



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies B

Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Religion and Ethics

Option 1D – Buddhism

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2025

Question Paper Log Number P78619A

Publications Code 1RB0_1D_2506_MS

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Paper 1: Religion and Ethics 1D – Buddhism Mark Scheme

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
Q1 (a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • The Wheel of Life shows the cycle of samsara (1) • The three poisons are represented in the centre (1) • One layer of the wheel shows kamma (1) • One layer of the wheel shows the realms of existence (1) • The wheel illustrates dependant origination (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a teaching. Award a second mark for development of the teaching. Up to a maximum of four marks. • The pancha sila are the five precepts (1). They are the main Buddhist rules of morality (1) • The pancha sila form the ethics that all Buddhists use to live by (1). They encourage Buddhists to avoid negative actions (1) • The pancha sila teach Buddhists to show compassion to all (1), helping them achieve enlightenment (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching / development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each belief. Award further marks for each development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • A Buddhist belief about Buddha-nature is that all humans can become enlightened (1). Buddhists believe that the Five Khandas are constantly changing so this must be true (1). 'The Blessed One said, "Monks, I will teach you the five aggregates & the five clinging-aggregates. Listen & pay close attention"' (Khandha Sutta) (1) • Buddha-nature is important as it teaches that Buddhists should live as the Buddha taught (1), they should follow the Middle Way (1). 'The middle way realised by the Tathagata — producing vision, producing knowledge — leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening' (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta) (1) • Buddhists believe Buddha-nature is important as it pulls them to understand the Buddha's teachings (1). The Buddha explained that Suppabudda the leper was able to understand all (1), '... he is a stream-winner, not subject to states of deprivation, headed for self-awakening for sure' (Kutthi Sutta) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief / development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
1(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • Some Buddhists would argue that paticca-samuppada is the most significant part of Buddhist teachings as it underpins their understanding of samsara and kamma; it shows everything is interconnected • Some Buddhists would agree with this statement as paticca-samuppada is essential to the acceptance of the Buddha's teachings about the Three Marks of Existence • Paticca-samuppada is important to Buddhists as it is part of their ethical system. It highlights that every action will have a consequence. Arguments against the statement: • Some Buddhists might argue that paticca-samuppada is not the most significant Buddhist belief, that the Four Noble Truths are and that it is only one small part of their beliefs • Some Buddhists may argue that there is no one important belief. All Buddhist beliefs are equally important as they are all part of the way to enlightenment • Some Buddhists might argue that understanding the teachings about the Middle Way are more important. They show how a Buddhist should live, which is more important than the ideas behind them. Accept any other valid response.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

SPaG

Marks		Descriptors
0 marks	No marks awarded	• The candidate writes nothing. • The candidate's response does not relate to the question. • The candidate's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.
1 mark	Threshold performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Candidates use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.
2 marks	Intermediate performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.
3 marks	High performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • One purpose of the family in Buddhism is that it forms a stable structure to live within (1) • A purpose of the family for Buddhists is as a place where good deeds can be done (1) • For Buddhists the purpose of the family is to support the monastic sangha (1) • The purpose of the Buddhist family is to provide compassion to each other (1) • A Buddhist family can support one another socially and religiously (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a teaching. Award a second mark for development of the teaching. Up to a maximum of four marks. • Buddhists are taught men and women are equal within the family (1) even though they are different biologically (1) • Buddhist teachings explain that men and women are equal in dignity in the family (1). Neither partner is regarded as more important than the other (1) • Modern Buddhist teachings explain that equality of roles is society dependent (1). It is not linked to the ability to become enlightened (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching/ development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each teaching. Award further marks for each development of the teaching up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Buddhists teach that marriage is not essential (1). However, it provides a way for people to live a good life (1). 'He who does not regard cold or heat any more than a blade of grass and who does his duties manfully, does not fall away from happiness.' (Sigalovada Sutta) (1) • Buddhists believe that marriage is important as a social institution (1). It is not a religious obligation (1). 'Nobody in this world would say that marriage is bad and there is no religion which is against marriage' (A Happy Married Life, Dhammananda) (1) • Buddhists teach that marriage is a partnership (1). They believe it should benefit both partners (1). The Buddha is quoted as saying 'If a man can find a suitable and understanding wife and a woman can find a suitable and understanding husband, both are fortunate indeed' (A Happy Married Life, Dhammananda) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching/ development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the teaching given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2(d)	AO2 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • Buddhists may agree, and argue that the role of the monastic sangha is to help the family in their spiritual growth. They will teach them Buddhist scriptures • Some Buddhists would agree because the sangha provides a place of safety and comfort for family as a whole and as individuals, especially during festivals • Many other Buddhists would agree, and argue because the family can give to the sangha and gain merit from this then the sangha is very important. Arguments against the statement: • Some Buddhists would argue that the role of the sangha is more important for individuals as it helps the individual Buddhist on their path to enlightenment • Some Buddhists would explain that the role of the sangha is to support the whole community, not families. They are essential as a communal place for worship and study • Some Buddhists may believe that as the family is not a religious requirement, it is a secular unit, the sangha is not important in supporting it, the government is. Accept any other valid response.	12

