

Religious studies

Answers and commentaries
A-level (7062)

Component 2A: Study of religion and dialogues: Buddhism

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

This resource is to be used alongside the A-level Religious Studies Paper 2A Study of Religion and Dialogues: Buddhism June 2022 Question paper.

10 mark question (AO1) mark scheme

Levels of response: 10 marks A-level – AO1	
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 reference 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.

15 mark question (AO2) mark scheme

Levels of response: 15 marks A-level – AO2	
Level 5 13-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. • Perspective 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 issues(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	<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.

10 mark question (AO1)

Question 1.1

Examine why there are different Buddhist views about celibacy and marriage.

[10 marks]

Mark scheme

Please refer to mark scheme on [page 3 for levels of response](#).

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 this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note: 'celibacy and marriage' may be treated as a single idea.

One reason for the difference is that in Theravada Buddhism the code of discipline for monks requires celibacy but the code of conduct for lay Buddhists does not. For monks, all sexual activity is forbidden. It is seen as feeding desire and attachment which they are working to overcome. Lay Buddhists, however, may marry and have children. For them sex is a normal part of life, but they have to avoid adultery and ensure that they are not harming their partner in any way.

Another reason is that many believe, based on the teaching of the Buddha, that all Buddhist teaching should be tested through experience and not taken as absolute. One should follow the Middle Way between self-indulgence and harmful self-denial, so it is up to each person to decide what is right for them in terms of sexual expression. For some people celibacy could be harmful, for others it may come naturally. Some may need the security of a marriage relationship to achieve any degree of mental peace, others may not.

Buddhist attitudes may be affected by the society in which Buddhism is being practised. For example, Buddhism in a secular western society may accept sex before marriage, and see it as a natural part of growing up for many people, but in another context it may be seen as harmful and wrong. Marriage has a different significance in different countries, so it may be a positive step, giving legal rights and protection to children, but there may be valid alternatives. It may be judged simply according to how harmful or positive it could be.

Maximum Level 2 for answers that only explain the different views.

Student responses

Response A

There are many different branches of Buddhism which can share different views about celibacy and marriage. However, all Buddhists strive ~~for~~ for enlightenment and to extinguish the three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance so they share the main views. Despite this, due to ~~see~~ globalisation, Buddhism has spread all over the world so the impact of cultural relativism has meant that some Buddhist views vary due to the society they are situated in.

Celibacy is the practice of refraining from sexual intercourse. This is practiced by all monks and nuns living in the monastery as sex ~~leaves~~ is an act of fulfilling desires which is one of the three poisons which will lead to the renewal of the cycle of samsara. It also leads to attachment to this pleasure which causes suffering due to the Dukkha of change due to Anicca as all things are in a constant change of flux so you suffer when you become attached to temporary pleasures. No sexual intercourse is one of the parajikas so requires expulsion from the monastery if it is transgressed. ~~#~~ Sensual misconduct is one of the 5 moral precepts so this includes sexual misconduct which forbids causing suffering through sexual acts therefore adultery is forbidden. Buddhists also follow in the example of the Buddha who practiced celibacy as part of his renunciation therefore it is a common practice.

However, laymen ~~and~~ lay Buddhists who are also part of the fourfold sangha may not follow the parajikas ~~seem~~ and in some ~~see~~ cultures it is permitted to not be celibate and still practice Buddhism. However, they will abide by the 5 moral precepts as these hold great significance for Buddhists for example, in Theravada Buddhism the monks and lay people join in to recite the 227 ~~pre~~ rules every fortnight showing rules do have significance. They should ensure they don't cause suffering so would refrain from sensual misconduct. ~~#~~ Due to the secularisation and globalisation of Buddhism,

it has spread all over the world and so many traditional practices that Buddha expounded 2,500 years ago run 'against the grain', of ~~the~~ the modern, westernised world. Davie said 'people believe without belonging', therefore people may practice Buddhism without following the dogmas therefore views about celibacy vary.

