



A-level
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
7062/2A

Paper 2A Study of Religion and Dialogues: Buddhism

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



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 A-level 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: 10 marks A-level – AO1

- Level 5**
9–10
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate, relevant and fully developed in breadth and depth with very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Where appropriate, good knowledge and understanding of the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion is demonstrated.
 - Clear and coherent presentation of ideas with precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**
7–8
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate and mostly relevant with good development in breadth and depth shown through good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Where appropriate, alternative views and/or scholarly opinion are explained.
 - Mostly clear and coherent presentation of ideas with good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**
5–6
- Knowledge and critical understanding is generally accurate and relevant with development in breadth and/or depth shown through some use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Where appropriate, there is some familiarity with the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion.
 - Some organisation of ideas and coherence with reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**
3–4
- Knowledge and critical understanding is limited, with limited development in breadth and/or depth shown through limited use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
 - Where appropriate, limited reference may be made to alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
 - Limited organisation of ideas and coherence and use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**
1–2
- Knowledge and critical understanding is basic with little or no development.
 - There may be a basic awareness of alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
 - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

Levels of Response: 15 marks A-level – AO2

- Level 5**
13–15
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Perceptive discussion of different views, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought with critical analysis.
 - There is an appropriate evaluation fully supported by the reasoning.
 - Precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**
10–12
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought, with some critical analysis.
 - There is an appropriate evaluation supported by the reasoning.
 - Good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**
7–9
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought.
 - An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning.
 - Reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**
4–6
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
 - Presentation of a point of view relevant to the issue with some supporting evidence and argument.
 - Limited attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**
1–3
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
 - A point of view is stated, with some evidence or reason(s) in support.
 - Some attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

0 1 . 1

Examine the analogy of the chariot in the Questions of King Milinda.

[10 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.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Anatta (no-self): the concept of anatta; the five aggregates and the analogy of the chariot in the Questions of King Milinda, Book II chapter 1.1.

The analogy of the chariot is a dialogue between the monk Nagasena and King Milinda about the concept of anatta. The Questions of King Milinda offer an explanation as to how, if there is rebirth and karma, there can be no self or permanent aspect of a human. Nagasena explains to the King that his name is only a designation for something conceptual and that no permanent individual called Nagasena can be found.

Nagasena goes on to explain how this is possible using the analogy of the chariot. Nagasena questions King Milinda about the true nature of the chariot. He uses the elements of a chariot to explain how multiple parts make up a chariot. The chariot is not one of its many parts, it is all of them together. In the same way humans are a combination of the five aggregates which are impermanent elements.

The analogy explains that there is no separate essence or soul, only a combination of elements. Without all the elements there is no chariot. In the same way, there is no being which exists outside of a person's present form. All these elements are constantly changing, therefore there is no enduring self or chariot which exists outside of these elements.

0 1 . 2

‘There is no single understanding among Buddhists about Anicca.’

Evaluate this claim.

[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: Anicca: the meaning and importance of the concept of Anicca; the development of that idea in the Mahayana doctrine of emptiness.

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

Buddhists understand the concept of Anicca as impermanence, which means that all things are subject to change. Anicca is at the centre of the Buddhist teachings, and all teachings link back to impermanence. Therefore there is some shared understanding. However, there are differences between what this means for Buddhists. For some Buddhists there are things which are not subject to change. For these Buddhists, Anicca may not apply to Nirvana, meaning that there is some permanence in this aspect. This suggests that there is no single understanding of Anicca among Buddhists.

Anicca is one of the causes of Dukkha and this can be understood by all Buddhists, for example, as part of the four noble truths. However, the Mahayana doctrine of emptiness takes this further by explaining that because all things are impermanent, nothing really exists. This is because nothing can exist without intrinsic existence. This means that there is no single understanding of Anicca among Buddhists.

For Buddhists the concept of impermanence can be empirically proven. This means that there is general understanding among Buddhists about Anicca. Buddhist practices work to release attachment to the world and the idea that things are permanent. However, there are a number of different understandings. For some Buddhists, the potential within everyone to be enlightened offers different perspectives about Anicca, for example, not all Buddhists believe in Buddha nature.

0 2 . 1

Examine how Buddhist liberationist approaches influence society today.

[10 marks]

Target: AO1.2: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies.

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: Emphasis on the contribution of Buddhism to society: including the principles and work of Engaged Buddhism as a liberationist approach in supporting the poor and oppressed.

Engaged Buddhism is a liberationist approach. It influences Buddhists to support the poor. Engaged Buddhism is based on Buddhist principles of generosity and compassion, with an understanding that these principles require action to help the poor and oppressed. For Engaged Buddhists, social activities can lead to liberation from suffering for everyone. This can be done by meeting the basic needs of society.

