



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

**A LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1
OPTION D: A STUDY OF BUDDHISM
A120UD0-1**

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

Rules for Marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two-stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content. Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 20 marks <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
5	17-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	13-16 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	9-12 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied. • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	5-8 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied. • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	1-4 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 30 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">25-30 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">19-24 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">13-18 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">7-12 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1 OPTION D

A STUDY OF BUDDHISM

SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

Either,

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 (a) **Examine the accounts of the conception and birth of the historical Buddha.** [AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha are outlined in a variety of ways in different books and for this allowance needs to be made.
- Candidates may explain accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha within the context of the cyclic uproar for a new Buddha to be born after the world has lost the dharma for one thousand years.
- Candidates may note the following key features of the accounts of the birth of the historical Buddha:
 - The Buddha decides to re-enter the realm of existence.
 - The Buddha selected Queen Maya because of her purity.
 - Queen Maya had a dream of being taken to the Himalayas and the Buddha – disguised as a white elephant carrying a lotus – entering her through her side leading her to conceive.
 - Various miraculous signs accompanied the conception.
 - Queen Maya journeyed to Lumbini and stopped at the gardens there.
 - A saloh tree bent down to her and as she stood and held on to it, the Buddha was born painlessly out of her side.
 - The Buddha was born as clean as a jewel and two streams of water came down from the sky.
 - The Buddha took seven steps to the four corners of the compass.
 - At each place where he stepped lotus flowers blossomed.
 - The Buddha declared: 'This is my last rebirth; I am the King of the Four Directions'. He declared that he would pluck out by the roots the sorrow caused by birth and death.
 - Queen Maya died seven days after the Buddha's birth.
- Candidates may focus on the hagiographical and mythological elements of the conception and birth of the Buddha.
- Candidates may focus on key features of the accounts of the conception and birth of the Buddha such as the unique nature of the Buddha, his purity, his super-human powers and his awareness of his destiny.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) 'The biography of the historical Buddha is not important for Buddhists today.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may argue that the biography of the historical Buddha is not important today because it is impossible to reconstruct with any accuracy the full details of his life.
- It may also be argued that the biography of the historical Buddha as handed down by tradition is too full of mythological and hagiographical details to be of any importance for Buddhists today.
- Some may argue that the biography of the historical Buddha is not one to which most Buddhists today can relate. For example, being born as a prince, being a wandering teacher for over forty years etc.
- It may also be argued that the biography of the historical Buddha is not relevant to Buddhists today since it concerns a completely alien time and culture.
- Another line of argument is that some parts of the biography of the historical Buddha are not ones which are important for Buddhists today because they focus on extreme acts such as his leaving his wife and son and his practising asceticism.
- It may also be argued that rather than the biography of the historical Buddha being important, Buddhists today should focus on the dharma and the sangha.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the biography of the historical Buddha is important as it shows that the Buddha really lived and died and is not a mythical figure.
- Another line of reasoning is that the biography of the historical Buddha is important because Buddhists today are able to separate the mythological and hagiographical details from what really happened and thus rediscover the founder of Buddhism.
- It could be stated that the key features of the biography of the historical Buddha are essential for Buddhists today such as his rejection of hedonism and asceticism in order to find the middle way.
- It may be argued that the biography of the historical Buddhist is important because the more that can be discovered about him, the more can the dharma be fully understood by placing it in context.
- Candidates may argue that as with other religions and their founders, Buddhism needs to have a clear understanding of its founder - the Buddha - which makes his biography important.
- It may be argued that the importance of the historical Buddha and the need for Buddhists today to relate to him can be seen in the fact that his image is central to Buddhist worship in homes and temples.
- Candidates may contrast the importance of the historical Buddha in Theravada Buddhism to his relative unimportance in Mahayana Buddhism.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

