

GCSE



WJEC GCSE in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

ONLINE EXAMINATION REVIEW



UNIT 1E BUDDHISM (05)
UNIT 2E BUDDHISM (05)
PART A Q2 C & D

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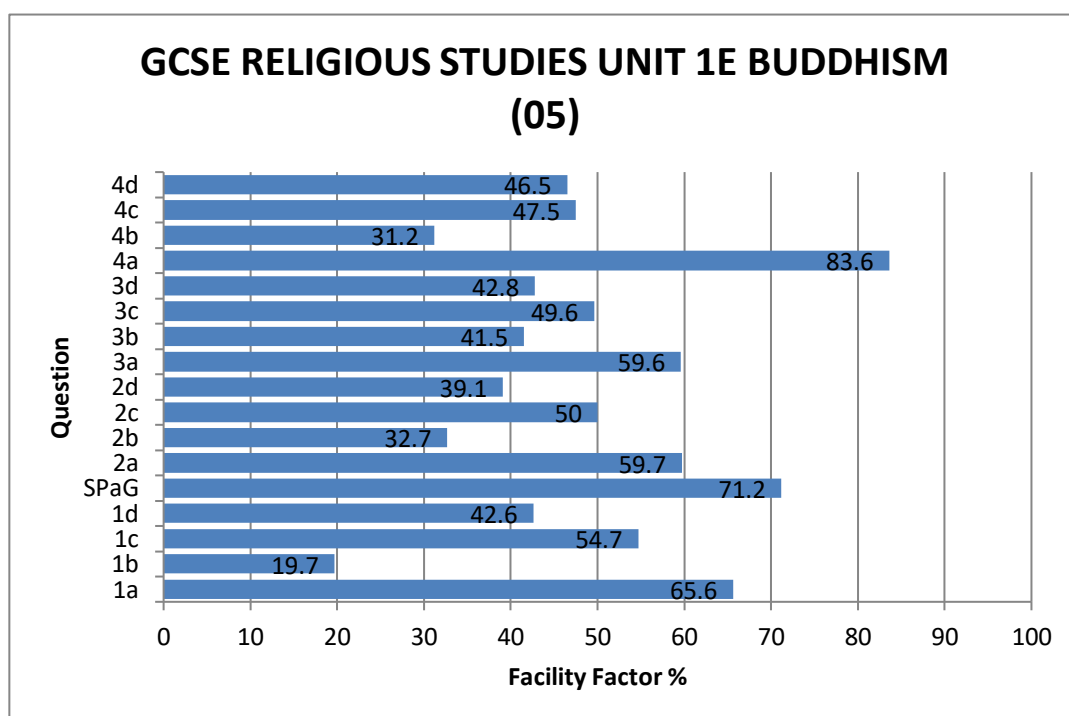
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UNIT 1E BUDDHISM

UNIT 1E BUDDHISM - ITEM LEVEL DATA

All Candidates' performance across questions

<i>Question Title</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S D</i>	<i>Max Mark</i>	<i>FF</i>	<i>Attempt %</i>
1a	1031	1.3	0.8	2	65.6	85.6
1b	937	1	1.3	5	19.7	77.8
1c	1185	4.4	2	8	54.7	98.3
1d	1157	6.4	3.5	15	42.6	96
SPaG	1185	4.3	1.7	6	71.2	98.3
2a	1013	1.2	1	2	59.7	84.1
2b	999	1.6	1.3	5	32.7	82.9
2c	1072	4	2	8	50	89
2d	974	5.9	4.2	15	39.1	80.8
3a	1057	1.2	0.9	2	59.6	87.7
3b	1137	2.1	1.2	5	41.5	94.4
3c	1087	4	2	8	49.6	90.2
3d	1092	6.4	3.2	15	42.8	90.6
4a	1152	1.7	0.5	2	83.6	95.6
4b	991	1.6	1.2	5	31.2	82.2
4c	1059	3.8	1.9	8	47.5	87.9
4d	1129	7	3.2	15	46.5	93.7



QUESTION 2c AND MARK SCHEME

c) Explain why the Four Sights were important in the Buddha's life. [AO1 8]

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

Refer to the marking bands for question (c).

