

General Ordination Examination 2016

Scale of General Criteria

Papers are weighed with the following in mind: *perception (and analysis)* of issues; *application* of resources; *demonstration* of knowledge; and *articulation* of views. These factors are implicit in the two-level scales used in evaluating the parts of the GOE, and these, together with the two-level scales particular to each set, provide for readers clear criteria for deciding how well a paper addresses questions in the sets of the examination. The two levels of these general criteria represent either proficiency in the area being tested or a lack thereof, in accordance with Episcopal Church Canons III.15.2-4.

Proficient: The response gives evidence of a sound and perceptive understanding of the basic issues raised by the question(s) and how those issues relate to the canonical area being tested. Written presentation is clear and organized with apt use of source material.

Not Proficient: The response indicates largely erroneous, minimal or no understanding of essential issues in the area being tested or does not answer the question asked. Arguments adduced may be flawed, ineffective or incoherent. Writing may be unclear, with little, inept or inappropriate use of sources.

Set 1: The Holy Scriptures

Open Resources

The Bible study group in your parish is reading the books of Ruth and Ezra, and has asked you about the apparent contradictions between these two books. In particular, they are concerned about the role of the “outsider” in the community in light of recent political discussions about immigration. The group has asked you, their Rector, to speak to them about these texts, and you have chosen to focus your discussion on the following two passages.

“The land that you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the pollutions of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations. They have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, so that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.” -- Ezra 9:11-12 NRSV

“So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When they came together, the Lord made her conceive, and she bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, ‘Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him.’ Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse. The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, ‘A son has been born to Naomi.’ They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.” -- Ruth 4:13-17 NRSV

Write an essay of about 1,000 words that forms the basis for a presentation to this Bible study group. The essay should demonstrate awareness of the literary, theological, and historical contexts of the passages while addressing the concerns of the group. Bring in at least two other scriptural references, one of which must be from the New Testament, to support your essay.

Criteria	Proficient	Not proficient
Exegesis contains all three required elements	The essay offers literary and theological and historical contexts for each of the two passages.	The essay does not offer a literary and theological and historical context for each of the two passages.
Application of Holy Scripture to the concerns of the group	The essay addresses the concerns of the group with reference to immigration.	The essay neglects to address the concerns of the group or may not refer to immigration as a concern.
Use of additional Holy Scripture	The essay exhibits an understanding of Holy Scripture, and provides at least two additional relevant scriptural references, with at least one reference from the New Testament.	The essay focuses solely on the passages given, providing only one or no additional relevant scriptural references. No reference from the New Testament is offered.

Set 2: Christian Theology

Open Resources

Write an essay of about 1,000 words offering at least two Christian theological perspectives on wealth. Cite for each perspective at least one biblical or Book of Common Prayer passage and one Christian theologian. Of the theologians cited, one must be from the Post-Reformation Anglican tradition. Conclude the essay by describing how one or more of your theological perspectives on wealth would inform your work with the members of a Vestry faced with deciding what to do with an unexpected, substantial, and undesignated financial legacy gift.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Theological perspectives on wealth	The answer presents two distinct perspectives.	The answer does not present two distinct perspectives.
Biblical or Book of Common Prayer passages	The answer includes two different biblical or BCP passages for each perspective. The biblical or BCP references are correctly cited and are relevant to the question about wealth.	The answer does not have all four of the requested biblical or BCP passages. The biblical or BCP references are not cited correctly or are not relevant to the question about wealth.
Theological references	The answer cites two theologians, including one Post-Reformation Anglican	The answer does not cite two theologians, or does not cite at least one Anglican theologian. References

	theologian. References from theologians are relevant to the question about wealth.	from theologians are not relevant to the question about wealth.
Coherence	Each pair of biblical or BCP references and theological citations combines to support the same perspective.	Each pair of biblical or BCP references and theological citations does not support the same perspective (e.g., the Bible or BCP reference is relevant to the perspective outlined but the theological citation is not).
Approach to Vestry	Each pair of biblical or BCP references and theological citations does not support the same perspective (e.g., the Bible or BCP reference is relevant to the perspective outlined but the theological citation is not).	The answer does not include at least one reasoned approach to working with the Vestry on the question about wealth. The answer does not make a connection between one of the theological perspectives and the practical theological approach to working with the Vestry (e.g., shows a third perspective on wealth different from two outlined previously).

