
A-level
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
7062/2A

2A: BUDDHISM AND DIALOGUES

Mark scheme

2018 Specimen

Version 1.0

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

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 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 Principal Examiner.

Additional Guidance for assessment of Global answers.

When marking 25 mark global answers, markers should be aware that they are assessing both AO1 and AO2. Weightings for each assessment objective are as follows:

**AO1 10 marks
AO2 15 marks.**

The level descriptors for these answers include both AO1 and AO2 elements and markers will be making an assessment on that basis by applying both the AO1 and AO2 levels.

Full guidance will be given on how to assess such answers during standardisation.

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

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|-------------------------------|---|
| Level 5
9-10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No accurate or relevant material to credit |

Levels of Response: 15 marks A-Level – AO2

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|--------------------------------|--|
| Level 5
13-15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 use of subject vocabulary |
| Level 3
7-9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No accurate or relevant material to credit |

Section A: Study of Buddhism

Question 01

0 1 . 1 **Examine how Buddhist teaching helps Buddhists respond to the challenge of secularisation.**

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

Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited:

- Students should apply their knowledge and understanding of the challenges of secularisation, a summary is not required.
- Secularisation may be defined – perhaps in terms of the replacement of the authority / explanatory role of religion with science or the loss of the relevance and significance of religion in the modern world.
- A wide range of teachings and of contexts may be considered.
- Dalai Lama has affirmed secularism as respect for all religions, beliefs and human beings. Described secular ethics as benefiting all human beings.
- Reaffirmation of the teachings of Anicca which can co-exist with science in some respects.
- Buddhist psychology, Anatta, and insights into conditioned states can co-exist with secular psychology.
- Those traditions in Buddhism that have few overtly religious elements chime with modern society - absence of supernatural element, emphasis on self-help and development.
- Meditation chimes with modern interests in spirituality, holistic therapies and mindfulness.

[10 marks] AO1

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2

 'For Buddhists, secularisation is an opportunity rather than a challenge.'

Evaluate this claim.

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

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

This may, but need not, be answered exclusively with reference to the British context.

- It may be argued that Buddhism in Britain has benefited from the way secularisation has impacted on Christianity. Some forms of Buddhism provide a non-theistic path and moral guidance with few supernatural elements; however, those aspects of Buddhism may become detached from the teaching – for example, meditation as therapy may be used for its therapeutic benefits but not lead to any development of insight or of conduct. It is debatable how much of that practice can be considered Buddhist.
- Secularisation makes freedom of religion a right enshrined in law. This has encouraged the development of Buddhism alongside traditional Christian faith and culture; however without an existing lay community to support it, some forms of Buddhism have struggled to establish themselves, and secular materialist values result in Buddhism becoming commercial with individuals and some communities selling retreats and meditation programmes. This may be seen to distort Buddhism.
- New forms of Buddhism have developed – such as the FWBO (now known as triratna) and secular Buddhism; however these are very different from more traditional forms of Buddhism in many ways – there are differences of opinion among Buddhist scholars as to the nature of Buddhism – there may be reference to the views of Stephen Bachelor and David Brazier. Some Buddhist centres also seem to focus as much on preservation of culture rather than development of faith.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 02

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- Examine why there are different views in Buddhism concerning the issues of:**
- **marriage**
 - **homosexuality.**

You should refer to both issues.

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

Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.

Answers may refer to specific factors as indicated below and/or more generally to underlying reasons for change such as changes in the status of women outside of Buddhism and the rights given to women by secular governments.

Marriage

- Differing attitudes to the scriptures and the recorded example of Gautama Buddha. Those who take his life as exemplar leave family life in order to pursue enlightenment or avoid marriage altogether.
- In some traditions monks are celibate and marriage is regarded as an attachment to this world which will obstruct the path to Nirvana, family is renounced.
- Other traditions stress the path of a layman or see no contradiction between family life and the Buddha's path – they have other routes to Nirvana eg the actions of Bodhisattvas or meditation.
- Some see marriage as a source of contentment a depth relationship that provides security, a respectful and trustful relationship. That gives it positive advantages in the pursuit of healthy attitudes and peace of mind. It is judged by its consequences.

Homosexuality

- Differing attitudes to sexual appetite – regarded as a hindrance by some, a form of attachment or greed driving the wheel of samsara, The 5 precepts teach against sexual misconduct, there are varying interpretations of that. Monks should be celibate.
- Actions may be considered wrong only if they harm self or others, or are actions we would not want done to us or those we love. Homosexuality is therefore not intrinsically wrong, it depends on whether or not it is harmful.
- Others see nothing in it that obstructs the Buddhist path, as long as relationships are carried out with love for each other.

Maximum level 3 if only one issue addressed.

[10 marks] AO1

0 2 . **2** **'Buddhist feminism has had little impact on Buddhism.'**

Evaluate this claim.

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

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

Students should apply what they know and understand about feminism within the religion rather than simply summarising it.