Indicative content here:

- According to legend, Buddha saw the Four Sights during his first visit outside the palace.
- After the Four Sights, Buddha understood that all humans suffer, and that suffering is inevitable.
- Buddha could no longer enjoy all the luxuries of his life in the palace knowing that that he could not be protected from old age, sickness and death.
- The sight of the holy man/ascetic encouraged Buddha to renounce his life of luxury and search for the answer to overcome suffering (seek the truth).
- As a result of the Sights, Buddha developed various teachings (dharma) – anicca, anatta, dukkha.
- Witnessing the Four Sights put Buddha on the path that led to Enlightenment.

AO1 Marking Bands

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

Example 1

(c) Explain why the Four Sights were important in the Buddha's life.

[8]

The Four sights were important in the Buddha's life as they set him on the path to enlightenment, ~~spurring~~^{causing} him to leave his life of luxury in the palace. The four sights that the Buddha saw when he left the palace for the first time were an ~~old man, sick~~^{sick man, old} man, a dead person and a Sadhu. At this point in the Buddha's life he had never experienced suffering, shielded by his father in the palace. When ~~the~~ the Buddha saw the ^{suffering} old man he was shocked, discovering this could happen to everyone. Seeing an old man he discovered that ^{can suffer from} people age, become frail and weak. He discovered that ~~all people~~^{all people} die after seeing the ~~dead~~ dead person. He then met a Sadhu, who seemed at peace, with no earthly possessions only looking for the answers to the big questions in life. These sights changed the Buddha who decided he could not go back to a life of luxury in the palace knowing there were others suffering outside of the palace. He decided to ~~leave~~ leave the palace and become a holy man. These sights were important to the Buddha as they set in motion the Buddha's path to achieving Nirvana (enlightenment) and finding an end to suffering. The ^{four} sights made him start to ask the big questions in life, to which he wanted answers.

(c) Explain why the Four Sights were important in the Buddha's life.

[8]

Before seeing the Four Sights, the Buddha was not aware that suffering existed. It was only once he left the palace and saw an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a holy man, that he came to this realization. This was a very important part of the Buddha's life because had he not seen these four sights, he would have never had the desire to become enlightened. When he was first born, ~~the~~ a prophet told the Buddha's parents that he would either become a great leader or a great teacher. He was always destined to become one of the two, but if he had continued living his sheltered life in the palace, he would not have gone on ~~the~~ to become a great teacher, and therefore he would not have been the Buddha. The only reason he did what he did was because he wanted to find a way to overcome suffering, but he wouldn't have been able to do that if he didn't even know that suffering existed. Therefore, the four sights were important in the Buddha's life, because without them, he wouldn't even be the Buddha.

Example 3

2c. The 4 sights were important to the Buddha as it showed him what life was really like. He spent many years trapped away in a temple with his family. He finally left and he saw 'a homeless man, a man with no food, a dying man and a dead man'. These sights showed him that the world was a cruel place and change was needed to help all these people.

It also taught him that in order to reach the end of your life you have to experience these things so you can empathise towards others and show respect. This is how he learnt about enlightenment and then taught his lesson to those around. He created Buddhism.

Example 1

2c 8

(c) Explain why the Four Sights were important in the Buddha's life.

[8]

The Four sights were important in the Buddha's life as they set him on the path to enlightenment, ^{causing} ~~spurring~~ him to leave his life of luxury in the palace. The four sights that the Buddha saw when he left the palace for the first time were an ~~old man, sick~~ ^{sick man, old} man, a dead person and a Sadhu. At this point in the Buddha's life he had never experienced suffering, shielded by his father in the palace. When ~~the~~ the Buddha saw the ^{suffering} ~~Schuman~~ he was shocked, discovering this could happen to everyone. Seeing an old man he discovered that ^(can suffer from) people age, become frail and weak. He discovered that ~~all people~~ ^{all people} die after seeing the ~~dead~~ dead person. He then met a Sadhu, who seemed at peace, with no earthly possessions only looking for the answers to the big questions in life. These sights changed the Buddha who decided he could not go back to a life of luxury in the palace knowing there were others suffering outside of the palace. He decided to ~~then~~ leave the palace and become a holy man. These sights were important to the Buddha as they set in motion the Buddha's path to achieving Nirvana (enlightenment) and finding an end to suffering. The ^{four} sights made him start to ask the big questions in life, to which he wanted answers.

