

**AS**  
**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**7061/2A**

Paper 2A Buddhism

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**Mark scheme**

June 2020

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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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

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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**

0	1	.	1
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**Explain the Buddhist concept of anatta (no-self).****[15 marks]**

**Target: AO1.1:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including religious, philosophical and 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.

Anatta can be translated as 'no-self' or 'substanceless'. This is the doctrine that humans do not possess any permanent, underlying substance that can be called the 'soul' or the 'self'. This was a departure from prevailing ideas of the self. This absence of a self, along with anicca (the impermanence of all being) and 'Dukkha (suffering) are the three characteristics of all existence. Recognition of these three doctrines, and their interdependence upon each other, constitutes 'right understanding'.

The teaching of the five aggregates leads to the understanding of the doctrine of no-self. 'Self' is just a convenient term for a collection of physical and mental experiences. All human experiences can be analysed in terms of the five aggregates: form; sensation; perception; mental formation; consciousness. These five aggregates work together to produce a mental being. Because of the reality of impermanence, each aggregate is undergoing constant changes: they are dynamic processes, not static things.

In the Questions of King Milinda, Nagasena questions the Greek King Milinda and demonstrates that, just as a chariot cannot be identified with any part of the chariot, the person named 'Nagasena' cannot be identified with any of his five aggregates, nor with any sum of his five aggregates, but also cannot be conceived as existing independently of such. The conclusion is that 'Nagasena' is only a conventional term to name something that has no substantial existence, and this is what is understood as the 'self'.

**[15 marks] AO1.2**

0	1	2
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**‘The Theravada and Mahayana concepts of Buddha are completely different.’**

**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: The key differences between the Theravada and Mahayana concepts of Buddha; the key features of the Trikaya doctrine in Mahayana Buddhism.

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

Theravada Buddhism emphasises the human characteristics of the Buddha. For them, the Buddha is Gautama Buddha, the enlightened one. In contrast Mahayana Buddhism understands Buddha to have three bodies. This is expressed in the Trikaya doctrine and means that Buddha is Ultimate Reality (Dharmakaya) and has a bliss body (Sambhogakaya) in addition to a human body (Nirmanakaya). However, both agree that Buddha is an expression of universal truths.

For Theravada Buddhists, Gautama Buddha is a role model showing how humanity should live. He lived the path to enlightenment to show others how they should live. In contrast, Mahayana Buddhists regard Gautama as only one example of the Buddhist path suited to his time and place. However, both agree that Gautama was a reflection of Buddha nature and of the path to enlightenment, even if they disagree about his significance.

Theravada Buddhism teaches that the Buddha achieved final Nirvana and so cannot be active in the world, whereas some Mahayana schools teach that the Buddha is a cosmic presence that can influence the world, and can be seen in meditation or visions. This makes the schools look very different. However, Theravada Buddhists revere the Buddha’s relics which creates ‘merit’, which looks like the Buddha can influence the world cosmically via his relics, and Theravada Buddhists may experience visions of Buddha in their meditation.

**[15 marks] AO2**



**Question 2**

0	2	.	1
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**Explain the nature of the five precepts.****[15 marks]**

**Target: AO1.1:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including religious, philosophical and 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.

The five precepts are five training principles in Theravada Buddhism. They may be summarised as: to abstain from harming any living thing; to abstain from stealing; to abstain from lying; to abstain from sexual misconduct; and to abstain from taking intoxicants. These are interpreted differently within the monastic and lay communities, for example, Theravada monks are forbidden any kind of sexual activity while sex within marriage is normal for lay Buddhists.

The precepts are not seen as laws devised by the Buddha but are said to reflect those actions which he discovered to generate negative karma and therefore to prevent people from achieving enlightenment. The importance of the intention behind the action is also stressed, for example 'stealing' out of greed is akusala (unhealthy) and produces negative karma. However, stealing to prevent someone from doing harm to themselves, for example stealing a gun from someone who is suicidal, may be considered kusala (healthy).

The precepts form the ethical conduct part of the middle way, and inform the practice of right action, speech and livelihood. For example, Buddhists are expected to earn their living, as far as possible, in a way that is consistent with the principles, and to follow a high ethical standard in everything they do. Following the precepts means Buddhists are on the Noble Path and heading towards enlightenment.

**[15 marks] AO1.1**

0 2 . 2

**‘Buddhist teaching about Dukkha is relevant to the modern world.’****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: The meaning and relevance of Buddha’s teaching about Dukkha, including the debate about whether Buddhism is pessimistic.

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

Dukkha is, in part, understood as physical pain and suffering, which are seen as inevitable parts of life. In Buddhism, Dukkha is alleviated by mindfulness/non attachment. This is clearly relevant because change, decay and death continue to bring much physical suffering today. However, much suffering is alleviated by drugs, and so pain is no longer seen as something we should treat as inevitable, nor as something to be overcome by mental strength.

Dukkha as psychological suffering continues today and some, in line with Buddhist teaching, is dealt with through talking therapies and mindfulness designed to strengthen the character. Buddhism offers the apparently pessimistic view that to live is to suffer, and it is preferable to escape from life by achieving Nirvana. However, today there is emphasis on the greatness of characters that can succeed despite suffering, and on the virtues that are developed in dealing with it. Risk-taking and challenging oneself with suffering may be seen, by some, as what makes life worth living.

Dukkha as conditioned states is relevant because it is reflected in much modern science and stresses how every living thing is interconnected. For Buddhists, this emphasises how the well-being of an individual depends on the well-being of the environment, other people and all living things, which are stressed in modern environmental movements. However, not all share the view that life is interdependent. Some Buddhists do not see links between themselves and others. Not everyone considers the views of modern science relevant to daily life.

**[15 marks] AO2**