

**CONFERENCE VERSION**



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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**AUTUMN 2020**

**AS  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1  
OPTION D: AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM**

**B120UD0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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 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.

## AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions</b>    25 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>21-25 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>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>16-20 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>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>11-15 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>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6-10 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>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-5 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>• 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>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

<b>Band</b>	<b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 25 marks</b> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>21-25 marks</b> <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>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>16-20 marks</b> <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>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>11-15 marks</b> <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>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>6-10 marks</b> <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>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>1-5 marks</b> <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>• Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

## Component 1

### Option D: An Introduction to Buddhism

#### Mark Scheme

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

#### Section A

1. (a) **Examine the characteristics of bodhisattvas according to Mahayana Buddhism.** [AO1 25]

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

- In Mahayana Buddhism the ultimate spiritual status for a Buddhist to be is one of Buddhahood, achieved through the bodhisattva path.
- The complex and comprehensive bodhisattva path is one of compassion. The aim is to return to the world of samsara having eliminated suffering.
- Before taking the path of the bodhisattva the Buddhist must awaken the bodhicitta. The four ways to do this are by thinking about the Buddhas; reflecting on the faults of material existence; arousing compassion by thinking about the suffering of others; and finally reflecting on the loss of the Buddha or emptiness.
- Buddhists on the bodhisattva path with first take vows called pranidhana. The pranidhana are wishes not only for themselves but for others also.
- One of the vows, the desire for enlightenment, is not wished in order to leave samsara. Once a bodhisattva has achieved awakening they do not seek nibbana, instead wishing to stay and help other beings.
- A bodhisattva must go through a series of ten stages that has corresponding virtues that are acquired at each stage. The path neatly intertwines the need for knowledge and compassion.
- The first stage is the delight and joy stage. At this stage dana is perfected. Dana is generosity of giving to others. Merit gained by a bodhisattva should be used for those striving towards Buddhahood.
- The second stage is the purity stage. At this stage a bodhisattva would visualise Buddhas whilst meditating. This stage will perfect the paramita of sila; purity. All actions will be spontaneous and pure.
- The third stage is the brightness stage. Patience is perfected in this stage (ksanti) and is gained through meditation and compassion.
- The fourth stage is the inflammation stage, where vigour (virya) is perfected.
- The fifth stage is the very difficult to conquer stage. The perfection is mediation. The sixth stage is the manifest stage that perfects wisdom (prajna)
- The seventh stage is the going far away stage that perfects skilful means (upaya kausalya). At this stage the bodhisattva should be able to project into other worlds to share these skills.
- The seventh stage is the immovable stage. This is where all desire for Buddhahood is removed
- The eighth stage is the good intelligence stage. A bodhisattva has acquired four complete knowledges. Stage ten is the clouds of Dharma stage. Knowledge (jnana) is complete.

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

**(b) 'There are only four stages of awakening.'**

**Evaluate this view with reference to Buddhism.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Mahayana Buddhists would disagree with this as they believe that there are more stages needed in order to reach enlightenment. They may believe that their way of reaching enlightenment is the better way because the bodhisattva path is the more compassionate of the two.
- This could be countered with the argument that the arhat has the same goal of reducing suffering.
- The path of the bodhisattva, with its ten stages, not four, can be seen as superior by some as it is more complex than the four-stage path of the arhat. However, it could also be argued that the path of the arhat is one of dedication as it focusses on the individual achieving enlightenment.
- Another line of argument could be that the bodhisattva path is not mentioned as the superior path in the Pali Canon and so Theravada Buddhists would not recommend the bodhisattva path over the arhat path. Theravada Buddhists do reference the bodhisattva way as they believe that the Buddha himself followed this path to awakening.
- However, it could be argued that the ten stages of the bodhisattva in Mahayana can be seen as a more developed way of reaching enlightenment. The Mahayana teachings and scriptures can be seen as the second turning of the Dharma wheel and as such it is therefore a more universal path for all to follow.
- The bodhisattva path is argued by Mahayana to be the real route to awakening as it is a selfless one and thus benefits the whole of humanity.
- It could be argued that there is no single way to awakening. To question whether the path to enlightenment is one of four stages or indeed ten stages is to lose the meaning of enlightenment.
- Indeed, issues only arise when comparing the two paths to enlightenment. The statement is true for Theravada Buddhists and false for Mahayana Buddhists and that is okay. The two concepts are both routes to awakening as they both embrace the path of the Buddha. They are both legitimate ways of reaching the same goal.
- Alternatively it could be suggested that the path of the arhat is the original way of reaching enlightenment and thus the statement that there are four stages of enlightenment is to be considered accurate.
- Ultimately, the Buddha did not follow stages and so the statement is neither true or false. There cannot be a definitive path that is of more truth than another.

