

GCSE (9–1)

Religious Studies

J625/04: Buddhism Beliefs and teachings & Practices

General Certificate of Secondary Education

2021 Mark Scheme (DRAFT)

This is a DRAFT mark scheme. It has not been used for marking as this paper did not receive any entries in the series it was scheduled for. It is therefore possible that not all valid approaches to a question may be captured in this version. You should give credit to such responses when marking learner's work.

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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1. Annotations

	Blank Page – this annotation must be used on all blank pages within an answer booklet (structured or unstructured) and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Noted

2. Awarding Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar to scripts with a coversheet

- a. If a script has a **scribe cover sheet** it is vital to check which boxes are ticked and award as per the instructions and grid below:
- Assess the work for SPaG in accordance with the normal marking criteria. The initial assessment must be made as if the candidate had not used a scribe (or word processor) and was eligible for all the SPaG marks.
 - Check the cover sheet to see what has been dictated (or what facilities were disabled on the word processor) and therefore what proportion of marks is available to the candidate.
 - Convert the SPaG mark to reflect the correct proportion using the conversion table given below.

SPaG mark awarded	Mark if candidate eligible for one third (eg grammar only)	Mark if candidate eligible for two thirds (eg grammar and punctuation only)
0	0	0
1	0	1
2	1	1
3	1	2
4	1	3
5	2	3
6	2	4
7	2	5
8	3	5
9	3	6

- b. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet** attached to it the candidate **can** still access SPaG marks (see point 1 above) unless the cover sheet states that the checking functionality is enabled, in which case no SPaG marks are available.
- c. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet AND a scribe cover sheet** attached to it, see point 1 above.
- d. If the script has a **transcript, Oral Language Modifier, Sign Language Interpreter or a Practical Assistant cover sheet**, award SPaG as normal.

Subject-specific Marking Instructions

General points

It is important to remember that we are rewarding candidates' attempts at grappling with challenging concepts and skills. Reward candidates for what they know, understand and can do. Be positive. Concentrate on what candidates can do, not on what they cannot do.

[3] mark questions are assessed via points-based marking. For all other questions, your first task is to match the response to the appropriate level of response according to the generic levels of response given after the indicative content. Only when you have done this should you start to think about the mark to be awarded. **Please note – the bandings for Assessment Objectives are not dependent; there is no requirement for a response to be awarded in the same band for AO2 as has been awarded in AO1.**

There are different ways of reaching a high level. Some candidates will go straight to the higher levels. Other candidates will gradually climb their way there by working their way through lower levels first.

The mark scheme for each paper will list responses which a candidate might offer. The list will not be exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers, and where a candidate offers a response which is not listed, examiners will be expected to use their knowledge and discretion as to whether the response is valid. Examiners who are in any doubt should contact their Team Leader immediately.

Specific points

Do not transfer marks from one part of a question to another. All questions, and sub-questions, are marked separately.

Mark what the candidate has written - do not assume that the candidate knows something unless they have written it.

The levels of response start with one from the following list of flag words:

Weak, Limited, Satisfactory, Good

During the standardisation process, examples of work at each level will be used to define the meaning of these flag words for the examination. In particular the word 'good' must not be interpreted as the best possible response. It will be what is judged to be 'good' according to the generic levels of response, although better responses could be offered.

Remember that we are trying to achieve two things in the marking of the scripts:

- (i) to place all the candidates in the correct rank order
- (ii) to use the full range of marks available – right up to the top of the range; 'Good' means a good response *from a GCSE candidate* and can therefore be awarded the highest marks.

This means that it is imperative you mark to the agreed standard.

Written communication, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Written communication covers: clarity of expression, structure of arguments, presentation of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling.

In the marking of these questions the quality of the candidate's written communication will be one factor (other factors include the relevance and amount of supporting detail) that influences whether an answer is placed at the bottom, the middle, or the top, of a level.

The following points should be remembered:

- answers are placed in the appropriate level according to the RS assessment objectives, i.e. no reference is made at this stage to the quality of the written communication;
- the quality of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar must **never** be used to move an answer from the mark band of one level to another;
- accept any reasonable alternative spelling of transliterated words from non-Roman alphabets in learners' responses.

