



GCSE MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2025

**GCSE
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 1
OPTION E: CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM
3120UE0-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

WJEC GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 1
OPTION E: CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM
SUMMER 2025 MARK SCHEME

General Marking Instructions for Examiners

The mark scheme defines what can be reasonably expected of a candidate in response to questions asked.

1. Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes that is accurate and relevant, 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. Errors should be ignored, not penalised.

2. Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor for the band provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains a range of marks.

3. Two-mark questions

Banded mark schemes are not suitable for low tariff questions. Instructions for the awarding of marks are given with the indicative content.

Using the banded mark scheme

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. 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.

Stage 2 – Deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (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.

Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. It is extremely important to note that **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 candidate need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.** Where a response is not creditworthy, i.e. that is contains nothing of any significance to the mark scheme, or is entirely irrelevant to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

Assessment Objectives

The questions test the candidate's ability to:

- AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief*, including:
 - belief, practices and sources of authority
 - influence on individuals, communities and societies
 - similarities and differences within and/or between religions and belief
- AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief*, including their significance and influence

* The term 'belief' includes religious and non-religious belief as appropriate to the subject content requirements.

LEVEL DESCRIPTORS/MARKING BANDS

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 (a) AO1

See instructions provided with indicative content.

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 (b) AO1

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark Total
3	An excellent, coherent description showing awareness and insight into the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses a range of appropriate religious/specialist language and terms and, where relevant, sources of wisdom and authority, extensively, accurately and appropriately.	4-5
2	A good, generally accurate description showing awareness and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses religious/specialist language and terms and, where relevant, sources of wisdom and authority generally accurately.	2-3
1	A limited statement of information about the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses religious/specialist language and terms and, where relevant, sources of wisdom and authority in a limited way.	1
0	No relevant information provided.	0

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 (c) AO1

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark Total
4	An excellent, highly detailed explanation showing awareness and insight into the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses a range of religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately and appropriately.	7-8
3	A very good, explanation showing awareness of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses a range of religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority accurately and appropriately.	5-6
2	A satisfactory explanation showing some awareness of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority with some accuracy.	3-4
1	A limited explanation showing little awareness of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. Uses religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority in a limited way and with little accuracy.	1-2
0	No relevant information provided.	0

Questions 1, 2, 4 (d) AO2

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark Total
4	An excellent, highly detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on comprehensive and accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. Clear and well supported judgements are formulated and a comprehensive range of different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately, appropriately and in detail.	12-15
3	A very good, detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on thorough and accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. Judgements are formulated with support and a balanced range of different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority accurately, appropriately and in detail.	8-11
2	A satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the issue based on some accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. Some judgements are formulated and some different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets some religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority with some accuracy.	4-7
1	A weak analysis and evaluation of the issue based on limited and/or inaccurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and/or moral reasoning. A limited and/or poor attempt or no attempt to formulate judgements or offer different and/or alternative viewpoints. Poor use or no use of religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority.	1-3
0	No relevant point of view stated.	0

Questions 3 (d) AO2 LIFE AND DEATH THEME ONLY

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark Total
4	An excellent, highly detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on comprehensive and accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. An excellent, highly detailed consideration of non-religious beliefs, such as those held by humanists and atheists. Clear and well supported judgements are formulated and a comprehensive range of different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately, appropriately and in detail.	12-15
3	A very good, detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on thorough and accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. A very good, detailed consideration of non-religious beliefs, such as those held by humanists and atheists. Judgements are formulated with support and a balanced range of different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority accurately, appropriately and in detail.	8-11
2	A satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the issue based on some accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. A satisfactory, reasonably detailed consideration of non-religious beliefs, such as those held by humanists and atheists. Some judgements are formulated and some different and/or alternative viewpoints are considered. Uses and interprets some religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority with some accuracy.	4-7
1	A weak analysis and evaluation of the issue, based on limited and/or inaccurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and/or moral reasoning. A very basic consideration or no consideration of non-religious beliefs, such as those held by humanists and atheists. A limited and/or poor attempt or no attempt to formulate judgements or offer different and/or alternative viewpoints. Poor use or no use, of religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority.	1-3
0	No relevant point of view stated.	0

