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# **GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2019**

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

**A120UD0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2019 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	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions</b>     20 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i></li> <li>- <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i></li> <li>- <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i></li> <li>- <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i></li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>17-20 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-16 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>

2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5-8 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-4 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</b></p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

Band	<p><b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions</b>    30 marks</p> <p><i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
5	<p><b>25-30 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>19-24 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed.</li> <li>• The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>13-18 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed.</li> <li>• Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>7-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>

1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence.</li> <li>• Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>



**A Level Component 1**  
**Option D: A Study of Buddhism**

**Mark Scheme**

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

**Section A**

- 1. (a) Examine different ways in which Buddhists meditate. [AO1 20]**

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

- Candidates may place Buddhist meditation in context by explaining that a general word for meditation is 'bhavana' meaning 'mental development' but that Buddhists also use the terms jhana (Pali) and dhyana (Sanskrit).
- Candidates may also illustrate their answers with reference to the Buddha's use of meditation.
- In each case the goal of meditation is the same: accessing the true nature of reality and cultivating qualities which lead to awakening.
- In Theravada, right mindfulness and right concentration are the basis of samatha (calmness) or calm meditation. Candidates may explain that an object is chosen, mindfulness and concentration are applied to it and full presence of mind is cultivated. There arises a state of tranquil, focused alertness. The object chosen might include qualities of the Buddha.
- In Theravada, benevolent concern is at the heart of a different form of meditation, metta bhavana (loving kindness). The goal is to counteract ill-will by making the mind friendly in a warm, patient, accepting and unsentimental way towards all beings. Candidates may explain one approach to metta bhavana: focusing on love for oneself, then on love for a greatly respected person, then on love for a person one is neutral towards and finally on love towards one who is regarded with hostility.
- In Theravada, another different way of meditation, which is the most advanced form – for which samatha is a preparation – is vipassana (insight/clear seeing). The goal is to see things as they really are and to gain clear knowledge and insight. Candidates may explain that this may be done through, for example, walking meditation. It may also be done through meditating on the three lakshanas (three marks of existence): dukkha, anicca and anatta.
- In Zen, zazen (just sitting) is a different way of meditation whereby the meditator sets out trying not to think and not trying to think and thus sits with no deliberate thought. In this purposeless state, the meditator is able to unfold the innate Buddha-nature within. Candidates may link zazen to meditation on a koan (paradoxical statement used as a practice in Zen traditions) which can then lead to one-pointed concentration.

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

- (b) **‘Meditation is the most important Buddhist practice.’  
Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

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

- Candidates may argue that meditation features in the life of the Buddha himself and it was this that led to his Awakening/Enlightenment. Meditation is therefore the most important Buddhist practice since this is something all Buddhists desire to achieve.
- Meditation is the most important part of the life of Buddhist monks and nuns. Candidates may argue that the practice of meditation is frequently encouraged by Buddhist leaders such as the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh.
- Candidates may argue that meditation is the most important Buddhist practice since it is only through meditation that a Buddhist is able to access the true nature of reality. It cultivates one of the six paramitas – dhyana paramita (one pointed concentration). In this way the three lakshanas (three marks of existence) and the nature of ultimate reality pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth can be understood.
- It may be argued by candidates that meditation is the most important Buddhist practice as it develops mental discipline which is a key part of the eightfold path: right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the most important Buddhist practice is to be found in going for refuge. Thus, heritage and convert Buddhists, may chant three times going for refuge to the Buddha, dharma and sangha. Going for refuge to any of the three might be seen as the most important Buddhist practice.
- It may be argued by candidates that the most important Buddhist practice is dana (giving). Selfless generosity/giving or sharing of time/money/possessions enables the Buddhist to support the sangha and the wider community. It is only through dana that loba (greed) one of the three fires can be extinguished.
- Karuna (generosity) is a Buddhist virtue which, candidates may argue, is at the heart of Socially Engaged Buddhism. It may be argued that karuna is much more important than meditation.
- Candidates may argue that the most important Buddhist practice is punya (merit). Such punya gained and accumulated as a result of good deeds, acts or thoughts can be carried over throughout life or in subsequent rebirths and may be transferred to others.
- Some candidates may point out that in Pure Land Buddhism and Nichiren Buddhism, meditation is not the most important practice. Instead it is the recitation of the nembutsu in the former and the daimoku in the latter.

