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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2018**

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

**2120UD0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2018 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.

### **Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark**

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner. When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

### **Awarding no marks to a response**

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

## AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 15 marks
	<p><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i></li> <li>- <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i></li> <li>- <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i></li> <li>- <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i></li> </ul>
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language /vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set.</li> <li>• Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question.</li> <li>• Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary</li> <li>• Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>N.B. A maximum of 1 mark should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</b></p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

<b>Band</b>	<b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 15 marks</b> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed.</li> <li>• The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed.</li> <li>• The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed.</li> <li>• Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> <li>• Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

## Unit 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 Theravada notion of the arhat (worthy one).

[AO1 15]

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

- Arhat, (Sanskrit: “one who is worthy”), Pali - arahant,
- An arhat is a perfected person, who has gained insight into the true nature of existence and has achieved nirvana (enlightenment).
- The arhat, having, through their commitment to wisdom, morality and meditation been freed from the bonds of desire, will not be reborn.
- The state of an arhat is considered in the Theravada tradition to be the proper goal of a Buddhist.
- Arhat is the fourth stage of attainment described in Pali texts: (1) the state of the “stream-enterer”—i.e., a convert (sotapanna)—achieved by overcoming false beliefs and doubts regarding the Buddha, the teaching (dhamma), and the order (sangha), (2) the “once-returner” (sakadagamin), who will be reborn only once in this realm, a state attained by diminishing lust, hatred, and illusion, (3) the “nonreturner” (anagamin), who, after death, will be reborn in a higher heaven, where they will become an arhat, a state attained by overcoming sensual desire and ill will, in addition to the attainments of the first two stages, and (4) the arhat.
- Except under extraordinary circumstances, a man or woman can become an arhat only while a monk or nun. Many traditions would believe that only men can become arhats.
- The five ascetics whom the Buddha the first taught are thought to be the first arhats.
- When the status of arhat is achieved no new karmic formations are attached.

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

1. (b) 'The arhat, rather than the bodhisattva, best reflects the teachings of the Buddha'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Because it is featured in the Pali texts the arhat may be considered as closer than the bodhisattva to the teachings of the historical Buddha. The Pali text are written as if they were the reported words of the Buddha. The Theravada tradition assigns primacy to the Pali Canon.
- The Buddha himself was seen as a fully-enlightened arhat.
- Many of the qualities of the arhat are in fact shared by the bodhisattva, so it could be argued that it is unnecessary to contrast the two paths.
- The bodhisattva could be considered a better expression of Buddhist teachings of non-attachment and unselfishness. The bodhisattva embodies wisdom and compassion which are core to the Buddha's teachings.
- Candidates may argue that what the Buddha taught (or didn't teach) is not relevant to the aims of Buddhism, which are to overcome suffering and unsatisfactoriness.
- Some forms of Buddhism would style both the bodhisattva and the arhat as skilful means, or fingers pointing to the moon. As such it does not make sense to evaluate them in relation to the likelihood of the Buddha teaching about them.

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



2. (a) Examine the notion of pratityasamutpada.

[AO1 15]

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

- The Sanskrit term pratitya-samutpada, (paticca-samuppada Pali) means the chain, or law, of dependent origination, or the chain of causation—a fundamental concept of Buddhism describing the causes of suffering and the course of events that lead a being through rebirth, old age, and death.
- Other translations are Interdependent Origination, Conditioned Co-production.
- Existence is considered to be an interrelated flux of phenomenal events, material and psychical, without any real, permanent, independent existence of their own. These events happen in a series, one interrelating group of events producing another. The series is usually described as a chain of 12 links (nidanas, “causes”),
- The nidanas consists of: (1) ignorance, specifically ignorance of the Four Noble Truths, of the nature of humanity, of transmigration, and of nirvana; which leads to (2) wrong thinking about reality. These in turn provide the structure of (3) knowledge, the object of which is (4) name and form—i.e., the principle of individual identity, and the sensory perception of an object—which are accomplished through (5) the six domains—i.e., the five senses and their objects—and the mind as the coordinating organ of sense impressions. The presence of objects and senses leads to (6) contact between the two, which provides (7) sensation (vedana). Because this sensation is agreeable, it gives rise to (8) thirst (tanha) and in turn to (9) grasping, depicted by intercourse. This sets in motion (10) the process of becoming which results in (11) birth of the individual and hence to (12) old age and death.
- The Buddha is said to have reflected on the concept just prior to his enlightenment,
- Having an understanding of cycle of becoming leads to emancipation from its bondage.
- Later, the nidana series became pictured as the outer rim of the wheel of life, (bhavachakra) frequently reproduced in Tibetan art.
- As well as the 12 nidana chain, pratitya-samutpada describes the radically inter-related nature of all phenomena, and becomes a concept later elaborated on in Mahayana philosophy. It is sometimes expressed as “if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist.”