Assessment of spelling, punctuation and the accurate use of grammar
Applies to Part A, Question 1, part (d) only

Band	Performance descriptions
<i>High performance</i> 5-6 marks	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall
<i>Intermediate performance</i> 3-4 marks	• Candidates spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy • Candidates use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall
<i>Threshold performance</i> 1-2 marks	• 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
0	• 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 Band, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning

PART A – CORE BELIEFS, TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES

CHRISTIANITY

QUESTION 1

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition and 2 marks for a developed definition and/or an example.

(a) What do Christians mean by ‘Messiah’? [AO1 2]

Means ‘Anointed One’. The Messiah is the one believed to be sent by God to be humanity’s saviour. Christians believe this person to be Jesus.

Refer to the marking bands for question (b).

(b) Describe Christian approaches to ethical decision making. [AO1 5]

- Humans should know the difference between right and wrong.
- Free will – the ability to make choices and nothing is predetermined.
- Deontological theory - actions themselves are right or wrong.
- Teleological theory - outcomes of the actions being classed as right or wrong.
- Divine Command Theory - something is right because God commands it.
- Absolute morality - actions are intrinsically right or wrong.
- Relative morality - actions cannot be considered right or wrong without looking at the situation.
- Situation Ethics a situation is taken into account in making ethical decision.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you.’ Luke 6:31
- “You shall not murder.” Exodus 20:13
- “You shall not commit adultery.” Exodus 20:14
- “You shall not steal.” Exodus 20:15

Refer to the marking bands for question (c).

(c) Explain Christian teachings about love. [AO1 8]

- God has unconditional love for humans – agape.
- Jesus taught about agape (unconditional) love that he had for humans.
- Christians should treat others how they wish to be treated.
- Golden Rule is the basis of Christianity.
- Jesus taught about love of God is the most important commandment.
- Jesus taught that loving your neighbour was the second greatest commandment.
- Good Samaritan shows how people should love each other.
- At the Last Supper, Jesus gave his apostles his final commandment to love one another.
- God’s love is referred to as hesed (steadfast) in the Old Testament.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'* Matthew 22:37–9
- *Do to others as you would have them do to you.* Luke 6:31
- *'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.'* John 13:34–35
- *'I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.'* Hosea 2:19

Refer to the marking bands for question (d).

- (d) 'Helping the community is the most important role of a church or chapel.'**
[AO2 15+6]

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.)

Marks for spelling, punctuation and the accurate use of grammar are allocated to this question.

- The Church should provide help within the community, e.g. food banks, helping the homeless.
- Food banks are set up to help those living in poverty.
- Some churches open their doors to provide a warm space for the homeless.
- It is a Christian moral duty to help people in need.
- It is a Christian duty to serve God.
- Christians should follow the footsteps of Jesus who taught about the importance of helping other who are less fortunate.
- Jesus commanded his followers to love each other as he loves them.
- The love Jesus spoke about was unconditional, caring for others.
- Attending church deepens a person's faith and understanding of God'.
- The church allows a person to communicate with God.
- Prayer in church allows a person to show their love to God.
- Church/chapel is a place for prayer, both communal and private.
- Church/chapel is a place where Christians can receive God's blessing through Holy Communion/Eucharist.
- Christians can listen to sermons and Bible readings in church/chapel.
- Christians can celebrate rites of passage in church/chapel, e.g. baptism, marriage.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *'For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'* Matthew 25:35–36.
- *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'* Matthew 22:37–9
- *Do to others as you would have them do to you.* Luke 6:31
- *'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.'* John 13:34–35

PART A – CORE BELIEFS TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES

BUDDHISM

QUESTION 2

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition and 2 marks for a developed definition and/or an example.