This is an excellent, highly detailed answer. Each of the Four Sights is covered, with reasons given for why each might be important. This answer also considers the impact of the Four Sights as a whole. There is evidence of religious language (although it would have been good to see Buddhist terms). The Four Sights are well used as a source of authority. Band 4, 8 marks.

(c) Explain why the Four Sights were important in the Buddha's life.

[8]

Before seeing the Four Sights, the Buddha was not aware that suffering existed. It was only once he left the palace and saw an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a holy man, that he came to this realization. This was a very important part of the Buddha's life because had he not seen these four sights, he would have never had the desire to become enlightened. When he was first born, ~~the~~ a prophet told the Buddha's parents that he would either become a great leader or a great teacher. He was always destined to become one of the two, but if he had continued living his sheltered life in the palace, he would not have gone on ~~the~~ to become a great teacher, and therefore he would not have been the Buddha. The only reason he did what he did was because he wanted to find a way to overcome suffering, but he wouldn't have been able to do that if he didn't even know that suffering existed. Therefore, the four sights were important in the Buddha's life, because without them, he wouldn't even be the Buddha.

A clear answer which puts forward a general idea of the importance of the Four Sights. Reference to the prediction made at the Buddha's birth is acceptable and clearly explained. There is some use of religious language and the Four Sights are used as a source of authority. Band 3, 6 marks.

Example 3

2c 3

2c. The 4 sights were important to the Buddha as it showed him what life was really like. He spent many years trapped away in a temple with his family. He finally left and he saw 'a homeless man, a man with no food, a dying man and a dead man'. These sights showed him that the world was a cruel place and change was needed to help all these people.

It also taught him that in order to reach the end of your life you have to experience these things so you can empathise towards others and show respect. This is how he learnt about enlightenment and then taught his lesson to those around. He created Buddhism.

The answer shows some awareness of the importance of the Four Sights; the first paragraph makes a general point. The second paragraph mentions that the Buddha created Buddhism which is relevant. Band 2, 3 marks.

QUESTION 2d AND MARK SCHEME

d) “Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.”

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) **[AO2 15]**

Indicative content here:

- It is an opportunity to gain merit/build up good karma which has to be important.
- It is a time when lay people can show generosity (dana) to monks by giving gifts of cloth.
- The Buddha did instruct followers to ‘spread the kathina’.
- It remembers the time Buddha spent in the forest when meditating to achieve enlightenment.
- Wesak celebrates the birth, death and parinirvana of the Buddha so must be more important.
- Parinirvana Day is more important for Mahayana Buddhists as it celebrates the Buddha’s passing into final nirvana, which is the ultimate aim for Buddhists.
- Wesak & Parinirvana Day gives Buddhists an opportunity to think of their own death and how they are living their lives.
- Vassa is an important time as it allows monks – and lay Buddhists – to study, reflect, meditate and make spiritual progress.
- The practice of the rain retreats was started at the time of the Buddha so must be important.
- Any festival is good as it is an opportunity to think about the dharma (dhamma) and this can help Buddhists make progress towards their own enlightenment.
- Some might argue that Buddhists shouldn’t be concerned with celebrating any festivals and as following the dharma (dhamma) is more important.

AO2 MARKING BANDS

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

Example 1

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [15]

~~For Buddhists, Kath~~

For Theravada Buddhists, Kathina is a very important festival, celebrated in the four weeks after monsoon season in October/November. This festival is important because it is a chance for lay Buddhists to show their appreciation for monks. During this festival, lay Buddhists will give monks a meal in the morning, followed by robes in the afternoon. This is very important as it is believed that giving monks robes is one of the most merit-making things a person can do, and that it will generate good karma. However, other Buddhists, such as Mahayana Buddhists, would disagree, and say that Parinirvana day is a more important day for Buddhists, as it celebrates the actual Buddha and him reaching Parinirvana, which ultimately to Buddhists should be more important than celebrating monks. Personally, I think that Parinirvana day is a more important day than Kathina, as not only is Parinirvana day a day to celebrate the death of the Buddha, but also a day to reflect on family and friends who have also died. Not only this, but the philosophy itself centres around the Buddha, therefore ^{any} day that ~~is~~ celebrates him should, to Buddhists, be more important than a day to celebrate monks.