SPaG is now assessed in e) part of the first question. Please refer to the grid overleaf when awarding the SPaG marks.

The Regulator now requires GCSE Religious Studies to assess the quality of extended responses by candidates. Marks are not specifically given for this assessment however. This assessment takes place in e) part of the second question. The levels descriptors for these are embedded in the Levels of Response, specifically AO2, and are *italicised for clarity*.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) Assessment Grid

<i>High performance 3 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Intermediate performance 2 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Threshold performance 1 mark</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder overall Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>0 marks</i>
The learner writes nothing The learner's response does not relate to the question The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

- Practice scripts provide you with examples of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Principal Examiners, Senior Team Leaders and Team Leaders and provide you with 'benchmark' examples of the approach to marking.
- The specific task-related indicative content for parts d) and e) of each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However; this indicative content is not an exhaustive list of 'correct' responses: it is material that candidates might use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. This needs to be used in close conjunction with the relevant Levels of Response marking grid, which is positioned below the indicative content. The guidance column on the right of the mark scheme will provide further exemplification and support as to the interpretation of answers, where required. **Levels of Response marked responses should be read holistically before applying the relevant Levels of Response.**

Assessment objectives (AO)

Assessment Objectives	
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• beliefs, practices and sources of authority• influence on individuals, communities and societies• similarities and differences within and/or between religions and their beliefs.
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion, including their significance and influence.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1 (a)	<p>State three elements of the Eightfold Path.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right view or understanding • Right intention • Right Speech • Right Action • Right Livelihood • Right Effort • Right Mindfulness • Right Concentration 	3 AO1	1 mark for each response.
	<p>(b) Describe what is meant by the term rebirth.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebirth is part of the cycle of samsara. Buddhism teaches that when a person dies, they are reborn and that this process of death and rebirth will continue until nibbana is attained. This is called the cycle of samsara • Buddhism teaches that the person is made up of thoughts, feelings and perceptions interacting with the body in a dynamic and constantly changing way. At death this stream of mental energy is re-established in a new body. This is rebirth • Rebirth is caused by the kamma of the previous life. It shapes each new life and the personality, situation and circumstances of events within each life. 	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification.
	<p>(c) Describe what is meant by the term dependent origination.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist". • The list of twelve elements from the Buddhist teachings which arise depending on the preceding link. 	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification.


Question		Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The arising of mental formations and the resultant notion of "I" and "mine," which are the source of suffering.• Dependent origination expresses the Buddhist view of the nature of reality. It says that everything arises, and continues, dependent upon conditions.• Nothing is permanent and unchanging.		

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	<p>A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	<p>A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	<p>Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
(d)	<p>Outline how ending craving will lead to enlightenment.</p> <p>Learners might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Learners might explain that craving is the second of the Four Noble Truths. They might show that the Buddha said that all suffering is caused by craving and that the way to end suffering is to overcome suffering.</p> <p>They might suggest that suffering is caused by craving (tanha). Craving is caused by and causes greed, hatred and ignorance. These are the three fires/ poisons. Enlightenment or nibbana for many Buddhists is the extinguishing of these fires.</p> <p>Learners might suggest that knowing that suffering is caused by craving means that it is possible to work out a way to end craving and therefore bring suffering to an end. This ending of suffering is enlightenment.</p> <p>Learners might suggest that this is how the Buddha achieved enlightenment and it is the way that all beings will eventually be able to achieve enlightenment.</p>	<p>6 AO1</p>	<p>Examiners should mark according to AO1 descriptors.</p> <p>Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.</p>

