

GCE

Religious Studies

H173/06: Developments in Buddhist thought

AS Level

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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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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Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
1. To what extent is craving the most important concept in Buddhism? AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • there are three forms of craving (tanha/trishna): craving for material pleasures, craving for existence, craving for non-existence • craving forms the second of the Four Noble Truths and the Buddha believed craving causes suffering • the Buddha also taught that it is craving that causes beings to go through the process of rebirth again and again • craving causes, and is caused by the three fires/poisons (greed, hatred and ignorance), which generate the karmic energy that results in rebirth • craving also forms part of the belief that all phenomena are interlinked. In Theravada Buddhism this is shown in the 12 links of dependent origination (12 nidanas) • the third Noble Truth is nirodha which is the ‘cutting off’ of craving through detachment. This is also explained as the extinguishing of the three fires/poisons, or finding the antidote to the three fires/poisons. Nibbana (nirvana) is when craving has ceased • in some texts craving for, and attachment to, ideas and ideals, views, opinions, theories, conceptions and beliefs; is regarded as a fourth type of craving	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • craving is the most important concept because it is what needs to be overcome in order to end suffering, which is arguably the goal of Buddhism • the Four Noble Truths state that craving is overcome through detachment. This was the Buddha’s first teaching and is central to all Buddhist beliefs. Once craving has been ‘cut off’ one can attain enlightenment • the Buddhist practice of detachment through wisdom, morality and meditation is designed to overcome craving. The monastic sangha is a good example of this, where monks and nuns have few possessions and need to be supported by the local community • in order to diagnose that craving is the cause of suffering, the Buddha first had to show that all beings were suffering. Not all would accept that a life of wealth, luxury or opportunity was suffering • there is no point in just showing that craving is the cause of suffering unless there is a cure. Therefore, the eightfold path is a more important teaching as it gives practical steps to overcome craving	Concepts which could be used to make a comparison with craving could include any relevant teaching such as; karma, rebirth, the five khandhas, dependent origination or dukkha.

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
- the three fires/poisons or the 12 nidanas may be more important because they show where craving comes from and how it works; this would enable one to overcome it - all concepts are interlinked and no one concept is any more important than another.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
2. Assess whether samatha and vipassana (vipasyana) meditation have the same goal. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: - samatha can be translated as tranquillity/tranquillity of the mind, this can be seen as the calming of the mind or the cultivation of mindfulness - samatha meditation is mainly used to focus the mind by concentrating on breathing. The aim is to concentrate at a deeper level and become mindful of the mind and body - samatha meditation is about calmness, and relies on the mindfulness of breathing. This means breathing thoughtfully, concentrating fully on breathing in and out - vipassana (vipasyana) is often translated as seeing through something or being free from preconception. It is often called insight meditation - vipassana (vipasyana) meditation helps Buddhists to find and understand the truth about reality and to develop wisdom, so that they can reach enlightenment. - Buddhists aim to gain insight into the true reality by meditating on the teachings of the Buddha.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: - Vipassana (vipasyana) meditation has a different focus from samatha meditation. In vipassana (vipasyana) meditation, a Buddhist may focus on a concept such as the Three Marks of Existence. By doing this, they hope to develop wisdom and work towards reaching enlightenment - samatha meditation has its origins in pre-Buddhist Indian practice and is focused on developing one-pointedness of mind but has nothing to do with truth, reality or nibbana (nirvana) - in Buddhist practice samatha is used to cultivate mindfulness; through this a practitioner can gradually attain higher states of consciousness (jhanas/dhyanas) leading to detachment	It can be argued that Samatha meditation leads into Vipassana meditation. It can be seen as an introductory form of meditation, which requires no specialist training or knowledge. Whereas Vipassana requires a teacher and a level of knowledge of Buddhist concepts in order to be effective

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
• vipassana (vipasyana) meditation also leads to detachment, not through higher states of consciousness but through a clear understanding of the nature of reality • samatha meditation focuses on mindfulness, which can help to overcome attachment, because through being mindful of one's thoughts a practitioner becomes aware of the interconnectedness of all phenomena • vipassana (vipasyana) meditation may focus on the idea of dependant origination, which means that a practitioner is focusing on the interconnectedness of all things and therefore overcoming attachment • all meditative practices in Buddhism are designed to help a Buddhist to overcome attachment, so the goals are the same but the practice is very different.	