Marriage can lead to attachment so for some Buddhists, they believe renunciation is not just about renouncing material possessions but also relationships in order to progress on the individual journey towards enlightenment. For example, Buddha left his ~~first~~ wife and newly born son on his path to enlightenment so some Buddhists follow this example. However, other Buddhists view marriage as acceptable as long as it is in a caring, loving relationship as this is suitable for upbringing children and reduces suffering. However, views on marriage are highly dependent on the views of the society. In Sri Lanka for example, polygamy is accepted but in other westernised cultures, this is seen as wrong. At the time of the Buddha in ancient India, views on marriage differed greatly to some secular societies today therefore views differ. One stable factor however is the absence of God in their union.

This is a Level 5 response

This response successfully responds to all aspects of the question. The student has clearly explained why there are differing ideas about celibacy and marriage. They have given detailed examples and developed the response with good breadth and depth of knowledge. The student explores differences between groups of Buddhists, the lay and monastic sangha, as well as different ways of following the example of the Buddha. These points are supported with Buddhist teachings and examples. This makes this a clear Level 5, full mark response to the question.

10 marks

Response B

Views on Celibacy are seen as good thing within Buddhism as it reframes others from committing sexual misconduct, it's part of the Vinaya code to not indulge in lustful act including masturbation. However, when it comes to the lay people they are encouraged to have sex so that they reproduce more men to join the Sangha which will continue the lineage of Buddhism. Not only Bhikku and Bhikkunis follow celibacy but also gay people are advised to be celibate since in Theravada Buddhism they are seen as lustful beings.

For Buddhism Marriage is not a sacrament as it is not seen as important due to their views on romantic relationships which is viewed negatively since it causes attachments to form between the partners which will lead to dukkha. They believe that marriage can also distract one's path to enlightenment due to problems such as children and commitment within the relationship, when it comes to same sex marriage a few will have a Buddhist to officiate the wedding such as the dai luma in Tibet had officiated a lesbian couple.

This is a Level 2 response

This response gives some detail about marriage and celibacy, and the student implies that the lay and monastic sangha might be following different rules, but this is not explained or developed in enough detail to achieve Level 3. The knowledge shown is limited, with limited development of the points which have been made. For example, the point in the second paragraph about attachment causing Dukkha doesn't explain why this might be the case. The points about same sex marriage and relationships are a valid response to the question, but they are not developed enough and lack detailed examples.

3 marks

15 mark question (AO2)

Question 2.2

'Gautama Buddha is very important as a role model for Buddhists.'

Evaluate this claim.

[15 marks]

Mark scheme

Please refer to mark scheme on [page 4 for levels of response](#).

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: The Buddha: the significance 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 'skilful means', with reference to the parable of the burning house in the Lotus Sutra.

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

Theravada Buddhists believe Gautama Buddha was an ordinary man who showed, by example, the way to achieve enlightenment. He can therefore be a role model, and monks follow his example in leaving their families and renouncing possessions, and by adopting his meditation practices. However, lay Buddhists do not follow his example in this way, so it may be of less importance to them. Life has changed so much since Gautama's time that much of his example may be of limited relevance today, and provide little help for Buddhists facing modern dilemmas.

The example of Gautama, which allows him to be used as a role model, appears in scripture such as the Pali Canon. Some see this as an accurate record of how he achieved enlightenment, and so an illustration of the path to be followed. However, the accuracy of the record is widely challenged because it was compiled from oral tradition long after his death, and scriptures vary greatly between different traditions. Also, Gautama is recorded as saying that each individual should find their own path, which suggests that a single example cannot apply to all.

Theravada Buddhism regards Gautama as unique. He is the human Buddha who is to be followed, which makes his example very important. However, for Mahayana Buddhists he is only one example of Buddha-nature, an example suited to his time and place, and matched by many other examples of different ways in which the goal can be reached. This reduces his

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importance as a role model. In some forms of Buddhism there is much more emphasis on sharing the merit of heavenly Bodhisattvas rather than on earning good karma for yourself by doing what Gautama did.

