



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies Short Course (3RB0)

Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Religion, Peace and Conflict

Option 2D - Buddhism

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Introduction

This paper contributes to 50% of the overall award. The paper includes two questions, each covers a section of the specification, candidates are expected to answer all questions, there is no element of choice on the paper. The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification. Centres are expected to use the Edexcel specification rather than other published resources when planning and teaching the course content. The examination is set from the specification.

This paper allows an in depth study of Buddhism as a lived religion within the United Kingdom, and its beliefs and teachings on life specifically about the issues of crime and punishment. This unit is the largest of the Buddhism papers on the specification and it engages the interest of young people, as it addresses many Buddhist beliefs and teachings in addition to some issues affecting young people today.

3RB0_2D_Q01a

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Buddhist Beliefs

Bullet point 1.8 – Buddhist ethical teachings

The question asked was:

‘Outline **three** of the paramitas.’

The candidates needed to provide an outline (not a list) of three of the paramitas (six perfections). Although this is on the specification some candidates confused it with other Buddhist teachings.

Some candidates wrote in lists and gained one mark for a list rather than an outline.

Examiner Tip

- Lists gain a maximum of 1 mark, candidates need to provide an outline therefore should write in full sentences.
- Candidates should make sure they provide answers in three distinct sentences

3RB0_1D_Q01b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Buddhist Beliefs

Bullet point 1.1 – The life of the Buddha

The question asked was:

‘Explain **two** ways in which the Buddha’s enlightenment is important.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain two’ on (b) items. Therefore, two ways are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of

extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must link to the way given and to the question asked.

This question was answered well by candidates who recognised the question was specifically about the Buddha's enlightenment rather than enlightenment as a Buddhist belief.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates should ensure they do not use the same information twice, they will only be rewarded once for a specific piece of information.
- Candidates must ensure they follow the requirements of the question which asks for two developed beliefs, some candidates gave lots of information which could not be credited.

3RB0_2D_Q01c

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Buddhist Beliefs

Bullet point 1.5 – Third Noble Truth

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** Buddhist beliefs about tanha.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain **two**' on (c) items. Therefore, two beliefs were required, and both needed to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must relate to the belief given and to the question asked. The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the belief given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

This question was answered well by those candidates who knew what tanha was and not well by those who simply guessed and usually guessed saying it was a positive thing.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must learn sources of wisdom and be able to use them accurately and in context.
- Candidates should not attempt to 'shoehorn' in random quotes as sources of wisdom they must use them appropriately.

3RB0_2D_Q01d

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the d items. The candidates are being assessed on AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence. AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion** – there must some consideration of the validity of the arguments used / appraisal to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Buddhist Beliefs
Bullet point 1.6 – Fourth Noble Truth

The question asked:

'It is easy for a Buddhist to live by the principles of sila.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Buddhist teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

Please note that, neither in the bullet point, nor on the question are candidates required to give a non-religious response. In the specification bullet 1.6 does not require a study on a non-religious perspective. Candidates who included non-religious views self-penalised as this information would have been ignored

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must ensure they address all the bullet points in the question
- Candidates should not refer to material that is not asked for - if a question does not ask for a non- religious response and the candidate provides it this part of the answer will not gain any credit.

3RB0_2D_Q02a

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment
Bullet point 2.8 – Buddhist attitudes towards the death penalty.

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** Buddhist teachings about capital punishment. '

The candidates needed to provide any Buddhist teaching not specifically scripture teachings they could be any teaching a Buddhist might follow.

Examiner Tip

- An outline must be more than one word.

3RB0_2D_Q02b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment

Bullet point 2.3 – Buddhist teachings about good, evil and suffering.

The question asked was:

‘Explain **two** Buddhist teachings about good actions.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain **two**’ on (b) items. Therefore, two teachings are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must be of the teaching given and to the question asked.

The question was straightforward and most candidates recognised that these are what most Buddhists would refer to as skilful actions. Many answers discussed the karmic effect of good actions and gained high marks.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates may use a source as the reason – in many other places a source can be accepted as a development of a reason
- b) items provide marks for four points, 2 for reasons and 2 for the development of each reason.
- It helps to write answer which divide into 2 paragraphs each containing a reason and a development.

3RB0_2D_Q02c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment

Bullet point 2.5 – Buddhist attitudes towards the aims of punishment

The question asked was:

‘Explain **two** Buddhist beliefs about the aims of punishment.’

Candidates needed to answer giving beliefs about the aims of punishment - so they need to look at aims specifically, not punishment in general.

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain **two**’ on (c) items. Therefore, two ways are required, and both need to be developed. They must also correctly use a source of wisdom in their answer which must be identifiable, relevant and linked to the way given in the answer.

Examiner Tip

- Candidates must be prepared for the whole breadth and depth of the specification in order to achieve higher grades. It is best to check that materials used in centres cover the specification.
- The source must be relevant and used as part of the candidates reasoning.

3RB0_1D_Q02d

The focus of the marking is AO2 on the d items. As explained in the specification this means: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question asks candidates to '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion** – there must some consideration of the validity of the arguments used / appraisal to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment
Bullet point 2.2 – Buddhist attitudes towards crime.

The question asked was:

'Buddhist groups should work to end crime.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against. Candidates needed to have a greater understanding of the concept

In your response you should:

- refer to Buddhist teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

The statement was designed to evaluate the work of Buddhist groups mentioned in the specification, better candidates referred to the specific groups however most did not. However, many were able to evaluate the concepts behind such work effectively without mentioning them.

Examiner Tip

- There are many different ways to answer d) items and gain marks, a template will not assure good marks.
- Teachers should not try to point mark d answers. The should be read completely and then assessed against the level descriptors to find a best fit.
- Appraisal shows the value of the evidence provided / the strength of the answer / the validity of the chains in the answer/ a consideration of what is written in order to answer the questions (rather than which side they agree with) / a measurement of which side is more logical / an assessment of which is the more compelling

argument / an understanding of which argument is more convincing or rational or cogent

Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Answer a) items in outlines i.e. full sentences
- Provide 3 sentences for a) items, each of a separate line
- b) items should have 2 developed reasons not more than 2
- development may be 1) examples 2) quotes 3) extra relevant material
- development must link to the reason given and still answer the question set
- c) items are similar to b) items but should also use a source as a fifth element
- the source of wisdom may be a paraphrase but should be identifiable
- the source of wisdom must be linked to the reason given
- d) item responses must show AO2 skills to get high marks
- d) items must show an appraisal of the argument not simply rely on a set format
- Level descriptors should be used to mark d items not point marking