Other Theravada Buddhists may argue that Wesak is a more important Buddhist festival, as it celebrates the birth of the Buddha. This day is important because the birth of the Buddha was a very significant event, and without his birth, Buddhism would likely not be a philosophy practiced by millions of people worldwide. However, it could be argued that Kathina is more important, as generating good karma for yourself is vital in order to move up in the cycle of Samsara, and if giving monks robes really is the most merit-making thing a person can do, then that's what should be done to make sure that person is well-rewarded in their next life. In my opinion, however, I think Wesak is more important. Without the birth of the Buddha, the philosophy wouldn't even be around. In addition to this, on Wesak day, Buddhists try to do good deeds like donating blood or food, which arguably is better than giving monks robes, making Wesak more important, as not only is doing good deeds a part of it, but you get to celebrate the most important part of Buddhism; the Buddha.

In conclusion, I ~~think that~~ do not think that Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists, and
(continued on additional page)

that arguably, it is the least important festival. The point of ~~pot~~ both ~~Parinirvan~~ Parinirvana day~~m~~ and Wesak, although celebrating different parts, both celebrate what Buddhism centres around, which is the Buddha. Without him, there would be no Buddhism, or at least not in the same way we know it today. That doesn't mean that celebrating Monks shouldn't be important, but it definitely isn't as important as celebrating the Buddha himself. If it weren't for the Buddha, Buddhist monks would not exist, therefore it doesn't really make sense to say that a day celebrating monks is more important than a day celebrating the Buddha.

Example 2

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

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

[15]

Some people may say that Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists. This may be because it showcases the significance of when the Buddha gave monks fresh robes and said that in the rainy winter ~~season~~ seasons they should get shelter.

Some may disagree and say this is a weak argument and that Parinirvana day is much more important. They may say this because, Parinirvana day means that you spend time with loved ones and also grieve the loved one you've lost. To conclude, I think that Parinirvana day is more important than Kathina because it's all about preserving life with the people you love and truly considering life's impermanence.

However, some might argue with my statement and say that how can a festival have a happy and good impact when it covers grief.

only
Wesak contains lots of lights, representing enlightenment, and it covers the Buddhas, Birth, enlightenment and death. Although this Wesak has all of these things, Parinirvana day also covers the life and death of the Buddha. They also bathe Buddha statues in scented water during Wesak. I think this is important because it highlights purity and that we need the same purity and balanced karma as the Buddha to get to nirvana (enlightenment).

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In conclusion I think there is a stronger argument for Wesak being the most important because it's joyful and ~~and~~ ~~and~~ and gets ~~people~~ ~~into~~ a diverse range of people involved all around the world. I believe the inclusivity and positivity helps portray a good, informative message to Buddhists and others. And although it could be argued that Kathina is also inclusive since all are welcome, ~~even~~ (e.g. lay buddhists). I still believe Wesak is a ~~very~~ ~~detailed~~ ~~analysis~~ ~~and~~ ~~evaluation~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~message~~ better message.

Example 3

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

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

[15]

Kathina is an important festival to celebrate for buddhists because it will bring them closer to the buddha and will bring them closer to family and have a good time with good food and celebrations. However most buddhists believe Wesak is the most important ~~etc~~ festival because it celebrates the enlightenment and life of the buddha which is important for buddhists because the buddha is a very impactful person for them. They also do a lot of praying and meditation and celebrate with family and have great food to also cherish the things we have in life and be grateful for them. While kathina is important i think that wesak is the most important festival and the one i would want to follow the most because it makes you learn more about the buddha and to look up to him.

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
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Other Theravada Buddhists may argue that Wesak is a more important Buddhist festival, as it celebrates the birth of the Buddha. This day is important because the birth of the Buddha was a very significant event, and without his birth, Buddhism would likely not be a philosophy practiced by millions of people worldwide. However, it could be argued that Kathina is more important, as generating good karma for yourself is vital in order to move up in the cycle of Samsara, and if giving monks robes really is the most merit-making thing a person can do, then that's what should be done to make sure that person is well-rewarded in their next life. In my opinion, however, I think Wesak is more important. Without the birth of the Buddha, the philosophy wouldn't even be around. In addition to this, on Wesak day, Buddhists try to do good deeds like donating blood or food, which arguably is better than giving monks robes, making Wesak more important, as not only is doing good deeds a part of it, but you get to celebrate the most important part of Buddhism; the Buddha.