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



2. (a) **Examine anatta with reference to the Chariot Passage of the *Questions of King Milinda*. [AO1 25]**

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

- Anatta is the idea of no self. It is often misunderstood and interpreted wrongly in the west.
- The idea of anatta can be seen as the opposite of having a soul. It can be seen as an absence of 'own self' (svabhava) or the 'emptiness' (sunnata).
- Buddhists believe that instead of a soul we are made up of 5 fluctuating impermanent khandhas (groups). They are rupa (form), vedana (feeling), sanna (perception), sankhara (mental formations), vinnana (consciousness).
- The Buddha himself decided that he could find no part of himself that was not constantly changing and thus could not identify any permanent part of himself.
- The text, 'The Question of King Milinda' (100BCE), is a non-canonical text that explains the misinterpretation of the idea anatta.
- The text is a famous Buddhist text explaining key Buddhist teachings in the form of a story about the Greek King named Milinda and his encounter with a Buddhist monk Nagasena.
- The Chariot passage begins with Nagasena answering the question of King Milinda, 'what, sir, is your name?' Nagasena explains that his name is not important as this does not make up who he is. It is just a label.
- The King doesn't understand this and tries to question what exactly makes up the man he sees before him. He lists various possibilities to do with body parts or sensations or ideas and eventually he accused Nagasena of denying that 'Nagasena' actually exists.
- Nagasena defends himself by saying that it is wrong to limit an evaluation of a person to determined physical elements. Instead the analysis needs to be more careful and appreciative of anicca (impermanence).
- He turns the tables on King Milinda. He uses his argument against him by asking what his chariot is. He asks if it is the pole or the yoke or the spokes. The king says no and he asks then if it is the cumulation of all parts. When he replies negatively again, Nagasena says that the chariot must be a lie or not exist at all.
- The king understands that the chariot is like Nagasena. It is not a thing in its own right but a composite of many other things. The term Nagasena applies to a collective *process* of materials rather than a single product.
- Nagasena is simply a label that describes a collection of physical and mental properties.

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

**(b) 'The three lakshanas do not fully represent reality.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- The lakshanas are representative of reality because they are observed concepts that follow the same empirical evidence basis as scientific ideas. It isn't based on a set of beliefs or teachings but experience gained from our senses. We can see that suffering exists; from small acts of discomfort such as a missed bus to more extreme suffering such as global famine.
- Anicca and dukkha are observable in human nature and are studied in depth by medical scientists and psychologists. Psychologists and psychiatrists base their studies in the changing nature of the human consciousness and the dukkha that goes with it.
- The three lakshanas offer humanity an insight into the world around us.
- People can relate very easily to the idea of dukkha. It is not, as it first seems, a negative element of Buddhism. It is about suffering, but more than that, it represents and explains the highs and lows of life. It is a universal concept as everyone can say that they have experienced it.
- The extreme emphasis put on dukkha could be seen as going against reality by some. There are some who would find the idea of dukkha and satisfactoriness as not something that they can match up with their reality. They may see it as very one sided.
- The three lakshanas represent reality as they fulfil the first step to humans reaching enlightenment. In order to end suffering a Buddhist would need to understand and embrace dukkha.
- Anatta is a very difficult concept for humans to understand. It is a concept that Buddhists understand. The Chariot story explores this difficulty and tries to shed light on it with an analogy, King Milinda and his misunderstanding is a common issue.
- The analogy of the chariot is not one that can be transferred to all aspects of life. It is too abstract to fully explain reality.
- There are other aspects of Buddhism that would represent reality better. For example the eightfold path.
- The analogy of the chariot helped King Milinda to understand a difficult concept, one that all humans can eventually understand. Because something is complicated this does not mean that it is not representative of reality.
- Quantum physics could be seen to be in line with this notion within Buddhism as it believes that the universe is constantly changing.
- Religious believers outside of Buddhism may struggle to accept the idea of anicca when they think of the human soul. The soul is permanent.

