

## Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit 3G: *World Religions 1: Buddhism*

Additional Specimen Questions

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a dictionary page. The word 'resource' is prominently displayed in a large, bold, black serif font. Below it, the text 'or supply of n' and 'adopted in ad' is visible. To the right, the phonetic transcription '/ri's' is partially visible. The background text is out of focus, showing words like 'counter or L.' and 'sonal'.

**GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION  
ADVANCED LEVEL**



**RELIGIOUS STUDIES UNIT 3G  
WORLD RELIGIONS 1 BUDDHISM**

**RST3G**

**ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN QUESTIONS**

**For this paper you must have:**

- a 12 page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book.  
The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is **RST3G**.
- Answer **two** questions.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 100.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- In each question, part (a) tests your knowledge and understanding, while part (b) tests your skills of reasoning and evaluation.
- You will be marked on your ability to use English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Answer **two** questions.

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- 1** (a) (30 marks)  
(b) (20 marks)
- 2** (a) (30 marks)  
(b) (20 marks)
- 3** (a) Examine the aims and methods of Buddhist meditation. (30 marks)  
(b) Assess the view that meditation is the most essential practice for a Buddhist. (20 marks)
- 4** (a) (30 marks)  
(b) (20 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**



## **GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN MARK SCHEME WORLD RELIGIONS 1 BUDDHISM RST3G**

Mark schemes are normally prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. When published, a mark scheme normally includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in the examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of this 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.

## RST3G: World Religions 1 *Buddhism*

### 1 (a) Examine the aims and methods of Buddhist meditation.

Candidates may choose to cover a number of different Buddhist traditions' practice of meditation, or be more selective.

**Samatha (and to some extent Vipassana) meditation methods** might include some, or all, of the following:

- Comfortable meditation – posture; sitting in one of a number of positions with hands resting in a mudra possibly with the stronger hand supporting the weaker one and the thumbs lightly touching.
- Chanting may be mentioned as a warm-up exercise.
- Thorough observation is required.
- Mental images (maybe of the Buddha-rupa) could be used as a meditational focus.
- Breathing or another bodily function process (non-sexual) or even physical objects could be used by the meditator such as kasinas (coloured discs).
- Anapanasati is one of the most popular methods of meditation – sat in the mindfulness of breathing.
- Reflection on the qualities that the Buddha possessed.

**Zen methods** might include some or all of the following:

- Zazen or sitting meditation a main technique.
- Facing a wall or cupboard with all one's possessions as a focal point away from attachment.
- Mondo and koan are a major feature of Zen meditational practice.

Some of the aims of meditation might include:

- To allow the mind to focus away from attachment.
- To help concentrate on aspects of dukkha.
- For an approach to enlightenment.
- To bring body and mind together in harmony.
- To achieve altered states of consciousness (primarily with Vipassana meditation).
- To appreciate calm, concentrated effort.
- To gain 'collectedness'.
- To suspend the five hindrances.
- To focus on the five factors of jnana.
- To achieve a state of equanimity (upekkha).
- To gain an understanding of the six knowledge's (abhinnas).

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) Assess the view that meditation is the most essential practice for a Buddhist.**

**Agree with the view**

- Through meditation one realises nirvana and this is the goal for most Buddhists.
- The Buddha taught this practice as the best way to achieve enlightenment and Buddhists will want to follow his example.
- It fulfils the Four Noble Truths.
- There is an emphasis in Buddhism on empiricism and the practice of meditation and Buddhist groups gathering for the practice might be regarded as absolutely essential.
- Buddhist monasteries and the Sangha in general stress meditation as essential.
- The word 'Zen' means meditation, which naturally reflects its importance. Likewise the Word 'Ch'an' in Chinese Buddhism means meditation so stresses its importance too.

**Disagree with the view**

- If the right teacher is not found, some argue that meditation can lose its significance.
- It needs to be performed correctly.
- It is a difficult practice to master and the fulfilling of other aspects of Buddhism, e.g. pilgrimage, being moral, giving dana, etc. might be deemed by some as more realisable and more significant for future rebirths.
- 'Engaged Buddhism' is rapidly being seen as the most important development in Buddhism in the modern age and may be regarded by some as superseding meditation.

Equal emphasis should be given to all three trainings.

**(20 marks) AO2**