

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES A

(8062/2A and 2B)

Marked Responses
Summer 2018 -Themes

See a range of responses and how different levels are achieved and understand how to interpret the mark scheme.

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EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Whilst every attempt has been made to show a range of student responses, the following responses and examiner comments provide teachers with the best opportunity to understand the application of the mark scheme. They are not intended to be viewed as 'model' answers, although they are genuine student responses from the summer 2018 examinations and have all been marked by senior examiners.

Two mark questions (A01.1)

0 | 1 | . | 2

Give two religious beliefs about same-sex marriage.

[2 marks]

Answer A

Muslims believe same sex marriage isn't allowed.

Some Christians do allow same sex marriage.

Answer B

Roman Catholics believe that same sex marriage goes against God and should never be allowed. They also believe that same sex marriage is a sin, as the point of marriage is to procreate which is not possible for two men.

Answer A

Two simple points which clearly identify two different religious beliefs. There is no requirement in these 2 mark questions to explain the reasons for the beliefs given.

2 marks

Answer B: There are more points than needed given in this response, and credit was given for the first two correct points given - 'goes against God' and 'never be allowed'.

2 marks

0	3	.	2
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Give two reasons why some people believe that God does not exist.

[2 marks]

Answer A

Suffering exists. God (who is supposed to be kind) wouldn't cause suffering.
Scientists believe everything was created by the Big Bang, not God.

Answer B

You don't see him around.
Why would he let suffering in the world.

Answer A

Two clear reasons given in this response. The first point did not require explanation, the existence of suffering would have been enough for a mark in this 'give' style of question. 2 marks

Answer B

Two simple points are given in this response. Although the first seems very basic and poorly expressed, the concept of God not being perceived as sufficiently 'visible' in our experience and doubts over his immanence is a valid reason for disbelief.

2 marks

Four mark questions (A01.3)

0	2	.	3
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Explain two contrasting religious beliefs about euthanasia. In your answer, you must refer to one or more religious traditions.

[4 marks]

Answer A

Muslims believe in euthanasia very rarely, only if the person is extreme suffering can passive euthanasia be considered the lesser of two evils. On the other hand, Roman Catholics never allow euthanasia as it goes against the idea of sanctity of life and the fact that God made us in his own image.

Answer B

Christians believe that killing is very wrong because God put us on this Earth and only he can take and bring life on Earth. Other Christians might say if they are suffering then it is ok to help them stop the pain and put them out of their misery.

Answer A

The first point included an incorrect reason, in Islam the justification of 'lesser of two evils' is not used, the point therefore lacks sufficient development for the second mark. The second point is well-developed with a clear explanation of sanctity of life.

3 marks

Answer B

The first point in this response includes a detailed explanation of the reason that any killing is believed to be wrong. The second point is not sufficiently developed to gain the final mark.

3 marks

0	4	.	3
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Explain two contrasting religious beliefs about nuclear weapons. In your answer, you must refer to one or more religious traditions.

[4 marks]

Answer A

Some Christians believe that using nuclear weapons is wrong because Jesus said “turn the other cheek” when faced with violence. It also goes against sanctity of life. However, the Bible also said “an eye for an eye” showing that it is ok to retaliate.

Answer B

Christians may believe that nuclear weapons whilst they should never be used because harming civilians goes against the sanctity of life, could be used as a deterrent to reduce the chance of war and violence. On the other hand, Buddhists believe in ahimsa and nuclear weapons contradict this and the first moral precept is to abstain from taking life, so they would be firmly against nuclear weapons.

Answer A

The first belief given in this response is developed, although the use of a quotation is not required by this question, the teaching of Jesus is a valid point which is then developed with the belief in ‘sanctity of life’. The contrasting belief is not developed and although the teaching of ‘an eye for an eye’ could be applied to this question, the use of nuclear weapons for retaliation is not a generally accepted view, therefore the teaching would need to be explained further in this context to gain the second mark.

3 marks

Answer B

This response includes two well-developed points. Although both points could be explained more concisely, they nevertheless include clear and accurate beliefs which meet the objective of the question by presenting ‘contrasting’ views.

4 marks

Five mark questions (A01.1)

0	5	.	4
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Explain two religious beliefs which show that all hate crimes are wrong. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Answer A

The Bible states “you are all one in Christ” showing that nobody should be discriminated against based on physical difference. God sees souls, not the body. Muslims believe everyone is equal, so nobody should feel superior to anyone else and commit crimes due to differences.

Answer B

Hate crimes are wrong because in the Bible it states ‘thou shall not kill’ which shows that everyone should be treated with respect and be assured that nothing is going to happen to them.

