

GCSE

Religious Studies

J625/04: Buddhism beliefs and teachings & practices

General Certificate of Secondary Education

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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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

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 No Response (NR) if:

- there is nothing written 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.**

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
	Blank Page – this annotation must be used on all blank pages within an answer booklet (structured or unstructured) and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Noted
	Benefit of Doubt
	Tick
	Cross
	Level 1
	Level 2
	Level 3
	Level 4

12. Awarding Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar to scripts with a coversheet

- a. If a script has a **scribe cover sheet** it is vital to check which boxes are ticked and award as per the instructions and grid below:
 - i. Assess the work for SPaG in accordance with the normal marking criteria. The initial assessment must be made as if the candidate had not used a scribe (or word processor) and was eligible for all the SPaG marks.
 - ii. Check the cover sheet to see what has been dictated (or what facilities were disabled on the word processor) and therefore what proportion of marks is available to the candidate.
 - iii. Convert the SPaG mark to reflect the correct proportion using the conversion table given below.

SPaG mark awarded	Mark if candidate eligible for one third (e.g. grammar only)	Mark if candidate eligible for two thirds (e.g. grammar and punctuation only)
0	0	0
1	0	1
2	1	1
3	1	2
4	1	3
5	2	3
6	2	4
7	2	5
8	3	5
9	3	6

- b. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet** attached to it the candidate **can** still access SPaG marks (see point 1 above) unless the cover sheet states that the checking functionality is enabled, in which case no SPaG marks are available.
- c. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet AND a scribe cover sheet** attached to it, see point 1 above.
- d. If the script has a **transcript, Oral Language Modifier, Sign Language Interpreter or a Practical Assistant cover sheet**, award SPaG as normal.

12. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

General points

It is important to remember that we are rewarding candidates' attempts at grappling with challenging concepts and skills. Reward candidates for what they know, understand and can do. Be positive. Concentrate on what candidates can do, not on what they cannot do.

[3] mark questions are assessed via points-based marking. For all other questions, your first task is to match the response to the appropriate level of response according to the generic levels of response given after the indicative content. Only when you have done this should you start to think about the mark to be awarded. **Please note – the bandings for Assessment Objectives are not dependent; there is no requirement for a response to be awarded in the same band for AO2 as has been awarded in AO1.**

There are different ways of reaching a high level. Some candidates will go straight to the higher levels. Other candidates will gradually climb their way there by working their way through lower levels first.

The mark scheme for each paper will list responses which a candidate might offer. The list will not be exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers, and where a candidate offers a response which is not listed, examiners will be expected to use their knowledge and discretion as to whether the response is valid. Examiners who are in any doubt should contact their Team Leader immediately.

Specific points

Do not transfer marks from one part of a question to another. All questions, and sub-questions, are marked separately.

Mark what the candidate has written - do not assume that the candidate knows something unless they have written it.

The levels of response start with one from the following list of flag words:

Weak, Limited, Satisfactory, Good

During the standardisation process, examples of work at each level will be used to define the meaning of these flag words for the examination. In particular the word 'good' must not be interpreted as the best possible response. It will be what is judged to be 'good' according to the generic levels of response, although better responses could be offered.

Remember that we are trying to achieve two things in the marking of the scripts:

- (i) to place all the candidates in the correct rank order
- (ii) to use the full range of marks available – right up to the top of the range; ‘Good’ means a good response *from a GCSE candidate* and can therefore be awarded the highest marks.

This means that it is imperative you mark to the agreed standard.

Written communication, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Written communication covers: clarity of expression, structure of arguments, presentation of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling.

In the marking of these questions the quality of the candidate's written communication will be one factor (other factors include the relevance and amount of supporting detail) that influences whether an answer is placed at the bottom, the middle, or the top, of a level.

The following points should be remembered:

- answers are placed in the appropriate level according to the RS assessment objectives, i.e. no reference is made at this stage to the quality of the written communication;
- the quality of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar must **never** be used to move an answer from the mark band of one level to another;
- accept any reasonable alternative spelling of transliterated words from non-Roman alphabets in learners' responses.

SPaG is now assessed in e) part of the first question. Please refer to the grid overleaf when awarding the SPaG marks.

The Regulator now requires GCSE Religious Studies to assess the quality of extended responses by candidates. Marks are not specifically given for this assessment however. This assessment takes place in e) part of the second question. The levels descriptors for these are embedded in the Levels of Response, specifically AO2, and are *italicised for clarity*.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) Assessment Grid

<i>High performance 3 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Intermediate performance 2 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Threshold performance 1 mark</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder overall Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>0 marks</i>
The learner writes nothing The learner's response does not relate to the question The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

- Practice scripts provide you with examples of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Principal Examiners, Senior Team Leaders and Team Leaders and provide you with ‘benchmark’ examples of the approach to marking.
- The specific task-related indicative content for parts d) and e) of each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However; this indicative content is not an exhaustive list of ‘correct’ responses: it is material that candidates might use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. This needs to be used in close conjunction with the relevant Levels of Response marking grid, which is positioned below the indicative content. The guidance column on the right of the mark scheme will provide further exemplification and support as to the interpretation of answers, where required. **Levels of Response marked responses should be read holistically before applying the relevant Levels of Response.**