Student responses

Response A

It is clear that Gautama Buddha is a very important role model for Buddhists today as many follow in his footsteps and practice his Dharma in order to reach Nirvana and escape suffering. There is no denying the influence of Gautama Buddha as a role model for Buddhists.

For Theravada Buddhists, Buddha has great authority as a role model. ~~But~~ Gautama ~~is~~ Buddha was a Sammasam Buddha therefore overcame suffering by his own means without any external help. He 'set the wheel of Dharma spinning' in the first place. He received no help but realised through the four sights the extent of suffering in the world and so strove to find an answer. Theravada Buddhists believe that through his commitment and dedication, he found the answer to overcome suffering and through his enlightenment, saw the true nature of reality. Therefore, Buddha is a role model for Theravada Buddhists as he ~~helped~~ independently found the answer to suffering.

Mahayana Buddhists however believe that you can receive help to become enlightened so potentially Buddha may be less of a role model as he received help. For example, Mahayana Buddhists can chant to Bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteshvara, ~~the~~ the Bodhisattva of compassion who is depicted with 1,000 arms in order to help people. This leads some Theravada Buddhists to view Mahayana Buddhism as an illegitimate 'cheat' Buddhism however Mahayana Buddhists believe that through Upaya, Buddha taught skilful means so only taught to meet the spiritual capacity of the audience so what they added later in their sutras is actually closer to the truth. This suggests that Gautama Buddha may be seen ~~as~~ as more of a role model in Theravada Buddhism in comparison to Theravada

Buddhism.

However, some view Buddha as having acted ~~immorally~~ ~~in~~ immorally in his life when renouncing his material possessions, he left his wife and newly born son in order to pursue his spiritual path. This runs 'against the grain of the western world' and many view it as having not acted compassionately. However, Buddha Siddhartha ~~is~~ performed renunciation in order to find the answer to suffering for everyone therefore many view it as just as it was for the greater good to 'save the many'. Buddha said that 'one ~~can~~ who is stuck in the mud cannot help another who is also stuck in the mud', showing he needed to overcome his personal suffering to find the cure. Through enlightenment, he discovered the 4 Noble Truths and the 'true nature of reality', allowing him to teach the Eightfold Path as the way to end suffering. Therefore, Buddha is a role model.

However, some see Buddha's teachings or Dharma as having a greater authority than him as a role. Buddha's Dharma contains all his teachings about the true nature of existence and ways to act compassionately and overcome suffering. The Sutta Pitaka is part of the Tipitaka of the Pali Canon which contains all Buddha's teachings. The Abhidhamma Pitaka contains a philosophical treatment of the Dharma so is useful for skilled monks and teachers. Therefore, some Buddhists view his Dharma as more important than the Buddha as it contains the methodology needed to overcome suffering and become enlightened.

However, Buddha and his Dharma cannot be separated. Buddha said that when 'one looks at the Dharma they see me and when one looks at me they see the Dharma', which suggests the 'Buddha is his Dharma', so we cannot separate them and they have equal significance. Also, we cannot become attached to

the Dhamma as attachment is one of the three poisons and inevitably leads to suffering due to Anicca as everything is impermanent. Buddha stressed the importance of going out and experiencing the real world and testing his teachings so many Buddhists do see Buddha as an important role model as they listen to his words of wisdom and test his teachings for themselves.

Another argument why Buddha may not be an as important role model for Buddhists as first presumed is he was a historical figure and just a human. Karen Armstrong said Buddhists, 'do not view him as a God', as he was a historical figure. Therefore, some view him as having less authority as a role model. However, for others, the fact he was a human gives him more authority as a role model as it means enlightenment is achievable and they can follow in his footsteps to achieve it likewise.

Mahayana Buddhists argue that after death you can either enter Pari-Nirvana and escape the cycle of ~~samsara~~ ^{samsara} or re-enter the cycle to 'go forth for the welfare of the many', and help others achieve enlightenment as a Bodhisattva. They believe the Dalai Lama is the manifestation of the Bodhisattva of compassion so may view the Dalai Lama as also being a role model. They see Buddha as still being active in the world so despite not being a God, still has supernatural elements so view Buddha as a role model as they follow what he said and take the Bodhisattva vow and 'vow to save them'.

