

GCE



CCEA GCE A2
Exemplifying Examination
Performance

Religious Studies

A2 5: Themes in the Celtic Church, Reformation and Post-Reformation Church

This is an exemplification of candidates' performance in GCE A2 examinations (Summer 2018) to support the teaching and learning of the Religious Studies specification.



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EXEMPLIFYING EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

GCE Religious Studies

Introduction

These materials illustrate aspects of performance from the 2018 summer A2 examination series of CCEA's revised GCE Specification in 2016.

Students' grade A responses are reproduced verbatim and accompanied by commentaries written by senior examiners. The commentaries draw attention to the strengths of the students' responses and indicate, where appropriate, deficiencies and how improvements could be made.

It is intended that the materials should provide a benchmark of candidate performance and help teachers and students to raise standards.

For further details of our support package, please visit our website at www.ccea.org.uk

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donna Finlay". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large 'D' and 'F'.

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GCE: A2 Religious Studies

**ARE51: Themes in the Celtic Church,
Reformation and
Post-Reformation Church**

Grade: A Exemplar

Section A

Q1a “The Book of the Angel provided the basis for Armagh’s claims to archiepiscopal authority.”

Discuss this statement. [20]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate’s permission could not be obtained.

Q1b Critically assess the view that whereas religious authority was of central importance in the Celtic Church, it is of no importance today. [30]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate’s permission could not be obtained.

Q2a Discuss the development of missionary outreach of the Celtic Church to Northern Britain. [20]

Student's response

The reason behind the peregrini's exile is a key argument historically. These peregrini "set out for an island they felt God was calling them to" (Genesis) in most cases whereas others left for penance such as Colmcille, solitude or with "missionary zeal" (Hughes) to evangelise to the Pagans. We must however note the lack of documented evidence on these missionaries.

Colmcille, who was a "prince of the church" (Hughes) worked fervently for the gospel in Ireland and Scotland. His contribution is intertwined with his evangelising activity, political contribution and his scholarship. Columba was "not only a great missionary saint but statesman and scholar" (Hughes). His scholarship gave us 300 books meanwhile his political aptitude he used to visit King Bruide, to be a "King-maker" (Hughes) and be involved in controversies such as Cul Dreimne and Druim Cett in 575. His foundation at Iona was the "heart of Celtic Christianity" where he aided his own people the Irish Scots and converted the Pagan pict. He also had other monasteries such as in Derry pointing to him as an influential figure and his spiritual impact of "dove of the Church" (Hughes) must be credited.

St Colman also was a key missionary figure who set up his island at Aranmore, but later built his foundation at Kilmacduagh for more seclusion. King Guaire granted to him endowments to his people but he still longed to be free of episcopal charge. In 525, he once again exiled but now to the Valley of Oughtmama for greater unity with God and died in 532.

Aidan, who was a consecrated bishop, chose Lindisfarne for this spiritual work. This man of "piery, meekness and moderation" went on foot, to evangelise the people he met. Although, friends with Oswald and defeated by Penda in 642, he still continued to evangelise and be aloof from feasting, highlighting his monastic character.

One may suggest that, "the main work of conversion in Britain was done by Celtic monks" (Hughes) but the lack of evidence and the missionary work in Europe by other "holy wanderers" (Gougavd) may outweigh the achievements of these "vagi" (Gougaid) in Northern Britain.

Examiner's comments

The response opens with an overview of the peregrination movement and shows very good awareness of some the problems encountered when trying to trace the development of missionary outreach to Northern Britain. Rather than just relying on descriptive narrative, the response is selective of key aspects of the work of Colmcille and shows a high degree of understanding of the nature of his missionary endeavour, intertwining the religious and political. Although not always accurately cited, the response shows awareness of scholarly debate surrounding Colmcille. The response extends beyond Colmcille to examine the impact of both Comgall and Aidan. Again, the response avoids mere description of the peregrini but offers discussion and analysis, alongside a very good range of relevant examples.

To improve on the mark awarded, the response could focus a little more explicitly on how the pergrination developed with the contribution of each of the figures mentioned. This could have perhaps been done while offering some comparison between them.

Band 4

Q2b “The Celtic Church had no doubts about its missionary aims whereas the Christian Church today is unsure.”

