

# PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

**BGCSE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**2023**



## Paper 1: Written Paper

### Section 1: General Comments

The paper was done well by a lot of candidates. Questions 1 and 2 were mainly recall questions which are usually easier for most candidates. Questions 3, 4 and 5 had evaluation or analysis questions which are often a challenge for the candidates. Candidates therefore scored less marks in these questions.

Candidates should continue to be given thorough training on how to respond to analysis and evaluation questions. They tend to focus on only one side of the question, either the positive or negative, and therefore lose a lot of marks on such questions. The evaluation questions require candidates to always give a balanced assessment which includes both the negative and positive side of the response or answer.

### Section 2: Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 (a) The question required candidates to just state two ways in which African Traditional Religion expresses itself. A lot of candidates managed to score full marks for the question, and this shows that they understood the demand of the question. Some however lost marks because they gave specific examples of how ATR expresses itself such as use of divining bones, sacrifices, libation etc. The question required them to give the general way in which the religion expresses itself such as through practices or rituals, beliefs etc. which would be inclusive of the diverse manifestations of ATR as a religion.
  - (b) The question required candidates to describe two negative effects of religion on people's lives. A lot of candidates did well and seemed to have clearly understood the demands of the question. However, candidates should be encouraged to always state the factor or in this case effect before giving the description as required. This helps them to avoid giving a description of an effect that has not been stated and thereby losing marks. It should always be clear as to what effect the candidate is describing as there is a mark allocated for the effect and for the correct description.
  - (c) The question required candidates to explain two socio economic factors that led to the formation of Islam. The question was well understood by a lot of candidates and those who knew the correct factors of Islam stated them and scored full marks. However, some showed lack of knowledge as they gave factors for other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism or stated reasons for the proliferation of religions and therefore lost marks. Teachers should also emphasise the difference between socio economic factors and political factors that led to the origin of Islam as some candidates gave the political factors and therefore lost marks as this was not in line with the requirement of the question.
- 2 (a) The question required candidates to explain one reason why some religions became established in Botswana. The question was done well by a lot of candidates, and they scored full marks as they managed to give a reason for establishment as well as an appropriate explanation. Those who lost marks based their answers on churches and not religion as required by the question. Some only scored one mark as they gave a reason for establishment but failed to give a proper explanation.
  - (b) Candidates were required to describe two challenges faced by the early Christian missionaries. Most of them were able to give and describe the challenges as required.



However, some lost marks because they misunderstood the question and gave the responses of Batswana towards Christianity when it was first introduced to them instead of the challenges faced by the missionaries. Some also lost marks because they gave challenges met by missionaries while travelling to Botswana such as shipwreck. Teachers are encouraged to focus on challenges met by missionaries when spreading the gospel in Botswana and not those met outside the country.

- (c) The question required candidates to describe two negative effects of Christianity on Tswana culture. Most candidates were able to state the fact that Batswana lost their culture but failed to describe how this was a negative effect or to even give relevant examples and as a result they lost marks. Teachers should encourage candidates to always ensure that they align their responses to the demands of the question such that when required to give a negative effect this should come out clearly in their responses.
- 3 (a) The question required candidates to list any two mission stations that were established in Botswana. The question was done well by most candidates. Some however showed lack of understanding as they gave names of mission schools and hospitals instead of the mission stations as required.
- (b) Candidates were required to describe the effectiveness of any two methods used by the missionaries to spread the gospel in Botswana. Those who understood the demands of the question managed to state methods and to explain their effectiveness. A lot of candidates however failed to describe the effectiveness of the methods used by the Christian missionaries and therefore lost marks. Some wrote the methods used by Christians today such as internet, television, and radio. Teachers are advised to emphasise on methods used by early Christian missionaries and not those used by Christians in general today.
- (c) The question required candidates to evaluate two ways in which formal education affected the lives of Batswana. Most candidates failed to give a full or balanced evaluation and only gave either a positive or negative way in which the lives of Batswana were affected. Candidates should always be advised to give a positive as well as negative way in which the lives of Batswana were affected. Stating only one way in which the lives were affected lead to candidates losing marks.
- 4 (a) The question required candidates to identify any two practices of African Traditional Religion in Botswana. Most candidates did well in this question and gave the two practices as required. Some however lost marks because instead of giving practices they gave beliefs and values. Teachers need to emphasise and help candidates to understand the difference between practices, beliefs, and values.
- (b) Candidates were required to assess any two effects of religion on family life from one of the given religions, namely Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Baha'i Faith. Most candidates failed to score full marks on this question as they focussed on how religion affects marriage instead of the family as the question required. Most of them also failed to make an assessment as required, they only gave one side of the effect and as such lost marks. Some still fail to identify religions used to answer the question and as such lose marks.

