**ASSESSING GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES**





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**EXAMPLE RESPONSES**

**KEY**

**Knowledge and Understanding of religious ideas, beliefs, practices**

**Influence of beliefs Use of specialist terms/language Use of sources of wisdom/authority**

1. **Describe** Catholic Attitudes to Evolution (5)

Catholics mostly believe in evolution. From science, we can see very strong evidence for evolution and Catholics use this but have the idea that God caused evolution - that there needed to be something to cause evolution and that would have to be an omnipotent being, which would have to be God. Pope John Paul II believed that evolution is worth studying and understanding and that you should take evolution (and other scientific evidence) and believe in it alongside God, linking the two together. He said that "It is important to set proper limits to the understanding of Scripture." This shows that he takes a conservative / liberal approach and sees the Bible as a source of understanding but not necessarily true. He believes that evolution is "more than a hypothesis." Catholic don't attempt to match the Theory of Evolution with the Genesis account of Adam being made from the earth and Eve being made from his rib - they believe in evolution, taking the bible accounts as symbolic stories to tell us that God created people via evolution. According to Pope John Paul II "there is no conflict" between evolution and faith in God.

**THIS IS A VERY SECURE RESPONSE THAT MEETS ALL OF THE CRITERIA IN THE b. MARKING BAND AND WOULD BE AWARDED FULL MARKS**

1. **Describe** how Catholics interpret the creation stories in Genesis. (5)

Catholics generally interpret the creation stories in Genesis in a non-literal way; either conservative or liberal. This means that they don't take the Bible word for word but interpret it as teachings and symbolic stories. Many Catholics use the Bible to say why God created and use science to explain how. They might believe that Genesis says that God created everything and that he did this out of love, giving us choices and opportunities but through the Big Bang. In the first Genesis story, where God creates the universe in six days, Catholics interpret each day as being longer than 24 hours. Even in Psalm 10:4 it says that "a thousand years are a single day". By interpreting the Bible in this way we can see how things are created by God over longer periods of time which may work with the theories from science. Catholics may also use these stories to discover what God is like: that God is transcendent, omnipotent and onmnibenevolent; that he gave us all a purpose to fulfil, a special role in life.

**THIS IS A VERY SECURE RESPONSE THAT MEETS ALL OF THE CRITERIA IN THE b. MARKING BAND AND WOULD BE AWARDED FULL MARKS**

**KEY:**

**Knowledge and Understanding of religious ideas, beliefs, practices**

**Influence of beliefs Use of specialist terms/language Use of sources of wisdom/authority**

1. **Describe** the teaching of the Catholic Church on the scientific theory of evolution (5)

Evolution is the process of mutation and natural selection which leads to changes in species over time to suit a particular environment. Many people have the view that the Catholic Church doesn’t agree with this but really their view is the opposite. The Catholic church believe that evolution took place and also that the big bang happened but they believe it was because of God and he was the one who started it all. We know this as Pope Francis said that “God created human beings and let them develop according to the internal laws…”. Also Pope John Paul said there is no conflict between evolution and the doctrine of faith – meaning that there is no problem between Catholic teaching and evolution. Also he said “some new findings lead us towards the recognition of evolution as more than a hypothesis” – this means he believes evolution should be accepted.’

**THIS RESPONSE IS NOT QUITE AS DETAILED AS NUMBER 1 AND THE USE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE IS NOT AS GOOD. HOWEVER, IT IS STILL A VERY GOOD RESPONSE AND WOULD BE AWARDED 4**

1. **Describe** how Jewish women might worship differently to men.

In Judaism men and women have different role and therefore worship differently. Women are naturally more spiritual and don't need guidance. So Jews believe that only men need to wear the Teffilin. In the Shema is says that you have to keep God close to your mind and soul. This is interpreted that male Jews wear the teffilin next to their hearts and heads to help them connect with God and become more spiritually focused.

Another reason and way Jewish men and women worship differently is their position in the synagogue. In the orthodox synagogues women sit at the top in the gallery and men sit at the bottom in the centre of the synagogue. This is done to stop men and women from getting distracted from their worship.