Set 3: Christian Ethics and Moral Theology

Open Resources

According to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, those who are baptized promise to follow and obey Jesus as their Lord; and those who are ordained to the diaconate and the priesthood promise that they are willing and ready to obey their bishop and other ministers who may have authority over them and their work [BCP: 303, 526, 538].

Obedience has been described in many ways that articulate differing aspects or perceptions of the concept. Consider the following two quotes:

- A 20th century Christian mystic has written that “Obedience is the only pure motive, the only one which does not in the slightest degree seek a reward for the action but leaves all care of reward to the Father who is in secret and sees in secret. ...”
- The views of a contemporary artist have been characterized with the following words, “All the world’s problems stem from obedience ... war, genocide, and slavery [are] products of such silent compliance.”

In an essay of up to 1,000 words:

- Provide an ethical definition of Christian obedience that takes into account promises of Baptism and Ordination, explaining how obedience is viewed in Christian life and ministry, as set within the Christian tradition of moral reflection.

- Address each of the above quotes, describing how obedience in Christian life and ministry is the same as, or different from, what is suggested by the phrase “silent compliance.”

Criteria	Proficient	Not proficient
Definition of obedience	<p>The essay provides a definition of obedience founded within the Christian tradition of ethical and moral reflection.</p> <p>The definition takes into account the promises of Baptism and Ordination that specifically refer to obedience.</p> <p>The definition explains how obedience is, or can be, viewed within Christian life and ministry, as set within the Christian tradition of moral reflection.</p>	<p>The essay does not provide a definition of obedience or provides a definition that is not informed by the Christian tradition.</p> <p>The definition does not take into account the promises of Baptism and Ordination that specifically refer to obedience.</p> <p>The definition does not explain how obedience can be viewed within Christian life and ministry, as set within the Christian tradition of moral reflection.</p>
Response to quotations	<p>The essay responds in a thoughtful way to both quotes.</p> <p>The essay describes how obedience in Christian life and ministry is the same as, or different from, what is suggested by the phrase “silent compliance.”</p>	<p>The essay does not identify or meaningfully discuss the differing perspectives on obedience provided by the two quotes.</p> <p>The essay discusses the quotes without specific reference to, or elaboration of, “silent compliance.”</p>

Set 4: The Practice of Ministry

Open Resources

You are a recently ordained priest in a rural diocese. Your bishop appointed you Priest-in-Charge of a pastoral-sized parish with an average Sunday attendance of 80. The parish is in a small town with a population of 500 in a county with 15,000 people. A veteran priest, who serves a 45-minute drive away, is your mentor. Your bishop is headquartered a five-hour drive from you. Soon after you arrive, a newly retired same-sex couple, who are Episcopalian and have recently moved into town, approach you with the request that you preside at their wedding. No such liturgy has previously been performed at your parish. The couple quotes a 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision as inspiration for the request. Your bishop has issued a pastoral letter indicating that General Convention has authorized such rites in The Episcopal Church, though, in accord with our canons, a priest can decline to solemnize any marriage.

Construct a pastoral response to this situation in a 1,000-word essay. Explain how the practice of ministry interplays with a theology of marriage in The Episcopal Church. Refer to the

appropriate canons of The Episcopal Church and/or resolutions from General Convention that will guide your pastoral response. Identify the key parties involved, and tell how you would engage those various parties in this situation. Include what considerations you might give to those who hold different views.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Analysis of the pastoral context	The essay adequately analyzes the pastoral context of this situation, identifying key parties and issues involved.	The essay does not analyze the pastoral context adequately enough to provide the basis for a proficient pastoral response. It does not sufficiently identify key parties and issues involved.
Application of theology and governance to ministry practice in The Episcopal Church.	The essay's pastoral response is guided by an adequate knowledge and understanding of a theology of marriage in The Episcopal Church as well as contemporary church canons and/or resolutions, as they apply to this situation.	The pastoral response does not display adequate knowledge and understanding of a theology of marriage in The Episcopal Church as it applies to this situation; relevant church canons and/or resolutions are not mentioned or discussed.
Plan for pastoral response	The response presents a clear plan of pastoral engagement with key parties in a way appropriate to this situation. Those who may hold other viewpoints are addressed in a pastoral manner.	The essay does not sufficiently present a clear plan of pastoral engagement with key parties, or the plan is not appropriate to the situation. Those who may hold other viewpoints either are not addressed in a pastoral way or the response to them is not appropriate to the situation.