Teachers are advised to emphasise the importance of giving a balanced assessment with both the positive and negative views of the two effects as required for them to avoid forfeiting marks. The issue of always identifying religion chosen should also be emphasised.



(c) Candidates were required to explain two reasons why Christian leaders who are good listeners might be needed in society today. Most candidates failed to understand the demands of the question and as such did not score marks. They gave general answers about a good leader instead of focusing on why a good listener is needed in society today. Teachers should emphasise the importance of always aligning answers to the requirement of the question.

5 (a) Candidates were required to identify two socio economic impacts of global epidemics. The question was done well by a lot of candidates however some showed lack of understanding as they gave the socio-economic impacts of natural disasters such as destruction of infrastructure instead or gave examples of the epidemics and not their impact.

(b) Candidates were required to assess two effects of religious prejudice. Most of them lost marks because they failed to assess. They only gave either only one positive effect or one negative effect, with most giving the negative.

Teachers are advised to put more effort on teaching candidates how to respond to assessment questions as a lot of them are evidently struggling to answer such questions. A lot of candidates also lost marks because they left the question unanswered, which could be due to lack of knowledge or understanding.

(c) The question required candidates to explain how any two Christian practices can negatively affect the environment. Some candidates understood the question and were able to explain how some Christian practices affect the environment. A lot of candidates however, lost marks because they gave practices of African Independent Churches instead of practices that are mainly Christian. Teachers are encouraged to emphasise on Christian practices when addressing this topic as the objective is focussed on Christian practices.



## Paper 2: Written Paper

### Section 1: General Comments

Generally, the performance compared to the previous year declined than the expected, especially that this is the second year we had unstructured questions. Majority of the candidates identified one issue to address questions. They used examples from the same issue as different issues.

Alignment of issues to the demand of the question also posed a challenge to a lot of candidates. Hence this disadvantaged them to score high marks. Emphasis should be made by Centers to encourage candidates to fully understand the demand of questions and most importantly identify independent issues to answer questions.

### Section 2: Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 A popular question but poorly done as candidates dwelt on a particular movement than the general perspective as the question demanded. A particular movement was expected to be used as application or example.
- 2 Candidates identified the roles of men and women but failed the aspect of showing the influence in modern society. It was a popular question and those who linked the issues to the question scored high marks. For example */Phuti tla o je lethodi/* and */mosadi tshwene o jewa mabogo/* are both under one issue, clearly defined roles in African Traditional Society.
- 3 A very popular question, poorly done as candidates brought two examples from the same issue, for example no founder and dress code belong to one issue or category again prearranged marriage and disposal of dead bodies belong to one issue.
- 4 Few candidates scored good marks though popular as the impact of the practices on the environment was not clearly defined. Again, a lot of candidates brought one issue for example, */Dikgafela/* and pouring of libation falls under ancestor veneration.
- 5 Popular question but fairly done as candidates identified the biblical teachings accordingly and linked to how such promote morality in the society.
- 6 A very popular question but a lot of candidates scored level 3 as they failed to bring two independent issues, for example the 10 commandments and beatitudes both encourage stability.