0 2 (a) **Examine the work of Thich Nhat Hanh.**

[AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Thich Nhat Hanh began his work in Vietnam as a Zen Buddhist monk
- He started the Socially Engaged Buddhist movement there during the Vietnam War.
- He encouraged young Buddhist students to combine meditation with work amongst those in need.
- He travelled frequently to Europe and the USA where he spoke out against the Vietnam War
- He met with and encouraged the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr to speak out opposing the war.
- His work in the USA condemning the war and seeking other ways to resolve the conflict led to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jnr putting his name forward for the Noble Peace Prize.
- Thich Nhat Hanh has written many accessible books on Buddhist practice with the emphasis on meditation and simple ways for people to meditate.
- Thich Nhat Hanh has been a pioneer in bringing Buddhism to the West, founding six monasteries and dozens of practice centres in the Anglophone world and Europe (including Plum Village in France), as well as over 1,000 local mindfulness practice communities, known as 'sanghas'.
- His Community of Interbeing founded in 1966 has 700 monks and nuns worldwide, who, together with tens of thousands of lay students, apply his teachings on mindfulness, peace-making and community-building in schools, prisons and workplaces.
- He introduced the concept of mindfulness to the West in his book 'The Miracle of Mindfulness' which taught many of the ideas and practices adopted since by the modern Mindfulness movement.
- Thich Nhat Hanh has worked to spread his message of mindfulness particularly through breathing, walking and smiling in innumerable interviews and articles.
- His work has made him probably the second-best known Buddhist internationally after the Dalai Lama.
- He founded the Order of Interbeing based on Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings.
- Some understand Hanh's contribution as simplifying Buddhism to simply smiling and walking enables the basics of Buddhism to be more accessible to, and appealing for, the masses.
- Others understand Hanh's contribution as developing and packaging his own brand of Buddhism which is in many respects discontinuous with more traditional forms of Buddhism practised in Buddhist countries

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘There is nothing new or innovative in the type of Buddhism taught by the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may argue that both the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh come from traditional Buddhist backgrounds – Tibetan and Zen – and that this is reflected in their teaching.
- It may be argued that the fundamentals of Buddhism such as the Four Noble Truths, the three lakshanas etc., all form part of the type of the Buddhism they teach.
- One line of argument is that both the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh have dukkha (suffering) and how to end it as their main focus of their teaching and that there is nothing new or innovative in such teaching.
- It may be argued that both the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh focus on the key Buddhist practice of meditation and have not altered traditional beliefs and teaching about it.
- A further line of reasoning is that there is nothing new in the focus given by both the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh on peace and non-violence since this is the first of the precepts observed by all Buddhists.
- It may be argued that the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh have centred all their teaching on rooting out the three poisons of greed, hatred and delusion and that this does not present new or innovative teaching.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the teaching of the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh is new and innovative since it is not directed to monks and nuns, but to lay people.
- It may be argued that because the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh often address Westerners through the medium of English in their interviews and writing, the type of Buddhism they teach is necessarily new and innovative.
- Candidates may argue that what is new and innovative in the type of Buddhism taught by the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh is its simplicity and its focus on happiness. ‘If you want others to be happy practice compassion. If you want to be happy practice compassion.’ (Dalai Lama). ‘Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.’ (Thich Nhat Hanh)
- It may be argued that the Dalai Lama’s Mind and Life Institute is presenting a new and innovative type of Buddhism since his aim is to connect Buddhism to modern science.
- Candidates may argue that Thich Nhat Hanh’s Order of Interbeing is a new and innovative type of Buddhism with the first of the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings rejecting attachment ‘to any doctrine, theory or ideology, even Buddhist ones.’
- It may be argued that the type of Buddhism taught by the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh is new and innovative because of the priority it gives to social engagement.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Section B

Either,

0 3 (a) Examine the concept of arhat (worthy one).

[AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Accounts of the concept of arhat may be outlined in a variety of ways depending on books used and for this allowance needs to be made.
- The arhat is the ultimate spiritual status that one can attain within Theravada Buddhism. The word derives from the root ariya (noble or worthy) and so this underlines its status within Buddhism. Essentially an arhat is one who has full proficiency in the ariya magga (noble path or path for the noble).
- An arhat is one who has aspired to nibbana during this life and will enter paranibbana upon death.
- The path to becoming an arhat is a long and difficult one but it is the ideal to which many Theravada Buddhists aspire.
- The first stage on the way to becoming an arhat is that of stream-winner or stream-enterer – one who is free from personal belief, sceptical doubt and the absolute nature of rules.
- The second stage on the way to becoming an arhat is that of once-returned – one who has diminished greed, hatred and delusion and is nearly free from craving and ill-will. They will only suffer one more rebirth in the realm of the senses.
- The third stage on the way to becoming an arhat is that of non-returned – one who has freedom from greed, hatred, delusion craving and ill-will. Any future rebirth will only be in the higher realms.
- The fourth stage is that of becoming an arhat – a worthy one. An arhat gains complete freedom from, for example, craving for material existence or immaterial existence, from conceit, restlessness and ignorance. Upon their passing they will escape samsara and enter nibbana.
- The arhat path is an individual one which encourages being solitary even in the company of others in order to focus on the single-minded effort to achieve nibbana during life.
- The arhat attains complete mental health and an arhat's calm actions no longer create karmic results.
- The arhat's mind is unaffected, undisturbed and totally concentrated. With such a mind, for example, physical pain may injure the body but it does not affect the mind.
- Candidates may contrast the path of the arhat (known as pratyeka Buddha in early Mahayana) with that of the Mahayana concept of bodhisattva; however, the focus of the answer should be upon the arhat.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **'In Buddhism the concept of bodhisattva is superior to that of arhat.'**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may argue that in the modern world the concept of bodhisattva is superior because it focuses on compassion which is key to social engagement.
- It may be argued that the concept of bodhisattva is superior because Buddhists can develop devotion to particular figures such as Manjushri or Avalokitesvara.
- Candidates may argue that the concept of bodhisattva is superior because it represents the wisdom of the Buddha which is given to and which can be accessed by all.
- It may be argued that the concept of bodhisattva is superior because it prevents Buddhism from being seen as a solitary, self-centred and individualistic belief system which is how the concept of arhat may be interpreted.
- Another line of reasoning is that the concept of bodhisattva is superior because it is what gives Mahayana Buddhism its vitality and variety in belief and practice.
- Conversely, it may be argued that that the concept of arhat is superior because it best represents the spiritual goal of Buddhists.
- It may also be argued that the arhat path is the one which is fully based on the life and practice of the historical Buddha and is therefore much more important.
- One other line of argument is that the true goal of meditation for Buddhists is to achieve the status of arhat and this makes it superior.
- It may be argued that the concept of arhat is upheld by Theravada Buddhism and because this represents the original/authentic form of Buddhism it is superior.
- Some may argue that the concept of arhat is superior because the four stages of the path to becoming an arhat present a clear and helpful form of progression.
- The concept of arhat is considered to be superior by some because it shows that attaining the spiritual goal of Buddhism is not easy but requires commitment, dedication and hard work.
- It may be argued that that neither the concept of arhat nor that of bodhisattva is 'superior' since both complement each other in upholding Buddhist belief and practice.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