Answer C

Buddhists believe in the concept of ahimsa. This is the idea that we should all be pacifist, and therefore all violence is wrong. This would automatically deem all hate crimes as wrong, as the violence they disagree with could be physical, mental or verbal.

Christianity teaches that we should ‘love thy neighbour’ and treat others how we would want to be treated which Jesus taught. This shows all hate crime is wrong as hate is the opposite of love.

Answer A

This response fully meets the criteria for a 5 mark question. The first point is well explained, and also includes an accurate reference from Galatians 3. The second belief makes the point that Muslims believe in equality, and then explains it with a good focus on hate crimes.

5 marks

Answer B

This response is too brief to fulfil the criteria for full marks, however it does include a relevant reference (1 mark) and then goes on to add a simple point about respect.

2 marks

Answer C

This response presents developed explanations that include accurate religious teaching. A strength of this response is the clear application to hate crimes which further demonstrates sound knowledge. The explanation of ahimsa in the second sentence is not quite accurate; however the implication of a resulting pacifism is valid. In the second paragraph, two references to Jesus' teaching are given, as well as a development in the final sentence, in total this is more than enough for the available marks.

5 marks

0	6	.	4
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Explain two religious beliefs that show why racial discrimination is wrong. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Answer A

Prophet Muhammad mentioned that white people don't have superiority over non-white people. Muslims believe that no races are better than any other, so racial discrimination shouldn't be carried out.

Christians believe that everyone is equal so committing a crime against somebody due to skin colour is incorrect.

Answer B

Jesus said in the Bible that "there is neither Jew nor non-Jew" which meant that race doesn't exist in the eyes of religion so people shouldn't be discriminated against. The Bible also said to "love thy neighbour" hinting that any form of discrimination is wrong.

Answer A

This response is succinct, but just meets the criteria for this AO1.1 question. The first paragraph on Islam includes a valid detailed point. The paragraph on Christianity is a developed point although could have been explained a little further to be more secure in the second mark. The answer includes a reference to Muhammad's teaching as a source of authority so gains the final mark.

5 marks

Answer B

The first point that racial difference doesn't exist in the eyes of religion is valid and is developed with reference to Galatians. Although wrongly attributed as a saying of Jesus, the teaching is relevant and valid. The second point is simple as 'love thy neighbour' isn't explained further. Either of the biblical references could gain the 'source' mark.

4 marks

12 mark questions

Levels of response

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

12 mark questions (A02)

0	1	.	5
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'For religious believers, sexual relationships should take place only within marriage.' Evaluate this statement.

[12 marks + SPaG 3]

In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to religious arguments
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

Answer A

Sexual relationships are carried out between people. Many people have various different reasons for carrying out sexual acts. Some people could agree with this statement. Muslims believe that sex can only be had within marriage. This is to preserve its sanctity and it allows everyone to fulfil chastity. Jews believe the main reason to have sex is to create children. Their holy scriptures state "Be fruitful and multiply." This emphasises the importance of having children, Jews believe marriage is the natural state of humans so people should only have children within marriage. Christians could also agree with the statement mentioning that a human can only be classed as a Christian if they're conceived within marriage.

Some people could also disagree with the statement. Some people may have other reasons to have sexual relationships than having children. People may have sexual relationships for fun or even for money. Additionally, people could state that it doesn't truly matter whether sexual relationships are had within or outside marriage because it is just a piece of paper.

Furthermore, one could state that a child who's born as part of a family where the parents aren't married has just as high value in society as a child who has married parents. Some Christians could also rebuttle that Jesus was born outside marriage, proving that marriage doesn't affect the child's life.

In conclusion I believe that marriage doesn't affect sexual relationships. Those who have children from sexual relationships still look after their children as well as a married couple would.

Answer A

This response drifts significantly from the focus of the statement in the question, which limits the mark that can be awarded. The first sentence is not relevant, and the rest of the first paragraph is more focussed on marriage and having children than sexual relationships. Again, paragraph three focusses on having children. There is reasonable religious content here, despite some inaccuracy of expression concerning Jesus birth, but the accompanying reasoning is limited. Therefore the response just meets the criteria for Level 3.

Level 3, 7 marks

SPaG 3 – good use of sentences and punctuation, high accuracy in spelling.

Answer B

'For religious believers, sex should only take place inside of marriage' is a statement that many religions differ on. Roman Catholics believe this is true, as the point of marriage is to 'be fruitful' and procreate, bringing more young Catholics into the world who can spread the religion. Muslims share this view to a degree. The overall idea is that sex is a tool given to us by God so that we may procreate, and sex should only take place inside of marriage. In parts of the east, Muslim women are executed for having sex outside of marriage.

