

Religious Studies Spec B

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8063)

Paper 2

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 student.

4 mark question

Question 1.3

Explain **two** contrasting beliefs in contemporary British society about adultery.

- You must refer to a Christian belief.
- Your contrasting belief may come from Christianity or from another religious or non-religious tradition.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

First contrasting belief:

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting belief:

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

If similar beliefs are given, only one of them may be credited up to 2 marks.

Contrast may mean opposing or mean different views in terms of either belief or issue

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

Christians oppose it because it goes against the Ten Commandments / do not commit adultery / breaks the marriage vows / of lifelong fidelity, etc.

An act of betrayal / causes deep hurt / irresponsible / causes families to break up / children suffer, etc.

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Might save a marriage / where one of the partners is incapable of or unwilling to have a sexual relationship / where there are long periods of separation though work / where one partner is permanently in a hospital or home because of illness / might relieve strong sexual urges, etc.
Everyone is fallible / can make a mistake / so forgiveness is important, etc.

No harm is done if the affair is carefully managed / the partner need never find out so will not be hurt / personal happiness comes first, etc.

NB: Two marks maximum if no clear reference to a Christian view.

Student responses

Response A

Some people believe that adultery should be accepted as some people may wait too long to have sex and rather do it with another person. People may also want to harm others purposely. However some believe adultery is wrong as it can lead to a break-up or divorce in a relationship and if a couple have children it can affect their lives negatively.

The response does not contain a clear reference to a Christian view, so the maximum that can be awarded is two marks. The response gains two marks because it contains a valid point – ‘some believe adultery is wrong as it can lead to a break up or divorce’, and this is developed – ‘if a couple have children it can negatively affect their lives’negatively.

2 marks

Response B

One view from Christianity, it that adultery breaks the marriage vows and promises. This is because the adulterer isn't loving their spouse until 'death us do part,' and therefore committing a sin and breaking the sanctity of marriage. Another belief from society is that adultery may be as a result of the person no longer loving the person and having found someone who makes them happier. The marriage may not be working for either side, so does not cause their spouse any harm, and is therefore acceptable.

This response has two developed points, one of which contains explicit reference to a Christian view, so gains the maximum marks available.

4 marks

5 mark question

Question 3.4

Explain two Christian views about freedom of belief.

Refer to a scripture 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 view:

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate view – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate view – 2 marks

Second view:

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate view – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate view – 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:

A basic right of all humans / applies to religious and non-religious beliefs / God gave humans free will / no one should be made to accept a particular set of beliefs / includes the freedom to apply beliefs to a way of life / promotion of tolerance / prevention of persecution / freedom to express beliefs / but to be used responsibly / to be respectful of and sensitive to the feelings of others, etc.

Sources of authority:

'If you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve...' Joshua 24:15) / Jesus rebuked his disciples to wanting to destroy a Samaritan village that did not accept him (Luke 9:51-56) / 'All things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial' (1 Corinthians 10:23) / 'no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs' (Dignitas Humanae 2) / 'no one may force others to believe, not even their own children' (Youcat 354) / 'we impose our faith on no one. Such proselytism is contrary to Christianity' (Pope Benedict XVI), etc.

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

Paraphrase of rather than quotation from Dignitas Humanae or other appropriate source of authority is acceptable.

Student responses

Response A

Christians believe that everyone should be able to believe whatever they want “without restriction” and that all people are entitled to their own beliefs and customs as humans with dignity.

Christians also believe that God gave us free will, and by forcing others to believe something we go against God’s wishes and teachings. This means that while you can educate others, you cannot force them to agree as they are made in ‘imago dei’ and are equal to all other humans.

This response contains two developed points but no reference to scripture, sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching, so is unable to achieve the 5th mark. Although the response includes ‘imago dei’, and the quote “without restriction”, there is no explicit identification of scripture, sacred writing or source of belief and teaching. 4 marks are awarded.

4 marks

Response B

Christians believe that everyone is owed dignity and respect regardless of religion, race or gender. This is important as we are all made in the image of God and are therefore entitled to our own beliefs. Evidence for this is “God made humankind in his image”- Genesis. As well as this, Christians believe that they must protect and support all religions. This is important as the Catholic Church work with charities such as ‘Islam aid’ to ensure justice and equal rights for all people.