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

**2. (a) Examine the different ways in which mindfulness is used in contemporary society. [AO1 20]**

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

- Candidates may explain that contemporary mindfulness is based on one of the Threefold Trainings in the Eightfold Path: meditation. Here 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. It may be explained that contemporary Mindfulness builds on meditation when seen as a psychosomatic therapy taught by the Buddha.
- Candidates may explain that the roots of contemporary mindfulness can be found with Thich Nhat Hanh and his teaching that a person should be mindful of the positions of their body, each breath, each movement, every thought and feeling, and everything which has any relation to ourselves.
- Stephen Batchelor's explanation of contemporary mindfulness may be referred to: he explains that the central part is breathing and experiencing the breath as the body experiences it, leading on to an awareness of the body/mind before expanding to an awareness of the world.
- Amongst different ways contemporary mindfulness is used, candidates may note, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and its use in treating conditions such as chronic pain, stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Candidates may refer to the work in the area of pain management of Jon Kabat-Zinn – founder of MBSR and creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society. He argues that through contemporary Mindfulness pain management may be achieved by focusing on and befriending physical pain.
- Candidates may note the work of Mindfulness Based Addiction Recovery (MBAR) founded by Vimalasara Mason-John which includes three-minute breathing space, four basic needs of the heart, body scan, and working with difficulties within the context of mindfulness.
- Candidates may explain how contemporary mindfulness is used in education through, for example, Mindfulness in School Project (MiSP). This includes 'b' (stop, breathe, be) and 'paws b' courses run in schools for students and staff which aim to train the mind to be more efficient through practices focusing on the breath.
- Candidates may note the work of Ellen Langer and the Langer Mindfulness Institute in the area of business management and leadership whereby avoiding mindlessness through being alert and receptive to new ideas is the focus. Thus, rather than having very focused attention on any one thing, soft openness to everything is required with a mind able to seize and grasp the new rather than rely on the tried and tested.
- Candidates may explain Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) where, being aware of and living in the present moment, as opposed to dwelling on a painful past or on an uncertain future, is the focus. They may note that the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) regards MBCT as an effective treatment for people who suffer from recurrent episodes of depression.

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

- (b) **‘The contemporary Mindfulness movement is not Buddhist.’  
Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

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

- Candidates may argue that the contemporary Mindfulness movement has focused exclusively on only sati (Right mindfulness) which is just one small aspect of the Threefold Trainings in the Eightfold Path.
- Key Buddhist beliefs such as the three lakshanas (three marks of existence), pratityasamutpada, karma and rebirth are not mentioned or required by the contemporary Mindfulness movement.
- Candidates may argue that sati (Right Mindfulness) should be seen in the context of the historical Buddha’s search for the answer to the question of dukkha (unsatisfactoriness) which did not stop with sati but which led to the Awakening/Enlightenment. The contemporary Mindfulness movement has therefore isolated just one step along the path but has ignored the goal of Awakening/Enlightenment.
- The contemporary Mindfulness movement may be seen as having nothing to do with Buddhism but as simply part of general Cognitive Therapy which tries to deal with pain management, treatment for stress, depression and anxiety, cancer-management, addiction treatment, concentration and behaviour issues in schools and getting the best out of employees in corporations and businesses.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the contemporary Mindfulness movement has captured the essence of Buddhism which in the form of meditation is accessing the true nature of reality and cultivating qualities which lead to personal awakening.
- It may be argued that mindfulness was introduced and practiced by the historical Buddha himself and that by learning from and copying his example, the contemporary mindfulness movement is Buddhist.
- Candidates may point to the fact that many of the key exponents of the contemporary Mindfulness movement come from the background of Buddhist belief or try to incorporate other aspects of Buddhism into what they teach. Jon Kabat-Zinn, for example, was introduced to mindfulness through Zen practitioners and studied under Thich Nhat Hanh.
- It may also be argued from the point of view of Socially Engaged Buddhism that the primary drive of Buddhism is to combat suffering. Pain, stress, depression, anxiety, cancer and addiction treatment are all forms of suffering. Since it aims to relieve suffering, the contemporary mindfulness movement is truly Buddhist.