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
3. 'The sangha (samgha) is the most important refuge.' Discuss. AO1 Candidates may demonstrate knowledge and understanding through the use of some of the following ideas: • sangha (samgha) means community or company and is most commonly used to refer to the monastic community of monks and nuns within a Buddhist community • the sangha (samgha) can also refer to the place in which monks and nuns live and work, although this is called a vihara • the sangha (samgha) can also refer to the whole community of Buddhists. This is often referred to as the four-fold sangha (samgha) and includes monks, nuns, lay men and lay women • the sangha is one of the three refuges in Buddhism. The others being the Buddha and the dhamma (dharma). These are the source of all the wisdom and authority in Buddhism • the monastic sangha (samgha) has kept Buddhist texts, and interpreted and taught those to the Buddhist community. The sangha (samgha) has also provided guidance on how to live a good Buddhist life.	
AO2 Candidates may demonstrate evaluation and analysis through the use of some of the following ideas: • the sangha (samgha) is the most important refuge because the monks and nuns live the life the Buddha did after his enlightenment and through their practice demonstrate to others how to do the same • the sangha (samgha) is also the most important because it keeps the teachings and textual tradition alive. It interprets texts so that they can be taught to the lay community and understood in the context of their own lives	The sangha could refer to both the monastic sangha as well as the fourfold sangha as the Buddhist community. As the community its importance is in the cohesion it brings to society and the sharing of good karma, as well as the living out of the concept of dependant

Indicative content – Responses might include:	Guidance
- the sangha keeps Buddhist traditions going, such as festivals and pilgrimages - the dhamma (dharma) is more important because it is the teachings of the Buddha. Without the Buddha's teachings there would be no Buddhism and no sangha (samgha). However, the sangha (samgha) needs to exist in order to maintain the dhamma (dharma) - the dhamma (dharma) is also the most important because it shows the path to enlightenment. Monks and nuns are on the same path and can give guidance, but if there is no sangha there is still the dhamma (dharma) - the Buddha is the most important refuge because he is the person who re-discovered Buddhism. Without the Buddha there would be no dhamma (dharma) and no sangha (samgha). However, no one would know about the Buddha today unless the sangha existed to keep his teachings alive - all three of the refuges are interconnected and therefore equally important.	origination in practical terms. The sangha in the West might not have the same significance or role as the sangha in countries such as Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. The role maybe less about the monastic life and more about supporting a small practicing community.

Level (Mark)	Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> • Religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching • Approaches to the study of religion and belief	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all listed strands of Assessment Objectives 1 (AO1) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
5 (13–15)	A very good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question : • focuses on the precise question throughout • very good selection of relevant material which is used appropriately • accurate, and detailed knowledge which demonstrates very good understanding through either the breadth or depth of material used • accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a very good range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
4 (10–12)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • addresses the question well • good selection of relevant material, used appropriately on the whole • mostly accurate knowledge which demonstrates good understanding of the material used, which should have reasonable amounts of depth or breadth • mostly accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a good range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
3 (7–9)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • generally addresses the question • mostly sound selection of mostly relevant material • some accurate knowledge which demonstrates sound understanding through the material used, which might however be lacking in depth or breadth • generally appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • A satisfactory range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding with only partial success	
2 (4–6)	A basic demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • limited selection of partially relevant material • some accurate, but limited, knowledge which demonstrates partial understanding • some accurate, but limited, use of technical terms and appropriate subject vocabulary.	

Level (Mark)	<u>Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 1 (AO1)</u> <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> • <i>Religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> • <i>Approaches to the study of religion and belief</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all listed strands of Assessment Objectives 1 (AO1) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
	• a limited range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding with little success	
1 (1–3)	A weak demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • almost completely ignores the question • very little relevant material selected • knowledge very limited, demonstrating little understanding • very little use of technical terms or subject vocabulary. • very little or no use of scholarly views, academic approaches and/or sources of wisdom and authority to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	
0 (0)	No creditworthy response	

Level (Mark)	<u>Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)</u> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all elements of Assessment Objective 2 (AO2) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
5 (13–15)	A very good demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • clear and convincing argument • successful and clear analysis and evaluation • views very well stated, coherently developed and justified • answers the question set competently • accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a very good range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority used to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i>	
4 (10–12)	A good demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • argument is generally successful and clear • generally successful analysis and evaluation • views well stated, with some development and justification • answers the question set well • mostly accurate and appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a good range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority are used to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear, relevant and logically structured</i>	
3 (7–9)	A satisfactory demonstration of analysis and/evaluation in response to the question: • some successful argument • partially successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted but often not fully justified • mostly answers the set question • generally appropriate use of technical terms and subject vocabulary. • a satisfactory range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority are used to support analysis and evaluation with only partial success Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a line of reasoning presented which is mostly relevant and which has some structure.</i>	
2 (4–6)	A basic demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • some argument attempted, not always successful	

