



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

AUTUMN 2020

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

A120UD0-1

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2020 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;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 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"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">17-20 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">13-16 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">9-12 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied. • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">5-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied. • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

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

A Level 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 notion of karma. [AO1 20]

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

- Accounts of the notion of karma are outlined in a variety of ways in different text books and for this allowance needs to be made.
- Candidates may explain karma as being 'action' and also as referring to the universal law of cause and effect that governs the moral results of intentional actions, including rebirth.
- Candidates may place the law of karma within the context of other laws governing causation such as physical and genetic laws.
- Actions may be defined as good, skilful or wholesome (kusala) or as harmful, unskilful or unwholesome (akusala).
- Three stages of karma may be identified: the intention or motivation, the action itself, the immediate result of the action.
- The intention may be identified as being spontaneous or planned and this affects the nature of the karma involved.
- Skilful actions may be seen as arising from dana (generosity), metta (loving-kindness) and prajna (wisdom). They are of benefit for all.
- Unskilful actions may be seen as arising from their opposites, the three fires/defilements/poisons of lobha (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion). They are selfish and self-centred actions.
- The effects of karma may be mental, physical or a combination of both which go to shape the skandhas of personality.
- Karmic seeds may bear fruit immediately, in the short or long term.
- Past unskilful karma may be purified before their effects fully ripen through practices such as meditation, following the noble eightfold path or through actions leading to the transfer of merit at a Theravada funeral.
- Removing the three fires/defilements/poisons creates freedom in making moral decisions.
- Reference may be made to the Dhammapada, chapter 1 'The Pairs' which states, for example: unskilful karma follows 'like the wheel follows the foot of an ox' and skilful karma follows 'like a man's never-departing shadow'.
- Reference may be made to the Dhammapada chapter 9 'Evil' which states, for example: 'the accumulation of evil' is painful and 'when it ripens the evil-doer will see the results of their evil deeds'.

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

- (b) **‘The existence of God and other metaphysical questions are not important in Buddhism.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may interpret metaphysical questions as being questions about what is beyond the physical reality perceived with our senses such as: whether or not the cosmos is infinite, whether or not the cosmos is eternal and whether or not God exists.
- Candidates may define ‘God’ in a way which links to an omnipotent creator God or in a way which links to ‘gods’ akin to bodhisattvas or the Cosmic Buddha (Vairocana).
- Candidates may locate metaphysical questions in the context of the avyakata (unanswered questions).
- It may be argued that speculating about metaphysical question is fruitless because a person’s focus, energy and concentration should be on removing the three fires/defilements/poisons.
- It may be argued that since metaphysical questions can never be answered with solid proof based on what we perceive with our senses, it is a waste of valuable time asking them and trying to answer them.
- It may also be argued that, as explained in the Four Noble Truths, the Buddha avoided speculation because his only concern was to identify dukkha, its causes, the fact that it can be ended and the means to end it.
- A line of reasoning could be that based on anicca – the impermanence of all things - Buddhism rejects belief in an omnipotent creator God and therefore questions about the existence of God should be avoided.
- It may be argued that, based on the teaching contained in the Parable of the Poisoned Arrow, all metaphysical questions including whether or not God exists should be avoided because they are irrelevant and unhelpful.
- Conversely, it may be argued that metaphysical questions such as whether or not God exists should not be avoided by Buddhists because they have been addressed by all religions over time and place.
- It may be argued that Buddhism is wrong to avoid metaphysical questions because they are fundamental to developing a person’s intellectual and philosophical skills.
- Some may argue that Buddhism already contains many metaphysical concepts such as karma and thus it is wrong for it to avoid addressing the question of whether or not God exists.
- Another line of argument could be that answers to metaphysical questions are essential for people to gain a full understanding of what Buddhism teaches and therefore they should not be avoided.
- It may be argued that whilst the teaching contained in the Parable of the Poisoned Arrow concerns apparently irrelevant and unhelpful questions, for some people these questions may be essential as to whether or not they become or remain Buddhists.