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

## Section B

### 3. (a) Explain the middle way with reference to the Eightfold Path. [AO1 25]

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

- The Eightfold Path is the fourth of the Four Noble Truths and can be seen as a set of principles or guides.
- The path is not a linear one and each of the aspects are to be developed together and not chronologically.
- The Buddha, on his journey to enlightenment, was faced with extreme hardship and extreme wealth at different points in his life. He had not found relief from the pain of despair, anger, illness and death. He had realised that the better way was the middle way. It allowed the follower to focus their energy on the goal; enlightenment. This teaching from the Buddha forms the basis of the ideal middle way of the Eightfold Path.
- The Eightfold Path is seen as a way to avoid the extremes of attachment and nihilism and so is referred to as the 'middle way' (madhyamaka).
- These eight principles can be organised into three categories; morality (sila), wisdom (prajna) and meditation (dhyana/samadhi).
- Right view (samma ditthi) is the awareness of the reality of life.
- Right thought (samma sankappa) is about the individual having only positive and wholesome thoughts. It is about directed thought, selfless and devoid of attachment.
- Right speech (samma vaca) is only using truthful and polite speech. Not lying would be an example of this.
- Right action (samma kammanta) is about not harming others.
- Right livelihood (samma ajiva) is ensuring that the livelihood of the individual is not one that involves harm to any living creature. It should benefit others.
- Right effort (samma vayama) is ensuring that one tries to stay away from unwholesome things.
- Right mindfulness (samma sati) is all about motives and ensuring that they are genuine and for the benefit of others.
- Right concentration (samma samadhi) is the focussing of the mind in meditation.
- The Eightfold Path encourages the middle way in each of its eight points.
- Candidates may focus on a couple of aspects to exemplar.

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

**(b) 'The Eightfold Path is the most useful guide for all Buddhists.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- The Eightfold Path can help with a wide variety of issues in life, especially the three aspects of morality. Learning to speak and act in a way that benefits others, and causes no harm, has many benefits to all of society.
- However, some would say that only having three pieces of guidance to cover the moral way to live is too vague and minimal. It does not contain enough guidance to provide anyone with a practical way to improve their lives.
- Right speech prevents cruel and false words from polluting the world and adding the dukkha that humans experience. The right language and action removes immorality. Purposeful and polite speech is encouraged by the Eightfold Path.
- The Buddha didn't need rules and so the Buddhists of today do not need a code to follow either. The Buddha himself said that if the Eightfold Path did not work for you then do not follow it. Buddhists are free to find their own path to enlightenment and thus morality.
- The eightfold path could be questioned as a useful tool for all Buddhists. Instead it could be considered useful just for those following a monastic lifestyle. It is suitable for those who have dedicated their lives to the pursuit of enlightenment. Life outside of a monastery can be seen as very different and more complex. A lay Buddhist may find the Eightfold Path more of a hinderance.
- The Eightfold Path has a positive effect on the Buddhists Karma, which feeds into many aspects of life and the lives to come.
- The Eightfold Path accompanies other aspects of Buddhist thought such as the idea of ahimsa. Ahimsa is the idea of non-violence to all living things. This directly links to right action.
- The other two sections of the Eightfold Path improve the thoughts and intentions of the individual that link to positive actions. It is a useful guide for both lay Buddhists and those within a monastery.
- There are many other useful guides within Buddhism such as the dharma as a whole or bodhisattvas/arhats.
- Lay Buddhists are in much more need of this guide than monastics and so it can be considered much more useful for them. Monastics are already on a path to enlightenment and follow various rules that lay Buddhists do not.