(a) What do Buddhists mean by 'Buddha'? AO1 [2]

One who is fully enlightened.
Siddhartha Gautama.

(b) Describe the Buddha's teachings about suffering (dukkha). AO1 [5]

- Buddha taught that everyone suffers (the first Noble Truth).
- Dukkha can be difficult to interpret – 'suffering' in just one translation; 'unsatisfactory' might be a better description.
- There are different types of dukkha e.g., pain, the realisation that good things don't last, the belief that things are permanent.
- Buddha set out some of the causes (tanha) of suffering e.g., greed, hatred, anger.
- Buddha taught that suffering could be ended (nirodha) by attaining enlightenment.
- Buddha taught that the way to end suffering was to follow the Eightfold Path (magga).

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *'Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering.'* Sutta Nikaya/Tipitaka

(c) Explain why many Buddhists celebrate Wesak. AO1 [8]

- Some Buddhists (Theravada) celebrate Wesak to mark the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha.
- Celebrating his birth helps Buddhists to recognise that Gautama was destined to become the Buddha.
- Celebrating his enlightenment recognises the importance of this event as the beginning of the Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.
- Without the enlightenment there would be no Buddhism, so this is an important reason to celebrate Wesak.
- Wesak allows Buddhists to celebrate the death of the Buddha and his release from samsara (the Parinirvana).
- The use of lanterns at Wesak symbolise the light of the Buddha and his teachings overcoming the darkness of samsara.
- During Wesak, some lay Buddhists have the time to take on the five extra (monastic) precepts.

- It is an opportunity for lay people to attend lectures and chanting from religious texts to learn more about the Buddha's life and example.
- It is an opportunity for lay Buddhists to practise dana, by giving donations to monks.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *'The world is afflicted by death and decay. But the wise do not grieve, having realised the nature of the world.'* *The Buddha: Sutta Nipata*
- *'The Enlightened One is deep, boundless, hard to fathom, like the ocean.'* *The Buddha: Samyutta Nikaya 44.1*

(d) 'Mettabhavana is the most important type of meditation.'

AO2 [15]

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.)

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

- The brahma viharas are thought of as the ideal qualities to develop and can promote harmony between people so meditating on these qualities must be one of the most important activities for Buddhists.
- During mettabhavana, Buddhists focus their minds on feelings of love for family and friends and transfer these feelings to all other people which is important when developing sympathetic joy and equanimity.
- Buddha showed compassion and kindness to others, so practising mettabhavana is following his example.
- Concentrating on feelings of loving kindness (meta) can help a Buddhist learn how to control their emotions so it is important on the path to enlightenment.
- During vipassana meditation Buddhists might reflect on their actions and motivations to gain insight. Understanding one's own motivations must be an important aim of meditation.
- Vipassana must be the most important type of meditation as some Buddhists can suddenly realise the truth about the nature of life (enlightenment), which is the aim of Buddhism.
- During samatha meditation Buddhists take note of their breathing (anapanasati) to observe the movement of their body; this could be most important as it is the most basic act that every person does.
- Focusing on objects during samatha meditation can help Buddhists concentrate and bring about mindfulness. Mindfulness is part of the Eightfold Path, an essential part of the Buddha's dharma.
- Samatha could be the most important type of meditation as it is the entry into other forms of meditation.
- Buddhist monks would make use of every type of meditation on the path to enlightenment so it could be argued that they are all important.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *'Meditation brings wisdom; lack of meditation leaves ignorance. Know well what leads you forward and what holds you back and choose the path that leads to wisdom'* *The Buddha: Dhammapada 282*
- *'Better it is to live one day wise and meditative than to live a hundred years foolish and uncontrolled.'* *The Buddha: Dhammapada 8*
- *'My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.'* *Dalai Lama*

PART B – RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO PHILOSOPHICAL THEMES

THEME 1: LIFE AND DEATH

QUESTION 3

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition and 2 marks for a developed definition and/or an example.

