

Religious Studies

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

Unit **G576**: Buddhism

Mark Scheme for January 2011

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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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AS LEVELS OF RESPONSE – G571-G579

Band	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 a.c.i.q	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 v lit arg
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 b att	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 b att
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 sat att	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 sust/just
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 g att	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 g att

AS LEVELS OF RESPONSE – G571-G579

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 vg/e att	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 vg/e att
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

1 (a) Explain the importance of Asoka for early Buddhism

Candidates are likely to describe key aspects of the life of Asoka. However better responses will need to move beyond description and address the question, specifically focusing on why Asoka was important for early Buddhism.

Candidates might explain Asoka's support for missionary activity, for example to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and the erection of pillars.

Further explanation is likely to focus on the reformation of the sangha and governmental support.

Some responses are likely to explain the success and importance of these factors in spreading Buddhist belief and practice within and beyond India.

[25]**1 (b) 'Asoka was not a good Buddhist.' Discuss.**

Candidates might argue that Asoka implemented many Buddhist practices during his reign, which supported Buddhism well.

Candidates might equally point to the purging of the sangha as evidence of Asoka's desire to support Buddhism and increase its success.

Candidates might however point to the purging of the sangha as a way of imposing his own views on Buddhism, and thus of a type of selfish or egotistical behaviour.

Candidates might explore whether Asoka's support of many religious traditions shows he was not a good Buddhist, or whether it demonstrates the very openness and generosity of Buddhism.

Some candidates might consider what a good Buddhist would be.

[10]

2 (a) Explain the social conditions in which the Buddha was teaching.

Candidates are likely to describe some of the key features of the religious, sociological and economic background in India at the time of the Buddha.

Candidates might consider the urbanisation of society and the challenges this brought to the caste system. Candidates might explore the development of monarchies, and the loss of tribal leadership.

Candidates might explore the shramana movements, folk religions, or Brahmanical Hinduism.

Candidates might explore economic success in North India and the increased leisure time this may have allowed for religious pursuits.

[25]**2 (b) 'The Buddha's teachings would have been identical no matter where or when he lived.' Discuss.**

Candidates might argue that the Buddha's teachings are a revelation of the eternal dhamma, and therefore completely unaffected by his background.

Alternatively they might explore areas where his background may appear to have influenced his teachings. For example, the Buddhist rejection of the caste system may have been influenced by the challenges urbanisation brought to the caste system.

Some candidates might explore whether the Buddha's background could have influenced the emphasis upon certain aspects of the eternal dhamma.

[10]

3 (a) Explain the importance of the Buddha in Theravada Buddhism.

Candidates might give some account of the life of Siddhartha Gautama. However they will need to move beyond description to access the highest levels.

Candidates might explore the notion that the Buddha was a man who followed the Bodhisattva Path and realised nibbana. They might explore how in doing this the life of the Buddha provides an example for other Buddhists.

Candidates might explore the Buddha's importance as one of the three refuges, and how this might support Theravadin Buddhists.

[25]**3 (b) Assess the view that the historical Buddha is more important in Theravada Buddhism than in Mahayana Buddhism.**

Candidates might argue that the Buddha is more important in Theravada Buddhism, since he is the only source of the dhamma for the Theravadin tradition. The existence of other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas can equally well fulfil the role in Mahayana.

Candidates might argue that the Trikaya doctrine, and the increased supernatural nature of the Buddha in the Mahayana tradition, indicate a higher status.

Candidates might explore the idea that the Buddha is equally important in both traditions, or explore the idea that it is impossible to make such a judgement from outside the traditions.

[10]

4 (a) Explain the Buddhist concepts of karma and samsara.

Candidates are likely to explain the concept of karma as a system of action and consequence which operates within the samsaric realm. Some candidates might explore the importance of intention in determining karmic consequences.

Candidates might explore the realms of rebirth as depicted on the Tibetan Wheel of Life, or in comparison, with nibbana.

Some candidates might explore the teaching of dependent origination and show how this operates to maintain the cycle of samsara.

Some candidates might explore the relationship between karma and samsara, explaining how rebirth may be affected by karma.

[25]**4 (b) To what extent can it be argued that karma is the only fair way to reward and punish people for their actions?**

Candidates might argue that karma is extremely fair, since it is a system of natural law, and thus affects everybody equally. Furthermore since no 'judge' exists there is no way for bias to be introduced.

Candidates might argue that since the results of karma are not immediate, and can be felt at much later times, it appears unfair. Some may explore whether the belief in anatta causes issues about which 'person' is being punished.

Some candidates might query the 'action' element of the statement, exploring whether intention is more important than action in Buddhist thought.

Some candidates might consider whether the terms 'reward' and 'punishment' are appropriate when applied to a natural system such as karma.

[10]

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