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

**4. (a) Examine accounts of the Buddha's awakening under the Bodhi tree.**  
**[AO1 25]**

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

- Candidates may set the context of how the Buddha came to be sat under the Bodhi tree but this should not be the sole focus of the answer.
- Siddhartha Gautama sat under a Bodhi tree and meditated until he achieved enlightenment.
- Traditional Buddhist text talk about how he sat under the Bodhi tree all night and had a very vivid religious experience.
- The experience contained mystical elements such as the presence of devas, particularly Mara. Mara is supposed to be a creature that binds humanity to the physical world.
- Mara confronts Gautama and tries to get him to abandon his quest for enlightenment. In many Buddhist texts this is a very dramatic affair, however, there are some very old texts that suggests that it was a very simple encounter in which Gautama simply refused to be swayed.
- The first test that Mara sent was an army to defeat him. Mara sent deadly weapons but Gautama's resolve was not broken. He summoned all of the ten paramitas to stop them. They are generosity, virtue, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, determination, loving kindness and equanimity.
- Mara failed and so tried again with promises of glory and pleasure. It did not work either as Gautama immediately rejected them, knowing they were meaningless. Mara sent creatures at this point to attack him. They sent arrows but the arrows transformed into flowers as they reached Siddhartha as they fell to the floor. Siddhartha Gautama asked for a flood from a goddess to wash away the dead creatures.
- Mara tried a new tactic. Mara sent daughters to entice and corrupt Gautama. They were beautiful maidens; hundreds of them. Gautama recognised them as what they were, despite them taking on every possible desirable physique. He was not swayed.
- The final test is perhaps the most important. Mara said that the seat that Gautama was actually sat at was Mara's. The question of legitimacy was placed on Gautama. Was Gautama worthy of sitting there?
- Gautama was asked by Mara to provide a witness to his worthiness. He demonstrated this by touching the ground. The earth would be his witness. The earth is said to have shaken like in an earthquake as it responded to the request. This hand gesture is known as the bhumisparsha mudra and has been used a symbolic hand gesture by Buddhists since then.
- Some candidates may also focus on four meditative absorptions (jhanas) that tradition states he had discovered.

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

- (b) **‘The Enlightenment of the Buddha is the most significant event in Buddhism.’**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- The enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama paved the way for Buddhists all over the world to strive for their goals. The story of the Buddha is one that all Buddhists can recount and it plays a large part of Buddhism as he can be seen as opening the door and demonstrating a path for all.
- It is the most significant event because it led to the establishment of the Buddhist community.
- It provides Buddhists with a way of ending suffering by leaving the cycle of birth and death.
- The Buddha’s enlightenment is just one example of an individual achieving enlightenment. He is not equal to a deity and he was not the first or last to do what he did.
- Focussing too much on the enlightenment of the Buddha could lead to the Buddhist not pursuing their own goal of enlightenment. The path to enlightenment is one that needs to be completed on one’s own. The enlightenment of the Buddha should only be an inspiration to aid the start of a Buddhist’s journey, and nothing else.
- The enlightenment is not significant for all Buddhists. It is not the goal of all Buddhists to become enlightened in this life. Not all Buddhists are on the arhat or bodhisattva path. They are trying to build up karma and trying to progress to a better rebirth. We can see that there must have varying degrees of significance based on the individual goals set.
- Mahayana Buddhists believe the path to be a simpler one and that it could happen for any Buddhist at any time. However, whilst this should suggest that the Buddha’s enlightenment story is one of great significance it is also worth noting that the Buddha Siddhartha Gautama is not the most important character for these Buddhists.
- It could be argued that there were more significant events in the history of Buddhism. This could include Gautama’s renunciation or the birth of the Buddha. It could be the Buddha viewing the four sights as this led to much of the Buddha’s future teachings.