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 (a) Examine the key Buddhist traditions in Japan. [AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Accounts of the key Buddhist traditions in Japan may be outlined in a variety of ways depending on the different books used and for this allowance needs to be made.
- The key Buddhist traditions in Japan may be seen as developing within the context of indigenous religious beliefs and practices such as Shinto and Kami, belief in mappo – the age of decay of the dharma – and the period being one of social and political turmoil.
- The three key Buddhist traditions in Japan as identified in the specification are: Zen, Pure Land and Nichiren.
- The origins of Zen might be traced back to Bodhidharma and Cha'an Buddhism in China.
- Zen began in Japan in the 12th and 13th century CE through the teaching of Eisai and Dogen.
- Eisai is associated with Rinzai Zen which found favour with the educated warrior and political classes. It cultivated martial arts, observance of ceremonial rules and defence of the state.
- Dogen is associated with Soto Zen which found favour with people outside of the educated warrior and political classes. It rejected any dealings with politics and martial arts, upholding instead a life of poverty.
- The central practice of koan is associated with Zen Buddhism.
- The origins of Pure Land might be traced back to Hui Yuan who had a vision of Amitabha Buddha and the Pure Land.
- Pure Land Buddhism in Japan developed through the teaching of Honen and his follower Shinran in the 12th and 13th century CE.
- Honen's teaching which was simplified by Shinran held that absolute devotion to Amida Buddha is all that is required to achieve rebirth in the Pure Land.
- The central practice of nembutsu (going for refuge in Amida/Amitabha Buddha) is associated with Pure Land Buddhism.
- The origins of Nichiren Buddhism may be traced back to Nichiren in the 13th century.
- Nichiren Buddhism might be seen as being based on the belief that the world could not understand the true dharma and that therefore something else was needed.
- Nichiren rejected Zen and Pure Land and upheld the Lotus Sutra as being the one scripture with the perfect and final truth.
- The central practice/depiction of the daimoku is associated with Nichiren Buddhism.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) 'Japanese Buddhist beliefs and practices are a unique form of Buddhism.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may argue that Japanese Buddhist beliefs and practices are a unique form of Buddhism because of the way in which they absorbed, adopted and adapted existing belief systems in Japan.
- It may be argued that Rinzai Zen Buddhism is unique because of the way in which unlike any other form of Buddhism it identified so closely with the ruling classes and martial arts.
- Candidates may argue that Soto Zen is unique because of its entire focus on zazen (just sitting) and on koans (paradoxical statements) as a way to enlightenment.
- It may be argued that the beliefs and practices of Pure Land Buddhism are unique because they focus completely on Amida/Amitabha Buddha and on rebirth in the Pure Land from where Awakening/Enlightenment can be achieved or the status of bodhisattva and ultimately the status of being a buddha.
- Some may argue that the practice of nembutsu (going for refuge in Amida/Amitabha Buddha) - as shown in the chant 'namu amida butsu' - is unique, since nothing more is required of Pure Land Buddhists.
- It may be argued that the beliefs and practices of Nichiren are unique because they focus entirely on the gohonzon, the Lotus Sutra and on the teachings of Nichiren.
- It may also be argued that the practice of chanting the daimoku – 'namu myoho rengo kyo' – is unique since nothing more is required of Nichiren Buddhists.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that there is nothing particularly unique about Japanese Buddhism once its cultural background is fully understood.
- It may be argued that as with other forms of Buddhism, Zen relies on the transmission of the dharma from teacher to student and that the use of zazen and koans are simply ways of putting into practice the threefold training of the Eightfold Path – wisdom, morality and meditation.
- Another line of reasoning is that the focus of Pure Land on Amida Buddha and rebirth in the Pure Land is entirely in accord with belief in the bodhisattva concept and in the whole philosophy of Mahayana as the greater vehicle.
- It may be argued that Nichiren Buddhism is not unique but is simply an example of skilful means whereby all beliefs and practices which lead to Awakening/Enlightenment are recognised as helpful. Chanting the daimoku is another form of chanting mantras.
- Candidates may 'question the question' in terms of whether there is one form of Buddhism against which other forms of Buddhism can be judged.
- It may be argued that whilst in its externals Japanese Buddhism might appear unique, this in reality is not the case since basic Buddhist beliefs and practices such as the Four Noble Truths, meditation etc., remain the same.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

