

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES SHORT COURSE (8061)

Marked Responses
Summer 2018 - Buddhism

See a range of responses and how different levels are achieved and understand how to interpret the mark scheme.

Version 1.1 January 2021

EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Whilst every attempt has been made to show a range of student responses, the following responses and examiner comments provide teachers with the best opportunity to understand the application of the mark scheme. They are not intended to be used as model answers, although they are genuine student responses from the summer examinations which were marked by senior examiners.

Four mark questions (A01.2)

0	1	.	3
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Explain two ways in which understanding the Four Sights influences Buddhists today.

[4 marks]

Answer A

It can influence Buddhists today so they know that all people will eventually grow old and die. And so that Buddhists understand that everyone goes through Dukkha and that it can't be avoided.

Answer B

The Four Sights influence Buddhists today because they showed the Buddha the suffering in the world. This influences Buddhists to find this suffering and help put an end to it. Also they aspire to become more like the Buddha because of his determination to help others who are suffering and become a holy man.

Answer A

The first point given here is simple, the idea that the Four Sights gives people the knowledge (influence) of the reality of old age and death, so is awarded 1 mark. The second point, that people will understand (influence) that all people experience dukkha, is then developed by the fact it cannot be avoided, so is awarded 2 marks.

3 marks

Answer B

This response addresses the target of the AO1.2 objective well by clearly linking points made to the influences on believers. The idea of finding suffering, helping to stop it and also the aspiration to become more like Buddha fulfils this requirement. Overall the response gives two developed points and thus achieves full marks.

4 marks

Five mark questions (A01.1)

0	1	.	4
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Explain two of the five moral precepts. Refer to sacred writings or another source of Buddhist belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Answer A

One of the moral precepts is 'do not cause violence' as Buddhists believe that causing violence and suffering will not put you on the right path to enlightenment.

Answer B

Do not take anything that is not yours unless it is offered to you.

Do not harm any living things and to respect all living things.

Answer C

The first precept is to 'abstain from killing' which means don't harm any human being. Buddhists can achieve this by becoming vegetarian, so they do not kill animals.

While another precept is to not take drugs or alcohol because Buddhists want to achieve a greater awareness by meditating and they can't do so if their perception is damaged. One of the six perfections is meditation.

Answer A

This response is somewhat poorly expressed but the meaning of the first precept is apparent and it is developed with the idea of being on the 'right path to enlightenment'

2 marks

Answer B

This response presents two simple points which are correct as summaries of the moral precepts. The second point is developed with the idea of 'respect'. No source of authority is referenced.

3 marks

Answer C

The first point correctly identifies the first precept, and is then explained by applying the teaching to vegetarianism. The second point also correctly identifies and explains the fifth precept, and the final sentence, although correct, was not required to gain the 2 marks available here. No source of authority is referenced.

4 marks

12 mark questions

Levels of Response

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	<p>A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view.</p> <p>Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information.</p> <p>References to religion applied to the issue.</p>	10-12
3	<p>Reasoned consideration of different points of view.</p> <p>Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information.</p> <p>Clear reference to religion.</p>	7-9
2	<p>Reasoned consideration of a point of view.</p> <p>A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence.</p> <p>Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion or the argument is one-sided.</p>	4-6
1	<p>Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.</p>	1-3
0	<p>Nothing worthy of credit.</p>	0

12 mark questions (A02)

0	1	.	5
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'Right Understanding is the most important stage of the Eightfold Path.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Buddhist teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks + 3 SPaG]

Answer A

Some Buddhists could agree with this because as a right understanding will make it easier to follow the rest of Buddhists teachings. This means that some Buddhists could find it easier to understand the three marks of existence and speed up the process leading to enlightenment and can help them find how to break the wheel of samsara. The teaching of The Six Perfections has Sila which means morality, this is the section of The Noble Enlightened Path it comes under. Another point is that the first part of the wheel Sidartha gained first. This means that before enlightenment gained these but seemed to be working towards The Right Understanding first. He taught that before enlightenment you have to find the middle way.

However others could believe that its not the most important, one point could be that if the Buddha's life was all equally important then how can one part of his teaching be the most important. This means that if when the Buddha was born is just as important as his life as an Asetic then how can the Right Understanding be more important than the Right Mindfulness. Buddhism teachers to follow the five precepts, if so then isnt it ignorance to see his teachings in an order of importance. Another part is that if the Buddha believed in dependent arising then how can one thing be more important than the rest. This means that if one thing brings another to be how can they be of the same importance.

To conclude I disagree with this statement as it goes against Buddhist teachings.

Answer A

This response is well reasoned but unfortunately leads to a weak concluding statement at the end which lacks an overall judgement. The response has breadth in terms of the range of teachings and beliefs included, although does include some slightly irrelevant material and occasional errors. However, it lacks in depth of evaluation of the points made so is limited to Level 3.

Level 3, 9 marks

SPaG 3 – despite some errors, generally spelling is good and a range of subject terminology is correctly used. Clear control of meaning throughout.

Answer B

Most Buddhists would disagree with this statement. This is because the Buddha taught that all eight elements of the path are equally as important. This means that without one element you can't reach enlightenment.

Furthermore, some Buddhists believe that all eight elements must be followed in order to go by the Threefold Path and to walk the Middle Way. Without achieving enlightenment by doing this, means that you will continue to be reborn into the cycle of samsara.

Moreover some Buddhists would suggest that Right speech is the most important. This is because to abstain from lying and to always be kind in what you say is one of The Five Precepts. Therefore, they believe this is important as Right speech is key in that a-lot of Buddhist teachings.

On the other hand, some Buddhists would agree with this statement. This is because without understanding the meaning of life, enlightenment isn't possible. This is because without understanding the Three Marks of Existence and the Four Noble Truths, Siddhart Gatamu wouldn't of been able to achieve his enlightenment. This is because he realised that everyone suffers and it can't be controlled which he soon came to understand.

Furthermore, this is shown by the parable of the mustard seed. This is because Misu only managed to stop grieving her son's death when she understood that the soul is impermanent and everyone is affected by death. Without that understanding, she may never had realised that everything is impermanent and there is no permanent self.

As a conclusion, I disagree with this statement. This is because I think that all 8 elements of The Noble Eightfold Path are equally important as they all have specific elements different to each other. Furthermore, you need all eight to reach enlightenment so they are all as important as each other.

Answer B

This response is well-argued and reasoned and includes logical chains of reasoning with good use of relevant religious content. The conclusion reaches a judgement on the statement and uses previous arguments to come to an overall evaluative decision on the statement. The response is a little longer than the expected length (304 words) but stays focussed on the statement throughout.

Level 4, 12 marks

SPaG 3 – high performance. A range of subject terms are used, spelling and grammar are generally accurate throughout.

Get help and support

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at aqa.org.uk/8061

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