

# GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## HOW TO ANSWER EXAM QUESTIONS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- The Y9 exam paper is divided into **three sections**. In each section you will have a choice of two questions - you must answer **one question only** and **not mix and match!**
- Each question is divided into 4 parts – a, b, c and d. Read the guidance below on how to answer each type of question.
- You should spend **20 minutes** on each question in the exam.
- You will be expected to include **Bible passages** and **Christian teaching**, where relevant, to support your answers and use the **key words** that you have learnt.
- You will be assessed on the **Quality of your Written Communication (QWC)** in all the 'c' questions. You should take particular care on these questions with your spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Questions in **Section 1** are where your **spelling, punctuation and grammar** will also be assessed – this can give you an extra 4 marks.

### TYPES OF QUESTIONS

#### **'A' TYPE QUESTION (2 marks)**

- These questions are based on the *key words glossary*. You will either be asked for a definition of a word or an example of the word.

e.g. What is atheism? (2)

- You get 2 marks for a correct answer or 1 mark for a partially correct answer.

#### **'B' TYPE QUESTION (4 marks)**

- These questions are asking for *evaluation of issues, beliefs and teachings*. You need to give your personal opinion with TWO reasons for your point of view and explain why you hold this view. This view can be:
  - two reasons agreeing with the statement
  - two reasons disagreeing with the statement
  - or if you are unsure you can give two opposing views.

e.g. Should all priests be celibate?  
Give two reasons for your point of view. (4)

- To get 4 marks you need to give your personal opinion with two developed reasons.

## 'C' TYPE QUESTION (8 marks)

- This is an **UNDERSTANDING** question and usually begins with the word 'EXPLAIN'.

e.g. Explain how a religious upbringing in a Roman Catholic family can lead to belief in God? (8)

'Explain' means to *give reasons*. For the question above you should give four features of a Catholic upbringing and explain, in two or three sentences for each, how they might lead to belief in God.

\* For this question you also get marked for your **QUALITY OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION** which means you need to write in clear English, spell words correctly, use sentences and paragraphs and use specialist vocabulary (the words in your glossary).

- To get 8 marks your answer needs to show a clear understanding of the issue which means you give four reasons or two developed reasons or three reasons with one developed or a comprehensive explanation using one reason only. You need to ensure that your English is clear, you have spelt words correctly, written in full sentences and paragraphs and used key words in your answer.
- If you DESCRIBE instead of explain then the most you can get is 2 marks out of 8.

## 'D' TYPE QUESTION (6 marks)

- These start with a stimulus quote:

e.g. "Evil and suffering prove that God does not exist".

and then you are asked:

- (i) Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (3)
- (ii) Give reasons why some people may disagree with you. (3)

The quote is intended to be controversial and elicit arguments in favour and against the point of view stated in the quote.

It does not matter which view you hold.

You need to:

- decide what you think about the statement
- give at least THREE reasons, or TWO longer reasons, or a paragraph supporting your point of view for (i)
- look at the opposite point of view and give at least THREE reasons, or TWO longer reasons, or a paragraph reasons for why people have this view for (ii)

**\* ONE OF YOUR POINTS OF VIEW SHOULD ALWAYS BE A CATHOLIC ONE – without this the maximum mark you can get is 3 out of 6 \***

- To get 3 marks for each part you need to give three reasons or two developed reasons or a fully developed reason. You must ensure that in (ii) you give an alternative view to the one in (i).

