

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE

Unit **G586**: Buddhism

Mark Scheme for June 2013

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Level 1
	Level 2
	Level 3
	Level 4
	Level 5
	Highlighting a section of the response that is irrelevant to the awarding of the mark
	Point has been seen and noted eg where part of the answer is at the end of the script

Subject-specific Marking Instructions

Handling of unexpected answers

If you are not sure how to apply the mark scheme to an answer, you should contact your Team Leader.

A2 Preamble and Instructions to Examiners

The purpose of a marking scheme is to ‘... enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’ [CoP 1999 25.xiv]. It must ‘allow credit to be allocated for what candidates know, understand and can do’ [xv] and be ‘clear and designed to be easily and consistently applied’ [x].

The **Religious Studies Subject Criteria** [1999] define ‘what candidates know, understand and can do’ in terms of two Assessment Objectives, weighted for the OCR Religious Studies specification as indicated:

All candidates must be required to meet the following assessment objectives.

At A level, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and their ability to sustain a critical line of argument in greater depth and over a wider range of content than at AS level.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

- AO1:** Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.
- AO2:** Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view.

The requirement to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through both assessment objectives.

In order to ensure the marking scheme can be 'easily and consistently applied', and to 'enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner', it defines Levels of Response by which candidates' answers are assessed. This ensures that comparable standards are applied across the various units as well as within the team of examiners marking a particular unit. Levels of Response are defined according to the two Assessment Objectives. In A2, candidates answer a single question but are reminded by a rubric of the need to address both Objectives in their answers. Progression from Advanced Subsidiary to A2 is provided, in part, by assessing their ability to construct a coherent essay, and this is an important part of the Key Skill of Communication which 'must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies at AS and A level'.

Positive awarding: it is a fundamental principle of OCR's assessment in Religious Studies at Advanced Subsidiary / Advanced GCE that candidates are rewarded for what they 'know, understand and can do' and to this end examiners are required to assess every answer by the Levels according to the extent to which it addresses a reasonable interpretation of the question. In the marking scheme each question is provided with a brief outline of the likely content and/or lines of argument of a 'standard' answer, but this is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive. Examiners are required to have subject knowledge to a high level and the outlines do not attempt to duplicate this.

Examiners must **not** attempt to reward answers according to the extent to which they match the structure of the outline, or mention the points it contains. The specification is designed to allow teachers to approach the content of modules in a variety of ways from any of a number of perspectives, and candidates' answers must be assessed in the light of this flexibility of approach. It is quite possible for an excellent and valid answer to contain knowledge and arguments which do not appear in the outline; each answer must be assessed on its own merits according to the Levels of Response.

Key Skill of Communication: this is assessed at both Advanced Subsidiary and A2 as an integral part of the marking scheme. The principle of positive awarding applies here as well: candidates should be rewarded for good written communication, but marks may not be deducted for inadequate written communication; the quality of communication is integral to the quality of the answer in making its meaning clear. The Key Skill requirements in Communication at Level 3 include the following evidence requirements for documents about complex subjects, which can act as a basis for assessing the Communications skills in an examination answer:

- Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so your meaning is clear.

Synoptic skills and the ability to make connections: these are now assessed at A2 as specification, due to the removal of the Connections papers.

Levels of Response: the descriptions are cumulative, ie a description at one level builds on or improves the descriptions at lower levels. Not all the qualities listed in a level must be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall in that level (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive). There is no expectation that an answer will receive marks in the same level for the two AOs.

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
1	<p>AO1 Candidates might explore the nature of nibbana as the escape from samsara and dukkha and thus liberation or enlightenment. For example, candidates may choose to use Gethin's view of showing nirvana from 3 points of view: i) extinguishing the 3 fires ii) the condition of a Buddha after death iii) The unconditioned realm known at the moment of awakening - two of which are describable.</p> <p>Candidates are likely to explore some of the ways in which nibbana has been described, through analogies such as those in King Milinda's Questions (chapter 15) or through via negativa. To illustrate the via negativa candidates might use the Udana 8.1 (the Nibbana Sutra). They could contrast this with, the Ituvuttaka 43 which states: 'The escape from that is calm, permanent, beyond inference, unborn, unproduced, the sorrowless, stainless state, the cessation of stressful qualities, the stilling of fabrications, bliss.'</p> <p>Candidates might consider the ways in which nibbana is talked about within the four noble truths or other appropriate Buddhist teachings.</p> <p>AO2 Candidates might argue that it must be possible to describe nibbana, as it has been done in a variety of Buddhist texts and by a range of Buddhist teachers.</p> <p>Candidates might consider whether these descriptions are complete or 'a finger pointing to the moon' as it is not possible to describe in samsaric language something which is outside samsara.</p> <p>Some candidates might consider what is meant by the term, since it may be that descriptions are incomplete, but are enough to make people want to seek nibbana and thus effective in their purpose.</p>	35	Assess the view that it is impossible to describe nibbana effectively.