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

2. (a) Examine the Four Noble Truths.

[AO1 20]

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

- Accounts of the Four Noble Truths are outlined in a variety of ways in text books and for this allowance needs to be made.
- Together, the Four Noble Truths may be identified as central to Buddhist teaching.
- The Four Noble Truths are outlined in the first sermon given by the Buddha after his Awakening/Enlightenment to the five ascetics.
- The sermon is the Dhammacakkappavattana ('Setting in Motion the Wheel of Dhamma') Sutta.
- The Four Noble Truths may be described as the 'four truths for the noble' or the 'four realities' (Harvey).
- Donald Lopez suggests that the correct translation for the 'Four Noble Truths' is the 'Four Truths for the Noble'. That is, it is the person who is 'noble' because they follow the Buddhist path. This is in keeping with the notion of an arhat.
- The Four Noble Truths may be summarised as: the Buddha's insight into dukkha (suffering/unsatisfactoriness/discontent), the source of dukkha which is tanha (thirst/grasping/attachment), the ending of dukkha (nirodha) and the magga (path/way) leading to the end of dukkha.
- Dukkha may be explained as being composed of dukkha-dukkha (suffering as experience of pain), viparinama-dukkha (suffering due to the changing nature of existence) and sankhara-dukkha (suffering due to the contingent nature of existence).
- The samudaya (arising) of dukkha may be explained as tanha. This may be further defined as selfish craving, greed, lust and attached wanting. The role of the three fires/defilements/poisons of lobha (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion) may be identified as the driving forces behind tanha.
- The nirodha (cessation) of dukkha can be achieved through eliminating tanha and its causes: the three fires/defilements/poisons of lobha (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion).
- The magga (path/way) leading to the end of dukkha is identified as the noble eightfold path which consists of the threefold trainings: wisdom, morality and meditation.
- The goal of the Four Noble Truths may be identified as nibbana in the sense that with the end of tanha complete detachment has been attained and thus rising beyond samsara and ending rebirth is realised.

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

- (b) **‘For Buddhists the Eightfold Path is the most important part of the Four Noble Truths.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may identify the Eightfold Path as the magga, the fourth of the Four Noble Truths
- It may be argued that the Eightfold Path is the most important part of the Four Noble Truths because through the threefold trainings of wisdom, morality and meditation the magga (path/way) to nibbana is identified.
- Some may argue that the Eightfold Path provides a way which includes all aspects of life and is thus the best form of practical guidance which can be given to Buddhists.
- It may be argued that particular aspects of the Eightfold Path highlight its overall importance and usefulness such as: right speech, right action, right livelihood, right view, right thought, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.
- One line of reasoning could be that the Eightfold Path is the most important part of the Four Noble Truths because it provides Buddhists with the Middle Way which rejects the extremes of asceticism and hedonism.
- It may be argued that the Eightfold Path is the most important part of the Four Noble Truths because only through following it can Buddhists remove tanha (thirst/grasping/attachment) and address in the correct way the three fires/defilements/poisons of lobha (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion).
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the Eightfold Path is not the most important part of the Four Noble Truths for Buddhists because this has to be the first Noble Truth which provides the diagnosis of the human condition - dukkha.
- It may be argued that the second of the Four Noble Truths is the most important for Buddhists because it identifies the cause of dukkha as tanha (thirst/grasping/attachment).
- Candidates may argue that the third of the Four Noble Truths is the most important for Buddhists because it identifies grounds for optimism in that dukkha and tanha can come to an end – nirodha (cessation).
- It may be argued that the Eightfold Path is too theoretical and complex to be followed by Buddhists in general and that it is much easier to grasp the concept of tanha (thirst/grasping/attachment) and address that in the way which seems most helpful to them.
- Candidates may argue that the Eightfold Path may be the most important of the Four Noble Truths for Buddhist monks and nuns, but it is not the most important for Buddhists in general.
- It may be argued that the Eightfold Path might have been useful in affecting every aspect of life for Buddhists in the past but that today Buddhists can address this by focusing simply on what causes dukkha and removing it from their lives in trying to find their own balanced Middle Way.

