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**AS**  
**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**7061/2A**

2A: BUDDHISM

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**Mark scheme**

2017 Specimen

Version 1.0

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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 Assessment Writer.

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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://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 on the following page 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 Principal 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

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|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Level 5</b><br><b>13-15</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding is accurate and relevant and is consistently applied to the question</li> <li>• Very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate</li> <li>• The answer is clear and coherent and there is effective use of specialist language and terminology</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Level 4</b><br><b>10-12</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding is mostly accurate and relevant and is mostly applied to the question</li> <li>• Good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate</li> <li>• The answer is mostly clear and coherent and specialist language and terminology is used appropriately</li> </ul>                |
| <b>Level 3</b><br><b>7-9</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding is generally accurate and relevant and is generally applied to the question</li> <li>• Some use of appropriate evidence and/or examples which may include textual /scriptural references where appropriate</li> <li>• The answer is generally clear and coherent with use of specialist language and terminology</li> </ul> |
| <b>Level 2</b><br><b>4-6</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding is limited and there is limited application to the question</li> <li>• Limited use of appropriate evidence and /or examples which may include textual /scriptural references where appropriate</li> <li>• Limited clarity and coherence and limited use of specialist language and terminology</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>Level 1</b><br><b>1-3</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding is basic</li> <li>• Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information</li> <li>• Basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary</li> </ul>  |
| <b>0</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No accurate or relevant material to credit</li> </ul>   |

**Levels of Response: 15 marks AS-Level – AO2**

- Level 5**  
**13-15**
- A very well-focused response to issues 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 issues 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 issues 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 issues raised
  - A point of view relevant to the issues 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 issues raised
  - A point of view is stated with some evidence or reasons in support
  - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information, and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit

## Buddhism

### Question 01

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**Explain the influence of belief in rebirth on Buddhist individuals and communities.**

**Target:** AO1:2 Knowledge and understanding of influences of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals communities and societies.

The influence of this belief may be evidenced in many ways including art, lifestyle and values, the lives of significant individuals, and cultural expressions

The emphasis in the answer should be on the link between the belief and its expression – the student should apply understanding of the belief, a presentation of it is not required.

There may be reference to a diversity of understandings of the belief, eg the view that the ‘afterlife’ is an image for present states of mind that arise from actions.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Belief in karma means an emphasis on consequences, both in this life and the next. The eightfold path is an expression of that belief.
- Stress on the idea of working together for common goals strengthens communal aspects, especially in monastic contexts.
- Protecting life and the environment – as individuals may return to it
- Respect for all forms of life.
- Expression of these beliefs in funeral rituals

For answers that present the belief(s) but make no link to influences - Max level 2  
Answers above level 3 must refer to the influence on both individuals and communities.

**[15 marks] AO1**

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 ‘As a goal of life, a better rebirth is more important to Buddhists than Nirvana (release from rebirth).’

**Assess this view.**

**Target:** AO2: Analysis and evaluation of aspects and approaches to religion and belief: significance

Students may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All valid arguments must be credited.

- Nirvana may be seen as an impossible goal, or one that may only be a vague hope for the future. However, it can also be seen as a state of mind within this life – one in which the power of desires is weakened bringing peace of mind and happiness as a result. This goal is both understandable and of immediate benefit.
- Working for a better rebirth means working for a better future life. This goal is understandable and its benefits are clear. However no matter how good a next rebirth may be, it will involve suffering and death because it is part of the wheel of Samsara – in the end a better rebirth may be seen as pointless.
- Nirvana is the goal of Buddhism and the purpose of the Buddha’s way, unlike rebirth which is merely a fact of life to be endured. Those who value rebirth above Nirvana are simply attached to existence and their preference is a sign of their ignorance.

**[15 marks] AO2**



**Question 02**

**0 2** . **1** **Explain the nature of the Pali Canon and its authority for Buddhists.**

**Target AO1:1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited.

**Nature**

- The Pali Canon is a collection of texts in the Pali language, this was not the language of the Buddha. The texts are the basis of Theravada teaching. There are different types of material in the Canon which has three divisions: a collection of texts setting out rules of conduct for the Sangha; sermons and teaching attributed to the Buddha and some of his followers; philosophical reflections on those teachings.
- According to tradition, this teaching was handed down orally before being put into writing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. The community tradition of reciting the whole of the text together was taken as a guarantee of its authenticity.

**Authority**

- There is debate in Buddhism about how far this is an accurate record of Buddha's teachings and different views among scholars. For Theravada Buddhists the Canon is the basis of their way of life and teachings, but a saying of the Buddha within the texts charges them to test all its truths through experience. This implies that personal experience is a higher authority than the text.
- In Mahayana Buddhism in general there is less certainty about how accurate the record is, and their belief in 'skillful means' means that they can see the teachings recorded in the texts as merely the best way of expressing the truths and explaining the path for the people of the day, rather than ultimate truths relevant for all times and all places.

Answers above level 3 must refer to both nature and authority.

**[15 marks] AO1**

**0 2** . **2** **‘Good moral conduct is the most important aspect of the Buddhist way of life.’**

**Assess this view.**

**Target:** AO2: Analysis and evaluation of aspects and approaches to religion and belief: significance.

Students may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All valid arguments must be credited.

- Moral actions are karma producing and an essential part of the 8-fold path and the six perfections of Mahayana Buddhism. However, the focus is not on the act itself but on the desire or drive it expresses. An apparently ‘good’ action that conforms with the teaching may have a negative and unhealthy drive behind it – such as giving charity in order to receive praise from others.
- Good moral conduct is seen as an essential basis for insight meditation because it stills the unhealthy drives within the personality by refusing them expression. However meditation or worship may be seen as equally important, all aspects of the path should be worked on together.
- The Buddhist way of life is so varied that it may be argued that it is impossible to generalise. Some focus on worship and faith, others on meditation. Lay Buddhists may focus on service to monks and others but worship or meditation may also play a part in their lives

**[15 marks] AO2**