- 0 5** (a) **Explain the use of mindfulness in health care, education and business.**
[AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Exemplification of mindfulness in health care, education and business might use a variety of examples not covered below as it is still a new and growing area of research and application.
- Mindfulness may be explained as being based on meditation – one of the Threefold Trainings in the Eightfold Path.
- Sati (Right Mindfulness) refers to the cultivation of calm and awareness of one's own body, sensations, feeling and thoughts with a view to having more knowledge of and control over them.
- Mindfulness builds on meditation when seen as a psychosomatic therapy taught by the Buddha and has been taught in many different forms by, for example, Thich Nhat Hanh, Stephen Batchelor, Jon Kabat-Zinn and Elizabeth Langer.
- The basic principles of mindfulness are the same but are adapted for application in a number of areas particularly in health care, education and business.
- In health care, one example of mindfulness is Kabat-Zinn's mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) which is used in treating conditions such as chronic pain, stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Kabat-Zinn's Stress Reduction Clinic and the Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society approaches pain management by focusing on and befriending physical pain.
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) regards MBCT as an effective treatment for people who suffer from recurrent episodes of depression.
- In education, one example of mindfulness is the Mindfulness in School Project (MiSP) which runs: '.b' (stop, breathe, be) and 'paws b' courses run in schools for students of all ages and for staff.
- One of the educational benefits is to train the mind to be more efficient and calmer in approaching, for example, academic studies or issues of confrontation by developing mental well-being through practices focusing on the breath.
- MiSP Hub members and SML members are invited to attend regular hour long sits via zoom to gain deeper awareness of mindfulness practice and its application in schools.
- In business, mindfulness practice can be seen in companies such as Google and its 'Search Inside Yourself' course alongside other mindfulness training courses for employees.
- The Langer Mindfulness Institute founded by Ellen Langer offers mindfulness courses/kits/programmes to businesses with a focus on people's neuroplasticity to enable them to be more responsive, productive, happy and creative in the workplace.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘The contemporary Mindfulness movement offers a very successful antidote to suffering.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- In agreement with the statement, it might be argued that the contemporary Mindfulness movement does offer a very successful antidote to suffering because it provides a variety of approaches to mental well-being in treating stress, depression and anxiety all of which are forms of suffering.
- That it offers a very successful antidote to such suffering is evident from its success in the field of health care as shown by NICE which approves of its use for those who suffer from recurrent episodes of depression.
- MBSR also offers an antidote to physical pain management by helping patients in identifying with their pain rather than trying to avoid it or simply escape from it.
- Since all forms of human suffering and responses to it are linked to what takes place in the mind, contemporary Mindfulness is very successful since its focus is on the workings of the mind, allotstasis and the removal of internal and external ‘stressors’.
- In the Satipatthana Sutta, the Buddha taught that right mindfulness is “the only way for the destruction of suffering and grief” and it is this which the contemporary Mindfulness builds on even though it might not be specifically Buddhist.
- In disagreement with the statement, it might be argued that the contemporary Mindfulness movement does not offer a very successful antidote to suffering because it is too superficial in its scope and in its approach. Ronald Purser’s book ‘McMindfulness’ argues that capitalism has tainted the notion of mindfulness beyond recognition.
- The contemporary Mindfulness movement does not concern itself with the root causes of suffering which are – from the Buddhist perspective – the workings of the Three Poisons (delusion, greed and hatred) and how they intertwine with tanha (craving).
- From one perspective the contemporary Mindfulness does not aim to offer a very successful antidote to suffering – Kabat-Zinn always encourages the dual use of mindfulness and relevant medical treatment.
- Slavoj Žižek argues that far from providing a very successful antidote to suffering, contemporary Mindfulness feeds into and supports the hegemonic ideology of global capitalism which is one of the root causes of suffering in terms of harm to mental wellbeing and exploitation of workers.
- Since contemporary Mindfulness is focused only on the individual and their own suffering, it is limited as an antidote to the far greater suffering found in society and communities in general.
- The contemporary Mindfulness movement might be regarded as being in vogue only in modern Western society as another form of self-help therapy which is only of temporary use as an antidote to suffering.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.