

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS DIRECTORATE

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NSC 2015 CHIEF MARKER'S REPORT

SUBJECT	Religion Studies		
PAPER	2		
DATE OF EXAMINATION:	Oct/Nov 2015	DURATION:	2 HOURS

This section of the instrument is aimed at providing valuable feedback to schools, subject advisors, teachers and learners about common errors committed by candidates in the answering of questions, to assist teachers and subject advisors to identify areas that need to be given special attention in the teaching and learning of the subject in 2015.

Your responses will be based on two parts:

Section 1: General overview of Learner performance in the question paper as a whole.

Section 2: Comment on candidates' performance on individual questions (Detailed explanations must be provided **per question** as follows: (You may include sub questions where necessary)

- General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
- Why the question was poorly answered?
- Provide suggestion for improvement in relation to teaching and learning
- Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
- Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development

SECTION 1: (General overview of Learner Performance in the question paper as a whole)

We thank the examiners who put together paper 2 for the Grade 12 2015 final exams. It was a challenging yet balanced paper structured according to the CAPS document and the 2015 Exam Guidelines.

The manner in which the questions were phrased as well as selections containing questions with different levels of difficulty, making up the subsections of each Full question, made the paper quite a challenging one. It demanded of learners to apply their minds and religion Studies knowledge.

Choice of questions:

The bulk of learners chose question – 2, 3, and 5 to make up their full selection. There were centres however where question 1 ranked very high as a popular choice. Question 4 ranked the least in choice.

The learner performance was commendable especially in those centres and districts where justice was done by both teachers and learners to content coverage and proper revision of the work.

In question 1 and 2 learner performance ranged from average to poor. Question 2 appeared to be a popular question and it was generally well answered.

Question 3 was not well answered.

- The candidates confused environmental issues with social issues.
- They continued with this trend even when doing analysis and discussion in sub-section 3.2, 3.2 and 3.4.

There are centres that gave a good rendering of this question and scored good marks.

Question 4 was Not well answered by the majority of candidates who attempted it. They generally did not obtain good marks in any of the sub-sections of this question.

This shows that the candidates were not exposed to the content of the subject in this area in particular. They tried to apply their intelligent guess but in such a question they could not budge. Had they been assisted well they would have done much better.



This question, more than any other part needs Subject specific information.
It has to do with knowing the sources/ 'written' texts of at least ONE of the prescribed religions and how the followers of this religion derive meaning/teaching/information from these "inspired writings.

Question 5

- Learners generally performed well scoring good marks for the full question.
- In some centres though, the performance ranged from not so good, to dismal.

This ranked amongst the most popular choice questions because it deals with two popular topics in the subject: i) Secular world views as well as well as ii) Science and Religion.

Candidates did not read the questions critically with full understanding as are result they misread the instructional words or key concepts used in almost all 3 subsections.

It was for the first time that these questions were formulated in this way. This underscores the danger of drilling learners using previous years pares and memoranda.

This also points out clearly that our learners are mostly ill prepared to attempt higher order comparison type questions.

SECTION 2: Comment on candidates' performance in individual questions

(It is expected that a comment will be provided for each question on a separate sheet).

QUESTION 1
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
The learner performance ranged from average to poor.

(b) Why the question was poorly answered? - Provide specific examples; indicating common errors committed by learners in this question, and high light any misconceptions.
1.1 The question required that the learners discuss the subdivisions of any ONE Religion under the following 2 subdivisions : 1.1.1 Religious teachings 1.1.2 Governance of religious structures.
- Learners failed to interpret this question well. - They also did not know their concepts well. - Brief comments will follow on why learners did not do well in subsections:1.1.1, to 1.1.2 and 1.2 to 1.3.
1.1.1 The majority of learners, at all centers that attempted this question failed to discuss the subdivisions of their preferred religion. They instead gave a general discussion on central teachings/'religious aspects of a particular religion.
1.1.2 Learners confused the term 'governance' with 'government' and in the process they lost valuable marks in that some discussed the government of the country.
1.2 & 1.3. It is in these two sub sections that learners lost most marks in question 1. They simply discussed 'internal differences' in general, instead of how 'contemporary inspiration' influences the internal differences existing within religions.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
Teachers to ensure that learners understand all terms well. Give them a comprehensive background and proper understanding of each topic dealt with in class. In attempting questions they should come to a proper understanding of instructional or commanding words in the question they are answering.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners:
- Learners did not read the question thoroughly with full understanding so as to get to the crux of the instructional words.
- They also struggled to apply their knowledge. Some failed to give their own opinion.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
Give learners
Arrange that your learners be exposed to more essay writing exercises so as to be able to:
- Analyze
- Describe and
- Apply

QUESTION 2

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

This appeared to be a popular question and it was generally well answered.

(d) Why the question was well answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

- This is a strait forward question.

- It is a middle order question.