Level (Mark)	<u>A01</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>A02</u>
3 (3)	<p>A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	4 (10–12)	<p>A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Buddhist groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Buddhist groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion
2 (2)	<p>A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	3 (7–9)	<p>A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion
1 (1)	<p>Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	2 (4–6)	<p>A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus
		1 (1–3)	<p>A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief • No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
(e)	<p>‘Buddhists do not need to worship at home.’</p> <p>Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Buddhism Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. <p>Learners might consider some of the following:</p> <p>AO1: Learners might explain that Buddhists might worship at home or in the temple. Learners could say that a Buddhist might worship by giving thanks to the Buddha for gaining enlightenment and teaching humans how to do the same. They might suggest that Buddhists offer incense, flowers and candles to represent purifying the mind, impermanence and wisdom. Learners might suggest that a Buddhist can worship at home with a home shrine. This might be in the corner of a room or they might have a separate room. or they might go to a temple if there is one near and worship there. Learners might suggest that at a temple they might join with others and chant mantras or say prayers, this can also be done at home.</p> <p>AO2: Learners might argue that in many Theravada countries Buddhists do not need to worship at home if they have a temple close to their home and they might feel that if they have been to the temple then they do not need to worship at home as well. They might also argue that in Theravada countries there may be shrine or stupas which are connected to the life of the Buddha and going to these places to worship would bring greater spiritual progress than worship at home. Learners might suggest that worshipping at home is better than worshipping in a temple because it is easier to concentrate on your own rather than in a busy temple; a home shrine can be personalised</p>	<p>15</p> <p>3 AO1</p> <p>12 AO2</p>	<p>Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors.</p> <p>Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.</p> <p>Please refer to the SPaG response grid on page 9.</p>

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>especially in Mahayana Buddhist homes where there may be Bodhisattvas of importance; at home a person can worship at times that are convenient for them.</p> <p>Learners might also argue that there may be more distractions at home or that their home may not have the room for a shrine, which would make home worship difficult or impossible.</p> <p>They might suggest that some Buddhists, such as Zen Buddhists, might say that you can worship anywhere and all of the time if you are being mindful of the Buddhas teachings.</p> <p>However, learners might argue that some Mahayana Buddhists might think that worshipping at home is very important because it is about your spiritual development.</p> <p>Learners might also argue that some Buddhists feel that going to a temple is not important because they show devotion at home in exactly the same way.</p> <p>Learners might also suggest that for some Buddhists in the UK there may not be a temple close by and so they can only worship at home.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>SPaG ()</p>	

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2 (a)	<p>State three of the Ten Precepts observed by monks and nuns.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures. • I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given. • I undertake the precept to refrain from sexual activity. • I undertake the precept to refrain from wrong speech • I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. • I undertake the precept to refrain from eating at the forbidden time (i.e., after noon). • I undertake the precept to refrain from dancing, singing, music, going to see entertainments. • I undertake the precept to refrain from wearing garlands, using perfume and beautifying the body with cosmetics. • I undertake the precept to refrain from lying on a luxurious bed. • I undertake the precept to refrain from accepting gold and silver (money). 	3 AO1	1 mark for each response.
(b)	<p>Describe the significance of offerings at a shrine or temple.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The significance of offerings is to pay respect to the Buddha and express gratitude and thanks for his teachings. • Offerings have different symbolic meanings and their significance is often linked to what they symbolize. For example: • Incense symbolises purity and its significance is to remind Buddhists of the importance of practising right thoughts, speech and actions. • Flowers symbolise impermanence and their significance is to remind Buddhists that all things are impermanent. • Light (candles) symbolise wisdom and their significance is to help a Buddhist focus on driving away ignorance. 	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
(c)	<p>Describe one stage of the bodhisattva path.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bodhisattva path is the path that some Mahayana Buddhist might take if they want to become an enlightened being in order to help all sentient beings to gain enlightenment. • Commonly the Bodhisattva path consists of developing the six perfections (paramitas) these are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generosity or giving – being charitable or generous in everything they think, say and do • Morality – follow the five or even ten precepts • Patience – to be patient in thoughts, words and actions • Energy – to develop the energy and perseverance needed to keep going when the path seems difficult and the goal is out of reach • Meditation - develop mindful awareness and concentration • Wisdom – to understand the wholesome thing to think, say and do in all situations • An alternative path exists consists of the 10 Bhumis. 	<p>3 AO1</p>	<p>Marks should be awarded for a statement plus any combination of development and exemplification.</p>