Engaged Buddhism influences all Buddhist traditions to help those who are oppressed in society. This can be seen through the work of Dhammananda and the Sakyadhita organisation, who work towards equality for men and women. These groups are involved in seeking the ordination of women within all Buddhist traditions as well as moving to give women equal rights within Buddhism and society.

Engaged Buddhism is politically active in challenging oppression with a view to bringing about social transformation. The root of Buddhism is in the alleviation of suffering through understanding of the causes of suffering. For many Buddhists, social action and liberationist approaches are inherently Buddhist concepts. For example, some Buddhists believe that there is Buddha nature within everyone, which encourages a liberationist approach.

0 2 . 2

‘There is little agreement among Buddhists about the ordination of women.’

Evaluate this claim.

[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: Continuing debates about female ordination and the role of women in Theravada Buddhism with reference to the work of Dhammananda and the Sakyadhita organisation. The debate leading to the revival of the Theravada order of nuns in the late 1990s.

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

For Buddhists there is little agreement about the ordination of women because Buddhism is made up of many traditions and cultures. For example, even with recent changes to the law surrounding ordination in Thailand, there is still a disagreement among some about the ordination of women. The opposition from some monastics and leaders means that there is little agreement. However, women have been ordained within the Theravada tradition and there are many who accept the ordination of women, which means that there is a move towards agreement.

There is little agreement about the ordination of women because there are seemingly conflicting teachings. The Buddha declined to ordain women at first, then later added extra rules to allow for the ordination of women. However, views about the status of women have been questioned since the time of the Buddha and the ordination of women remains a topic for discussion. This means that there is at least general agreement that the subject should be considered.

For some Buddhists there is little agreement about the status of women's ordination. Some Buddhists consider female ordination to be inferior to male ordination. This means that monks are considered to hold a higher status than nuns. However, the work of the Sakyadhita organisation has improved conditions for Buddhist women. As a result, there has been some movement towards dialogue within different traditions of Buddhism, with the hope that one day there will be complete agreement on the status of ordained women.

Maximum level 3 for answers which do not address whether there is agreement on ordination.

0 3 . 1

‘Religious sources of authority do not require miracles.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Buddhism and philosophy.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1.4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

AO1

Buddhism

There may be consideration of different Buddhist beliefs about the significance of the life of Gautama Buddha, for Theravada Buddhists with reference to his relevance as a role model and his authority as ‘the enlightened one’; the Mahayana view that the life and teaching of Gautama Buddha was ‘skillful means’ and the nature and authority of the Pali Canon.

Philosophy

There may be consideration of different understandings of ‘miracle’.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and philosophy.

AO2

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

Some Buddhists argue that Buddhist sources of authority do not require miracles. Hume defines miracles as maximally improbable violations of the laws of nature. The Buddha told his followers to test his teachings, and to base their belief on an empirical view of the world, so miracles are not required for the Buddhist sources of authority to be meaningful. However, for many Buddhists, miracles are needed to show that the Buddha was a special being. For example, some see the miraculous nature of the Buddha's birth as an indication of his authority.

Batchelor, a Secular Buddhist, explains that supernatural teachings within Buddhism reflect the world view of the Buddha, and that these are primarily agnostic in nature. For Batchelor, Buddhism still holds its importance without miracles. However, for many Buddhists, these aspects of Buddhism are important because they offer an insight into the nature of reality. These miracles support elements of belief which are important to many Buddhists, for example, rebirth.

For many Buddhists meditation is a source of authority. Some Buddhists would argue that meditation can be used as a therapy for all, for these Buddhists meditation may not be miraculous, but instead a way of focusing the mind and breath. However, there are many examples in Buddhist literature about meditation and how it can unleash powers which are not normally apparent, and this could be described as miraculous. This knowledge may be used as a source of authority by Buddhists, meaning that miracles are needed.

0 4 . 1

‘Science shows that it is not reasonable to believe in ultimate reality.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Buddhism and philosophy.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

AO1

Buddhism

There may be consideration of how and why science has influenced Buddhism, how scientific explanation has challenged belief in karma and in miracles and Buddhist responses to that challenge. The value of science: the Buddha’s attitude to the search for answers to unanswerable questions; the belief that science agrees with some Buddhist teaching with particular reference to quantum physics; the views of Thich Nhat Hanh and the 14th Dalai Lama about the relationship between Buddhism and science.

Philosophy

There may be consideration of arguments for the existence of God, their value for religious faith and the relationship between reason and faith; religious experience.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and philosophy.

