



AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
7061/2A

Paper 2A Buddhism

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



2 4 6 A 7 0 6 1 / 2 A / M S

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Methods of Marking

It is essential that, in fairness to students, all examiners use the same methods of marking. The advice given here may seem very obvious, but it is important that all examiners follow it as exactly as possible.

1. If you have any doubts about the mark to award, consult your Team Leader.
2. Refer constantly to the mark scheme throughout marking. It is extremely important that it is strictly adhered to.
3. Remember, you must **always** credit **accurate, relevant and appropriate** answers which are not given in the mark scheme.
4. Do **not** credit material that is irrelevant to the question or to the stated target, however impressive that material might be.
5. If a one-word answer is required and a list is given, take the first answer (unless this has been crossed out).
6. If you are wavering as to whether or not to award a mark, the criterion should be, 'Is the student nearer those who have given a correct answer or those who have little idea?'
7. Read the information below about using Levels of Response mark schemes.
8. Be prepared to award the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks when the answer merits full marks or to give no marks where there is nothing creditable in an answer.
9. No half marks or bonus marks are to be used under any circumstances.
10. Remember, the key to good and fair marking is **consistency**. Do **not** change the standard of your marking once you have started.

Levels of Response Marking

In AS Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, levels of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Levels of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Levels are tied to specific skills. Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Levels of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully, responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. This should only be necessary occasionally and where this occurs examiners must indicate, by a brief written explanation, why their assessment does not conform to the levels of response laid down in the mark scheme. Such scripts should be referred to the Lead Examiner.

Assessment of Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives. Where students are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. The quality of written communication skills of the student will be one of the factors influencing the actual mark awarded within the level of response. In reading an extended response, the examiner will therefore consider if it is cogently and coherently written, ie decide whether the answer:

- presents relevant information in a form that suits its purposes
- is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- is suitably structured and that the style of writing is appropriate.

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Levels of Response: 15 marks AS-level – AO1

- Level 5**
13–15
- Knowledge and understanding is accurate and relevant and is consistently applied to the question.
 - Very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is clear and coherent and there is effective use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 4**
10–12
- Knowledge and understanding is mostly accurate and relevant and is mostly applied to the question.
 - Good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is mostly clear and coherent and specialist language and terminology is used appropriately.
- Level 3**
7–9
- Knowledge and understanding is generally accurate and relevant and is generally applied to the question.
 - Some use of appropriate evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - The answer is generally clear and coherent with use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 2**
4–6
- Knowledge and understanding is limited and there is limited application to the question.
 - Limited use of appropriate evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Limited clarity and coherence and limited use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 1**
1–3
- Knowledge and understanding is basic.
 - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information.
 - Basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

Levels of Response: 15 marks AS-level – AO2

- Level 5**
13–15
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Reasoned and evidenced chains of reasoning supporting different points of view with critical analysis.
 - Evaluation is based on the reasoning presented.
 - The answer is clear and coherent and there is effective use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 4**
10–12
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Reasoned and evidenced chains of reasoning, with some critical analysis, supporting different points of view.
 - Evaluation based on some of the reasoning.
 - The answer is largely clear and coherent with specialist language and terminology used appropriately.
- Level 3**
7–9
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different points of view supported by evidence and chains of reasoning.
 - The answer is generally clear and coherent with use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 2**
4–6
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view relevant to the issue(s) with limited supporting evidence and chains of reasoning.
 - Limited clarity and coherence and limited use of specialist language and terminology.
- Level 1**
1–3
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view is stated with some evidence or reasons in support.
 - Some clarity and coherence and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

Question 1

0 1 . 1

Explain different Buddhist perspectives about the significance of Gautama Buddha.

[15 marks]

Target: AO1.1: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Many Theravadan Buddhists believe that Gautama Buddha is significant because he is the enlightened one. For these Buddhists, this means that The Buddha understands the nature of reality and his teachings give others an insight into this truth.

Many Buddhists believe that Gautama Buddha is significant as a role model. His teachings give guidance and a path to help Buddhists to become free from suffering. Gautama Buddha's enlightenment means that others can also be free from samsara, if they follow his example.