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

Section B

3. (a) Examine the Parable of the Burning House in the Lotus Sutra. [AO1 20]

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

- Accounts of the Parable of the Burning House in the Lotus Sutra may be outlined in a variety of ways depending on the different text books used and for this allowance needs to be made.
- The Lotus Sutra might be identified as one of the most important Mahayana Buddhist sacred texts.
- The Lotus Sutra might be put into context as being a text which teaches the superiority of the Mahayana goal of Buddhahood over the Theravada goal of Awakening/Enlightenment and nibbana.
- The Parable of the Burning House might be linked to the concept of ekayana ('only one single vehicle') since all 'yanas' have the same goal of Buddhahood.
- The Parable of the Burning House might be linked to the three yanas identified in the Lotus Sutra: the sravaka-yana (yana of the arhat), the pratyekabuddha-yana (yana of the solitary arhat/buddha) and the bodhisattva-yana (yana of the bodhisattva).
- The Parable of the Burning House might be outlined as showing that the father deceives the children trapped inside by promising them three carts – one pulled by a sheep, another by a deer and a third by an ox. Once they have escaped the house there is in fact only one cart.
- The Parable of the Burning House might be explained as showing the Buddha as the father, the burning house as the realm of samsara/rebirth, the children as sentient beings who are so absorbed in the world that they ignore its dangers.
- The father's promise of the three carts might be explained as showing that the Buddha offers sentient beings various paths to escape samsara according to their limited aspirations.
- The dialogue between the Buddha and Sariputra at the end of the parable might be explained whereby the Buddha asks whether the father 'deceived' the children or not and Sariputra replies that there was no deception because the children were saved and obtained marvellous toys.
- The conclusion reached by Sariputra and supported by the Buddha is that the children were saved by skilful means and that such skilful means show the 'great mercy and compassion' of the Buddha who 'incessantly and indefatigably seeks the welfare of all beings and benefits them all'.

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

- (b) **‘The concept of skilful means is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may argue that the concept of skilful means is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity.
- It may be argued that the concept of skilful means gives equal validity to all the variety of Buddhist traditions from Theravada to Pure Land and this makes it a key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity since each Buddhist can follow the path best suited to them.
- Some may argue that the concept of skilful means is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity because Buddhists of different traditions are able to recognise that their path is not the only correct one to follow.
- It may be argued that the concept of skilful means is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity because it recognises new developments within Buddhism such as that of Western Buddhism and Socially Engaged Buddhism.
- Another line of reasoning is that the concept of skilful Buddhism is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity because it prevents Buddhism from becoming trapped in beliefs, teachings and practices of the past which are not relevant today such as those related to the position of women.
- It may be argued that the concept of skilful means is key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity because it allows for the creative and inclusivist interaction between Buddhists and believers of other religions, humanists and atheists.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that the concept of skilful means is not key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity as other concepts and factors are more important.
- It may be argued that key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity is the lack of a central authority figure which has its roots in the Buddha’s refusal to appoint a successor before his death.
- Another line of argument may be that key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity is its lack of one central body overseeing Buddhist belief and practice.
- It may be argued that key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity is the split between Theravada and Mahayana and the fact that the latter incorporates such a wide range of Buddhist beliefs and practices.
- Candidates may argue that key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity is the complex geographical spread of Buddhism from India to countries such as China, Tibet, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia etc. whereby the culture, belief and mores of the existing society were often adopted, adapted and absorbed by Buddhism.
- It may be argued that key to understanding Buddhism’s diversity is that at its heart as a religion, its belief and practices are based on each individual following their own journey to follow the final words of the Buddha: ‘attain perfection through diligence’.

