

AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
7061/2A

Paper 2A Buddhism

Mark scheme

June 2023

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.

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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 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

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Explain the relevance of Buddha's teaching about Dukkha.**[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 the mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

One reason why Buddha's teaching about Dukkha is relevant is that it is a key element of Buddhism. The first noble truth is that all life contains Dukkha. There are three types of Dukkha: physical suffering, change or impermanence, and psychological angst. The Buddha teaches that clinging to the concept of self and not accepting impermanence causes Dukkha. Understanding Dukkha is critical to understanding the four noble truths.

Another reason why the teaching about Dukkha is relevant is because it allows Buddhists to understand why they are suffering. The Buddha says Dukkha is caused by craving, leading to the three poisons which are greed, hatred, and ignorance. The three poisons generate karma and keep beings trapped within the samsaric cycle.

A final reason is that the teachings explain that there is an escape from Dukkha. They give Buddhists a clear path to be free from all types of suffering. For example, the fourth noble truth gives clear guidance of how this is possible, through following the eightfold path. For example, the Dharma is universal and offers a solution to all.

[15 marks] AO1.1

0 1 . 2

‘Buddhist scripture successfully describes Nirvana.’

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 consideration of the following specification content: Nirvana: Nirvana in this life and after death; Nirvana as indescribable and beyond understanding; attempts in scripture to describe it and their strengths and weaknesses with reference to the 80th dilemma of the Questions of King Milinda.

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

For some Buddhists Nirvana is successfully described by Buddhist scriptures. In the 80th dilemma of the Questions of King Milinda, Nagasena describes Nirvana using things that are known to exist, such as the ocean. While the ocean exists, it is impossible to know how much water is in the ocean, or how many creatures live there. It is possible to describe Nirvana to the same extent that it is possible to describe the ocean. However, other Buddhists argue that descriptions of Nirvana are irrelevant, and are like pointing a finger at the moon. All the teachings are tools to help understanding; Nirvana can never truly be described.

In the second part of the 80th dilemma, Nagasena uses formless deities to explain the nature of Nirvana. This description is successful because, although the existence of formless deities cannot be proven, many people believe that they exist. However, there are also many who do not believe that formless deities exist. Just because some people believe that they exist, it does not mean that this explanation helps to describe successfully what Nirvana is.

Nagasena uses metaphors to explain the concept of Nirvana. For example, Nirvana is like a lotus, untarnished by water. This means that Nirvana is untarnished by evil dispositions. This is successful because it provides a description that Nirvana is a good thing, free from evil. However, it is clear from the other descriptions that Nirvana is not a lotus flower and this description contributes nothing to understanding Nirvana. Therefore, scripture fails to describe Nirvana.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 2

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Explain why there are different Buddhist views on the nature and purpose of meditation.

[15 marks]

Target: AO1.3: Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including causes 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 the mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

One reason there are different views about meditation is that Buddhists may have different ideas about its purpose. For some Buddhists, the purpose of meditation is to achieve enlightenment. For example, some Buddhists practise meditation to develop correct and clear awareness about the nature of reality, working towards reaching enlightenment. For others, the aim of meditation is to achieve a better rebirth. Some Buddhists practise meditation to help develop the skills of deep concentration, helping to achieve a better rebirth.

Another reason that there are different views about the nature of meditation is because there has been a rise in the number of people using meditation as a therapy. Mindfulness is offered as therapy by many organisations, such as the National Health Service. Some Buddhists argue that Buddhist meditation is an effective form of therapy, and Buddhist teachings are not needed for the practice to be useful. Some Buddhists disagree with this because meditation should not be separated from its spiritual meaning.

A third reason that there are alternative views about the purpose of meditation is due to the many different varieties of meditation practised within Buddhism. Buddhists may focus on different types of meditation to develop different aspects of their spirituality. For example, many Buddhists use Metta Bhavana meditation to help them overcome anger and hatred. Others may use candles or sutras to help them focus on aspects of the eightfold path.

Maximum Level 2 for answers that only explain different views.

[15 marks] AO1.3

0 2 . 2

‘The most important thing for Buddhists is good intention.’**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 consideration of the following specification content: Good conduct: the importance of good moral conduct in the Buddhist way of life; the importance of intention; actions as kusala (healthy) or akusala (unhealthy); the extent of human free will and moral responsibility.

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

For Buddhists intent is especially important because good conduct comes from good intention. For example, the eightfold path includes right intention. An act that appears to be good, for example giving to charity, may have an unhealthy drive or desire behind it. The focus is not on the act itself, but on the intention. However, another important teaching is right view. Many Buddhists argue that it is impossible to have the right intention without first having the right view about reality. Right view provides the understanding of reality needed to establish the right intention.

The Buddha spoke repeatedly about right intention, meaning that for many Buddhists it is the most important thing. Right intention comes from carefully considering actions and the motive behind them. However, the law of karma operates in such a way that the consequences of actions have the same importance as intentions. Taking responsibility for the results of one’s thoughts and actions is an essential part of Buddhist teaching.

In the Sangha, renunciation may be the right intention. For the monastic Sangha this involves leaving worldly possessions behind and pursuing a spiritual life. Lay Buddhists may also renounce attachment to the material world. The intention of renunciation is important. However, other Buddhists argue that no single teaching is more important than another. All things are linked and interconnected so that all teachings are important, not just right intention.

[15 marks] AO2