Overall, Buddha does have great importance as a role model for Buddhists. Buddhists follow what he did to achieve enlightenment by practising the middle way between materialism and asceticism and follow the eightfold path

and meditate - Despite some such as Paul Williams saying 'before looking at the life story of the Buddha we must first look at his Dharma, Buddha and his Dharma have great significance ~~to~~ Batchelor said it is his 'footsteps we will find at the end of the path', so ~~we should~~ Buddhists view Buddha as a role model as he first attained enlightenment.

This is a Level 5 response

This is a well-developed response. The student has given a clear argument for and against the statement, with critical analysis and a line of argument running throughout their answer. The points are fully explained with good detail and development, and a wide range of appropriate and relevant evidence used in support.

15 marks

Response B

Gautama Buddha is seen to be a very important role model for all Buddhists, both traditionally and in the ~~secular~~ modernised age. His teachings run throughout the Pali Canon, particularly in the Vinaya Pitaka and the Sutta Pitaka where stories of his birth and his path to enlightenment can be found. This provides the Buddha with authority so people tend to look up at him as a role model and follow his actions throughout their own lives. For example, the Buddha renounced his marriage to focus on reaching enlightenment and, as the Sangha suggests, many monks and nuns have both done the same when they enter the Sangha. Due to this, they can then focus and concentrate on the Buddha's dharma, further suggesting how he is a role model for Buddhists as many follow what he did.

This, however, is not always the case where some may not see Gautama Buddha as being very important as a role model for Buddhists because he could just be seen as a means to an end. It is said that thoughts of ending suffering

and finding peace within is inevitable and it just happened to be Siddhartha Gautama who found this middle way, regardless of the prophecy which suggested he would either become a king or a great religious leader. This can also be said about his dharma and that the Buddha's teachings may hold more authority than he does as that's what the Buddha himself said to focus on. With this in mind, it could be said that Siddhartha Gautama Buddha is not seen to be a very important role model for Buddhists in either the traditional or contemporary sense.

Whilst this is true for some, other Buddhists may also say that having the Buddha as a role model could be seen as worldly attachments, which ~~the~~ the Buddha clearly teaches should be avoided. He is also not able to comment on ^{specific} modern issues such as ~~the~~ abortion or cloning, despite some teachings ~~that~~ could be vaguely applied to such matters. From this point of view, 'worshipping'

or looking up to the Buddha would then distract you from reaching enlightenment, which goes against everything the Buddha has taught, meaning that Gautama Buddha would not be very important as a role model for Buddhists.

In conclusion, whilst some may see the Buddha in high regards with ^{having} authority over others, I disagree with the statement at hand and don't believe that Gautama Buddha is an important role model for Buddhists. He, himself, is important and so are his teachings but regarding the Buddha as a role model would fully go against what he taught and so would ^{defying} ~~defy~~ his authority within ^{our} ~~his~~ dharma.

This is a Level 3 response

This is a clear Level 3 response: the student gives different opinions for and against the statement but with no critical analysis of these points; this means the response cannot move to Level 4. The answer is general with some relevant information but the points are not developed enough for the top of Level 3.

7 marks

25 mark question (AO1 and AO2)

Question 5.1

'Bentham's way of making moral decisions is compatible with Buddhist ethics.'

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

[25 marks]

Mark scheme

Please refer to mark scheme on [page 3 for levels of response for AO1](#) and [page 4 for levels of response for AO2](#).

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

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects 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

Buddhist ethics may be unpacked in terms of the five precepts and the six perfections, including reference to the principle of ahimsa and to intention. There may be reference to the importance of the consequences of the action, both for the individual carrying it out and more widely.