Assessment objectives (AO)

Assessment Objectives	
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including • beliefs, practices and sources of authority • influence on individuals, communities and societies • similarities and differences within and/or between religions and their beliefs.
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion, including their significance and influence.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1	(a) State <u>three</u> features of a Buddhist shrine. Responses might include: • Image of the Buddha (Thangka) • Statue of the Buddha (Rupa) • Flowers • Incense • Bowls of water • Food Offerings/ Fruit • Candles • Bell	3 AO1	1 mark for each response.
1	(b) Describe what is meant by the term anatta/anataman/anatman. Responses might include: • The absence of a permanent self or soul. • There is nothing fixed or permanent about the self • The self is ever-changing • No self/soul that continues after death.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification.
1	(c) Describe the importance of the lay sangha. Responses might include: • The lay sangha provide financial support for the monastic sangha for example paying for new scriptures or robes • They allow the monastic sangha to function so that it can fulfil its purpose of teaching and accumulating puna • The lay sangha provide food for the monastic sangha so that the monks and nuns can eat • The lay sangha provide support with the up-keep of the monastic sangha so that the buildings can be used by everyone • The lay sangha produce the next generation of monks and nuns to keep the monastic sangha going	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification.

Question		Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
		The lay sangha is an important community in its own right, where non-ordained Buddhists can meet, meditate, and discuss the dharma and how they practise Buddhism		

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1 (d)	Explain the relationship between dependant origination and the cycle of samsara. Learners might consider some of the following: Samsara is the constant movement from birth to death. Dependent origination means that the way everything is interconnected. Everything affects everything else. All thoughts, words and actions are influenced by previous thoughts, words and actions and will affect all future thought, words and actions. Each new rebirth is dependent on a series of prior causes, this is dependent origination. This is based on a person's ignorance/ unawareness and confusion, which leads them to pursue worldly happiness, which will never really satisfy them. The cycle of samsara can only function because of the nature of dependent origination. The only way to break free from the cycle of samsara is to break the chain of dependent origination. This means to work backwards through the 12 links (nidanas) of dependent origination, unpicking/ unrooting each one.	6 AO1	Examiners should mark according to AO1 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>AO2</u>
3 (3)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	4 (10–12)	A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Buddhist groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Buddhist groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion
2 (2)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	3 (7–9)	A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion
1 (1)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	2 (4–6)	A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus

		1 (1–3)	A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1 (e)	‘Death rituals have nothing to do with the Buddha’s teachings.’ Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should: - Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Buddhism - Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. Learners might consider some of the following: AO1: Theravada Buddhist funerals involve a shrine with the dead person’s picture and an image of the Buddha surrounded by candles, flowers and incense. Theravada Buddhists either bury or cremate the dead person. The Tibetan Book of the Dead is sometimes read to remind people that they are moving on to the next life and that death is not the end. In Japanese traditions, the body is placed in a casket with the coffin pointing west, and the community chant as they walk around it. Tibetan Buddhists often have a sky burial. This is when the body of the deceased is placed high up on a hill or mountain so that it can be eaten by vultures. AO2: Death is very important in Buddhism as it is central to the concept of samsara. Samsara is the cycle in which all beings are born, live, die and are reborn. This means that death is just part of the cycle and has to happen. Death enables a person to be reborn so that they can try to gain enlightenment in the next life. Buddhists believe funerals are important as they provide a reminder of the Buddha’s teachings. For example, if Buddhists can remember the Buddha’s teachings regarding impermanence, then they can remember that nothing lasts forever.	15 3 AO1 12 AO2 3 SPaG (4/3)	Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question. Please refer to the SPaG response grid on page 8.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	This helps Buddhists to accept that everything changes, which in turn helps them to reduce their suffering by encouraging them not to hold on to things. Some might argue that the rituals themselves do not link to these teachings. Buddhists might see that death rituals are for the dead persons family so that they get to say goodbye or have a reminder or memorial to that person. Many Buddhist death rituals reflect the culture of the country they take place in, and this suggests that they have nothing to do with the Buddha's teachings. Tibetan Buddhists might argue that the rituals are there to help the dead person move quickly through Bardo and into their next life. <i>OCR recognises that some of the material related to this subject may contain content that is offensive. By including this material in our assessment material, we are not condoning the content or the viewpoint of the creator.</i> <i>However, we feel it is important to include this material in the context of the assessment material to give students a holistic view of the subject matter.</i>		