- (a) What is meant by ‘afterlife’? [AO1 2]

Life after death; the belief that existence continues after physical death.

- (b) Describe Christian or Buddhist beliefs about caring for the world. [AO1 5]

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

Christianity

- Christians believe God created the world and gave humans a responsibility to care for it as global citizens for future generations.
- Christianity teaches that God gave humans stewardship which is the responsibility to care for the world and use its resources wisely and in a sustainable way.
- Christianity teaches humans have dominion which means they can rule over the world, but this is interpreted as taking the responsibility of caring for it seriously and not wasting the earth’s resources.
- Christians believe they are the caretakers of the world which means they should respect the world and everything in it including animals and hand it back to God unspoiled as they believe they will be judged on this in the afterlife.
- Christians believe they have environmental responsibility and should conserve the world’s natural resources which can be done through actions such as recycling, reducing pollution and using non-renewable sources of energy.
- Christians believe they should care for the world as they were given this as a duty from God which is seen in the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *‘God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”’ Genesis 1:28*
- *You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet. Psalm 8:6*

Buddhism

- The Buddhist principle of pratyasamutpada says that everything is interrelated, dependent on everything else for its existence so Buddhists believe they have a duty to live simply and respect all life forms which helps to maintain the natural balance of the world.
- Buddhists believe in stewardship which is that humans depend on nature and nature depends on humans so living in harmony in the world and caring for it is important.

- Practices from the Eightfold path relating to caring for the world include Right Mindfulness which teaches Buddhists they should be mindful of their actions on the world and avoid causing damage to nature and living creatures.
- The Eightfold path also includes Right Action which accepts that Buddhists need to take care of the world and everything within it by being a good steward.
- Buddhists believe in the idea of ahimsa which means they should do no harm and Buddhists are expected to take their role as a global citizen seriously and take care of the world and all creatures, acting in a sustainable way.
- Buddhists accept the second precept which says they should not take anything that does not belong to them and argue destroying natural habitats is doing this so they should work to protect the environment.
- Buddhists believe their actions on earth will impact on their future rebirth and accept that they should not treat the world in a harmful way, but instead should care for the environment to have a positive rebirth from the effects of karma they achieve.

(c) Explain Christian and Buddhist teachings about the origin of the universe.

[AO1 8]

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

Christianity

- Christian teachings about the origin of the universe are found in the Bible in the book of Genesis where it explains how the universe was created in detail.
- Genesis 1 explains that God created the universe and brought it into existence through six days of creation and one day of rest showing the nature of God as a creator and his omnipotence.
- Christianity teaches that God created the universe from nothing; a belief known as ex nihilo.
- Christianity teaches that on Day 1, God created light; on Day 2, God separated the sky and the sea; on Day 3, God created land, plants and trees; on Day 4, God created the sun, moon and stars; on Day 5, God created the creatures in the sea and sky; on Day 6, God created land animals and humans who were made in the image of God; on Day 7, God rested.
- Some Literalist Christians believe the teaching of the story of creation in the Bible to be true in every detail accepting that God alone was responsible for the creation of the universe and that as the Bible comes directly from God, anything that contradicts it is wrong.
- They will reject scientific theories such as the Big Bang which contradict the Bible story of creation which explains the origin of the universe.
- Other Christians regard the teachings of the origin of the universe in the Bible to be symbolic accounts and look to science to help them understand fully the creation of the universe.
- They believe that whilst God is responsible for the origin of the universe, he used scientific theories such as the Big Bang to make it happen because they believe the Bible needs to be interpreted to include modern theories.
- The Big Bang theory is a scientific theory that states the world started around 14 billion years ago when all matter and energy in the universe was at a point of infinite density and expanded rapidly which formed stars, galaxies and planets.