Critically evaluate this claim. [30]

Student's response

The term ‘peregrinatio’ is Latin and it refers to the state of sojourning away from one’s homeland for personal salvation, in accordance to the gospel directive “go and preach the good news to all creation.” Many of the monks in the Celtic church were “inflamed with the desire to carry their ascetic practices to foreign lands” (Gougaud) however, one may suggest there is less clarity behind the reasons for people to exile.

The Christian Church today has a lower rate of clergy who travel, as a lot of evangelisation can be done by the use of technology. Also, religious authorities today do not impose people to do penance by exile as is done in the past by St. Brendan by St. Ita for the negligence of a drowning youth.

Today, we are not faced in with “the pagan roots which were constantly showing themselves” (Finlay) as the era of the Celtic Church. Diversity is accepted in our Church and there is no need to flee to escape atheists today, as we are an ecumenical society.

Furthermore, today I doubt that people become “wanderers fro Christ” (Gougaud) to repay the gift of religion from the British Church and Europe or to follow in the steps of St. Patrick.

On the other hand, it is clear that the missionary aims of clergy today is to work for the poor, in other areas of the world. For example, Trocairé is a Christian charity which aids poor people in places such as South Africa by providing them with meals, clean water and also spiritual hope.

In addition, many modern missionaries’ motives were to evangelise and gain peace for countries facing conflict. Gandhi helped fight for peace and independent rights for Indians and Pope Francis visited Myanmar to prevent discrimination against the Muslim Rohingya.

Many religious people also undergo pilgrimages to not only strengthen their faith but also to apply their work of the gospel to different cultures in various countries. This too may encourage people to “come back to the loving embrace of the Church” (Pope Francis).

Overalll, we can assume that many of the people today still become missionaries to become closer to God however, there is no real evidence to prove this, only ideas and opinions.

Examiner's comments

The response opens with very good focus on the question. It sets the scene in a relevant way for the analysis that follows. The opening is rooted in both scripture and scholarship. The first paragraph clearly finishes opening the debate about missionary aims and using the language of argument in an explicit way. The response is also quick to address the two-pronged nature of the task, to address missionary aims in the Celtic Church and those of the Christian Church today. It compares the two quite effectively and in an integrated way. The response also contains some quite mature and insightful comment about the relationship between religious faith and atheism in the contemporary world, emphasizing the importance of recognising diverse belief systems in a spirit of tolerance. The response also offers variety of interpretation, assessing the importance of evangelising as well as orthopraxy and care of the poor as the concern of the modern missionary. It is informed by relevant evidence and example, such as the visit of Pope Francis to Myanmar.

To improve on the mark awarded the response could have further evaluated the range of aims of the Celtic Church as it embarked on its missionary outreach.

Band 4

Q3a Analyse the teaching of Vatican II on the nature of Church organisation.
[20]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate's permission could not be obtained.

Q3b "Change has not always been welcome but is an essential feature of church life."

Critically assess this claim in relation to the Celtic Church and the Protestant Reformation. [30]

The above question could not be exemplified as the candidate's permission could not be obtained.

Section B

Synoptic Assessment

Theme: Faith, Morality and the State

Q4a Outline **two** reasons why religious believers have a duty to prevent conflict. You must support your answer with reference to at least one other unit of study. [20]

Student's response

In my other unit of study of the New Testament, Paul strongly argues for Christian unity, criticising those who would bring up lawsuits against each in Corinthians, telling Christians that they should follow 'The law of love' and "bear one another in love". Paul's teachings support the idea that it is the duty of religious believers to prevent conflict.

As religious believers we are called to maintain peace as there is no religion in the world that advocates for violence because whatever the God, peace is always the ideal religious believers should strive for. After Neville Lawrence's son Stephen was fatally stabbed, on the 25th anniversary of his death Mr Lawrence described how he forgave his son's murderer, "to be a Christian is to forgive" even though it is hard. Religion calls us to forgive those who have wronged us, for example in the Our Father "and forgive those who trespass against me." Emphasising that the duty of the religious believer is to forgive and if forgiveness is found this can prevent conflict.

Paul in his letter to the Corinthians also called us to respect our bodies as temples for God, therefore as Christians we should not harm other humans because we all belong to God in one body and therefore we do not have the right to hurt others because we are all made in the image and likeness of God. An example of a Christian who saw it as his duty to try and prevent conflict is Dietrich Bonhoeffer who in the 1930's and 1940's spoke out and openly criticised the Nazi regime and it's unjust treatment of Jews and the disabled as part of their ethnic cleansing ideology because he knew it was wrong as we are all God's people.