This response has two developed points and a clear reference to scripture, sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching (Genesis), therefore achieving the maximum 5 marks available.

5 marks

12 mark question

Question 2.5

'Biblical teaching supports the view that women and men are equal.'

'Evaluate this statement.

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 Christian arguments
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Level 4 – A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. **10-12 marks**

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.

Level 3 – Reasoned consideration of different points of view. **7-9 marks**

Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information.

Clear reference to religion.

Level 2 – Reasoned consideration of a point of view. **4-6 marks**

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.

Level 1 – Point of view with reason(s) stated in support. **1-3 marks**

Level 0 – Nothing worthy of credit. **0 marks**

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

Arguments in support:

Genesis 1: 27 states that God created both male and female in his own image / there are many examples in the Bible of women who played roles that were equal to men / Deborah was a judge and prophet / Esther saved her Jewish community from destruction / the dignity and high status of women is seen above all in Mary / 1st century society meant it was impossible for Jesus to choose women to spearhead his mission but he respected them / women were the first witnesses of the Resurrection / some women played key roles in the churches that Paul founded / Paul taught that in Christ there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3: 28) / Paul's restrictions on the Corinthian women might have been due to the chaotic state of that Christian community / some Christians claim that the differences between women and men that are seen in the Bible are about difference in role, not about equality, etc.

Arguments in support of other views:

Biblical views are patriarchal / men were dominant whereas the role of women was to care for the home and rear children / women were totally reliant for their wellbeing on men / women had virtually no rights in 1st century Israel / eg in law courts their evidence was admissible only if confirmed by their husbands / Paul told wives to submit to their husbands / the husband was head of the wife in the same way that Christ is head of the Church / Paul told women in the Corinthian Church to be silent in worship / if they had any questions, they should ask their husbands afterwards, etc.

NB: the statement relates to biblical teaching, not modern views

Student responses

Response A

I agree with this statement as the Bible states many times that men and women are equal. For example, Galatians says “there is no longer Greek and Jew, but Christ is all and in all” meaning that no matter what we look like or our gender, we are all equal. However, some may disagree as Jesus’ 12 disciples were men so people may feel that women are less valued in the Bible and they were also appointed as the first of 12 priests.

Another reason why I agree with this statement is because women are also mentioned and valued in the Bible, even if society thousands of years ago was being controlled by men which were the dominant figures. For example, in the Bible, Esther freed the Jews from the Persians (Esther) and Mary Magdalene was the first person to announce Jesus’ resurrection (John). This shows the importance of women, clearly, however, some may disagree as most stories in the Bible are about men and women are not often mentioned.

Lastly, I agree with this statement as in Genesis “God made humans in his image” (Genesis, Old Testament) and was also created by the use of one of Adam’s bones. Therefore, men and women are equal and share qualities with God. However, some may disagree because the Bible was written mostly by men, however, overall, I agree because Mary was a woman and she was the mother of God.

This is a Level 4 response

This is well argued with many developed points, particularly in support of the argument, and with some perceptive comments on the other side of the debate. The answer is focused full on the question, displaying sound biblical knowledge.

12 marks

Response B

Genesis 2 shows that women and men are equal as God made women from the bone of Adam, who represents humanity. This shows that men and women are complementary as they are complete when together and one fulfils the other in the part that they are lacking, which creates a harmony not possible in isolation. However, it could be argued that the Bible does not support this view as most accounts are about men. For example, the first priests (Jesus' apostles) were men and women weren't allowed to be travelling priests. Though this could be because it was written during the male-dominated Roman empire.

Many would agree with this view as the dignity of women is shown in the Bible through Mary, as she became mother of God out of obedience to him, shown when she said 'let it be with me according to your word'. Furthermore, Deborah was a judge. On the other hand, it could be argued that scripture supports this view even more than the Bible because it says 'the personal resources of femininity are certainly no less than the resources of masculinity'. However, it also teaches that equality does not mean uniformity, when many would argue that men and women should have equal opportunities.

In conclusion, I think that the Bible does support men and women as equal because God created us 'in his image' so everyone is equal as we share in his qualities.

This is a Level 3 response

Very sound arguments in support of the statement; particularly at the start of the response. The alternative view is much less developed and the penultimate paragraph drifts from the point.

8 marks

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Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/8063

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