In conclusion, I ~~think that~~ do not think that Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists, and

(continued on additional
Page)

that arguably, it is the least important festival. The point of ~~par~~ both Parinirvan Parinirvana day~~am~~ and Wesak, although celebrating different parts, both celebrate what Buddhism centres around, which is the Buddha. Without him, there would be no Buddhism, or at least not in the same way we know it today. That doesn't mean that celebrating Monks shouldn't be important, but it definitely isn't as important as celebrating the Buddha himself. If it weren't for the Buddha, Buddhist monks would not exist, therefore it doesn't really make sense to say that a day celebrating monks is more important than a day celebrating the Buddha.

Initially, the answer considers whether Kathina or Parinirvana Day is the most important festival, with reference to some of the differences within Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. A judgement is made after considering the importance of these two festivals. Wesak is considered as an alternative for other Theravada Buddhists and is weighed up against Kathina, following a clear line of argument. Religious and evaluative language is used extensively, accurately and appropriately. Buddhist teachings and beliefs are used effectively to back up the points made. Throughout the answer, the focus is kept on the statement. Band 4, 15 marks.

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [15]

Some people may say that Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists. This may be because it showcases the significance of when the Buddha gave monks fresh robes and said that in the rainy winter ~~season~~ seasons they should get shelter.

Some may disagree and say this is a weak argument and that Parinirvana day is much more important. They may say this because, Parinirvana day means that you spend time with loved ones and also grieve the loved one you've lost. To conclude, I think that Parinirvana day is more important than Kathina because it's all about preserving life with the people you love and truly considering life's impermanence ~~however~~.

However, some might argue with my statement and say that how can a festival have a happy and good impact when it covers grief.

Wesak contains lots of lights, representing enlightenment, and it covers the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death. Although this Wesak has all of these things, Parinirvana day also covers the life and death of the Buddha. They also bathe Buddha statues in scented water during Wesak. I think this is important because it highlights purity and that we need the same purity and balanced karma as the Buddha to get to nirvana (enlightenment).

In conclusion I think there is a stronger argument for Wesak being the most important because it's joyful and ~~and~~ ~~and~~ gets people into a diverse range of people involved all around the world. I believe the inclusivity and positivity helps portray a good, informative message to Buddhists and others. And although it could be argued that Kathina is also inclusive since all are welcome, ~~even~~ (e.g. lay buddhists) I still believe Wesak is a better message.

QUESTIONS

A good answer with some evidence of analysis. This answer gives alternative viewpoints and attempts to make a judgement, but there is limited knowledge of the reasons why Parinirvana Day might be important. There is some consideration of Wesak as an important festival and an attempt to weigh up which festival is most important. There is some use of religious language. Band 3, 8 marks.

(d) 'Kathina is the most important festival for Buddhists.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [15]

Kathina is an important festival to celebrate for buddhists because it will bring them closer to the buddha and will bring them closer to family and have a good time with good food and celebrations. However most buddhists believe Wesak is the most important ~~etc~~ festival because it celebrates the enlightenment and life of the buddha which is important for buddhists because the buddha is a very impactful person for them. They also do a lot of praying and meditation and celebrate with family and have great food to also cherish the things we have in life and be grateful for them. While kathina is important i think that wesak is the most important festival and the one i would want to follow the most because it makes you learn more about the buddha and to look up to him.