For Mahayana Buddhists, Gautama Buddha is one of many significant enlightened beings. The Buddha's teaching is skilful means and should be considered temporary. These teachings give humans some understanding of the world in which we live, and offer a way towards the end of suffering. This means that The Buddha's teachings are significant, but temporary.

[15 marks] AO1.1

0 1 . 2

‘The principle of ahimsa means that Buddhists cannot support abortion or embryo research.’

Assess this view.

[15 marks]

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Ahimsa: the concept of ahimsa and its application to issues concerning the embryo and the unborn child, different Buddhist views.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Many Buddhists argue that the principle of ahimsa means that abortion and embryo research cannot be supported. For Buddhists, human life exists as an unending cycle and therefore, life is present from the moment of conception. Since abortion and embryo research end life they cannot be supported. However, some Buddhists would say that life does not begin until the embryo possesses all five of the aggregates, meaning that embryo research and abortion until this point can be justified.

Another reason Buddhists argue that the principle of ahimsa cannot support abortion or embryo research is because taking life goes against the first precept and causes suffering. Both the embryo and mother experience suffering from these acts. However, some Buddhists view the intention of ending suffering, for both the mother and embryo, as acceptable. This means that abortion and embryo research can, in some cases, be justified.

Another reason Buddhists argue that the principle of ahimsa cannot support abortion and embryo research is the negative karma attributed to these acts. This karma impacts on all involved, whether born or unborn. However, some Buddhists accept that abortions may be necessary, and work towards lessening the karmic burden. For example, in Japanese Buddhism, Jizo statues are used to remember deceased infants, including those who are miscarried, aborted, or stillborn.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 2

0	2	.	1
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Explain why Buddhists have different attitudes about the purpose of acts of devotion.

[15 marks]

Target: AO1.3: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

One reason there are different attitudes about the purpose of devotion is due to different traditions of Buddhists. Mahayana Buddhists may focus on devotion towards bodhisattvas and other enlightened beings. Theravada Buddhists may focus devotion on the teachings and pathway set out by The Buddha.

Another reason there are different attitudes about the purpose of devotion is due to the differing ideas about the ability to contact and engage with The Buddha. For most Theravada Buddhists the aim is to focus on living according to the teachings of The Buddha and acts of devotion help them to do this. For some Mahayana Buddhists acts of devotion are aimed at seeking help and guidance from buddhas and bodhisattvas, who can be reached through these acts.

A final reason is because there are differences in the focus on rebirth and enlightenment. Some Buddhists during devotion will focus on making and sharing merit. In this way they hope to achieve a favourable rebirth for themselves and others. Others will focus on the reaching of enlightenment for themselves, in this lifetime and acts of devotion will be centred around achieving this aim.

Maximum level 2 for answers that only explain different views.

[15 marks] AO1.3

0 2 . 2

‘The realms of becoming can only be interpreted literally.’**Assess this view.****[15 marks]****Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: The realms of becoming and their significance including literal, metaphorical and psychological interpretations.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

For some Buddhists the realms of becoming can only be interpreted literally because they are part of the teaching of The Buddha. The Buddha gained insight once he became enlightened, for this reason the realms of becoming should be understood literally. However, for other Buddhists The Buddha’s teachings are skilful means, this means that the teachings about the realms of becoming could be taken to refer to psychological states of mind, which we all encounter daily.

For some Buddhists the realms of becoming can only be interpreted literally. This is shown, for example, by the festival of the hungry ghosts celebrated in many Buddhist countries. The festival seeks to free those trapped in the realm by the transfer of merit. However, for many Buddhists the realms are metaphors. For example, the hungry ghost realm may be seen as a metaphor for the things we find difficult to relinquish. Festivals, for example, the hungry ghost festival, can be used as a time to work on letting go of harmful attachment.

For some Buddhists the realms of becoming can only be interpreted literally because they are the result of karmic consequence. The realms are linked with intentional actions and the outcomes of these. However, for other Buddhists the realms could be both literal and metaphorical. The unenlightened are unable to understand fully the true nature of reality, but they can identify when they are full of anger or resentment. Dealing with these emotions, in this lifetime, should be the focus.

[15 marks] AO2