- There may be reference to the 'starting point' – ie the status /role of women before feminism made any impact and a definition of 'feminism' in this context. Some scholarship identifies Buddhist feminism as a very recent movement eg the revival of the Theravada order of nuns did not take place until 1996, but other traditions have nuns, and there are small numbers of Buddhist nunneries in North America and Europe.
- It may be argued that many still believe that teachings attributed to the Buddha stating that women cannot achieve enlightenment and that their inclusion within the Sangha will shorten its life mean that they should not be ordained, but the Dalai Lama permits this where a tradition allows. Difficult to assess whether this is a result of Buddhist feminism or wider factors.
- There may be reference to many different Buddhist traditions including: the struggle for ordination within Theravada Buddhism in Thailand with reference to the work of the Sakyadhita organisation and its achievements; status of Buddhist nuns in Sri Lanka; lay Buddhism and recent Buddhist movements in Britain and elsewhere. Women are playing an increasingly high profile role in many contexts.

[15 marks] AO2

Section B: The dialogue between philosophy and Buddhism

Question 03

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 'Buddhist beliefs about the afterlife are reasonable.'

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

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

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

AO1

Students may include some of the following, but all relevant material should be credited.

- Buddhist beliefs about the afterlife. These may include: Samsara: the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; the wheel of becoming and the realms of becoming; karma; Tibetan Buddhist beliefs about the 14th Dalai Lama; Nirvana.
- Philosophical ideas about the possibility of continuing personal existence after death, including the nature and existence of the soul and Cartesian arguments. Note that candidates may apply these views and arguments to the nature and existence of karma /karmic potential.
- Evidence supporting Buddhist views such as scripture, religious experience and contemporary evidence for rebirth / reincarnation such as near death experiences and memories of past lives.

Max level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and philosophy.

AO2

The debate about how 'reasonable' the beliefs are may centre on the sources of authority that underpin them and/or the coherence of the concepts involved. Students may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All valid arguments must be credited.

- It may be argued that the evidence and arguments in support of these beliefs from scripture, religious experience, and contemporary evidence of rebirth/reincarnation in the human realm are inadequate. For example, religious experience may be argued to be subjective and unverifiable and/or better explained as the result of natural causes; scripture may be argued to derive its authority from such experiences and therefore to be undermined by the same arguments; much contemporary evidence also derives from religious experience (such as near death experiences) but these are open to the same challenges. 'Memories' and other evidence of past lives have been extensively investigated: some argue that there are alternative explanations for these; others offer a cumulative argument suggesting that the possibility of some form of rebirth / reincarnation is at least consistent with the evidence and may be the best explanation of it.
- Cartesian arguments in support of the existence of a soul may be applied to Tibetan Buddhist ideas about reincarnation and evaluated. Of particular relevance from the perspective of Buddhism may be a discussion of the nature of the soul Descartes is concerned with, and the degree to which the existence of a soul, or any other non-physical reality within the body, has any relevance to beliefs about the afterlife.
- The coherence of the beliefs may be challenged, for example ideas about rebirth /reincarnation raise issues concerning continuing personal identity. However, both Anatta and the wheel of becoming stress continuity through change.
- Some Buddhists argue that a belief in life after death should only be accepted on the basis of personal experience, they may therefore remain agnostic or interpret the teaching as referring to psychological states. This could be considered evidence of the impact of philosophy on Buddhist thought, however the demand to test all supposed 'truths' through experience can be traced back to the Buddha.

[25 marks] AO1/AO2

Question 04

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1

'Religious experience gives Buddhists knowledge of Ultimate Reality.'

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

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

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

AO1

Students may include some of the following, but all relevant material should be credited.

- Buddhist beliefs about religious experiences, especially the enlightenment experience of Gautama Buddha, as a source of knowledge about Ultimate Reality. NB. The concept of Ultimate Reality may be broadly interpreted example, Buddha /heavenly Bodhisattvas the three signs of existence; the truth of conditioned states; Nirvana.
- Philosophical views about such experiences including the challenges of verifying them. This may include the problems of subjectivity and the possibility of alternative natural explanations.
- An explanation of Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony and their implications for the way Buddhist religious experiences should be approached.

Max level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and philosophy.

AO2

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

- Against the principles of credulity and testimony it may be argued that there are many good reasons to argue that those reporting experiences of Ultimate Reality are lying, and that even if it is accepted that they are telling the truth, there are always good reasons to think that they could be mistaken about their experience. Such alternative explanations may be challenged, but some Buddhists do consider 'visions' resulting from meditation to be mind produced.
- If the assumption is that 'things are as they appear to be' then the absence of experiences of Buddhas, heavenly Bodhisattvas etc should be taken as evidence that these are not real; Swinburne rejects this argument on the basis that the principle deals only with positive experiences, not the absence of experience.
- It may be argued that religious experience is 'experiencing as'. The believer 'sees' or understands the experience in a particular way because of pre-existing beliefs and only those beliefs allow people to recognise what they experienced as Bodhisattavas /Buddhas / other realms of existence. Others lacking those prior beliefs would have the same experience but not believe they had experienced these realities, perhaps seeing them as a dream. However, some argue that religious experiences are self-authenticating: ineffability and the sense of the numinous guarantee they are genuine. They would argue that the believer and non-believer do not have 'the same' experience.
- Some Buddhists would accept psychological or physiological explanations of all religious experiences as part of their understanding of experience as a conditioned state. Their test for the authority of any idea is not how it was 'received' or realised by someone else, but their own experience and the effect of the truth revealed or realised on their lives. In this way philosophical insights become part of their exploration of experience and not an 'opposing' view.