Question		Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2	(a)	State <u>three</u> unskilful actions. Responses might include: • Greed • Hatred • Ignorance • Killing • Stealing • Lying • Consuming alcohol or drugs • Sexual misconduct • Anything that specifically goes against general Buddhist teaching • Anything that lads a person away from enlightenment	3 AO1	1 mark for each response.
2	(b)	Describe <u>one</u> activity that takes place in a monastery on an Uposatha Day. Responses might include: • Monks and nuns renew their dedication to the dharma and dhamma practice. • Monks and nuns chant the monastic rules and think about rules they have neglected. • Monks and nuns reaffirm their commitment to the three refuges or the five precepts. • Lay Buddhists come to the vihara or temple to meditate, • Lay Buddhists come to the vihara or temple to listen to the monks chanting or to hear the Dhamma being taught.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for a statement supported by any combination of development and exemplification.
2	(c)	Describe <u>one</u> way that impermanence causes suffering. Responses might include: • We suffer because our bodies are impermanent; they are subject to decay and death • We suffer because those things we get attached to are impermanent. • We suffer because cannot find lasting happiness in things that are impermanent.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for a statement supported by any combination of development and exemplification.

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2 (d)	Explain how devotional worship helps to end dukkha. Learners might consider some of the following: The word puja means acts of ‘worship’ or ‘adoration’. Buddhist puja can be performed at a home shrine, in a temple or monastery, at a stupa or at a site of pilgrimage. For many Buddhists, puja devotional rituals include prostrating themselves towards a Buddha image to show commitment and to request blessings. They may also make offerings, such as flowers, food, water and other gifts as if the Buddha was present and an honoured guest. Theravada puja traditions focus on ‘making merit’. This means earning positive karma by making offerings to monks or a monastery, chanting mantras and reciting Buddhist texts. Positive karma helps to reduce dukkha. Mahayana puja traditions include confessing bad actions, wishing others well and celebrating the good in the world. This reduces the dukkha a person may suffer and the dukkha they may cause to others. Devotional worship can also include a period of meditation. From meditation a person can experience calm, calm leads to ease (sukha the opposite of dukkha), and ease to concentration (samadhi) and ultimately enlightenment. Rupa puja (devotion offered to an image of the Buddha) can help Buddhists to remember and reflect on the life and teachings of the Buddha, which may comfort them and bring them closer to enlightenment.	6 AO1	Examiners should mark according to AO1 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.

Level (Mark)	<u>A01</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>A02</u>
3 (3)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	4 (10–12)	A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Buddhist groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Buddhist groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion <i>There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i>
2 (2)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	3 (7–9)	A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion <i>There is a line of reasoning presented which is mostly relevant and has some structure.</i>
1 (1)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals,	2 (4–6)	A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>AO2</u>
	communities and societies		<i>There is a line of reasoning which has some relevance and which is presented with limited structure.</i>
		1 (1–3)	A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief • No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus <i>The information is communicated in a basic/unstructured way.</i>
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2 (e)	‘The Middle Way is not important to Buddhists today.’ Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should: - Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Buddhism - Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. Learners might consider some of the following: AO1: In Theravada Buddhism the Middle Way can be seen as the spiritual practice that steers clear of both extreme asceticism and sensual indulgence. In Theravada Buddhism the Middle way can also refer to the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to enlightenment. In Mahayana Buddhism, the Middle Way refers to the concept of sunyata (emptiness) that transcends the extremes of existence and non-existence. AO2: For some Buddhists today the Middle Way is following the Noble Eightfold Path and this is not something they can do in their lives. The Noble Eightfold Path is too demanding for a lay Buddhist and is only possible to follow if one were a monk or nun. This might be the case for farmers, fishermen and butchers who job does involve killing animals. However, finding a middle point between denying oneself everything or over-indulgence is something that a Lay Buddhist can do in their lives. A Mahayana Buddhist might say the idea that everything in the universe inter-exists and therefore neither exists nor does not exist, is too complex and abstract to live their lives by. A Pure Land Buddhist may see that the Middle Way is one where a person tries to live a moral life in which they pay homage to Amida Buddha. In return Amida Buddha will ensure that they are reborn in the Pure Land where they can work towards enlightenment. For some Buddhists this might mean concentrating on gaining good karma and not producing any negative karma. Therefore, the five moral precepts might be more important.	15 3 AO1 12 AO2	Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	Some Buddhists today might see the Buddha's teaching as out of date and that the Middle Way today should refer to a lifestyle that balances the demands of living with the world as it is today and causing it no more harm in the future. Some Buddhists might see the Middle Way as being the most important teaching of the Buddha because it is a path that does not promote a fixed path or set of ideas but one that can change and adapt to a person's situation and circumstances. It is also important because it is the basic principle behind the ideas of Buddhism. To avoid extremes or opposites because these are not sustainable either practically as lifestyle choices or theoretically as philosophical principles. <i>OCR recognises that some of the material related to this subject may contain content that is offensive. By including this material in our assessment material, we are not condoning the content or the viewpoint of the creator.</i> <i>However, we feel it is important to include this material in the context of the assessment material to give students a holistic view of the subject matter.</i>		

AO Grid

Question	AO1	AO2	SPaG	Total
1a	3			3
1b	3			3
1c	3			3
1d	6			6
1e*	3	12	3	18
2a	3			3
2b	3			3
2c	3			3
2d	6			6
2e*	3	12		15
Total	36	24	3	63

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