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	<p>A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	<p>A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	<p>Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
(d)	<p>Outline one Buddhist belief about the five aggregates (khandas).</p> <p>Learners might consider some of the following:</p> <p>The five aggregates (khandhas) are the five heaps which make up individuals. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form • Feeling • Perception • Mental formulation • Consciousness <p>Buddhists believe that these are all interlinked and only exist because of what has existed before them. This may be linked to the idea of dependent origination.</p> <p>Buddhists believe that these are constantly changing, therefore there is no permanent self or soul.</p> <p>Buddhists use this to help explain the concept of anicca – impermanence.</p> <p>Buddhists show how this also links to anatta – not self.</p> <p>In Mahayana Buddhism these are linked to the idea of sunyata or emptiness because they show that all things are empty of self.</p>	<p>6 AO1</p>	<p>Examiners should mark according to AO1 descriptors.</p> <p>Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.</p>

Level (Mark)	<u>A01</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>A02</u>
3 (3)	<p>A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	4 (10–12)	<p>A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Buddhist groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Buddhist groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion <p><i>There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i></p>
2 (2)	<p>A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	3 (7–9)	<p>A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion <p><i>There is a line of reasoning presented which is mostly relevant and has some structure.</i></p>
1 (1)	<p>Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Buddhism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies 	2 (4–6)	<p>A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Buddhist groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus <p><i>There is a line of reasoning which has some relevance and which is presented with limited structure.</i></p>

		1 (1–3)	<p>A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief • No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus <p><i>The information is communicated in a basic/unstructured way.</i></p>
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
(e) *	<p>‘Festivals are not important in Buddhism.’</p> <p>Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Buddhism Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. <p>Learners might consider some of the following:</p> <p>AO1: Learners might suggest that there are many special or holy days held throughout the year by Buddhists. Many of these days celebrate the events in the life of the Buddha or birthdays of bodhisattvas in the Mahayana tradition. Learners might explain that the most widely celebrated festival is Wesak. This happens every May on the night of the full moon, when Buddhists all over the world celebrate the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha over 2,500 years ago. In Mahayana Buddhist countries, there are regional and other differences depending on the various schools and traditions of Buddhism as to how these great events are celebrated. Learners might explain that Wesak is significant today because it reminds Buddhists of the importance of the life of the Buddha. Wesak gives Buddhists the opportunity to think about what they can learn from the Buddha's life. They remember his teachings, and spend time celebrating with other Buddhists. Dhamma Day is now seen as a chance to express gratitude that the Buddha and other enlightened teachers have shared their knowledge with others. Dhamma Day is usually celebrated with readings from the Buddhist scriptures, and is an opportunity to reflect deeply on their content. Dhamma Day is important to Buddhists today as it reminds them of the Buddha's teachings and what they can learn from his enlightenment and apply to their own lives. Parinirvana Day is significant to Buddhists today as they think about their lives and how they can work towards gaining nibbana. They remember friends or relations who have recently died and reflect on the fact that death is a part of life for everyone.</p> <p>AO2: Learners might argue that festivals are not important because they might be a distraction from following the Five Precepts or Eightfold Path. They might see that festivals do not help a Buddhist overcome craving and may cause it to worsen as people crave these big occasions.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>3 AO1</p> <p>12 AO2</p>	<p>Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors.</p> <p>Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.</p> <p>Please refer to the SPaG response grid on page 9.</p>

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	<p>Learners might argue that in non-Buddhist countries there maybe only be a small Buddhist community and it maybe difficult to celebrate in the same way as in a Buddhist country. People might not be able to have time off work or school to take part in celebrations. There may not be any local monasteries to go to to celebrate and therefore Buddhists may not choose to celebrate.</p> <p>Learners might argue that festivals are important because they are an important aspect of Buddhist practice. In addition to the religious background, some festivals have social and cultural features. Since the celebrations have developed in different countries, and over long periods of time, there are variations. Learners might suggest that festivals are important because a Buddhist might renew their faith by going to the local temple or monastery and offer food to the monks and take the Five Precepts and listen to a dhamma talk.</p> <p>Festivals are also important because Buddhists often distribute food to the poor to make merit or take part in the circumambulation of a stupa three times as a sign of respect to the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha.</p> <p>Learners might also suggest that festivals are important because they bring the Buddhist community together which deepens their shared identity and strengthens faith.</p>		

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