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

5. (a) **Explain how Buddhist meditation practice can be used to access the true nature of reality.** [AO1 25]

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

#### **Samatha**

- Samatha means calm meditation and requires a relaxed posture. There are many positions that a Buddhist could choose to take up. There is a sitting position, lotus, half lotus or even sitting on a chair.
- Whilst meditating in this position they will rest their hands in their lap or in certain positions called mudra.
- Whilst performing samatha meditation the meditator may use objects to focus their mind and ensure right concentration is upheld.
- These objects can also be mental images such as the Buddha or it could be physical images such as small circles of colour.
- There is often a focus on breathing as a way of maintaining focus.
- Samatha meditation results in the meditator appreciating calmness and developing the ability to concentrate by eliminating all distractions around them. It is a pathway to insight into the true nature of reality.

#### **Metta Bhavana**

- Metta Bhavana is the cultivation of loving kindness.
- It is a Pali word that means friendly love.
- It is a type of meditation that can create a change of outlook in the person when practiced over time.
- Metta bhavana has five stages to perform.
- Metta (loving kindness). It begins with a focus of calm and then turns into a love for oneself.
- Karuna (Creating compassion for all of the suffering experienced by others). This involves thinking about the good qualities of others and wishing them well.
- Mudita (sympathetic joy and the celebration of other people's success). It is about neutralising the negative feelings that we may have about others at difficult times.
- Uppekkha (equanimity of love- love for all equally). It is about removing hatred from one's life. Celebrating and supporting those that you may not necessarily want to.
- The final stage of metta bhavana is imagining love spreading to everyone like ripples of waves. Metta bhavana gives insight into the true nature of reality in seeing plight of the suffering of others.

#### **Vipassana**

- Vipassana meditation comes from the Theravada tradition. It is often known as insight meditation. It allows the three fires of greed, hatred and delusion to be extinguished. It opens the mind allowing us to fully understand the true nature of reality. It is often done through the mindfulness of walking rather than sitting as this helps to connect to the true reality of the arising and passing away of all conditioned phenomena.
- Zazen meditation is a Japanese form of meditation developed by Chinese Ch'an Buddhism. Zazen meditation means 'sitting in absorption' and focussing on sitting. Sator enlightenment happens spontaneously and instantaneously during this type of meditation.

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

- (b) **‘Zazen is not the most useful Buddhist meditation tradition in today’s society.’**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Zazen is a type of meditation that comes from the Zen school of Buddhism and means sitting meditation.
- Because it is from a small school of Buddhism (in comparison to Theravada and Mahayana) then perhaps it can be seen as not very useful for today’s society which is not largely made of Zen Buddhists.
- Zen Buddhism does not focus on the use of text as they feel that this inhibits their path to enlightenment because the text itself is not enlightened. If they do not rely on the text then the idea of Zazen is not one that can be verified and practiced by all in the same way.
- Zazen is not useful in today’s society because it can take hours to do. Monks often spend hours sat facing a wall waiting for the moment of awakening. This is not possible for those who work a nine to five job and those who have children. A more structured and shorter type of meditation may be better.
- Metta Bhavana may be more suitable for those with busy lifestyles as they can spend 20-25 minutes completing the five stages and build this up for the required result. It is a much more suitable for someone living in today’s society.
- Zazen claims that awakening can happen at any moment. It could be the meditator’s first meditation session that leads to their awakening. In this sense it can be considered the most suitable for today’s society as it fits with modern desire for instant gratification.
- A fairer approach may be to understand that each method of meditation is more useful to each of the groups of Buddhists individually as each holds great importance and tradition to each denomination.
- To back this up we can look to the teachings of the Buddha. He said that there was not one certain path to enlightenment and emphasised that it was important to find your own path.
- To look at each of the types of meditation separately is to miss the point. It is much better to use a combination of various types of Buddhist meditation and see how they complement each other. It helps to use each of them together.
- Metta bhavana is the best form of meditation in society today as society today needs to spread love. The news is full of the spread of hate and we would all benefit from the outpouring of love from others.

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