**THIS RESPONSE CAN GAIN CREDIT FOR THE INCLUSION OF TEFFILIN AND POSITION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THE SYNAGOGUE. USE OF SPECIALIST LANGUAGE IS VERY GOOD.**

**IT DOES CONTAIN A LOT OF EXPLANATION AND THIS IS AT THE EXPENSE OF SPENDING TIME ON OTHER SPECIAL CLOTHING OFTEN WORN BY MEN BUT NOT WOMEN, SUCH AS TALLITH AND KIPPAH AND THE GENDER OF THE RABBI IN DIFFERENT JEWISH TRADITIONS, MINYAN ETC. THIS WOULD BE AWARDED 3**

**KEY:**

**Knowledge and Understanding of the diversity of religious ideas, beliefs, practices**

**Influence of beliefs Use of specialist terms/language Use of sources of wisdom/authority**

1. **Explain** the attitudes of **two different religions/religious traditions** towards abortion (8)

Catholics would say that all human life is sacred. The reason is because they believe that God created us and that we are 'Made in God's image and likeness'. That makes us special to God and no-one should have the right to destroy a life that God has made. Catholics believe that every human is given its soul at the very moment of conception, so you are killing a full human person. The Bible says that God planned us before we were even born and 'knit us' in the womb. The Pope would also say that abortion is a great sin and is always wrong, so most Catholics would not agree with abortion.

 \*Other Christians, such as liberal Anglicans, would also say that abortion is usually wrong, but they take a less strict view and do allow abortion in some situations. For example, if the baby was growing wrong in the womb and would be disabled, they might agree that abortion was the best option. Same as if the woman had been raped, they might say the same because Jesus said we must love other people and not judge them.

**OR: THE CANDIDATES COULD INCLUDE THE PERSPECTIVE OF ANOTHER RELIGION. IN ROUTE B THIS IS LIKELY TO BE JUDAISM**

\*Jewish people might agree that abortion is wrong because in the Ten Commandments in the Torah, it says 'Do not murder'. Jews also have the idea of pikuach nefesh which really means 'saving a life' and they think that this must come before all other duties. Reform Jews though might take a less strict view and say that it does depend on the situation and that sometimes abortion is acceptable.

**THIS IS A VERY SECURE RESPONSE THAT MEETS ALL OF THE CRITERIA IN THE COMPONENT 1 c. MARKING BAND AND WOULD BE AWARDED FULL MARKS**

1. **Explain** why a Roman Catholic would say that all human life is holy. (8)

 Roman Catholic Christians believe in the “sanctity of life”: There is something special and holy about life. For Christians, human life is different because we share something of the nature of God. Genesis describes how God made Adam, and “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” (Genesis 2:7). This did not happen with the animals and the plants, but only with the human. Genesis also says that people are made “in the image of God”:  “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:26-27. This means people are in some way reflections of God. In humans, something of God himself can be seen.

 Roman Catholics believe that humans have a soul which lives on after the body has died. The soul will be judged by God, and can join God for ever in Heaven. Because people have souls, they must be treated as special; they are different from other species.

Roman Catholics believe that human life is sacred - it is more special than other kinds of life. Other animals do not have souls, and are not made in the image of God, although they deserve to be treated with kindness and respect. Christians believe that God knows and plans every human life.

**THIS IS A VERY SECURE RESPONSE THAT MEETS ALL OF THE CRITERIA IN THE COMPONENT 1 c. MARKING BAND AND WOULD BE AWARDED FULL MARKS**

**COMPONENT 3 JUDAISM – d. QUESTION (ROUTES A AND B)**

**KEY:**

**Influence of belief Use of terms/languageUse of sources of wisdom and authority**

 **Offering alternative or different views**

**Use of religious/moral reasoning to analyse, evaluate and formulate judgements**

**‘YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE SYNAGOGUE TO BE A JEW’ (15)**

**1a.**. Jewish people usually go to a synagogue for services, prayers, community events and sometimes to school. They will try and walk there because on Saturdays they are not allowed to do any work and the synagogue might be quite far away and the walk would be tiring and feel like work. Jews like to go to the synagogue because it means you can be with people who believe what you believe and you can all join in the singing and prayers. Also, their holy books are kept there, so they would want to go and see those. I don’t see the point in going to a synagogue because I am not Jewish, but I expect it is important for them.