Set 5: History of the Christian Church

Open Resources

The decades 1640-1650 and 2000-2010 were periods of turbulence in the Anglican worlds of their day, turbulence that arose in part from conflicting views over the nature and sources of authority in the Church. In an essay of about 1,000 words, please identify one or more important issues generating the conflicts in each decade. Describe ways in which those issues were disruptive, and ways in which they were addressed and resolved (or not) in each era. Conclude your essay by addressing how knowledge of these historical conflicts and the issues underlying them can help us to understand persistent disagreements about the role of authority within Anglicanism more generally.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Historical understanding of the decade of 1640-1650	The essay exhibits accuracy and clear thought, i.e., it is written in grammatically intelligible English. The argument is	The essay is not clearly written and does not logically organize the material to respond to the

	logically developed and names at least one issue creating turbulence in this decade. The essay develops an understanding of opposing opinions or situations and describes at least one attempt by opponents to engage and, perhaps, resolve the issue.	question. It offers confusing or inaccurate discussion of the examples cited. The essay does not show an understanding of opposing opinions or situations and does not describe at least one attempt by opponents to engage and, perhaps, resolve the issue.
Historical understanding of the decade of 2000-2010	The essay exhibits accuracy and clear thought, i.e., it is written in grammatically intelligible English. The argument is logically developed and names at least one issue creating turbulence in this decade. The essay develops an understanding of opposing opinions or situations and describes at least one attempt by opponents to engage and, perhaps, resolve the issue.	The essay is not clearly written and does not logically organize the material to respond to the question. It offers confusing or inaccurate discussion of the examples cited. The essay does not show an understanding of opposing opinions or situations and does not describe at least one attempt by opponents to engage and, perhaps, resolve the issue.
Role of authority within Anglicanism	The essay shows specific knowledge of how the turbulence it cites in each decade resulted from differing views and applications of authority within Anglicanism. It traces how this knowledge is helpful in understanding persistent disagreements over authority within Anglicanism more generally.	The essay does not exhibit understanding of the role that authority played in the conflicts cited for each era. It does not show knowledge of how the turbulence it cites in each decade resulted from differing views and applications of authority within Anglicanism. The answer does not detail how this knowledge is helpful in understanding persistent disagreements over authority within Anglicanism more generally.

Set 6: Christian Worship

Open Resources

You are preparing to instruct a group of parents whose children are to be baptized during a Eucharist on a day that the Book of Common Prayer designates as especially appropriate for Baptism.

In an essay of about 1,000 words, provide a written teaching on the major liturgical and theological dimensions of Baptism to send to an out-of-town sponsor who cannot attend the preparation sessions. In the essay:

- Explain how the words of the Thanksgiving over the Water (*BCP 306/307*) inform our understanding of Baptism;
- Identify one of the lectionary texts for the occasion chosen and how it relates to Baptism;
- Describe how two or more ceremonial actions in the baptismal liturgy express our understanding of Baptism; and
- Identify a hymn of your choosing and how it is significant for Baptism and the Propers of the day.

Criteria/Area	Proficient	Not Proficient
Identifies theological elements of the Thanksgiving over the Water that inform our understanding of Baptism	The teaching makes a connection between at least one section or line from this prayer and The Episcopal Church's understanding of what Baptism means.	The teaching only paraphrases the prayer or quotes lines without showing how they explain or relate to Baptism.
Appropriate baptismal occasions	The answer identifies one of the especially appropriate occasions for Baptism. If not one of the especially appropriate occasions, it explains the reason for the choice.	The answer does not give reasons for the occasion other than one of the especially appropriate baptismal occasions or chooses an inappropriate occasion for Baptism.
Lectionary texts for the baptismal occasion	The response identifies the correct lectionary text for the baptismal occasion chosen. It shows a connection between some portion of the chosen lectionary and Baptism.	The response does not correctly identify the lectionary text for the chosen baptismal occasion or does not show the connection between any part of the lectionary and Baptism.
Ceremonial elements	The teaching describes two or more ceremonial actions in the baptismal liturgy. It explains how the chosen actions express our understanding of Baptism.	The teaching describes only one or no ceremonial actions in the baptismal liturgy or does not explain how the actions chosen express our understanding of Baptism.
Hymn	The essay chooses a hymn appropriate to both Baptism and to the lectionary of the day. It explains why the hymn is appropriate.	The essay chooses no hymn or offers no explanation of why the hymn is appropriate.