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
2	<p>AO1 Candidates are likely to outline the setting and main contents of the Lotus Sutra, showing that upaya is the most used concept. Most will relate the Parable of the Burning House. Answers must move beyond description and link to the question to access the higher levels.</p> <p>Candidates might consider how the parables such as the Medicinal Herbs, the Excellent Physician and the Phantom City describe the use of upaya by the Buddha as a necessary means of helping those trapped in samsara.</p> <p>Candidates might also consider other concepts such as ekayana and the superiority of the bodhisattva path, or the multiplicity of buddhas. Some might comment that it appears to be the earliest text to use the phrase 'greater vehicle'.</p> <p>Use of concepts from the AS specification such as the Trikaya doctrine would also gain credit.</p> <p>AO2 Candidates might argue that almost every parable shows the use of upaya, so this emphasis shows that upaya is the key concept within the sutra. Candidates might also contrast the upaya concept with the Lotus Sutra's focus on the importance of faith and devotion, and link this to the bodhisattva path and to the view that everyone can achieve Buddhahood (tathagatagarbha).</p> <p>Candidates might consider whether the focus on upaya is to justify the difference in the teachings within the Lotus Sutra, thus making it secondary to the focus on ekayana and the superiority of the bodhisattva path.</p> <p>As always the quality of the discussion is more important than the conclusion reached.</p>	35	To what extent is upaya the most important concept in the Lotus Sutra?

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
3	<p>AO1 Candidates are likely to outline the five precepts; however they will need to move beyond mere description to access the higher levels. For example, candidates will need to explain and exemplify the five precepts as well as demonstrating reasons why they might not be of any help in making ethical decision.</p> <p>Candidates might approach the five precepts as a whole, or explore each one individually. They might provide specific ethical dilemmas to help them illustrate their points, but a simple list would not access the highest levels.</p> <p>Candidates might consider other ethical codes within Buddhism, such as the eightfold path (linking the five precepts to sila), but this is not expected.</p> <p>AO2 Candidates might suggest that they reflect the time that they were written in and therefore are no longer relevant to the modern world.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that the five precepts provide fairly clear advice, and are often treated as rules, so provide good support when making ethical decisions. For example, candidates might demonstrate that the five precepts are the corner stone of most legal systems ie refraining from murder, lying, unlawful sexual activity, theft and harmful intoxicants. However, they may also demonstrate that this is a modern interpretation and that the precepts have a greater link to monastic rules or the eight fold path.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that the five precepts are guidelines, not absolute rules, so still leave Buddhists with difficult decisions about when to apply them. If candidates suggest that the rules are not absolute they will need to go further and suggest that if there is no compulsion to follow them, they have little moral authority thus making them of little use.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that teachings such as ahimsa do not always help when ethical decisions are such that someone will always get hurt, as they are impossible to apply fully.</p>	35	'The five precepts are of no help when making ethical decisions.' Discuss.

Question	Indicative Content	Marks	Guidance
4	<p>AO1 Candidates might explore the ways in which traditional Buddhist traditions living in the West have adapted their lifestyles to cope with the western culture.</p> <p>Candidates might also explore the development of specifically western forms of Buddhism, such as that of the Triratna movement (previously FWBO). For example, candidates might quote from Vessantara's introduction to the FWBO who states, 'Western Buddhists should feel free to draw on the whole Buddhist tradition for inspiration... we study and practise whatever we find useful for our development.' And this could be seen to be the fullest expression of upaya.</p> <p>Candidates might explore the psychological interpretations give to the realms of samsara by many intellectual western converts to Buddhism.</p> <p>AO2 Candidates might argue that any changes made to accommodate western sensibilities are not a betrayal of the essential nature of Buddhism and diminish its integrity. Some might counter this by suggesting that a pick and mix approach to any religion is bound to devalue it.</p> <p>Other responses might focus on the fact that as long as a Buddhist is attempting to free themselves from the three fires/ achieve nirvana then this is not a betrayal of the origins of Buddhism. It might however, betray certain traditions within Buddhism. A discussion on the 'origins' of Buddhism and on the idea of 'betrayal' would also be valid and in fact would help present a well considered response.</p> <p>Candidates might point to the huge variety present within Buddhism already and explore whether any western interpretation is more or less valid than any other Buddhist tradition.</p> <p>Candidates might refer to the Buddhist concept of upaya, and thus justify any Western forms of Buddhism as just presenting a different path to the same goal.</p>	35	'Buddhism in the West is not a betrayal of Buddhist origins.' Discuss.

APPENDIX 1

A2 LEVELS OF RESPONSE

Level	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1–5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little relevant material some concepts inaccurate shows little knowledge of technical terms. <i>L1</i>	1–3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> little or no successful analysis views asserted with no justification. <i>L1</i>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6–9	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge limited and partially accurate limited understanding might address the general topic rather than the question directly selection often inappropriate limited use of technical terms. <i>L2</i>	4–6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some analysis, but not successful views asserted but little justification. <i>L2</i>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10–13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some accurate knowledge appropriate understanding some successful selection of material some accurate use of technical terms. <i>L3</i>	7–8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some successful analysis which may be implicit views asserted but not fully justified. <i>L3</i>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14–17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate knowledge good understanding good selection of material technical terms mostly accurate. <i>L4</i>	9–11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some successful and clear analysis some effective use of evidence views analysed and developed. <i>L4</i>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
5	18–21	A very good/excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information accurate use of technical terms. <i>L5</i>	12–14	A very good/excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehends the demands of the question uses a range of evidence shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints. <i>L5</i>
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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