On the other hand, you could just pray at home where you have peace and quiet to concentrate and be with family. Jewish people think that family life is important especially on a Friday and Saturday when they celebrate Sabbath.

**THIS RESPONSE DOES NOT FOCUS ON THE STATEMENT ENOUGH, GIVES NO SOURCES OF WISDOM, USES VERY FEW SPECIALIST WORDS AND DOES NOT PRESENT A VARIETY OF VIEWS. IT WOULD BE AWARDED 4.**

**1b.** For many Jews attending a synagogue is an important part of their religion and

a way of expressing their Jewish beliefs. Through taking part in the Shabbat services and festivals Jews become a part of a Jewish community and learn more about Judaism by listening to the sermon by the rabbi and hearing the reading from the Sefer Torah.

Some would say that a synagogue is not just used for worship as there will be a range of community events such as interfaith discussions. It is also considered a house of learning where Jews may go in the week time to discuss the Talmud with the rabbi. Jewish people have met to worship and discuss and learn together throughout their history, so it is part of the heritage of being Jewish.

For many Jews, though, the home is a place that it is important in Judaism. This is because many important festivals are celebrated in the home such as Pesach, Rosh Hashanah and Shabbat. Many Jews show the importance of the home by placing a mezuzah case on the front door and keeping mitzvoth such as kosher food diets. This identifies them as Jewish.

However there are many Jews who don’t go to the synagogue but are considered Jewish because one of their parents is Jewish. This is because being Jewish is more than just being a religious Jew. Also for many Jews being truly Jewish is more about the way they act in daily life than going to the synagogue. This would include how you treat other people and how you keep the mitzvoth that are in the Torah, such as 'Do not murder/steal'.

**THIS IS A VERY SECURE RESPONSE THAT MEETS ALL OF THE CRITERIA OF THE d. MARKING BAND AND WOULD BE AWARDED FULL MARKS**

**THE WORLD IS OURS TO DO WHAT WE LIKE WITH (15)**

**Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.**

**(You must refer to religious and non-religious beliefs such as those held by Humanists and Atheists, in your answer)**

**2a.** Catholics believe that we should care for the planet for God. This is because they believe that God 'appointed man as ruler over all creation' and that it is their duty to care for the earth (for God).

However, humanists believe that humans should care for the earth for themselves to make us happier. Like Catholics, humanists do believe in preserving the planet, just not for a God but for future generations.

The Pope's 'Laudato Si' says that we should stop treating the earth as we do because we should be stewards to the earth and care for God's creation responsibly. It also says that we should not treat the earth's resources as profit and that we should be grateful of what God left here for us.

Humanists believe that we should preserve the earth and protect it for future generations and to make sure they have a good quality of life ad so that they can enjoy their time on the earth as much as possible.

**EFFECTIVE USE OF SOURCES BUT LIMITED USE OF KEY LANGUAGE. OFFERS ANOTHER VIEWPOINT WHICH IS NON-RELIGIOUS, AS REQUIRED BY THE DEMANDS OF THIS QUESTION. DEMONSTRATES HOW BELIEF CAN INFLUENCE PRACTICE.**

**HOWEVER, IT IS REPETITIVE AND NEVER REALLY ENGAGES WITH *A DISCUSSION* OF THE QUESTION OR REACHES ANY JUDGEMENTS ABOUT WHETHER THE WORLD IS, IN FACT, OURS TO DO WHAT WE LIKE WITH. AO2 IS LACKING – IT READS LIKE *AN EXPLANATION* OF THE VIEWS OF CATHOLICS AND HUMANISTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, RATHER THAN A DISCUSSION.**

**THIS WOULD BE AWARDED 6 (BAND 2) BECAUSE IT CANNOT BE CONSIDERED 'A GOOD….*ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION* OF THE ISSUE' WHICH IS THE CRITERIA FOR THE BAND 3 (7-9 MARKS)**

