



Pearson

Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies B (3RB0)
Paper 1D Buddhism

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Publications Code 3RB0_1D_1806_ER

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies.

Religious Studies B Short Course Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion Option 1D – Buddhism.

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall award. The assessment consists of two questions; candidates must answer both questions. The details of the assessment content is provided in the specification. Centres are to use this rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

3RBO_1D_Q1a

The question asked was:

'Outline three beliefs about the Three Marks of Existence'

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, only a list – usually one or two words per belief - can reach a maximum of one mark, as these are not outlines.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a list.

Using this question:

- Impermanence, no self, suffering (1 mark for list).
- All things are in a state of change (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information).
- Impermanence, no self, right intention (no marks as, though a list, all three must be correct to gain the mark).

Examiner tip:

- Centres should encourage candidates to write in full sentences in order to ensure that their response is an outline and not a list.
- Centres need to encourage candidates to be sure they are clear about the different 'numerical' teachings within Buddhism - for example the difference between the content of the Five Precepts and the Five Khandas. Failure to do so, or confusion - as in this question between the Three Marks of Existence and the Three Refuges - can mean the loss of marks.
- It is good idea to separate each outline by starting a new line for each one.

3RBO_1D_Q1b

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why panna is important for Buddhists.'

Candidates who performed less well on this question were either unable to develop answers or were unsure of the meaning of panna. It is important that centres teach both the original term and the translation as questions can include either when both are given in the specification. Furthermore, the question was about how panna can be

understood/interpreted by Buddhists. Answers which were simply a description of wisdom were not credited.

Examiner tips:

- Centres should encourage candidates to make sure that, in a developed response, both parts of their answer are able, to stand on their own. One way to check this is to see if both parts of the reason – the statement and development – both make sense when read on their own. If they do the reason is likely to be developed.
- Centres need to make sure candidates realise rewording a reason does not count as development.
- Centres should encourage candidates not to rely on transferring material from other sections of the same question in order to try to gain marks.

3RBO_1D_Q1c

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why kamma is important for Buddhists.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

This question was point marked. A fifth mark is given for a relevant source of wisdom integrated into the answer.

Some candidates added the source of wisdom almost as a footnote at the end of their response. This could not be credited when it was not linked to the body of the response. It is important that the source of wisdom be integrated into the response.

Examiner tips:

- Centres should be certain that the source of wisdom is genuine.
- Two sources of wisdom will not gain two marks as the question paper specifically states 'a source' of wisdom.
- Separating the two reasons into two paragraphs not only makes it easier to distinguish those reasons but can also help clarify the thinking of the candidate.
- Centres need to encourage candidates to pay particular attention to the wording of the question and respond accurately to 'reasons'/'ways'/'teachings' rather than, as happened with a minority of candidates, simply giving a description of kamma.

3RBO_1D_Q1d

The question asked was:

"Every Buddhist should aim to become a bodhisattva."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Buddhist teachings
- refer to different Buddhist points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.'

In (d) questions candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will also be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. Simply providing a for and against set of reasons and a personal conclusion does not begin to appraise the statement, and centres need to encourage candidates to write in a well formulated and discursive style.

This question also has 3 marks for SPaG. To gain these marks the candidate needs to:

- Spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy.
- Use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall.
- Use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate

Examiner tip:

Centres should encourage candidates to go beyond for and against arguments with a conclusion as this is likely to limit them to Level Two marks.

3RBO_1D_Q2a

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** ways in which family life is important for Buddhists.'

Whilst many responses were well written others performed less well as they discussed roles within the family of purposes of the family rather than the ways required by the question.

Examiner tips:

- It is important for centres to stress the importance of the wording of the question.
- Candidates should be encouraged to highlight the key words to keep the demands of the question in focus.
- Writing in sentences, even if using bullet points, can help to guarantee that the result is an outline rather than a list.

3RBO_1D_Q2b

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Buddhist beliefs about sex outside of marriage.'

This question was well answered by the majority of candidates, many of whom were able to use the Five Precepts to ground their responses and so develop their answers.

Examiner tips:

- In a question that asks for two ways, give two ways (not three) as the third way will not be credited
- Whilst many candidates directly quoted the Five Precepts, paraphrases would be equally acceptable as long as relevant and recognisable.

3RBO_1D_Q2c

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Buddhist teachings about the roles of men and women in the family.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

As was specified in the comments for Q1c, it is important that in each (c) question the source of wisdom is clearly linked to the teachings given.

Examiner tips:

- If in doubt about suitable sources of wisdom, use a search engine to find specific Buddhist teachings.
- For accurate Buddhist teachings there are many excellent Buddhist centres which have informative and accurate teachings available online.
- Paraphrases of sources of wisdom are acceptable as long as they are accurate, relate to the question, and are from genuine Buddhist teachings. Accurate references - i.e. chapter/verse - are not necessary as long as the reference is generally stated.

3RBO_1D_Q2d

The question asked was:

"Limiting family size in today's world shows responsibility."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Buddhist teachings
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.'

As stated for Q1d, responses in (d) questions must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors.

The key to this question was 'in today's world' and many responses focused more on contraception rather than the Buddhist's relationship to the environment. If in the response not all bullet points for (d) questions are addressed, candidate can only reach the top of Level 2. SPaG is not assessed in Q2d.

Examiner tips:

- Centres need to encourage candidates to look carefully at the stimulus quotation. It will give a clear indication of what is being looked for. All parts of the quotation need to be addressed.
- It might be a good idea for candidates to cross through each bullet point as they address them.

Summary:

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Do not attach extra sheets to your examination paper, write within the scannable pages using the blank spaces.
- When answering the (a) items use three full sentences.
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) items must be relevant to the question and support the reason given. They do not have to be learnt by rote, but can be paraphrased. Accurate chapter and verse references are not needed.
- The (d) items ask for evaluation, after considering the evidence. The higher grades are achieved if the evidence/reasons given are 'considered' or appraised for their value.
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the answer.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully, and answer the question asked fully.