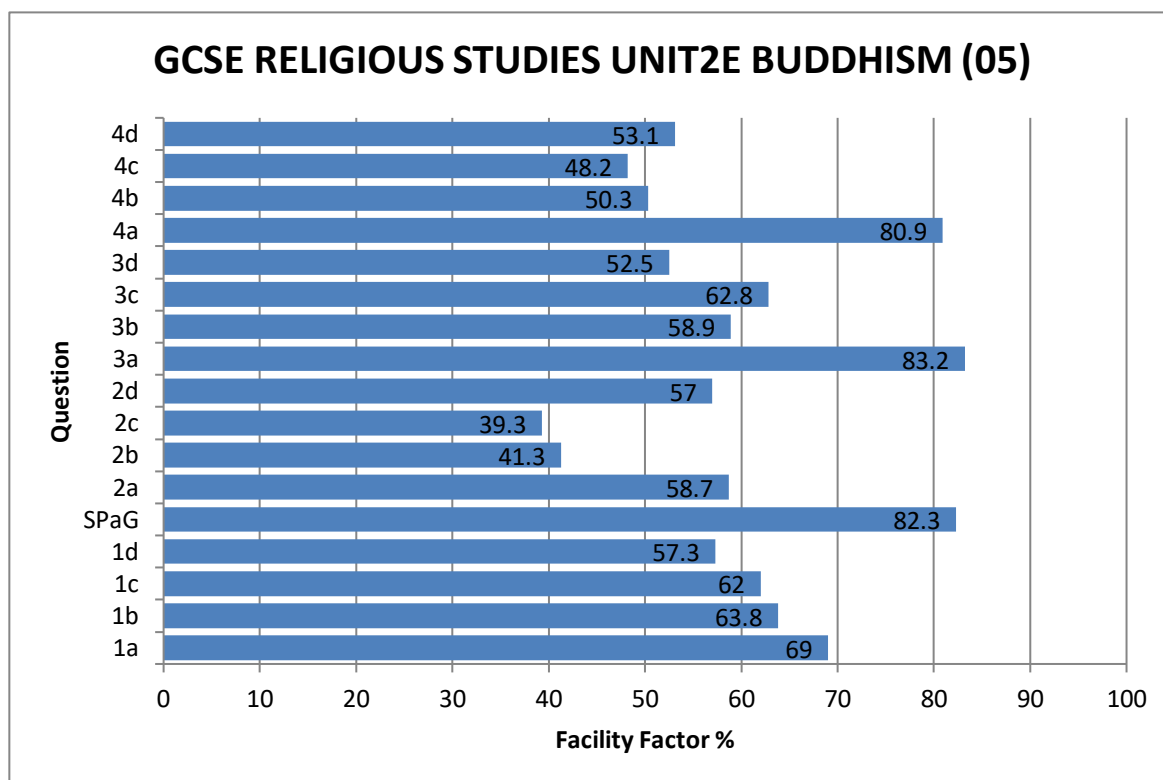
Alternative viewpoints are given with the information on Wesak being relevant. A simplistic judgement is reached at the end of the answer. There is some use of religious language. Band 2, 4 marks.

UNIT 2E BUDDHISM

UNIT 2E BUDDHISM - ITEM LEVEL DATA

All Candidates' performance across questions

<i>Question Title</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S D</i>	<i>Max Mark</i>	<i>F F</i>	<i>Attempt %</i>
1a	168	1.4	0.8	2	69	90.8
1b	180	3.2	1.1	5	63.8	97.3
1c	183	5	1.8	8	62	98.9
1d	183	8.6	3.8	15	57.3	98.9
SPaG	184	4.9	1.4	6	82.3	99.5
2a	155	1.2	1	2	58.7	83.8
2b	157	2.1	1.7	5	41.3	84.9
2c	147	3.1	2.4	8	39.3	79.5
2d	173	8.6	3.9	15	57	93.5
3a	179	1.7	0.6	2	83.2	96.8
3b	184	2.9	1.2	5	58.9	99.5
3c	179	5	2	8	62.8	96.8
3d	179	7.9	3.5	15	52.5	96.8
4a	175	1.6	0.6	2	80.9	94.6
4b	169	2.5	1.5	5	50.3	91.3
4c	163	3.9	2	8	48.2	88.1
4d	171	8	3.8	15	53.1	92.4



QUESTION 2c AND MARK SCHEME

c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja. [AO1 8]

Indicative content here:

- Mantras evoke spiritual well-being and elevate levels of consciousness.
- Mantras can be seen as helping the person to find it easier to reach enlightenment.
- Mantras might help a person realise that they are not worshipping a god but are cultivating mindfulness.
- An example of a mantra might be 'om mane padme hum' which is associated with the bodhisattva of compassion so the follower can identify with the qualities of the bodhisattva.
- Mandalas are symbolic representations of the universe and their patterns can be visualised as a palace where buddhas and bodhisattvas live.
- Some people believe that mandalas possess the power to influence someone who uses it as a focus of worship.
- Mandalas are used in meditation in order to help someone become enlightened.
- Mandalas are brushed away when they are finished as an aid to mindfulness about the impermanence of life (anicca) and not being attached (tanha).