Therefore, these two reasons highlight why religious believers have a duty to prevent conflict.

Examiner's comments

The candidate opens the response with a connection to another unit of study and effectively uses this as some reason why religious believers have a duty to prevent conflict. The connection works effectively on its own terms and as a means of addressing the question. The response goes on to suggest a further reason why religious believer have a duty to prevent conflict and provides an effective example in Neville Lawrence. The response avoids description here. This argument is further exemplified by reference to the Christian prayer. The candidate offers a second link to another unit of study and effectively integrates this with the example of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The candidate also uses a very good range of technical language. This paragraph is quite cohesively put together. The answer is drawn together quite effectively in the concluding sentence.

Band 4

Q4b “Strong religious faith has not always been matched by high levels of morality, even though religious faith and morality are inseparable.”

Critically assess this view. You must refer to other aspects of human experience in your answer. [30]

Student's response

Religion, as believed by many, provides us with moral and ethical guidance to ensure we live by the footsteps of Jesus however there are many issues and conflicts which suggest that both morality and faith are separate, even in the life of the religious believer.

The Church was the moral sphere of church influence since 1921 in Northern Ireland. Sectarianism arose in the Partitioning of Ireland, in 1690 the Battle of the Boyne. This was due to the fact that the Church of Ireland and the Catholic could not co-exist peacefully. In St. Augustines Doctrine he states there should be “one Church and error has no right” this makes us believe that he feels religion should have a say in state affairs. Anti-Catholicism was used to maintain the socio-economic position of the Protestants, as Catholics at that time were facing social injustice. This caused ‘The Troubles’ which included 1972 Bloody Sunday and the 1980 Hunger Strikers.

In history, the Magdalene Laundries demonstrated immorality, as many women had to do intense physical labour, as they had fallen pregnant outside of marriage. Enda Kenney describes this as the “nations shame” however many argue that these were compassionate institutions.

Literalist readings of religious texts are dangerous in issues such as same – sex marriage. The Catholic Church believes marriage must be between a man and a woman, as it ‘must be life-giving.’ The Asher’s Bakery controversy was that a Protestant owner of a bakery in 2014 refused to make a cake for Gareth-Lee who was a gay-rights activist. One may ask was this discriminatory?

On the other hand, one may argue that religious faith is matched by high levels of morality, as through the bible we are taught to love one another, “love should govern” and we are taught to abide by the commandments such as “thou shalt not kill”. This can deter people from committing crimes of murder, especially in a society high in religiosity.

Oscar Romero, as an archbishop worked to resolve poverty and social injustice in the world. This reminds us that in fact religious leaders and believers do still have high levels of morality.

This however can be counter argued by the killings of ISIS for their faith. Is it moral to kill for religious beliefs?

Overall, we live in a society who is becoming more non-religious causing higher levels for immorality however, religion can still be used today to guide our actions, through Jesus' teaches on love of neighbour.

Examiner's comments

The response opens with clear focus on the question but does so using the language of critical assessment. The response is well informed and effectively cites an historical example which clearly illustrates the argument that religion can be the cause of immoral action or at least action which has a bad outcome. The candidate also marries the example to the philosophy of Saint Augustine which shows both insight and complexity of thought. The implications of the historical example are effectively linked to the legacy of the Troubles. The candidate thus develops the argument within the context of other aspects of human experience. The response also offers a range of types of example and argument in an effort to address the question. The Magdalene Laundry works effectively as an example which informs an argument and is enhanced by the reference to political commentary of Enda Kenny. A strength of the response does lie in the range of ideas and arguments the candidate provides, including scriptural literalism and its implications in terms of the Asher's bakery case. Independent thought and personal interpretation is evident, and the use of technical language enhances the quality of the response. The arguments are balanced with biblical referencing used effectively in evidence and qualified by the reference to societies "high in religiosity. Coherence is lent to the answer when the issue of religiosity is further alluded to in the final paragraph. There would have been an opportunity to further improve the answer had the candidate also considered at this point, the fact that religious belief is not always necessary for morality.

Band 4



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