Ethics

Bentham's key ideas may be identified as: how consequences of pain or pleasure determine whether an action is right or wrong; the goal of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, the hedonic calculus and the equality of pleasures. Bentham's approach may be identified as act utilitarianism, meaning that each situation is judged on its own merits rather than any moral rules or laws applied.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Buddhism and Bentham's way of making moral decisions.

AO2

There are likely to be many issues on which both Bentham and Buddhism would reach the same conclusions, because the pursuit of the greatest good/ happiness of the greatest number is consistent with the Buddhist emphasis on compassion. However, Bentham's system potentially justifies any action as long as it contributes to that goal while the precepts and perfections of Buddhism do appear to some to be rules which prohibit certain actions completely, regardless of their consequences. For example, ahimsa would seem to rule out causing pain to a minority even if it increased the pleasure of the majority.

Bentham's goal of the greatest happiness for the greatest number would appear to be consistent with the Buddhist emphasis on ahimsa and the ending of Dukkha. However, for Bentham all pleasures are equal while for Buddhism true happiness is the end of all desires, not the fulfilling of them in this life, which appears to be Bentham's priority. The focus of Buddhism could be seen as the mental adjustment needed to cope with suffering rather than practical steps to end it.

Both Bentham and Buddhism pay great attention to the consequences of actions, making experience the arbiter of whether the action is 'right' or 'wrong', and requiring those consequences to be considered before the action is carried out. However, for Buddhism the intention behind the action is important, while in Bentham's view it is not, since it has no effect on the outcome of the action.

Student responses

Response A

Many of the main principles of Bentham's decision making is compatible with Buddhism such as acting compassionately to the greatest number however they have major disagreement on the idea of pleasure. They are mostly compatible.

Bentham's ~~main~~ way of moral decision making is Act utilitarianism which is a teleological approach to consequentialist approach to decision making. In his Act utilitarianism, Bentham's main guiding principle is to bring happiness for the greatest number, ~~we should~~ the judge of whether an action is right or wrong is not by duty or moral obligation as it is Kantian ethics but is about what brings about the most happiness and pleasure for the many. He argued that if you chose the action which brings about happiness for the many and minimises pain, you are acting virtuously. He argued that the end goal ~~is to~~ (telos) is to achieve happiness.

Bentham proposed his hedonic calculus to compare if actions will achieve the right balance by producing more happiness and pleasure than pain. This includes 6 factors for example, the extent of the pain and pleasure produced, the intensity of pain and pleasure and the duration of pain and pleasure so how long it lasts. This shows that Bentham's way of making moral decisions is forward looking and aims to consider the consequences. He argued that we need to not prescribe set rules for each situation but should ~~not~~ calculate using the hedonic calculus the pleasure and pain created in each situation. This promotes individual autonomy to be empowered to make your own decisions however

with individual freedom to make your own moral choices, there is always the risk of people making decisions to favour themselves due to the natural tendency of humans towards selfishness. ~~Bentham~~ As stated by Bentham: 'not all men are angels'.

However, Bentham's utilitarian ethical system avoids issues with using absolute rules. It avoids immoral outcomes for the sake of fulfilling duty. Bentham grew up in a wealthy family, but ~~but~~ when studying law, ~~then~~ he saw how the legal system favoured the rich and how the poor were neglected in society through ^{the} unjust legal system. He therefore aimed to create his own ~~to~~ way of making moral decisions which treat everyone as equals. Therefore, when calculating pain and pleasure, one person is equal to another person in spite of wealth and status, gender, ^{and} sexuality. Therefore, Bentham's ~~in~~ utilitarianism is a very inclusive ethical system which aims to prevent suffering and pain. However, criticisms arise as he seems to ignore the minority ~~but~~ but it is clear that if decisions favoured the minority, then more people would lose out so his is the fairest method.