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

4. (a) Examine the emphasis in Buddhism on testing Buddhist teaching and staying true to experience. [AO1 20]

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

- The Buddha's approach to life was grounded in empiricism by means of careful analysis and observation. Analysis of our 'selves' and the world around us is a main feature of the Buddhist path and is a major aspect of meditation in order to see things as they are for ourselves.
- The first aspect of the Eightfold Path is samma ditti (right view) whereby we ourselves see things as they are (truths) or as Harvey translates 'realities' rather than accepting concepts and ideas gleaned from the experience of others.
- Candidates may illustrate their response by reference to the Kalama Sutta. This may be explained as showing how the Kalama clan asked how they were to decide on which religion to follow.
- The Buddha's response was to advise against relying on reports, legends, traditions, scriptures etc. Instead they should use observation and experience to see whether what was being taught was skilful or unskilful in leading to welfare and happiness or to harms and suffering.
- Common sense testing of the teaching received should be applied. First-hand testing should therefore be the deciding factor.
- Once this had identified skilful teaching it should be followed whilst unskilful teaching should be rejected.
- Candidates may illustrate their response by reference to the Majjhima Nikaya and Buddha's conversation with Upali.
- This may be explained as showing how Upali was a Jain. He entered into discussion with the Buddha.
- He found the Buddha's teaching convincing and resolved to become his disciple. He was cautioned by the Buddha to act only 'after careful consideration' before making that decision.
- The Buddha gave more detailed explanation of the dhamma and ensured that Upali could understand everything. Upali could therefore tell his Jain teachers that he had 'scrutinized and pressed' the Buddha's teaching and found that it was true.
- Reference may be made to the example of the Buddha himself who for six years tested the teaching he had been given about following ascetic practice to find answers to life's questions before he rejected it.
- The notion of 'testing for oneself' is directly related to the Buddha's empirical approach to life. Indeed, his final words, according to the Mahaparinibbana Sutta were, 'attain perfection through diligence'.

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

- (b) **‘For Buddhists, relying on personal experience is of more value than any other source of authority within Buddhism.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may argue that Buddhism rejects ‘blind faith’ (amulika saddha) and instead embraces ‘confidence based on reason and experience’ (akaravati saddha) which shows the importance of personal experience.
- It may be argued that, as taught in the Kalama Sutta, it is only personal experience based on testing which can be relied upon and therefore experience is more important than any other source of authority.
- Candidates may argue that the Buddha did not rush to convert Upali but told him to act after ‘careful consideration’. This suggests that Upali’s personal experience was of more value than the Buddha teaching him.
- It may be argued that Buddhism is not a missionary religion seeking to convert people but instead encourages people through personal experience to see whether it provides them with the answer/way of life for which they are looking.
- Another line of reasoning is that Buddhism is based on ehi-passiko (come and see) which means that personal experience of Buddhism is much more important than any other source of authority.
- It may be argued that Buddhism is about removing dukkha in the here and now and that whether it works or not can be tested by the personal experience of meditation, mindfulness etc.
- A further line of argument could be that the Buddha stated in the Dhammapada 160, ‘Atta hi attano natho’ (‘Oneself is one’s own refuge’). This suggests that personal experience must always take priority over any other source of authority in Buddhism.
- Conversely, candidates may argue that personal experience should not be of more value because there is always the problem of self-deception and mistaken understanding.
- It may be argued that personal experience is of less value than sources of authority such as found in the sangha through the teaching provided by senior monks/nuns or other experienced Buddhists.
- Candidates may argue that the dharma itself is of more value because it provides the full scope of Buddhism which a person can reflect upon before following the Buddhist path.
- It may be argued that the life, teaching and practice of the Buddha is of more value than personal experience because it provides a pattern and guide for Buddhists to follow in seeking the Middle Way.
- Candidates may argue that personal experience is of value but that it cannot be relied upon alone but must be supported by other sources of authority such as found in the sangha, the dharma and the Buddha.
- It may be argued that some Buddhists – such as Pure Land Buddhists – would rely on Amida/Amitabha Buddha and that such faith in the power of the nembutsu is of far more value than any other source of authority.

