace / so there is no reason why God's grace should not be given to those who are too young or who are otherwise unable to choose baptism for themselves.
- Symbolic actions are important in Christianity / eg the bread and wine symbolising Jesus' body and blood / and baptism symbolises clearly that a child is part of the Christian Church, the body of Christ.
- God's grace can be given by baptism at any age / so some argue that this should be at as young an age as possible / at baptism, the infant receives God's grace as a member of the Church / and the infant is then believed to be freed from sin / and is introduced to the support of the Christian community.
- This means that an infant's inability to choose baptism is not important / since baptism can be chosen for the infant by its parents or guardians.

- Some believe that by being baptised as an infant, a child is cleansed of the 'original sin' of Adam and Eve / and can go to heaven after death / so again, this can be seen as a reasonable choice made by parents and guardians for an infant.
- Some Christians do not accept baptism / some denominations do not have baptism / so in their view no one should be baptised into the Christian religion, etc.

Student responses

Response A

On one hand adults should be baptised as they will be able to decide weather they want to or not on the other hand babies should be baptised as they have just been brought to this world but still have a choice later in life if they want to stay christian. In conclusion I think babies should be baptised as well as adults as it's the start of the babies life. "I knew you before you were created in the womb" so babies should get christened to have Jesus touch

This is a Level 2 response

This answer includes recognition of different points of view with relevant reasons, so it goes beyond Level 1. It does not include enough explanation or reasoning to go higher into Level 2, but is awarded 4 marks.

4 marks + 1 SPaG

Response B

Some Christians might agree with this statement because during infant baptism, the baptised person cannot give consent. In infant baptism, the infant is dipped in blessed water and baptised 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit', with the parents promising to raise the child as a Christian. Some Christians might think that this is unethical because the parents do not know what life the child might lead and whether he/she would like living as a Christian, it is as if the parents were forcing a child into a religion which goes against the freedom of religion as well as Jesus' teaching to love your neighbour. Additionally, believer's baptism is for people old enough to understand the faith, which is a bit vague. Teenagers or even young children might misinterpret the religion and choose to be baptised, only to regret it later in life. Therefore, only adults, people who are old enough to make an informal decision should be baptised. This is why some Christians might agree with this statement.

However, other Christians would disagree with this statement as this has been Christian tradition for a long time. Baptism is practised in Jesus' time and therefore changing the rules after such a long time goes against Christian traditions. Furthermore, although some churches practice believer's baptism, they do not consider it as a sacrament, showing that some Christians think that infants baptism is more important than believer's baptism, and they would disagree with the statement. Lastly, being baptised means getting into a Christian community. Although an infant might not be able to give consent, but a child might really enjoy the religion and want to be baptised and be introduced officially into the community, so these Christians would also disagree with the statement as well.

In conclusion, although the argument that infant baptism is slightly unethical is true, I don't think only adults can be baptised, the tradition of baptism had been around for a long time and teenagers or children could be interested as well. So it is not necessary to limit baptism to only adults.

This is a Level 4 response

The response begins particularly well and is evaluative throughout. The second paragraph lacks a depth of knowledge and reads as several simple points without any being developed. Best fit is bottom of Level 4.

10 marks + 3 SPaG

Response C

Some believe that only adults should be baptised into the religion. “He said to them: ‘Go and make disciples of all nations and baptise them in the name of the father, the Son and the holy Spirit’. This quote suggests that Jesus is encouraging the growth of the church by spreading Gods message and by having adults know and be aware of what they are doing so they can choose God and a religious life themselves. Also Jesus was baptised as an adult and many believe that we should follow Jesuses example. What’s more it is a choice to be forgiven and to ask for forgiveness and adults need some of their life to sin before they can be cleansed of their sin and join the church and be forgiven. So some believe that only adults should be baptised.

On the other hand, others believe that infants should be baptised. ‘Truly I tell you, only those born of the water and spirit can enter the kingdom of God’. This suggests that babies must be brought into the church and the community as soon as possible and have the holy spirit watching over them for their whole life as well as their childhood. Also many believe we are born with original sin passed down from Adam and Eve, so we must remove that sin from a child by baptising them. What’s more it is a celebration of a birth and welcoming them into the community and church and celebrating the parent’s gift from God as well as thanking God. So some believe that you should baptise infants.

In conclusion I believe that only adults should be baptised. ‘the one who believes in the father will not perish but have eternal life’. This shows that believe and faith in God is what is important for forgiveness so each individual should be able to choose for themselves. They should be able to be fully emerged and cleansed in a believers baptism to cleanse their soul from sin rather than on the head for an infant. And it gives them an opportunity to prove themselves to God and their faith to God. So I believe only adults should be baptised.

This is a Level 4 response

This answer clearly fulfils the criteria for Level 4 as it includes logical chains of reasoning and is a well-argued response. Judgements are made on the statement in the conclusion.

12 marks + 3 SPaG

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/8062

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