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

## Section B

### 3. (a) Explain how Buddhists apply the dasa sila (ten precepts). [AO1 20]

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

- The dasa sila are outlined in a variety of ways in text books and for this allowance needs to be made.
- Candidates may explain how the dasa sila feature within the community of believers: lay people and the monastic sangha.
- They may explain the dasa sila in the context of the panca sila (five precepts) and the atanga sila (eight precepts).
- It may be noted that the precepts are 'training-precepts' which are primarily for the monastic sangha – including those in training for the monastic life- but may be followed by lay people. The dasa sila may be given in a negative and a positive form.
- The panca sila are:
  1. Avoiding harm to beings
  2. Avoiding theft
  3. Avoiding sexual misconduct
  4. Avoiding lying and wrong forms of speech
  5. Avoiding intoxicants that cloud the mind.
- Candidates may explain that in some Buddhist lands where Buddhism is the dominant religion, lay people may chant and 'take the precepts' in the same way as chanting and going for refuge.
- The atanga sila include the panca sila and the following three:
  6. Abstaining from eating after noon
  7. Abstaining from dancing, music / Abstaining from personal adornment
  8. Abstaining from high or large beds or seats
- Candidates may explain that lay Buddhists may undertake the atanga sila on festival days.
- The dasa sila include the atanga sila - splitting the 7<sup>th</sup> precept into two parts - and then adding the 10<sup>th</sup> precept:
  10. Abstaining from accepting gold and silver.
- Candidates may explain that it is the 10<sup>th</sup> precept which precludes the actual handling of money which means that the dasa sila are not taken temporarily but on a full-time basis by the monastic sangha.
- Candidates may note that in Theravada Buddhism, devout lay Buddhists may also choose to follow the dasa sila.

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

- (b) **'The dasa sila are essential for the sangha.'**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

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

- Candidates may argue that the dasa sila have to be seen in the overall context of going for refuge to the dharma and in particular in the context of the second noble truth which states that craving leads to suffering. Since each of the dasa sila deals with an aspect of craving, they should be seen as essential for the sangha.
- It may be argued that the Eightfold Path highlights the Three Trainings which are central to the ethical and moral life of the Buddhist. The dasa sila are essential in order that Buddhists can develop right speech, right livelihood and above all right action.
- Candidates may distinguish between lay people and the monastic sangha and argue that whilst for lay people the dasa sila are not essential, they are for the monastic sangha. Thus, failure to observe the dasa sila may lead those in the monastic life and those in training for the monastic life to be disciplined or expelled.
- Candidates may argue that the dasa sila should be essential since it is only through following them that members of the sangha will be able to live in such a way that Awakening/Enlightenment is possible.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the dasa sila are only to be seen as guidance for living and training aspirations rather than as essential for lay people and the monastic sangha. With this approach, over time, the dasa sila as ideals may be followed in an increasingly complete way.
- Candidates may argue that the dasa sila should not be seen as essential given by an external authority but rather, as personal undertakings or promises to oneself. Breaking any one of them simply requires a renewal of that undertaking or promise to oneself.
- It may be noted that the concept of essential is foreign to Buddhism. Instead the Middle Way is followed with regard to the dasa sila. Thus, what is required is avoidance of the extremes of ignoring them completely on the one hand, and of following them rigidly on the other.
- Candidates may argue that the dasa sila cannot be seen as essential as everything depends on the situation and circumstances of lay people and monastic sangha. Thus, what might be easily applicable in the context of heritage Buddhists (abstaining from intoxicants that cloud the mind) might be much less applicable to convert Buddhists.
- Candidates may point to the dasa sila not being essential as they reflect the time of their composition and need to be updated particularly with regard to the Buddhist sangha in the West. Thus, abstaining from high or large beds and abstaining from accepting gold and silver are no longer relevant today.