**Examples of possible frameworks/structures**

**Group Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**‘Couples with marriage problems should always turn to a religious community for help’**

**Write down some religious responses; they can all agree with the statement, all disagree with the statement or be a mixture of both. How valid is each point you make?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **AGREE** | **DISAGREE** |
|  | **P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point****P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point****P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point** |

 **Group Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**‘The high divorce rate in Britain today means that marriage is no longer special’.**

**Write down some religious responses; they can all agree with the statement, all disagree with the statement or be a mixture of both. How valid is each point you make?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **AGREE** | **DISAGREE** |
| **P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point****P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point** | **P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point****P……..make a point****E……..explain the point fully (include religious language and teachings)****E…….evaluate the validity or strength of the point** |

**SUGGESTED WRITING FRAME FOR PART D QUESTIONS (15)**

Many Christians would agree with this because.........***(link with religion and belief)***

Furthermore, they might also say that.......... ***(expanded or different viewpoint – link with***

***quote)***

These arguments are valid/weak/strong/make sense because......... ***(formulating***

***judgements/justifying opinions)***

On the other hand/however/additionally…. ***(alternative or opposing views)***

some............might disagree because............ ***(link with religion and belief)***

In addition they could argue that...... ***(expanded or different view – link with quotes and***

***show the effects of belief on practice)***

These arguments are valid/weak/strong/make sense because......... ***(formulating***

***judgements/justifying opinions)***

Conclusion with own brief opinion given (but not compulsory). ***If own opinion given, use it***

***as another opportunity to link with religion and belief*** e.g. ‘Like many Christians, I would

argue that………because……..'

**HAVE YOU…**

Used and explained at least 3 quotes/extracts?

Used an extensive range of key vocabulary? (key words and other

words)

Checked spelling, grammar and proof read you work to make sure it

makes sense?

Expanded your points with reasoning, detail and examples?

Included a diversity of views?

Reached judgements?

Explained how this diversity of views effects the way that individuals and

communities lead their lives?

**STRUCTURING AN ANSWER FOR *(d)* QUESTIONS**  ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. [15]

(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [Non-religious beliefs also for question 1d.]

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Para.** | **Sentence Starter** | **Planning for writing** |
| 1 | Many Catholics would agree/ disagree with this statement because… | Would a Catholic agree or disagree with this statement?Why would a Catholic feel like this? *(Think about Bible/Catechism/Saint/Teaching of a Pope)*How would this belief affect the life of a Catholic? |
| This is a strong/ weak argument because… | Is this a convincing argument? Why is it convincing? OR Are there issues with this argument? What issues might there be? Does someone argue against it? |
| 2 | Furthermore, Catholics might also say that… | A second reason why a Catholic might feel like this? *(Think about Bible/Catechism/Saint/Teaching of a Pope)*How would this belief affect the life of a Catholic? |
| This is a strong/ weak argument because… | Is this a convincing argument? Why is it convincing? OR Are there issues with this argument? What issues might there be? Does someone argue against it? |
| 3 | However, some \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ might disagree with this statement because…Or…Another/different view might be…… | Think about another Christian group (Church of England/Methodists/Orthodox Christians) or non-religious group (Humanists) that would have a different viewpoint to Catholics. Which religious group are you going to use? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Would they agree or disagree with the statement? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Why would they have this viewpoint? *(Think about sources of wisdom – including the Bible/*How would this belief affect their life? |
| This is a strong/ weak argument because… | Is this a convincing argument? Why is it convincing? OR Are there issues with this argument? What issues might there be? Does someone argue against it? |
| 4 | In addition, some \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ could argue that…. | Consider a second reason why would they have this viewpoint? How would this belief affect their life? |
| This is a strong/ weak argument because… | Is this a convincing argument? Why is it convincing? OR Are there issues with this argument? What issues might there be? Does someone argue against it? |
| 5 | In conclusion, like many \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I agree/disagree with this statement because… | This is the opportunity to give your own opinion. HOWEVER, you must support it with religious/non-religious (only in Component 1) belief. Select one of the arguments you have discussed that you agree with and then you can develop it with your own thought. |