However, there are reasons why this should not be the case. Quakers are often ok with sex outside of marriage, as they believe that the sex is more about the loving relationship shared by the people involved than about God. Buddhists also generally don't have a problem with it. They believe that all sex should be moral and loving, but that is all. The fact that so many religions have differing views on the topic should show that its less about God, and more about the people.

In conclusion, however, I think that this statement is correct, especially for Christians. Marriage is sacred in Christianity (one of the sacraments) and should be respected, as should sex. Those who have sex outside of marriage are labelled fornicators and are considered grave sinners. Even the Pope said all sex should have the chance for life.

Answer B

This response is about the expected length (241 words) and is well-argued. The response is well focused on the question set, and makes reasonable use of religious teachings. As such, the response is firmly within Level 4, but does not quite reach the top mark. A tighter focus on the question of sexual relationships, rather than the purposes of marriage could have aided this.

Level 4, 11 marks

SPaG 3 – this response fully meets the criteria for high performance with a good level of accuracy throughout.

0	4	.	5
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'War is the best way to solve problems between countries.'
Evaluate this statement.

[12 marks + 3 SPaG]

In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to religious arguments
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

Answer A

War is when two countries fight, usually over land or power. For centuries, war has been the solution for conflicts between countries, something that has been around so long must be effective in dealing with problems.

War is a fair way of deciding on a winner. It has to be approved by the UN which then allows the countries to settle the problems in a test of each country's strength and determination.

Jesus said that he approved of war by telling his followers that if they didn't "own a sword, then sell your cloak and buy one." There have also been many Holy Wars in the name of God, for example the Crusades. However, war often forces people to leave their homes and families to fight, and maybe die for their country. Although civilians aren't killed thousands of innocent soldiers die.

Before starting a war, the countries have to prove that there is no other way of solving the conflict. If they could negotiate their terms and avoid starting a war, it would be better for both countries. Finally, Gandhi told Hindus "an eye for an eye and the whole world would be blind" meaning that if everyone tried to inflict pain on anyone who had wronged them we would all be in pain.

To conclude, I think that war is not the best solution as there are others that can be effective. As John F Kennedy said "mankind must put an end to war before puts an end to mankind."

Answer A

This response gives points on both sides of the argument but lacks evaluations and development of the accurate and relevant points that are given. There are some inaccuracies and confusion, for example the second paragraph and the point about civilians in the third. Furthermore, the reference to holy war and Gandhi are not made relevant with reference to 'countries.' Due to some inaccuracies and lack of focus on the statement, this response does not meet the criteria for Level3.

Level 2, 6 marks

SPaG 3 – good use of spelling and grammar, which allows clarity of meaning throughout.

Answer B

War is the best way to solve problems between countries. Whether it be regular war, Holy War, or Just War, it always has the most impact and makes sure there is no messing about. War can be moral in the case of Holy War and Just War, where the point is not to take as many lives as possible, but rather to achieve some sort of goal. For example, God approved Muhammad going to war to take back Makkah, showing that it can be religiously acceptable. The alternatives are often slow, and open to political abuse.

However, Christians would argue that war will never be the best way to solve problems between countries. Jesus taught us the idea of reconciliation, which is very important in christianity (as it is one of the sacraments). They would always try to reconcile broken relations between two bodies, for example Corymeela in Northern Ireland. The least violent way is the best way. This is an idea shared by Buddhists, who believe in Ahimsa – pacifism and peaceful protest at all costs.

I do not believe that War is the best way to solve problems between countries. I agree with the idea that there are many suitable alternatives which cause far less loss of life and are much more morally acceptable. I also know that war is often overdone, and that there are never any real winners to it. I believe that the lives of the public should always be put first.

Answer B

A well-argued response of the expected length (246 words). The religious arguments are used well, although throughout the answer there could have been more focus on the issue of 'between countries'. This clear focus on the exact statement at hand is required for a top mark.

Level 4, 10 marks

SPaG 3 – this response meets all the criteria for high performance. Good use of subject vocabulary, accuracy of spelling and clear communication of meaning.

Paper 2B – Textual Themes (St Mark’s Gospel)

Four mark questions (A01.3)

0	7	.	4
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Explain two contrasting explanations for the empty tomb of Jesus.

[4 marks]

Answer A

One explanation for Jesus’ empty tomb would be the resurrection. Jesus has risen from the dead and was out of the tomb. Another explanation would be that his disciples had gone to the tomb, rolled away the rock and took his body for a proper burial.

Answer A

A succinct response than nevertheless fully meets the demands of the question. Both points made about the empty tomb are developed effectively.