Bentham's Act utilitarian and Buddhist ethics are compatible. Bentham's way of moral decision making is aimed at reducing the amount of pain and suffering for the majority ~~who~~ and Buddhism decision making is similarly aimed at reducing suffering. The 5 moral precepts in Buddhism are in place to reduce suffering for the greatest number. For example, the first precept to abstain from killing living beings aims to reduce suffering of the victims, the killer and to a wider extent the loved ones of the victim. In this sense, they

Bentham's act utilitarian and Buddhist ethics are compatible. Bentham's way of moral decision making is aimed at reducing the amount of pain and suffering for the majority and Buddhist decision making is similarly aimed at reducing suffering. The 5 moral precepts in Buddhism are in place to reduce suffering for the greatest number. For example, the first precept to abstain from killing living beings aims to reduce suffering of the victims, the killer and to a wider extent the loved ones of the victims. In this sense, they are compatible.

However, arguably the main difference between Buddhism and Bentham is their view on pleasure. Bentham viewed pleasure as something to strive for and happiness is the end goal of humanity. However, Buddhism views pleasure as hostile to attaining enlightenment. Pleasure suggests the fulfillment of temporary desires. Pleasure thus causes suffering as people become attached to this temporary state of happiness and when it goes, they suffer. Anicca is one of the three marks of existence in Buddhism and teaches that everything is impermanent and nothing has a changing, unstable essence. Therefore, we should not aim to seek pleasure but we should be content with what we have. Pleasure leads to craving which subsequently induces more suffering. The 3 poisons are craving, attachment and ignorance which trap us in the cycle of samsara. By seeking pleasure you crave it, become attached to it and are ultimately ignorant to the true nature of reality that these are the causes of suffering. Buddha taught in Magga, the 4th noble truth that (to cease suffering is to cease craving), so to overcome suffering, we must ~~cease~~ stop craving these worldly desires. Therefore, ^{Buddhist} Buddhism and Bentham's ideas on moral decision making are not compatible.

However, some forms of Buddhism are more compatible than others with Bentham. Mahayana Buddhism is more compatible with Bentham's principle of helping the many. In Mahayana Buddhism, after achieving enlightenment, you can choose to become a bodhisattva and re-enter the cycle of samsara in order to help others become enlightened. They take the bodhisattva vow and 'vow to save them'. They argue this is what Buddha told them to do as he commanded they 'go forth for the welfare of the many'. This is highly compatible with Bentham as they help to save the most

people they can. The Dalai Lama is an example of a manifestation of a bodhisattva as he is the manifestation of Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva of ~~3,000 arms~~ compassion who is depicted with 1,000 arms to help people. This shows Buddhism as being utilitarian as it aims to help everyone.

However, Theravada Buddhism does not ~~agree~~ ^{agree} and places greater emphasis on enlightenment being an independent, personal spiritual journey. They believe that after achieving enlightenment, you escape the cycle of samsara and after death enter parinirvana where you are 'free from all mental suffering' and have 'extinguished the three poisons'. They believe that Mahayana Buddhism is more of a 'cheat' Buddhism and illegitimate as they receive help but Mahayana Buddhists respond by saying Buddha taught this through upaya where he used skillful means to teach regarding the 'spiritual capacity of his immediate audience'. Therefore, Mahayana Buddhism is more compatible with Bentham.

Engaged Buddhism is also focused on having an influence on society and helping others. It would therefore be compatible with Bentham as ~~people~~ ^{people} Buddhists should be politically and socially active in order to bring about the most good for society. Brazil's New Buddhism follows a similar principle.

However, some argue Buddhism is more compatible with other ethical theories. It contains deontological *parajika*, making some aspects compatible with Kant's deontological ethical theory. Although it is most compatible with virtue ethics through prominent features such

as the middle way and intention.
Overall, Buddhism is compatible with Bentham as they both aim to reduce suffering. Although Mahayana Buddhism is more compatible as it aims at helping more people. However, their views on pleasure contrast starkly but despite this, features are compatible as they reduce suffering.

This is a Level 5 response for both AO1 and AO2

AO1: The student has excellent knowledge of both Bentham and Buddhism. All points are fully developed, and evidence is appropriately chosen and fully developed. The student has used examples from different groups of Buddhism and a selection of appropriate examples from the specification.

AO2: There is a developed discussion of different points and critical analysis throughout, with a clear line of argument and evaluation.