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

5. (a) **Explain the reasons for the development of Socially Engaged Buddhism.** [AO1 20]

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

- Precise details/terms regarding the development of Socially Engaged Buddhism (SEB) may be outlined in a variety of ways depending on the text books used and for this allowance needs to be made.
- The development of SEB might be traced back to the teaching and example of Thich Nhat Hanh against the background of the Vietnam War (c.1955 - 1975). The founding of the School of Youth for Social Services founded in 1964 might be regarded as important in that Buddhists moved from, for example, practice of meditation to helping with the educational, health and economic needs of Vietnamese people.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the work of the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka which started in 1958 and which aims to bring economic development in a Buddhist context avoiding the three fires/defilements/poisons of lobha (greed), dosa (hatred) and moha (delusion).
- The development of SEB might be linked to the development of Western Buddhism as, for example, in the way in which Thich Nhat Hanh joined with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr in promoting peace and an end to the Vietnam War.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the work of the Thich Nhat Hanh's Order of Interbeing founded in the 1960s and the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings which aimed to combat suffering rather than just focus on achieving a positive rebirth or awakening for oneself.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the work of the Dalai Lama in promoting a peaceful resolution to the situation in Tibet through non-violent protests against the Chinese government.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the work of Sakyadhita in awakening women and in advancing their spiritual and secular welfare.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the work of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and its work for progressive social change in the context of the Block, Build and Be programme.
- The development of SEB might be linked to the views/writings of Joanna Macy on ecological global concerns and Damien Keown on new forms of Western liberal Buddhism which embrace active engagement with society.

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

- (b) **‘Social engagement is a harmful distraction for Buddhists on the path to Awakening.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Candidates may argue that historically the Buddha was never interested in social engagement and that Buddhists should follow his example and avoid such distraction as being harmful.
- It may be argued that everything in society is subject to anicca (impermanence) and that therefore trying to address the social issues of the here and now in society is a harmful distraction in wasting time which should be spent on seeking Awakening.
- Candidates may argue that social engagement requires a person to get involved and therefore attached to social issues which is a harmful distraction because non-attachment is key to being Buddhist.
- It may be argued that social engagement is a harmful distraction because it requires a person to take part in, for example, demonstrations and protests which might mean a person develops more dosa (hatred) one of the three fires/defilements/poisons.
- Candidates may argue that achieving Awakening is in itself a very hard task requiring a person to focus just on themselves and that social engagement might be a harmful distraction in preventing them from achieving that goal.
- It may be argued that particularly for Theravada Buddhists, social engagement is a harmful distraction as they would not be able to attain the position of arhat if they are caught up in social concerns.
- Conversely, it may be argued that social engagement is not a harmful distraction but is in fact essential on the path to Awakening because Buddhism is about the removal of dukkha in the individual and in society at large.
- It may be argued that, in the words of the Dalai Lama, social engagement is essential as it puts into practice the idea that ‘my religion is kindness’.
- Some may argue that the Mahayana bodhisattva ideal is entirely about karuna (compassion) and that this is best expressed through social engagement since it helps and does not hinder the path to Awakening.
- Another line of reasoning is that for Buddhism to remain relevant particularly in the West, it cannot ignore what is going on in the world and that therefore social engagement is not a harmful distraction but is essential on the path to Awakening.
- Others may argue that whilst social engagement in the past might have been seen as a harmful distraction, today the world is far more complex and precarious due to issues such as climate change, globalisation etc. This means that Buddhists must be socially engaged.
- It may be argued that, for example, due to pratitya samutpada, everything is interconnected and therefore an individual's dukkha is linked to the dukkha caused to others by things such as racism, sexism and discrimination in general. This means that social engagement is essential in helping the individual to move forward on the path to Awakening.

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