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

2. (b) 'Pratityasamutpada accurately describes reality.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Candidates may explain that much of modern science, especially quantum mechanics and systems theory, supports the idea of pratityasamutpada, which describes phenomena unfolding moment by moment, caused and conditioned by an almost infinite number and variety of events, with no underlying essential core.
- Candidates may explain what pratityasamutpada means to them, in their own terms, highlighting cause and effect and connectedness observable in the world.
- Candidates may argue that describing reality has never been satisfactorily achieved, and numerous theories compete for recognition. Pratityasamutpada is merely one such theory.
- Candidates may argue that it is reasonable to suggest that reality needs to be understood in theistic terms, as without a first cause there is no chain of cause and effect.
- Candidates may suggest that religious people in a range of traditions report experiences which suggest that the Buddhist worldview is not correct.
- Candidates may argue that the problem with pratityasamutpada is that it relies on a notion of anatta, and either it is not compatible with their religion to accept this, or that it is not necessary to, or even that it makes no sense to, privilege this understanding of personhood over any other.

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

## Section B

3. (a) Examine the practices of metta bhavana (loving-kindness) and zazen (just sitting).

[AO1 15]

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

- The usual definition of 'metta' is 'loving kindness.' Another definition is, 'kind friendliness,' as metta derives from the Pali word for friend. 'Bhavana' is usually translated as 'meditation' but it means 'cultivation' or 'development.'
- The basic framework is outlined in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* 5th CE, which offers a commentary on the Metta Sutta.
- Metta Bhavana is a structured practice with distinct stages. It involves cultivating good wishes for different classes of beings, and firstly, toward oneself. The Metta Sutta states, 'in gladness and in safety, may all beings be at ease.' 'All beings' includes the self. The cultivation here is the wish 'May I be happy and free from suffering.'
- The next stage focuses on a person close to the meditator, whom they love and respect. During this stage, the practitioner focuses on the qualities which inspire feelings and thoughts of affection. The next stage extends to people to whom the meditator is indifferent. The focus is 'May those around me be happy and free from suffering.' The next stage is the most difficult stage, in which the focus is on people who have harmed the meditator, or in other words 'an enemy'. 'May my enemies be happy and free from suffering.'
- The ultimate goal is to embrace all sentient beings within the radiant metta cultivated through practice. This includes human beings whom we have not met, potential life in the rest of the universe, and even some non-human life on Earth. 'May all beings be happy and free from suffering.'
- Zazen seated meditation. The instructions for zazen direct the practitioner to sit in on a zafu (cushion), breathing rhythmically and easily, with legs fully or half crossed, spine and head erect, hands folded one palm above the other, and eyes open. Logical, analytic thinking should be suspended, as should all desires, attachments, and judgments, leaving the mind in a state of relaxed attention. Thought should be observed and not clung to.
- Zen master and founder of the Sōtō sect in Japan, Dōgen considered zazen not only to be a method of moving toward enlightenment but also, if properly experienced, to constitute enlightenment itself. This relies on the idea that all beings have Buddha nature, and nirvana and samsara have mutual identities.

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

3. (b) 'Meditation is a waste of time in modern society.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Candidates may argue that meditation can seem like a passive practice which has no effects in the real world. It may be calming and relaxing for the practitioner, but so are many other activities.
- They may argue that meditation is an amoral practice. It does not bring about benefits, so it is qualitatively different from practices that are virtue and morality orientated, involving giving, helping others, or being committed to social justice and social engagement.
- They may argue that meditation helps people cope with the demands of modern life. They may argue that this is beneficial outcome – or they may argue that it allows the causes of stress in the modern world to remain in place, so it is part of the problem.
- Candidates may give an account of meditation which considers its role in Buddhist soteriological goals, of rooting out greed hatred and delusion and of achieving enlightenment. They may value this as either a waste of time, or as meaningful.
- They may consider that if the goals of meditation, such as developing increased loving –kindness and compassion, and reducing greed, hatred and ignorance, are reached, this will have beneficial effects in the real world.

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

4. (a) Explain the Threefold Trainings in the Eightfold Path.