25 marks (AO1:10 marks and AO2: 15 marks)

Response B

Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarianism is a teleological theory that has a maxim ~~of~~ to have "the greatest happiness for the greatest number". To make decisions which result in the greatest happiness for the greatest number, Bentham's Hedonic Calculus is to be considered ~~as~~ such like the duration or the intensity of the happiness should be taken into account. From Bentham's point of view, happiness is equal to pleasure and anything pleasurable is seen to be a good act. Whereas as anything that doesn't induce pleasure would be considered a bad act. So, in regards to the Hedonic Calculus, if the pleasure, or good act, is going to occur sooner rather than later than it can be carried out. This is much like the intensity factor and that if one act will cause more pleasure than another, then the individual should choose the act which results in the most pleasure.

From a Buddhist perspective, parts of Bentham's Utilitarianism would be seen as compatible, like the tenet of doing the act which creates the most pleasure/happiness. If you consider this more closely,

however, this maxim has flaws and can leave out the minority in many situations. Whilst Buddhism is personal and about the individual journey, it also teaches karuna which means that Buddhists should show compassion to all, rather than just the majority. With this in mind, this would mean that Bentham's utilitarianism would be incompatible with Buddhist ethics.

In terms of making moral decisions focusing on the majority is not always the right thing to do. For instance, in the case of the 10 guards having lustful thoughts and wanting to rape a woman, this would not be acceptable just because the majority deems it to be, neither from a Buddhist or a secular perspective should this be justified. This would then mean that Bentham's way of making moral decisions is not compatible with Buddhist ethics.

Another example of this would include Phillipa Foot's Trolley problem. Regarding Bentham's principle of utility which states that one should choose to do the greatest happiness for the greatest number, the Trolley problem would still result in

the death of one person. By choosing the tack with one person rather than 2 would follow Bentham's telos but would also be unlawful killings and be harming another living beings, going against the Buddha's 1st precept; once again showing how Bentham's way of making moral decisions is incompatible with Buddhist ethics.

On the other hand, Mahayana Bodhisattvas choose to stay with the human realm instead of following through to a nirvanaed state. They do this out of compassion (karuna) as they once made a vow to protect all living beings. This would follow on from Bentham's Utilitarianism as it is showing happiness towards ~~the~~ ^{the presider} ~~the~~ ^{the} and has resulted in a pleasurable and good consequence, showing that these Bodhisattvas have considered Bentham's Hedonic Calculus and ^{have} chosen hedonism and distinguished pleasure and pain, allowing Bentham's way of making moral decisions to be compatible with Buddhist ethics.

In conclusion, whilst Bentham's ~~the~~ principle of Utility allows Utilitarianism to be compatible with Buddhist ethics in some cases, like that of the Bodhisattvas, ~~it is~~ it is mainly seen to be incompatible with it. Buddhist

ethics teaches metta and loving kindness, having a similar approach to Bentham's Utilitarianism but, overall, ~~I believe~~ I disagree with the statement and believe that Utilitarianism is incompatible with Buddhism. ~~That~~ Even though Buddhism focuses on the individual ^{as a whole} rather than society as a whole, Utilitarianism can still disregard the minority of a society (like in the case of the 10 guards) and disregard any input they feel they should have within that moral decision. ~~As~~ Therefore, due to this reasoning, I believe that Bentham's way of making moral decisions is incompatible with that of Buddhist ethics.

This is a Level 3 response for both AO1 and AO2

AO1: This is a general response for both Buddhism and Bentham. The student has made mostly accurate and relevant points, some of which have been developed with relevant examples. This means that this response was awarded the top of Level 3. The points are not consistently developed and there isn't the breadth that is needed to move into Level 4.

AO2: This response has points for and against and there is no critical analysis. This means that the response cannot move into Level 4 as it is a general response. There is some developed discussion and as such this response awarded the top of Level 3.

15 marks (AO1: 6 marks and AO2: 9 marks)

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E: religiousstudies@aqa.org.uk

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