(e) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning

- Teachers need to continue and improve on exposing their learners to discussion questions, also assisting them how to select information that is relevant to the question under discussion.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners

- o In those centres where the learners did not perform so well in this question, the following errors were predominant:

- 2.1.1 Some learners gave a broad explanation of the Christian religion or how Christians should behave instead of the "Nature of divinity".

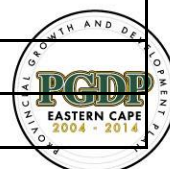
- Others did not even bother to work on one religion, but jumped around from one religion to the other

- 2.1.2 There are those who wrote whatever came first in their minds about evil and not actually answering the question.

(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- For the bulk of our learners to opt for this question is clear indication that they are more capable to answer low to middle order questions.

- They do need help in dealing with questions where they have to critically discuss, analyse and compare



QUESTION 3

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

- This question was not well answered.
- There are centres that gave a good rendering of this question and scored high marks.

(b) Why the question was poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

- 3.1 They confused environmental issues with social issues/ social ills that are rampant in the community.
- They continued to analyse the social issues they listed in 3.1 in dealing with sub-section 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. in the process they lost up to a maximum of 40 marks.
- In 3.2 learners appear to have had a problem in knowing the meaning of the term: "impact".
- 3.3 and 3.4 appear similar but each question has a different focus group (3.3 – 'religious organizations'; 3.4 – "ONE Religion"); but the same point of departure – "protecting the environment".

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning

- Teachers to expose their learners to discussions and debates on social and environmental issues following the prescriptions contained in the CAPS document and Exam guidelines.

(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners

- Learners confused environmental issues with social issues.

(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.

- Excursions and the information contained in Life Orientation on environmental issues can be quite helpful.
- Topic 4 on 'Research should also be made use of.
- All Religion Studies teachers should compile a mind map/ glossary of key terms and concepts that are relevant to specific topics to help their learners master crucial subject-related terminology.



QUESTION 4
(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?
Not well answered by the majority of candidates who attempted it. They generally did not obtain good marks in any of the sub-sections (4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are candidates who did not confine themselves to “ONE” religion as was required.
- 4.1 In this subsection they were mostly unable to give a detailed explanation of the development of Normative Sources. Confused facts and development stages of the normative sources. The bulk of the marks for this question are contained here.
- 4.2 Instead of discussing ‘specific’ hermeneutical principles of textual interpretation some candidates merely listed these principles. In the process half of the allocated marks were lost. There are those who did not have the faintest idea of such principles.
- 4.3 appeared to be the most challenging part of this question. Most of the candidates did not have a clue of the two crucial words in this question: (i) “divine INSPIRATION”; (ii) “normative sources”.

(b) Why the question was poorly answered? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This question is NOT general but very specific. It has to do with knowing the sources/ ‘written’ texts of at least ONE of the prescribed religions and how the followers of this religion derive meaning/teaching/information from these “inspired writings. A general discussion will not yield any good rendering of the question.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning
- The Exam guidelines are an important resource for Grade 12 teachers.
- This section of the work has been shown to be VERY IMPORTANT as part of the information learners should be prepared on in the 2015 Guidelines.
- The CAPS document and ATP also puts emphasis on it.
- Teachers should expose learners to practical examples of these sources and terms.



(d) Describe any other specific observations relating to responses of learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4.1 And 4.2 were set out in this manner for the first time this year. - At those schools that use previous papers and memoranda irresponsibly learners got side-tracked, especially if they did not read and get the sense of the question well.
(e) Any other comments useful to teachers, subject advisors, teacher development etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous exam papers and guidelines (Memo) can be used profitably by teachers in guiding learners also to help them get used to the standard of responses required when answering exam questions.

QUESTION 5

(a) General comment on the performance of learners in the specific question. Was the question well answered or poorly answered?

- Learners generally performed well scoring good marks for the full question.
- In some centres though, the performance ranged from not so good, to dismal.

Note that question 5 was on two areas teachers should consider as a **must cover and know** for any grade 12 learner:

i) Secular world views; ii) Religion and the Natural Sciences.

(b) Why the question was poorly answered in some centres? Also provide specific examples, indicate common errors committed by learners in this question, and any misconceptions.

- Candidates do not read the questions critically with full understanding as are result they may misread the instructional words or key concepts used.

Examples:

5.1 For 10 marks there are candidates who just mentioned the circular world views or tried to explain their importance instead of giving reasons for the increasing popularity of secular world views.

5.2 Some confused this portion of the question with the concepts in section 1 of the work – “Important concepts: ‘Similarities and differences’.

A few did not know anything about secular world views, to the point of some going for a discussion of Dogma/doctrine – ATR.

Learners are possibly not used to making comparisons between secular world views, as this question usually comes up as a: ‘discussion’ type of question.

5.3 Not knowing the difference between the Big bang theory and Darwin’s theory of evolution.

(c) Provide suggestions for improvement in relation to Teaching and Learning

Use of mind map to give an understandable broad outline of the 4 topics with the information that goes under each topic. This will assist learners in practically observing where each bit of information fits in; also emphasizing the links.



