



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Religious Studies (9RS0)
Paper 4A: Buddhism

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Paper 9RS0 4A: Buddhism - 2023
Mark scheme

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
1	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three marks of existence are the three concepts that summarise a Buddhist concept of reality. • The three marks of existence include anicca, dukkha and anatta. • They are common to all dependently arisen beings. • Buddhists use these to try and understand existence and how to behave in order to reach enlightenment and release from the inevitability of samsara. • Buddhists would refer to these things when secular answers to problems of existence are offered. 	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2	<p>4 marks AO1, 8 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of Buddha Gautama or Shakyamuni Buddha as a historical person is accepted within Mahayana Buddhism. • Mahayana Buddhists believe they must follow the teachings of Buddha Gautama to achieve enlightenment. • Mahayana Buddhists will accept the Buddha Gautama as a transcendental being as well as a historical figure. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahayana Buddhists would understand that Buddha Gautama shows the path that all must follow. Therefore, they aim to help others as a bodhisattva whilst on the path to personal enlightenment. • Within Mahayana Buddhism, Buddha Gautama is perceived as an eternal being. Thus, they believe that they may feel that the Buddha is active in their daily life. • Mahayana Buddhists will recognise that Buddha Gautama or Shakyamuni Buddha taught the Middle Way as a route to release from samsara. However, they also accept that other Buddhas have valuable teachings about how to achieve this. • Most Mahayana Buddhists believe that Buddha Gautama is the supreme Buddha and that all other Buddhas follow in his footsteps. They believe everyone has a Buddha nature. Thus they accept that everyone is on the path to enlightenment. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(12)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(a)	<p>10 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three refuges reveal what is real to Buddhists. • The three refuges that a Buddhist may use are the Buddha, the dhamma and the sangha. • Buddhists can find out the way to live by recognising the wisdom in the three refuges. • A Buddhist cannot be misled by the three refuges as they are straightforward, however other teachings may be misunderstood. • Complete understanding of reality can be found in the three refuges. 	(10)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is superficial (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies that are not directly linked to the extract (AO1).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed, however it is not fully developed (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are linked in most cases to reference from the extract (AO1).
Level 3	7–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs is detailed and fully developed (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs and are fully linked to references from the extract (AO1).

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(b)	<p>5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking refuge in the Buddha, the dhamma and the sangha is a sign of commitment to Buddhist beliefs. • The three refuges help people when they are trying to find the way to live. • Some Buddhists feel that reciting the three refuges can have protective powers. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking the three refuges is a way that Buddhists show their commitment. Therefore, they can be regarded as essential within the Buddhist faith. • The three refuges will guide Buddhists down the right path, if they are looking to the Buddha, the dhamma and the sangha for advice then they will avoid suffering as a result. Therefore, it can be assumed that the three refuges are important in daily life. • The three refuges are also referred to as the Triple Gem. This reminds Buddhists how precious they are because they are a way to find enlightenment. For this reason, it could be said that the three refuges are extremely important in Buddhist life. • The three refuges help Buddhists focus on what is real. When meditating using the three refuges they will recognise that they need these things, and awaken their understanding of the Buddha, dhamma and sangha. For this reason, they are important as they ensure Buddhists do not become distracted by the world around them. • It can be argued that the three refuges are not separate to one another as you cannot have the dhamma or the sangha without the Buddha. Thus, it is the Buddha that is important in daily life. However, it could be argued that it is important to turn to the dhamma and the sangha as those are present in Buddhist daily life. • Some may argue that the three refuges are mainly used as a meditative chant in a traditional or ritual manner rather than in a practical way. However, most Buddhist would reply that opening the mind to the three refuges in meditation can be transformative. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(20)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are selected (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2).
Level 2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made, which are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question, which are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2).
Level 5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question, which are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4	<p>5 marks AO1, 25 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism is a religion that tries to find answers to issues by focussing on what they know and what they do not know, in a similar way to science. • Buddhism is open to scientific concepts as often they are in line with the Buddhist understanding of the cosmos. • Buddhists may regard scientific advances as important in that they may affect a Buddhist path in life. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Buddhist teachings are in line with scientific understandings. For example, the Buddhist response to issues surrounding creation and evolution is that they are in line with teachings about paṭiccasamuppāda, dependent origination. Therefore, responses to scientific issues are straightforward. • The practice of both science and Buddhism is based on observation leading to truthfulness. The Dalai Lama taught that if science ever disproves Buddhism, Buddhism must change. As a result, Buddhists would argue that science and Buddhism are complementary ways to study the universe. • Buddhist practice of meditation has long been recognised to have medicinal benefits. Buddhists including the Dalai Lama are now working with scientists to prove that it is rational to accept people need to try to overcome suffering as an essential part of life. As a result, it can be argued that science will eventually agree with the teaching of the Buddha. • Some Buddhists would argue that science is in essence objective and not in line with Buddhism. Science aims to prove what is observable and provable, and the Buddhist concepts of the cosmos and samsara are not like this. Thus, although science and Buddhism may not clash in many areas there are some they can never agree with. • Some would argue that Buddhism does not have an omnipotent deity to be obeyed. It means that Buddhism can analyse and accept scientific findings. However, there are some scientific issues which may go against the Buddhist's dhamma e.g., the precepts about the preservation of life and medically ending a life. Thus, agreement with science is not always possible. • Teachings about the acceptance of scientific knowledge, 	

	<p>and whether this leads to atheism, or whether science is compatible with religious beliefs, are studied in Philosophy of Religion. (This shows links to the Philosophy of Religion).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhist teachings about science will link to the understanding of ethical decisions, especially those concerning medical developments. (This shows links to Religion and Ethics). • The acceptance of scientific methodology when it corresponds to Buddhist philosophy, but not when it is in conflict with the dhamma, can be compared to the opposition faced by Jesus in the New Testament (This shows links to New Testament Studies). <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p> <p>Candidates who do not show links with another area of their course of study will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 4.</p>	<p>(30)</p>
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided but are simplistic and/or generic (AO2).
Level 2	7–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). • Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided, which loosely draw together ideas but with little or no attempt to justify (AO2).
Level 3	13–18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). • Judgements of some of the elements in the question are made (AO2). • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2). • Conclusions are provided, which logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).
Level 4	19–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected, most of which are used appropriately and accurately throughout (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between a wide range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of many but not all of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are supported by the appraisal of some evidence (AO2). • Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are partially justified (AO2).
Level 5	25–30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convincing conclusions are provided which fully and logically draw together ideas and are fully justified (AO2).
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