



# Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In Religious Studies (8RS0)  
Paper 4A: 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](http://www.edexcel.com) or [www.btec.co.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.pearson.com/uk)

Summer 2023

Question Paper Log Number P73825A

Publications Code 8RS0\_04\_2306\_MS

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2023

## 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 8RS0 4A: Buddhism - 2023**  
**Mark scheme**

Question number	Answer	Mark
1	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Three-fold Way is a description of the Buddhist path of life.</li> <li>• The Three-fold Way divides the Buddhist way of life into three elements: sila, samadhi and prajna.</li> <li>• The way explains to Buddhists the path they must follow to enlightenment.</li> <li>• The Three-fold Way is another way to group the teachings within the Eightfold Path.</li> <li>• It is part of the bodhisattva path of Mahayana Buddhism.</li> </ul>	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>

Question number	Answer	Mark
2	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting the AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The practices of Theravada Buddhism are based on the understanding that enlightenment can be achieved in one lifetime.</li> <li>• They believe that enlightenment can only be achieved by bhikkhus, thus practice centres around the monastic life.</li> <li>• Theravada Buddhists maintain that as the oldest branch of Buddhism theirs follows the correct practices.</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theravada Buddhists take their teachings directly from the Tipitaka. They therefore consider that their practices are closest to those intended by the Buddha. Other Buddhist groups will argue that other scriptures and teachings are equally valid.</li> <li>• Theravada Buddhists concentrate on development of the individual as part of the path to enlightenment. Therefore, they regard time spent in meditation and self-realisation as extremely important and they may regard other practice as less efficacious.</li> <li>• Theravada worship will not involve the worship or devotion towards any person or item. Shrines will use items as a reminder of impermanence, but these will not be objects of devotion. However, other Buddhists may make use of buddharupa.</li> <li>• Theravada Buddhists focus on the path to enlightenment and once enlightened they may be referred to as an arahant. However, these are regarded as worthy rather than saint like. But, many other Buddhists, mostly Mahayana Buddhists, would regard enlightened beings as Bodhisattva and thus more saintly.</li> </ul> <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(9)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Information/issues are identified (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2)</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meditation is often regarded as an important part of samadhi, within the Noble Eightfold Path.</li> <li>Many elements of the Eightfold Path can be enhanced by the practice of meditation.</li> <li>Meditation is regarded as an essential Buddhist practice in the Eightfold Path.</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meditation is samadhi, mental concentration, and as such it means that a Buddhist who is able to meditate will act in a more ethical way, with wisdom. Therefore, meditation can be seen as important when trying to follow the Eightfold Path.</li> <li>Meditation allows a Buddhist to cultivate individual consciousness. This refers to two parts of the Eightfold Path in particular: right mindfulness and right concentration. Some may feel this is the only part of the Eightfold Path it is relevant to.</li> <li>Some Buddhists will maintain that only specific types of meditation are part of the Eightfold Path as they are those that focus on self-realisation or insight such as dhyana and vipassana. However, some other Buddhists may feel that some meditation does not lead to insight e.g. metta meditation, which is mainly for the benefit of others, as such it is not linked to the path.</li> <li>Some Buddhists will regard meditation as essential as Dhammapada 1.1 records ‘Mind precedes all knowables, mind's their chief, mind-made are they’ and if the Buddha teaches that the mind is before</li> </ul>	

	<p>everything then opening the mind and stilling it must be part of the path.</p> <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	<b>(9)</b>
--	---	------------

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>Information/issues are identified (AO2).</li> <li>Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>Deconstructs religious information/issues which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> </ul>

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
<b>4(a)</b>	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tipitaka is the oldest Buddhist scripture often called the Three Baskets.</li> <li>The Three sections of the Tipitaka; the Vinyaya Pitaka, the Sutta Pitaka and the Abhidhamma Pitaka are all in use by Buddhists today.</li> <li>The Tipitaka records the teachings of the Buddha. It is not regarded as the teachings of a divine being.</li> <li>Most Buddhists regard the Tipitaka as a source of wisdom, to learn from and inspire them. It is not a book to be regarded as sacred.</li> <li>It is used more frequently by Theravada Buddhists than other groups of Buddhists who may use more modern texts.</li> </ul>	<b>(8)</b>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).</li> <li>• Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).</li> </ul>



Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(b)	<p>5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2</p> <p><b>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Abhidhamma Pitaka is the third part of the Tipitaka.</li> <li>• In comparison to the other two parts of the Tipitaka, it is regarded as theoretical rather than practical in nature.</li> <li>• Although recording the Buddha's words, it was not added to the Tipitaka until 250 BCE during the Third Buddhist Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</b></p> <p><b>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is thought that the Abhidhamma Pitaka was a summary of the Buddha's teachings composed during the reign of Ashoka and added to the Tipitaka. However, it is a record of orally taught materials and therefore is subject to misunderstandings which may make them less significant.</li> <li>• Traditionally the Buddha taught the content of the Abhidhamma Pitaka in the fourth week of his enlightenment, and this was then passed to his followers including Sariputta. However, the content may be accurate as his followers were used to being taught using oral teaching rather than the written word.</li> <li>• The Abhidhamma Pitaka contained complex explanation of the concepts that the Buddha taught. It analyses the psychology of mind and matter, life and death, thus it explores the concepts the Buddha taught previously in an analytical manner. However, the content may be less accessible than other Buddhist teachings.</li> <li>• It is regarded as significant by Theravada Buddhists because of its link to teachings of the Buddha. However, many other Buddhists may regard the text as less important as it is not regarded as relevant to their practice.</li> <li>• Many believe that some of the text is no longer relevant. For example, the Patthana examines the laws of conditionality about how dhammas interact compared with the rest of the Tipitaka which gives practical guidelines about ethics and behaviour.</li> <li>• Most of the seven books of the Abhidhamma Pitaka provide analysis and answer questions about the Buddha's teachings. However, the fourth book, the Puggalapannatti, describes different personalities found amongst human beings and may therefore be less significant when understanding the teachings of the Buddha.</li> </ul> <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>	(20)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1).</li> <li>• Information/issues may be selected (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1).</li> <li>• Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made (AO2).</li> <li>• Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>
Level 4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1).</li> <li>• Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2).</li> <li>• Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question (AO2).</li> <li>• Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).</li> </ul>