AO2

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

Scientific discoveries about the nature of the universe have challenged Buddhist beliefs about ultimate reality. Many Buddhists believe in realms of rebirth. When a person dies, they are reborn in accordance with their karmic burden and manner of death. Scientific discoveries do not support this concept. However, some Buddhists interpret rebirth as the literal recycling of matter, and this may link with a scientific interpretation of the world. Therefore, belief in ultimate reality is reasonable.

Scientific challenges to religious experience may also show that belief in ultimate reality is unreasonable. Belief in Nirvana, the goal for Buddhists, may not be supported by science. However, the 14th Dalai Lama believes that there can be a dialogue between science and Buddhism, telling his followers to leave aside the Buddhist teachings which do not fit with a scientific idea of the world. This means that belief in ultimate reality can be reinterpreted to fit with new understandings of the world.

Buddhism and science may appear to be in conflict. Buddhist sources of wisdom and authority are not always supported by scientific method. For example, science may argue that rebirth and memories about rebirth gained at enlightenment could be false. However, quantum physics offers different interpretations to previously held beliefs of ultimate reality. This suggests the current human understanding of the nature of the universe is not complete. Belief in Buddhist concepts of impermanence is therefore reasonable.

0 5 . 1

‘Buddhist ethics do not deal effectively with issues concerned with marriage.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Buddhism and ethical studies.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

AO1

Buddhism

There may be consideration of different Buddhist views about marriage.

Ethics

There may be consideration of Natural Moral Law and Situation Ethics.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and ethical studies.

AO2

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

One issue concerns who may be married to whom. Among Buddhists there may be disagreement as to how Buddhist teachings, for example, the third precept regarding sexual misconduct, should be applied. This suggests that Buddhist ethics do not deal effectively with this. However, some Buddhists approach the issue in a similar way to Natural Moral Law, which is quite clear that procreation is the primary purpose of sex, and therefore same sex marriage is not permitted. For these Buddhists, Buddhist ethics do deal effectively with this issue.

Buddhist ethics are more concerned with the attainment of Nirvana, and for this reason Buddhist ethics are focused on this area and do not deal effectively with issues of marriage. However, some Buddhist suttas do deal with marriage and issues surrounding marriage, so the issues are dealt with effectively for some Buddhists. For example, the Siglovada Sutta offers guidance on how to have a successful marriage, and the Buddha offered advice about how to be compassionate within a marriage.

For some Buddhists, for example the monastic Sangha, celibacy is desirable. The Buddha left his wife and family to seek the path to enlightenment. This may mean that Buddhist ethics do not deal effectively with issues surrounding marriage because marriage is generally seen as a secular issue. However, Buddhist ethics has some similarities with virtue ethics. The development of the six perfections in Mahayana Buddhism may offer some support for conduct within a marriage, for example, the development of the perfection of patience. Therefore, some Buddhist ethical teachings do deal effectively with these issues.

0 6 . 1

‘Kant’s ethics are compatible with Buddhist ethical teaching.’

Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Buddhism and ethical studies.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1:4: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

AO1

Buddhism

There may be consideration of Buddhist views about good conduct and key moral principles.

Ethics

There may be consideration of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics, the key ideas of Kant about moral decision-making.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and ethical studies.

AO2

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

For Buddhists and Kant all beings are connected. As such, actions are necessarily universal because they inevitably have an impact upon others. Therefore, Kant's principle of universalisability seems compatible with Buddhist teaching. However, some Buddhists may argue that some individual actions which cannot be universalised may be necessary to help others achieve Nirvana for themselves. Those who have attained Nirvana can see what is skilful in a situation, and this means that Kant's ethics may not be compatible with Buddhist ethical teaching.

For both Buddhists and Kant the intention of an action is important. For Kant, good will is the most important aspect and people should act out of duty rather than from emotion or to bring about certain consequences. Similarly, the monastic Sangha may perceive a duty towards the lay community. For example, the bodhisattva vow may be seen as an expression of obligation to others. However, Buddhist ethics may not be based on duty to others. Arhats instead choose to undertake a personal spiritual journey towards enlightenment. This makes Kant's ethics incompatible with Buddhist ethical teaching.

Buddhist ethical teaching and Kant's ethics both offer an ultimate reward for good moral conduct. For Kant, it is the highest good; for Buddhists, it is Nirvana. However, for Buddhists, both skilful and unskilful, ethical decisions have a consequence. This is based on the ethical teaching of karma. Since Kant is not so concerned with consequences of ethical decision making, this may be incompatible with Buddhist ethical teaching.