Where appropriate, relevant references may include:

- *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1*

- *By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Genesis 1:2*

Buddhism

- Buddhism does not teach about a creator God and do not believe that a creator God is the explanation for the origin of the universe.
- Buddhism does not concern itself with how the world was created because the Buddha argued that the question of how to overcome suffering in the world is far more urgent than explaining how the world came into existence.
- Buddhists would generally suggest that scientific explanations about the origin of the universe provide a satisfactory explanation for where the universe came from.
- The Big Bang theory is a scientific theory that states the world started around 14 billion years ago when all matter and energy in the universe was at a point of infinite density and expanded rapidly which formed stars, galaxies and planets.
- Buddhists would accept the Big Bang explanation is the best way of understanding how the universe came into existence.
- Buddhism does teach that everything within the universe is interrelated and depends on everything else for its existence, so the existence of all things is caused by the existence of other things and their origin is dependent on others; this is called 'Dependent Origination'.
- The Principle of 'Dependent Origination' is not meant to explain the origin of the universe but does suggest that God did not create the universe.

(d) 'Only God has the right to choose when a person's life ends.' [AO2 15]

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religious and non-religious beliefs, such as those held by Humanists and Atheists, in your answer.)

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

- Some religious believers may point to the sanctity of life argument which states that life is special because it was created by God showing that only God can decide when life should end.
- Some religious believers may refer to teachings such as life being a gift that should not be wasted or taken for granted.
- Reference may be made to religious teachings that show life is a gift and should not be wasted so only God can decide when it should end.
- Some religious believers may support arguments concerning the quality of life and how life needing to have value to be purposeful.
- Non-religious believers may argue that there is no God and it is up to an individual if they feel their life has value.
- Some people may support arguments of it being an individual person's choice over their life and life and death decisions.
- There may be reference to issues such as abortion where discussion may focus around whether a foetus is a person or not and if it is the woman's choice.
- There may be reference to issues such as euthanasia where discussion may focus around the quality of life and people being shown dignity and respect to decide what to do if the quality of their life is challenged.
- Reference may be made to various sources of wisdom or authority relevant to religious teachings on the sanctity of life or linked to specific issues such as euthanasia and abortion.

PART B – RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO PHILOSOPHICAL THEMES

THEME 2: GOOD AND EVIL

QUESTION 4

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition and 2 marks for a developed definition and/or an example.

- (a) What is meant by 'suffering'? [AO1 2]

Pain or distress caused by injury, illness or loss. Suffering can be physical, emotional/psychological or spiritual.

- (b) Describe Christian or Buddhist attitudes towards pacifism. [AO1 5]

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

Christianity

- Christianity is divided on the issue of pacifism with some Christians choosing to follow this teaching and others recognising that war and conflict are sometimes needed.
- Some Christians support pacifism, believing that war and violence do not solve anything and look to the Bible which contains many teachings that promote peace, showing opposition to the use of violence and conflict.
- Quakers are a denomination of Christianity that support pacifism and non-violence.
- Some Christians may look to teachings such as the Ten Commandments which states 'Thou shall not kill' to support a message of pacifism.
- There are many teachings given by Jesus which support pacifism such as 'Blessed are the peacemakers'.
- Some Christians do not support war and believe it can never be justified.
- In times of war, Christian pacifists may take on different roles such as medical support rather than fight and some may not support conflict at all, choosing to protest against it, one example being conscientious objectors.
- Many Christians may understand pacifism and believe that war and conflict should only be a last resort but may accept that sometimes conflict is necessary to bring about peace.
- These Christians may look to teachings such as Just War theory to determine if a war and the use of violence in conflict is necessary.

Buddhism

- Peace and non-violence are central to Buddhism, and it is often seen as a pacifist religion.
- Buddhists believe that violence destroys inner peace and without this, a Buddhist cannot reach enlightenment.
- The Five Precepts, which are moral principles followed by Buddhists, all support ideas of pacifism and not harming others.
- The First Precept is to abstain from taking life so killing or harming others is not accepted by Buddhists and supports their view of pacifism.

- Buddhists practice ahimsa which is the principle of non-harm that supports pacifism.
- The Dalai Lama, the Spiritual leader of the Tibetan people refused to consider the use of violence to defend his country.
- Many Buddhists are committed to the use of non-violence and helping those who suffer through war and injustice.