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • Buddhists teach that meditation is an essential part of mental concentration (1) • Buddhists meditate to cultivate mindfulness (1) • Buddhists meditate to reach enlightenment (1) • Some Buddhists meditate to provide metta (1) • Some meditate because it follows the example of the Buddha (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason. Up to a maximum of four marks. • The library in the vihara is a place of spiritual learning (1), a place to find out how to follow the Middle Way (1) • The library is where Buddhists can find texts to learn from (1), inspiring them to find out more about their faith (1) • The library in the vihara is a place where the local Buddhists gather for lessons (1). It is regarded as the place where monks and students will meet (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • One reason a buddharupa is used by Buddhists is to help them remember the characteristics of the Buddha (1). They may feel more able to emulate the Buddha when they look at a buddharupa (1). 'For a long time, Lord, I have wanted to come and set eyes on the Blessed One' (Vakkali Sutta) (1) • A buddharupa will remind worshippers of the teachings of the Buddha (1). 'Truly seeing Dhamma, one sees me; seeing me one sees Dhamma' (Vakkali Sutta) (1). Buddhists are able to ponder the dhamma (1) • Buddharupas are used in a vihara to help meditation (1). They ensure focus is mindful (1). 'When the mind is directed to some satisfactory image, happiness is born' (Bhikkhunupassaya Sutta) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/ development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for this statement: • Buddhists may argue that death and mourning ceremonies are only important for the living as they are a chance to read the Buddha's teachings on impermanence • Tibetan Buddhists recognise that the rituals mark important stages in existence. They are a reminder that death is not the end • Many Buddhists recognise that these rituals are a way for them to gain merit by honouring the dead and treating their relatives in the correct traditional way. Arguments against the statement: • Many Buddhists will argue that the rituals are important for the dead person. For example, some keep vigil over the body to increase chances of a positive rebirth • Pure Land Buddhists may chant the name of the Amitabha Buddha, this is important for the dead person as it helps the conscious part of the body leave the physical • Some Tibetan Buddhists would argue that the rites are important for the dead, as they need to take place so that they are guided through bardo and not left between death and rebirth. Accept any other valid response.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

SPaG

Marks		Descriptors
0 marks	No marks awarded	• The candidate writes nothing. • The candidate's response does not relate to the question. • The candidate's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.
1 mark	Threshold performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Candidates use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.
2 marks	Intermediate performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.
3 marks	High performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • Buddhists teach active euthanasia is wrong (1) • Buddhists teach that euthanasia is not a compassionate act (1) • Some Buddhists would accept euthanasia as an expression of metta (1) • Buddhists teach that euthanasia goes against the precept not to kill (1) • Buddhists may argue that the Buddha taught that it is wrong to end one's life early (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a belief. Award a second mark for development of the belief. Up to a maximum of four marks. • Buddhists believe the universe should be cared for (1). This means they try not to abuse the balance of the world (1) • Buddhists believe that life is cyclical, and the universe supports life at a point in time (1). Thus, Buddhists regard the universe as a valuable part of the cycle (1) • Buddhist belief in dependant origination means that everything in the universe depends on other things (1). The universe is valuable as it is part of this chain of causation (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief /development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each belief. Award further marks for each development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Buddhists believe that life is special (1), it should not be harmed (1). The Five Precepts teach Buddhists to refrain '...from taking life' (Abhisanda Sutta) (1) • The Buddha told the blind sea-turtle story to show how rare life is (1). It teaches that a blind sea turtle is unlikely to put his head in a yoke if he only surfaces once in a hundred years (1), so it is '...a sheer coincidence that one obtains the human state' (Chiggala Sutta) (1) • Buddhists believe that human life is how enlightenment is achieved (1). Human beings can live in the way that is required for enlightenment (1), '...the faculty of wisdom is reckoned chief as regards the attainment of enlightenment' (Pade Sutta) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief / development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(d)	A02 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. A02 Arguments for the statement: • Buddhists believe that life is cyclical, that living beings are caught in the cycle of samsara. Therefore, belief in life after death is more than a source of comfort, it is part of the reality of life • Buddhists believe that life after death is more than a source of comfort; the belief gives meaning to life. Because they believe in samsara, they will try to achieve enlightenment • Some Buddhists would argue that belief in life after death is more than a source of comfort as it is an essential part of faith. If they follow the Middle Way they will achieve a positive rebirth. Arguments against the statement: • Some non-religious people would argue that belief in life after death is just comfort. They believe that there is nothing after death and people are incorrect believing otherwise • Some non-religious people would argue that belief in an afterlife provides comfort for people who cannot accept that this world is all there is • Some non-religious people would argue that some Buddhists need to believe in life after death to comfort them because otherwise they would not be able to accept that suffering can be overcome. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider non-religious points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.