



GCSE

Religious Studies A

8062/13 Paper 1: Christianity

Report on the examination

Version: 1.0
June 2025

Further copies of this report are available from aqa.org.uk

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

General

In line with previous years, all questions were attempted by the majority of students. There were rare occasions where students did not attempt multiple questions, and the responses across the paper indicated that it was accessible to a wider ability range and able to differentiate students effectively. Time management continues to be successful overall, with the majority of students making solid attempts at all questions, including Question 2.5. We continue to recommend the AQA Subject Specific Vocabulary list for GCSE Christianity as a basis for teaching and learning, as effective understanding of these key terms can support students in both AO1 and AO2 responses. For a small minority of students, handwriting continues to present challenges for examiners.

Question 01.1

Ninety-five percent of students chose the correct answer, identifying which option related to the death of Jesus. The vast majority followed the rubric by ticking only one box.

Question 01.2

The vast majority of students (90%) were able to identify two Christian beliefs about hell, including, from a universalist Christian perspective, that hell might not exist. A small minority gave answers outlining belief in purgatory, which were not credited as this was not the focus of the question.

Question 01.3

To be successful in this question, students needed to identify ‘influences’, not merely detail beliefs about the Holy Spirit. An influence could be an action undertaken due to belief in the Holy Spirit, a belief formed as a result of the Holy Spirit, or a change in worldview or faith perspective. Many students referred to receiving guidance, experiencing comfort, or being encouraged to evangelise. Others explained how the presence of the Holy Spirit influences Christians to trust that God is listening to prayers or watching over their lives, encouraging ethical actions and following the teachings of Jesus.

Question 01.4

To gain marks in this question, students had to refer specifically to the role of Christ as a means of salvation rather than outline general beliefs about salvation. A minority of students were unsuccessful because they discussed salvation through faith and salvation by works, without linking these concepts to the role of Christ. A smaller group did not seem confident in their understanding of the key term ‘salvation’. Successful responses identified Christ as redeemer, Lamb of God, saviour, or a role model for Christians to emulate in order to attain salvation. Jesus’ teachings on heaven were frequently used to show how following these would lead to salvation.

Question 01.5

There were some outstanding answers to this question, with a higher number of Level 4 responses than for Question 2.5. The best responses clearly evaluated different viewpoints, rather than merely describing them, and included a justified personal viewpoint. To meet the Level 4 descriptor, students needed to make judgements about the validity of different

viewpoints in addressing the problem of evil in relation to the Christian understanding of a loving God. Most students outlined contrasting perspectives, with many using the inconsistent triad as an entry point. Some referred to original sin, the Fall, and Augustine's theodicy, presenting these as frameworks that allow Christians to maintain belief in a loving God despite the existence of evil, due to the role of free will. Others referred to Irenaeus' concept of soul-making.

However, for a minority of students, reference to the inconsistent triad led them away from focusing on the concept of a loving God. Some students appeared to have been taught to use a writing frame for AO2 questions. This worked well for some, who used the structure methodically to guide evaluative writing. However, in other cases, the attempted reasoning in students' analysis did not logically follow from their stated points, which is necessary for Level 3. Similarly, evaluation using writing frames was sometimes superficial, vague, or unsupported, preventing access to Level 4. Most students received 3 marks for Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPAG), with the vast majority receiving 2 or 3. SPAG marks are awarded holistically across the three domains. There were a small number of scripts where handwriting made it difficult to award both content and SPAG marks accurately.

Question 02.1

Slightly fewer students than usual were able to select the correct term for the spreading of Christian beliefs, with 85% answering correctly. As in Question 1.1, the majority followed the rubric by ticking only one box.

Question 02.2

In line with Question 1.2, the vast majority (90%) of students successfully outlined two purposes of baptism. A small minority misread the question and instead described two examples or features of baptism.

Question 02.3

This question required students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of **private** worship. A minority did not follow the rubric and instead discussed more general forms of worship, including liturgical or collective worship. The most successful responses gave clear examples of private praise and devotion, such as praying at home, singing alone, or reading the Bible in solitude and reflecting on its meaning. Some students included mention of other forms of worship in their descriptions, for example attending Bible study groups or communal hymn singing, which could not be credited.

Question 02.4

There was a noticeable decline in the number of students who correctly identified a relevant Christian source of belief in relation to pilgrimage. Fewer than usual received full marks. Successful responses referred to a range of references, including the idea that "faith without action is dead" and biblical accounts of Jesus' life in the Holy Land. A number of students confused Christian pilgrimage beliefs with those from other faiths, particularly Islam, referring to the compulsory nature of Hajj as one of the Five Pillars. However, there were also excellent responses that recognised pilgrimage as a means of healing, strengthening faith, and connecting with other Christians. Many cited Lourdes, Iona, and the Holy Land as pilgrimage destinations.

Question 02.5

This question elicited a wide range of valid responses. Many students used the prompt of 'helping in the local community' to demonstrate understanding of Street Pastors or organisations such as the Trussell Trust and evaluated these details to reach judgements. However, some became overly focused on descriptive detail, at the expense of evaluation. Some responses distinguished between the Church's local and international responsibilities, while others compared its physical role with its spiritual duties. Many explored whether the Church's primary focus should be worship or political engagement rather than local service. A good range of biblical teachings was used to support arguments, though students were less confident in using these teachings evaluatively to reach the judgements required for Level 4.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.