Level (Mark)	<u>Levels of Response for AS Level Religious Studies: Assessment Objective 2 (AO2)</u> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study</i>	Note: The descriptors below must be considered in the context of all elements of Assessment Objective 2 (AO2) and the indicative content in the mark scheme.
	• little successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted but with little justification • only partially answers the question • some accurate, but limited, use of technical terms and appropriate subject vocabulary. • a limited range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support analysis and evaluation with little success Assessment of Extended Response: <i>There is a line of reasoning which has some relevance and which is presented with limited structure.</i>	
1 (1–3)	A weak demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question: • very little argument attempted • very little successful analysis and evaluation • views asserted with very little justification • unsuccessful in answering the question • very little use of technical terms or subject vocabulary. • very little or no use of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support analysis and evaluation Assessment of Extended Response: <i>The information is communicated in a basic/unstructured way.</i>	
0 (0)	No creditworthy response	

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS – FOR MARKING ON-SCREEN

June 2025

H173, H573 AS and A Level Religious Studies

PREPARATION FOR MARKING

RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
5. **Crossed Out Responses**
Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only **one mark per response**)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth **two or more marks**)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space.)

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.
7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response):
 - if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**

If you have any questions or comments for your team leader, use the phone, the RM Assessor messaging system, or e-mail.

9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.
10. For answers marked by levels of response:
 - a. **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
 - b. **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Level one – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level two – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level three – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level four – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level five – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	(H573 only) Level six - to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Highlighting a section of the response that is irrelevant to the awarding of the mark.
	Point has been seen and noted, e.g. where part of an answer is at the end of the script.

SUBJECT–SPECIFIC MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

H173, H573 AS and A Level Religious Studies

Introduction

Your first task as an Examiner is to become thoroughly familiar with the material on which the examination depends. You should ensure that you have copies of these materials:

- the specification, especially the assessment objectives
- the question paper and its rubrics
- the mark scheme.

Please ask for help or guidance whenever you need it. Your first point of contact is your Team Leader.

Information and instructions for examiners

The practice scripts provide you with *examples* of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Lead Marker and Team Leaders.

The specific task-related indicative content for each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However, this indicative content **does not** constitute the mark scheme: it is material that candidates **might** use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. It is hoped that candidates will respond to questions in a variety of ways. Rigid demands for 'what must be a good answer' would lead to a distorted assessment. Candidates' answers must be relevant to the question. Beware of prepared answers that do not show the candidate's thought and which have not been adapted to the thrust of the question. Beware also of answers where candidates attempt to reproduce interpretations and concepts that they have been taught but have only partially understood.

Using the Mark Scheme

Please study the Mark Scheme carefully. The Mark Scheme is an integral part of the process that begins with the setting of the question paper and ends with the awarding of grades. Question papers and Mark Schemes are developed in association with each other so that issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed from the very start.

This Mark Scheme is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers. The Mark Scheme can only provide 'best guesses' about how the question will work out, and it is subject to revision after we have looked at a wide range of scripts.

Please read carefully all the scripts in your allocation and make every effort to look positively for achievement throughout the ability range. Always be prepared to use the full range of marks.

The Mark Scheme contains a description of possible/content only; all legitimate answers and approaches must be credited appropriately. Learners are expected to make use of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority to support their argument.

The Levels of Response must be used in conjunction with the outlined indicative content.

Assessment Objectives

Two Assessment Objectives are being assessed in all questions:

AO1 (Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief) and

AO2 (Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study).

Responses are credited for **AO1** for selection, detail and accuracy of the knowledge and understanding of religion and belief deployed.

Responses are credited for **AO2** for how well the response addresses the question, for candidates using their knowledge and understanding to draw, express and support conclusions in relation to the question posed. Candidates will be assessed on the quality of the conclusions and points they argue and the clarity and success of their argument.

Levels of Response

Questions in this paper are marked using a levels of response grid. When using this grid examiners must use a **best fit** approach. Where there are both strengths and weaknesses in a particular response or particularly imbalanced responses in terms of the assessment objectives, examiners must carefully consider which level is the best fit for the performance.

Note that candidates can achieve different levels in each assessment objective, for example a Level 3 for AO1, and a Level 2 for AO2.

Please note that the Assessment Objectives being assessed are listed at the top of the mark scheme. Where a candidate does not address all of the Assessment Objective strands listed, the candidate cannot achieve the top level of response.

Assessment of Extended Response

The GCE General Conditions of Recognition state that:

GCE 5.1 In designing and setting the assessments for a GCE qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, and awarding organization must ensure that, taken together, those assessments include questions or tasks which allow Learners to -

- a) provide extended responses

As such, the quality of extended responses are assessed in all questions. While marks are not specifically given for this, descriptors for extended responses can be found in the AO2 Levels of Response *in italics*.

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