

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE

Unit **G586**: Buddhism

Mark Scheme for June 2011

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- 1 'The differences between Rinzai and Soto Zen traditions are not important.' Discuss. [35]

AO1

Candidates might explore the practices associated with Soto Zen, for example Zazen and kinhin (sitting and walking meditations). They might also consider the way in which enlightenment is perceived as a slow awakening.

Candidates might explore the practices associated with Rinzai Zen, for example koans and martial arts. They might also explore the views of satori and the way in which enlightenment can occur suddenly.

Whilst description of the practices and teachings are to be expected, candidates should move beyond mere description towards analysis in order to access the higher levels.

AO2

Candidates might argue that the differences are profound in both practice and attitude, encapsulating a different world view.

Candidates might explore the idea that the differences are a matter of emphasis rather than revealing significant variations. They might explore the idea that the variations within Zen are less than the variations between Zen and other traditions.

Some candidates might explore the idea that although there are significant differences between the two traditions they are not important. The idea of upaya might be used to explore the idea that different teachings can be accommodated easily within Buddhism.

- 2 To what extent are the teachings in the Heart Sutra representative of Mahayana Buddhism? [35]

AO1

Some description of the origins and structure of the Heart Sutra would be appropriate, but not at the expense of addressing the question

Candidates are likely to explore the concept of sunyata - the emptiness of inherent existence.

Candidates might explore the concept of two levels of truth, conventional and ultimate.

AO2

Candidates might argue that Mahayana Buddhism is too varied to have any one scripture be representative of the whole tradition.

Candidates might explore how representative the concepts of sunyata and two levels of truth depicted in the Heart Sutra are of all Buddhist schools.

Candidates might argue that there are other key factors in Mahayana which are not considered on the Heart Sutra, such as upaya and ekayana.

Candidates should be able to evaluate the extent to which the teachings mentioned are representative of the Mahayana tradition.

3 'The underlying aim of all of the five precepts is the same.' Discuss. [35]**AO1**

Candidates are likely to describe the five precepts, but must move beyond mere description in order to access the higher levels.

Candidates might explore the interpretations of the first precept ahimsa and the ways in which this might be put into action through the other four precepts.

Candidates might explore the other four precepts: avoiding false speech, avoiding sexual misconduct, avoiding taking what is not given, and avoiding intoxicants which cloud the mind, considering their similarities and differences.

Candidates might explore the relationship between the five precepts and what they are trying to achieve.

AO2

Candidates are likely to argue that the aim of all of the precepts is to avoid actions which cause harm, and therefore they do just elaborate on ways to avoid harm.

Candidates might argue that, for example the fifth precept, is not an elaboration of the idea of non-harming, but rather a way to avoid the likelihood of causing harm.

Some candidates might consider whether there are other purposes to following the five precepts than avoiding harm.

4 Assess the importance of scripture for Pure Land Buddhism. [35]**AO1**

Whilst candidates are not expected to have detailed knowledge of the Sukhavati scriptures they might show awareness of their existence and use by Pure Land Buddhists.

Candidates might explore whether other Buddhist scriptures are of any relevance for Pure Land Buddhists, for example the ethical codes in the vinaya.

Candidates are also likely to explore other aspects of Pure Land, for example, the use of the nembutsu, but this must not be at the expense of addressing the question.

AO2

Candidates might argue that the Pure Land scriptures are of key importance in providing the teachings upon which Pure Land is based and thus scriptures are important within Pure Land.

Candidates might argue that most Pure Land practitioners do not read the scriptures, but instead focus on other practices such as nembutsu and thus scriptures are of no practical importance for most Pure Land Buddhists.

Some candidates might explore the value of other scriptures for Pure Land Buddhists. Alternatively, candidates might explore whether the value of scriptures within Pure Land vary, depending on the attitude of the practitioner.

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