[AO1 15]

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

- The Threefold trainings are the same as the Three sections of the Noble Eightfold path, namely wisdom, morality (or virtue) and meditation. Each is equally important. According to Theravada canonical texts, pursuing this training leads to the abandonment of greed, hatred, and delusion. Becoming fully accomplished in this training a person attains arhatship and Nibbana.
- In the Anguttara Nikaya, training in morality includes following the Patimokkha, training in meditation (sometimes simply referred to as concentration) includes entering and dwelling in the four jhanas, and training in wisdom includes directly perceiving the Four Noble Truths or knowledge and destruction of the klesas (greed hatred and delusion). Morality (sila) is less about following rules, than about having a discipline which leads to harmony with others.
- The Eightfold Path is classified as follows :
- Morality = Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood
- Wisdom = Right View, Right Intention
- Meditation = Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.
- The eightfold path is practiced by the monastic and lay sangha (though the meaning of the elements may differ by context). However, in the Pali texts the implication is that they only lead to nibbanic outcomes for monastics.

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

4. (b) 'Morality without wisdom and meditation is worthless.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Candidates will identify the three terms in the question as the Three Trainings.
- The Three Trainings are sometimes described as three legs of three-legged stool. If one is removed the stool collapses. This supports the statement in the question.
- Buddhism as a religious tradition and set of practices requires careful attention to all three aspects.
- However, candidates may argue that morality on its own still has worth. It is better to be a good person, who lives without harming others, than it is to be a religious virtuoso, excelling at religious knowledge and meditation.
- They may argue that in some forms of Buddhism, the efficacy of all three of the trainings is doubted. For example in Pure Land Buddhism, only the grace of Amida Buddha can bring sentient beings to awakening. So any idea of becoming accomplished in the trainings is misplaced.
- In Soto Zen there is no need to practice anything other than zazen, as enlightenment is already attained. Practice and attainment are one – whether one is wise or moral or not.

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

5. (a) Explain what the Four Sights mean to Buddhists.

[AO1 15]

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

- Candidates should set the Four Sights in context in Siddhartha's biography. Accounts vary as to whether he saw the sights consecutively on one visit beyond the gates of the palace, or whether they were four different occasions. However, he is usually thought to have seen them at the age of 29 having developed a sense of dissatisfaction with his imprisoned state in the palace.
- The first three sights; sickness, old age and death (a corpse); are understood to have introduced Siddhartha, seemingly for the first time, to the impermanent and painful nature of existence. His realisation that all sentient beings are subject to them emerges from the discussions he has with Channa, his charioteer. The sights mean similar things to Buddhists. They illustrate the urgency of imperilment the human condition. Sickness, old age and death, are aspects of dukkha-dukkha, the most obvious forms of suffering. Siddhartha's deluded state about their existence is reflected upon by contemporary Buddhists in the context of the way culture attempts to hide these realities from us, and how we prefer to live in denial about them.
- The fourth sight was of a sadhu or ascetic who appeared to be at peace with the knowledge of sickness, old age and death. For Siddhartha this prompted him to fulfil the prophecy which his father had worked hard to prevent, of 'leaving home' to follow a spiritual path to meaning and liberation. This is interpreted by Buddhists to mean they too must 'leave home' whether this is literally, or interpreted psychologically in terms of leaving a comfort zone spiritually speaking.

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

5. (b) 'The life of the Buddha is not important to Buddhists.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Candidates will show their awareness of our lack of actual historical knowledge about the Buddha. It is likely that he existed, but we know almost nothing about him as a matter of fact. All our knowledge comes from texts that were written at least 300 years after he died. There are no contemporary sources. Many Buddhists consider his life to be a story.
- Candidates may show their understanding of religious narrative, by exploring the power of meaningful stories. Although the life story is not historical fact, it is nonetheless a 'truthful story' because it communicates beliefs and values of the community who remembered the Buddha.
- The life story of the historical Buddha is considered very important by Theravada Buddhists, not least because the Buddha is thought to be a human example of what is possible in relation to awakening. The story of his efforts is important because it inspires Buddhists today.
- Many Buddhists in Mahayana schools have little or no interest in the historical Buddha. They may be more interested in the Lotus Sutra, or in Amitabha.
- The Buddha is not a figure like Jesus in Christianity – absolutely essential to make sense of the religion. It could be argued that Dharma is essential and the Buddha is incidental.
- Candidates may refer to the importance to Buddhists of the Hagiographical or mythological nature of the life of the Buddha.

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