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

4. (a) **Examine how Buddhism in the West can be seen as a secular philosophy.** [AO1 20]

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

- Candidates may explain that there are many aspects of Buddhism which can be seen as secular philosophical concepts such as the three lakshanas (dukkha, anicca and anatta) and pratityasamutpada.
- Candidates may refer to philosophical Buddhist texts often seen as promoting a view that can be consistent with a secular approach such as the Heart Sutra which states that all is empty (sunya) of inherent existence (svabhava). It claims 'form is emptiness, and the very emptiness is form'.
- It may be noted that Buddhism as a secular philosophy in the West is only dependent on assertions and claims which can be verified in the natural world through verifiable and convincing evidence. As with the claims of other religions, that which cannot be verified in such a way is set aside.
- Reference may be made to the writings of Stephen Batchelor and the key points of his approach may be given in a variety of ways. For example:
  - 1) That the term 'dharma practice' should be used rather than Buddhism since it is not a religious belief system.
  - 2) That 'dharma practice' is for this world alone and is entirely based on reason and evidence and not on any inherited doctrines from the various schools of Buddhism: Theravada, Mahayana, Zen, Pure Land, Nichiren and Tibetan Buddhism.
  - 3) That the Buddha taught only four things: the conditioned nature of existence, the practice of mindfulness, self-reliance on the individual and 'the four ennobling truths': anguish, its origins, its cessation and the path to its cessation.
  - 4) That the Buddha's Awakening/Enlightenment was nothing more and nothing less than discovering 'complete freedom of heart and mind from the compulsions of craving'.
  - 5) That 'dharma practice' can lead anyone to follow the Buddha and gain their own awakening and that it requires no religious belief or ritual but focuses on 'understanding, letting go, realization and cultivation'.
  - 6) That as a religious belief system, Buddhism should be rejected as it has made individual awakening increasingly more difficult, inaccessible and something to be attained in a future lifetime - for which there is no evidence.
- Candidates may explain a variety of other approaches in the West whereby Buddhism can be seen as a secular philosophy such as that of the Secular Buddhist Association (SBA). This focuses on the four noble truths as providing a philosophical framework for personal and social development within the context of modern times.

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

- (b) **‘Buddhism is not a religion.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

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

- Candidates may argue that much depends on how the word ‘religion’ is defined. If it is seen as a system of beliefs and practices relating to the sacred which produces social behaviours and unites all the individuals who adhere to it in the same community, then Buddhism is a religion.
- It may be pointed out that the term ‘religion’ includes belief in supernatural beings, life after death, heaven, hell, miracles, mystical experiences, prayers beings offered and worship being made. That being the case, Buddhism is a religion since all of these beliefs can be found within the various Buddhist schools: Theravada, Mahayana, Zen, Pure Land, Nichiren and Tibetan Buddhism.
- Candidates may argue that Buddhism is a religion as it has the same features as the other world religions: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Thus, there are sacred buildings, sacred sources of wisdom and authority, rituals, spiritual leaders and access to the numinous.
- Candidates may refer to the writings of David Brazier. Among other things, he argues that secularized forms of Buddhism are only partial and are products of modern secular society. In addition, the Buddha himself founded the monastic sangha, taught religious ritual, revealed his previous births and spoke with supernatural beings.
- Conversely, candidates may refer to the Kalama Sutta v. 9 & 10 which could be seen as implying that Buddhism is not a religion since tradition, scripture and the teaching of monks is rejected in favour of that which is good, not blameable, praised by the wise and which leads to benefit and happiness.
- Candidates may point out that Buddhism cannot be a religion in the accepted sense of the word as there is no belief in one omnipotent creator God as evident in the other major world religions: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.
- Candidates may argue that Buddhism should not be seen as a religion as there is no requirement to believe in the supernatural or life after death. Instead it should be called an ‘attitude to life’ or ‘a way of life’ based on compassionate positive action towards oneself and towards others.
- Candidates may also refer to Socially Engaged Buddhism in the West which - through its focus on combatting suffering, action in society, ecological awareness, the search for a new economics, gender inclusivity, political and institutional reform – may be seen as a form of Humanism rather than as a religion.