(c) Explain Christian and Buddhist beliefs about how criminals should be treated. [AO1 8]

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

Christianity

- Christianity teaches that punishment is important and should happen when someone has done something that is against the law to both protect society and help the criminal understand that what they have done is wrong.
- Christians believe that criminals should have to take responsibility for their actions which may mean losing their freedom by being put in prison or being given an appropriate punishment for their crime, which helps to both protect society and help victims feel like justice has been achieved.
- Christians support that a criminal should have basic human rights such as necessities provided and that they have a right to medical care and protection as they are human and not all rights should be removed.
- Christians support a criminal being given human rights because they were created by God and the Bible teaches that everyone sins so this should be recognised.
- Christians believe that criminals have the right to a fair trial and should have the right to defend themselves as it is possible that some people accused of crimes may be innocent and the law of a country should be allowed to operate.
- Many Christians have worked for better conditions in prisons, believing that prisoners deserve appropriate facilities; Elizabeth Fry and John Howard may be given as examples and they worked for better sanitary conditions, appropriate jails to be created and genders separated as well as education and skills to be taught to allow criminals the chance to return to society.
- Christianity supports the idea of the reform of criminals in prisons; this could be through education or the provision of support from groups such as Prison Fellowship and Prison chaplains who work to enable them to stay in contact with family, work to understand what they did was wrong and help them to change and hopefully return to society successfully.
- Reference may be made to relevant teachings from sources of authority that relate to ideas of justice and fair treatment of criminals.

Buddhism

- Buddhism teaches that punishment is important and should happen when someone has done something that is against the law to help protect society and help them understand that what they have done is wrong.
- Buddhists believe that criminals should have to take responsibility for their actions which may mean losing their freedom by being put in prison or being given an appropriate punishment for their crime, which helps to both protect society and help victims feel like justice has been achieved.
- The primary purpose of prison is to protect society and is a fair way of treating a criminal who has done something wrong.

- Buddhists support that a criminal should have basic human rights such as necessities provided and that they have a right to medical care and protection as they are human and not all rights should be removed.
- Buddhists believe that criminals have the right to a fair trial and should have the right to defend themselves as it is possible that some people accused of crimes may be innocent and the law of a country should be allowed to operate.
- Buddhists would approve of giving criminals the opportunity to reform and change their behaviour, understanding what they did was wrong, so they don't repeat the action.
- Buddhists may support punishments such as community service in helping a prisoner to 'pay back' their debt to society and recognise the negative impact their crime had on others.
- Reference may be made to relevant teachings from sources of authority that relate to ideas of justice and fair treatment of criminals.

(d) 'The death penalty is a fair punishment.'

[AO2 15]

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.)

Answers may include the following points, but other relevant and accurate points must also be credited.

- Some religious believers may look to teachings on justice, believing that if a person has killed another human, taking their life may seem fair as a form of punishment.
- Many religions have teachings that relate to ideas of fairness such as 'an eye for an eye'.
- Throughout history, there are examples in most religions where the death penalty has been used as an appropriate and fair form of punishment.
- There may be reference to arguments that support the death penalty such as referencing the aims of punishment, one being to protect society, or the economic cost of keeping someone in prison who has committed a serious crime and likely would never be released.
- Some religious believers may argue that the death penalty is ironic as a criminal who has taken the life of another is judged for that action and it is stated it is wrong, but the same punishment is issued as the action they committed.
- Some religious believers may look to teachings about the sanctity of life and God as judge to argue that it is not the place of humans to determine a punishment that is so severe.
- All religions contain teachings on peace and forgiveness that suggest a person who has committed a crime deserves punishment but also the effort and chance to change their behaviour through reformation which the death penalty does not allow.
- Many religious believers may argue that the death penalty is inhumane and seems to support ideas of revenge which is often seen to be wrong.
- Reference may be made to various sources of wisdom or authority relevant to religious teachings on the death penalty.