4 marks

0	8	.	3
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Explain two contrasting ways in which Christians can help people who are disregarded by society.

[4 marks]

Answer A

Christians can donate money to those regarded as outcasts to help them regain their place in society and gain strength in their community. Alternatively, outcasts can be helped through physical labour and volunteering.

Answer A

The first way identified here - donating money - is developed by explanation of the possible outcomes of that donation, which is valid way to approach this question. An alternative way could have been to explain an example of where the money could have gone, such as a homeless shelter etc. The second point is credited for volunteering, although there is no development or explanation given.

3 marks

12 mark questions

Levels of response

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

12 mark questions (A02)

0	7	.	5
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The miracles of Jesus are enough to prove that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah).’ Evaluate this statement.

[12 marks + 3 SPaG]

In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to St Mark’s Gospel in your answer
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

Answer A

The statement holds credibility to Christians who interpret the Gospel’s events as being literal. For example, if Jesus truly did revive the dead daughter of Jairus simply because “anything is possible to those who hold faith” and this is interpreted literally, then no further evidence is needed and the statement is proved valid.

Moreover, even if doubt is present about the validity of the miracles, there are countless times in the Gospel where Jesus is seen doing or teaching concepts with the authority of the Son of God, rather than a simple teacher. For example, Jesus is seen to overturn the tables of the merchants at the temple courts because his house should be one of prayer not of for a “den of robbers” The authority behind this action also helps to credit the statement.

On the other hand, Some Christians may not accept the miracles as being true or that they may have been exaggerated. In these cases the statement loses validity as further evidence is required to prove Jesus’ divine nature. For example, if the healing miracles are considered to instead be the work of coincidence then Jesus did not actually heal anyone but was simply at the right place at the right time. These Christians require further evidence to confirm their faith in the Christ.

In conclusion, the statement holds credibility to Christians who interpret the Gospels literally, however other Christians will require more evidence.

Answer A

This response is about the expected length (238 words) and includes some good use of the text of Mark. The first paragraph makes a strong point which is well argued, however the example of the turning of the tables is not the most relevant choice for this particular question. The third paragraph explains the counter argument clearly, although the idea of coincidence could be unpacked further than 'right place at the right time.' The conclusion adds little to the response as it restates the positions of believers without adding an overall judgement on either side.

Level 3, 9 marks

SPaG – 3 marks. The response meets all the criteria for high performance with good control of meaning, and accuracy in spelling and grammar throughout.

Answer B

Many Christians would agree with the statement that the miracles Jesus conducted prove that he was the Messiah (the anointed one). For example, when he healed Jairus' daughter and seemingly brought her back from the dead by uttering "talitha cum!" translated as little girl get up he defies the laws of nature because of his divine powers. This could be argued against because some people don't believe the miracles literally happened. Liberal Christians may take a symbolic interpretation of this miracle. Having faith is extremely important or a secular view like the Scottish philosopher David Hume who believed that superstition and religious bias removes any truth from the miracles. If you doubt the miracles worth then they are not enough to prove Jesus as the Messiah. This wouldn't be an issue for fundamentalist Christians who believe the miracles were factually true, they may think nature miracles like the feeding of the 5000 also prove Jesus was the messiah because he used his connection with God to feed lots of people with little food.

On the other hand, the Messiah was a person the Jewish believed was going to come and free them from Roman rule. This is why they believed he would be political and a warrior. If this is the definition of messiah then the miracles could never be enough to prove he was the messiah because it would require overthrowing Roman rule which he did not as he was crucified by the Romans. Furthermore, the miracles weren't the signifying stage of him being Christ, it was when he sacrificed himself on the cross. He said "I did not come to be served, but to serve." This emphasises what Jesus believed the Messiah to be, someone who would sacrifice himself to atone for people sins. However, it could be argued that by performing miracles the messianic secret was discovered and that led to his crucifixion so they do play a big role in proving he was Christ.

In conclusion, I believe the miracles (if they are scientifically true) are proof of Jesus' divine nature and point to him being the son of God because had abilities to overcome the laws of nature. I don't think by any means they are enough to prove that he was the messiah because being the messiah relies upon his death and the salvation that came from that, so his resurrection would be most important. This does defy the laws of nature so could be argued to be a miracle.

Answer B

A long response (417 words) which could have been more concise in places. However, both sides of the argument make good use of examples from Mark and the answer is well-balanced. Good evaluation is demonstrated throughout the response as well as in the conclusion.

Level 4, 12 marks

SPaG 3 – the answer meets the criteria for high performance, as despite some overly long sentences that lack punctuation, meaning is not lost.

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