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



**5. (a) Examine the Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha. [AO1 20]**

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

- The Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha is outlined in a variety of ways in text books and for this allowance needs to be made.
- Candidates may explain the Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha within the context of his life up to that time: leaving the Palace, his wife and son at the age of 29; living for six years as an ascetic; learning meditation practices; extreme fasting which came to an end by accepting the offering of Sujata; the departure of the five ascetics who believed that he had failed through breaking his fast.
- Candidates may note the following key features of the Buddha's Awakening/Enlightenment:
  - Siddhartha aged 35, sitting under the Bodhi Tree.
  - Siddhartha's resolve not to move until he obtained supreme and absolute wisdom.
  - His exploring of the four meditative absorptions (jhanas).
  - Mara, the god of illusion and deceit, trying to prevent Siddhartha's Awakening/Enlightenment.
  - Mara sending his sons as a demon horde to frighten Siddhartha and thus break his resolve.
  - Siddhartha remaining unmoved.
  - Mara sending his seductive daughters to tempt Siddhartha and thus break his resolve.
  - Siddhartha remaining unmoved.
  - Mara's challenge to Siddhartha that he must find a witness to testify that he deserved to succeed in his resolve.
  - Siddhartha's defeat of Mara by the earth-touching mudra whereby the earth itself was his witness.
  - Siddhartha gaining insight into the true nature of reality: the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; the role of karma in this relentless turning; the three fires; the three marks of existence; dukkha, the cause of dukkha and the path to its cessation.
  - Siddhartha having achieved Awakening/Enlightenment becoming the Buddha.
- The Buddha deciding that what he had gained through his Awakening/Enlightenment should be passed on to others.
- The Buddha then giving the First Sermon in the Deer Park at Sarnath, 'Setting in Motion the Wheel of Dharma', which was followed by 45 years of teaching.
- Candidates may explain the Awakening/Enlightenment by focusing on a mythic and psychological interpretation. Thus, all that is described took place in Siddhartha's mind. The actions of Mara represent the fears and doubts of Siddhartha and his desires to return to his life of hedonism.
- Candidates may refer to the misogynistic structure of the myth regarding the temptation offered by Mara's seductive daughters.

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

- (b) **‘The Four Sights are more important than the Awakening/Enlightenment of the Buddha.’**  
**Evaluate this view with reference to Buddhism.** [AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may argue that the Four Sights are more important because it was through the totality of this experience that Siddhartha made the radical choice to turn away from a pleasant and fulfilling family life with the expectation of inheriting a position in society. Without the Four Sights the Awakening/Enlightenment would not have taken place.
- Candidates may argue that through the sight of the old man, the sick man and the corpse, an understanding of dukkha (unsatisfactoriness) was gained since youth, vitality and strength could not prevent the pain and suffering resulting from old age, sickness and death.
- Candidates may argue that through the sights of the old man, the sick man and the corpse, an understanding of anicca (impermanence) was gained since constant change was obvious in the way in which a baby becomes a youth, then becomes an adult, then becomes an old man and then becomes a corpse.
- It may also be argued that through the sight of the old man, the sick man and the corpse, an understanding of anatta (insubstantiality/no-self) was gained since in the stages of continual change no one continuing self could be identified.
- Candidates may argue that the fourth sight of the sadhu (holy man) was the most important of the four sights since it provided Siddhartha with the inspiration which led to the Great Renunciation.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the Awakening/Enlightenment is more important since it was this event which marked the real change for Siddhartha as through this he became the Buddha.
- It may be argued that the Awakening/Enlightenment is more important since it provided the answer to the questions raised by the Four Sights and pointed towards a resolution of the issues of dukkha, anicca and anatta.
- Candidates may argue that the very name ‘Buddha’ means ‘Enlightened/Awakened One’ and that it is the event of the Awakening/Enlightenment and not the Four Sights which gives Buddhism itself the name it bears.
- It may be noted that since the Four Sights are in the form of an artificial and stereotyped legend which cannot be accepted literally, the Awakening/Enlightenment is of far more importance since it was this event which is at the centre of the Buddha’s teaching.
- Candidates may argue that seen in isolation the Four Sights are not important since they simply form an introduction to the main event in the life of the Buddha – his Awakening/Enlightenment.
- It may be argued that today Buddhists look not to the Four Sights but to the Buddha’s Awakening/Enlightenment as providing a purpose, goal and rationale for living the Buddhist life.

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