[25 marks] AO1/AO2

Section C: The dialogue between ethics and religion

Question 05

0 5 . **1** **'Buddhist ideas of moral responsibility have been undermined by understandings of the nature of free will.'**

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

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

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

AO1

Students may include some of the following, but all relevant material should be credited.

Buddhism rejects both absolute free will and absolute determinism, but accepts conditioned free will.

- All human actions lie within the continuum of change described in the wheel of becoming – all states are conditioned states. The effects of karma limit the choices that any individual is capable of making.
- Karma is generated by volitional acts – it can be defined as 'will' and much Buddhist teaching emphasises that individuals have some control over the karma they produce.
- Free will may be linked with the radiant mind (Theravada) an unconditioned dimension of consciousness that cannot be thought about or analysed rationally.

Perspectives from ethical studies vary, and include the following.

- Libertarianism: humanity is free to make decisions unconstrained by nature or by any other external power.
- Hard determinism: all events, including those in the brain, are determined by prior causes.
- Compatibilism: free will is consistent with determinism, humans have limited freedom to act within their own nature.

Max level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and ethical studies.

AO2

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

Hard determinism challenges the idea that humans have ‘will’ or volition, but it is mechanical in its understanding, and Buddhism puts priority on mind/consciousness as the determining factor, not body/material. The priority of mind means that what science/philosophy sees as a chain of cause and effect, Buddhism sees as a way of mentally organising perceptions. As such philosophy is only relatively true.

Libertarianism challenges Buddhist ideas of conditionality but is challenged by common experiences of how human actions are influenced by circumstance and prior states of consciousness.

Compatibilism seems to support Buddhist ideas that the human will is both determined and ‘free’. However if compatibilism is defined as our freedom to act according to our desires it does not actually address the problem of the cause of those desires.

The coherence of Buddhist concepts can be challenged, not least the presence of an unconditioned ‘radiant mind’ beyond the 6 ordinary levels of consciousness and beyond thought and analysis. Buddhism claims that this can be known through direct non-dual awareness but not by intellect. That insulates it from rational investigation but opens it up to the charge that it is an idea invented to explain the unexplained.

[25 marks] AO1/AO2

Question 06

0 6 . **1** **'Buddhist understandings of the status and rights of animals have been undermined by ethical studies into animal rights.'**

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

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

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

AO1

'Status and rights' may be treated holistically. The answer may be approached in a variety of ways,.

Students may include some of the following, but all relevant material should be credited.

Buddhist beliefs vary.

- Buddhism teaches that all life is connected – animals and humans are simply different expressions of karma and as such similarly deserving.
- A second strand of thought in Buddhism sees rebirth as an animal as a result of bad karma, as such they do not deserve the respect given to human beings.
- The principle of ahimsa is generally extended to non-human animal life.

Perspectives from ethical studies vary, and include the following.

- According to some ethicists, higher order animals may not be clearly distinguished from mentally handicapped humans or babies, this suggests they should have equal rights. Bentham argued that all sentient beings should be taken into account when calculating the utility of an action.
- Others make a clear distinction between the rights /status of humans and those of non-human animals. This may be based on personhood of human beings or on human beings as 'ends in themselves'.
- Many virtue ethicists argue that harming animals, directly or indirectly, conflicts with virtues we should be developing such as respect for the interests of others and compassion.

Max level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and ethical studies.

AO2

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

- The theoretical underpinning of Buddhist views (karma and rebirth) may be considered irrelevant by ethicists but many do share the view that animals have comparable rights to human beings. It might be argued that Buddhism shares with Bentham the view that animals have rights because they suffer rather than the view held by others that some animals have rights because they are intelligent.
- Against those Buddhists who argue that animals do not merit 'rights' comparable to human beings are the similarities between non-human and human animals such as ability to feel pain and fear, and, some claim, to think, grieve and make moral decisions. However others see this as humans anthropomorphising animal behaviour and seeing 'personhood' where none exists.
- The extension of the principle of ahimsa to animals may be supported by Virtue Ethics on the grounds that the key Buddhist virtue of compassion is not developed through harming animals or tolerating practices that result in their harm. However, some Buddhists are meat eaters and use animal products which would be criticised as inconsistent with virtue.
- The Buddhist principle of ahimsa may be considered idealistic and impractical when applied to animals. For example, the culling of some animals may be necessary to prevent the greater suffering of the greater number. Some ethicists argue that the omission of 'causing harm' here is worse than its commission, but the principle seems to rule this out. Similar dilemmas arise with killing disease carrying insects and killing in self-defence.

[25 marks] AO1/AO2