AO1 Marking Bands

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

Example 1

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

Buddhists also believe in the principle on 'anicca', which is the impermanent nature of all things, and so use ~~mandalas~~ mandalas during puja to reflect this. Buddhists will often make mandalas out of coloured sand, which they will spend very long periods of time creating. Once completed, these beautiful pieces are then destroyed or blown away to remind Buddhists that nothing is in life is permanent. Buddhists will also recite mantras during puja which will help them reach an inner sense of peace and also reflect on the teachings of the Buddha. Mantras can act as a way to unite Buddhists and help them learn and reflect on the dharma.

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

Mahayana Buddhists, the more liberal and progressive school of Buddhism use mantras and mandalas during puja, the Buddhist word for worship. Mantras are short phrases of the dharma, the Buddha's teachings, are chanted over and over again and are used in order for Buddhist students to memorise certain teachings. Mandalas are geometric patterns, made out of different coloured grains of sand, that take months to complete and are destroyed the moment they are finished. This is done to symbolise Anicca, part of the 3 marks of existence, which means nothing is permanent. This is done to help Buddhists see the true nature of things and prevent them from becoming too attached to things which ~~eventually~~ inevitably leads to suffering. Some Buddhists choose to use ~~for~~ mantras and mandalas during puja and not others as Buddhism is a non-dogmatic religion, and so there are no rules to how a Buddhist should worship.

Example 3

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

Puja is the Buddhist word for worship. Many Buddhists use mantras or hand gestures during puja to better channel their energy, making their worship more meaningful. They believe these gestures will help ~~to~~ ^{raise} lower their perceptions of life. In addition, mandalas will be used to cleanse the soul.

Example 1

2c: 7

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

Buddhists also believe in the principle on 'anicca', which is the impermanent nature of all things, and so use ~~mandalas~~ mandalas during puja to reflect this. Buddhists will often make mandalas out of coloured sand, which they will spend very long periods of time creating. Once completed, these beautiful pieces are then destroyed or blown away to remind buddhists that nothing is in life is permanent. Buddhists will also recite mantras during puja which will help them reach an inner sense of peace and also reflect on the teachings of the Buddha. Mantras can act as a way to unite Buddhists and help them learn and reflect on the dharma.

A balanced answer which is highly detailed and shows understanding of both mantras and mandalas. Religious language is used appropriately with references to anicca, inner sense of peace, reflect and dharma. Band 4, 7 marks.

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

Mahayana Buddhists, the more liberal and progressive school of Buddhism use mantras and mandalas during puja, the Buddhist word for worship. Mantras are often short phrases of the dharma, the Buddha's teachings, are chanted over and over again and are used in order for Buddhist students to memorise certain teachings. Mandalas are geometric patterns, made out of different coloured grains of sand, that take months to complete and are destroyed the moment they are finished. This is done to symbolise Anicca, part of the 3 marks of existence, which means nothing is permanent. This is done to help Buddhists see the true nature of things and prevent them from becoming too attached to things which ~~eventually~~ inevitably leads to suffering. Some Buddhists choose to use ~~for~~ mantras and mandalas during puja and not others as Buddhism is a non-dogmatic religion and so there are no rules to how a Buddhist should worship.

A good answer which shows awareness of mantras and mandalas, with the section on mandalas being stronger. The explanation of mandalas includes reference to anicca and seeing the true nature of things. The answer also shows awareness that not all Buddhists perform puja in the same way. Religious language and sources of authority are used appropriately. Band 3, 5 marks.

(c) Explain why some Buddhists use mantras and mandalas during puja.

[8]

puja is the buddhist word for worship. many buddhists use mantras or hand gestures during puja too better channel their energy making their worship more meaningful. They believe these gestures will help to ~~raise~~ lower their perceptions of life. In addition mandalas will be used too cleanse the soul.

A general answer which shows little awareness of mantras and mandalas. The answer received 1 mark for the first sentence. Band 1, 1 mark.

QUESTION 2d AND MARK SCHEME

(d) ‘For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.’

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) **[AO2 15]**

Indicative content here:

- Not harming any living being (ahimsa) is the first Precept so it must be seen as the most important.
- Not harming any living being has implications for all aspects of a Buddhist’s life e.g. what they eat, their lifestyle and how they treat other people.
- In developing ahimsa, Buddhists aim to cause the least and create the most happiness which must make it the most important of the Precepts.
- The second Precept (not to take what has not been given) must be important as it builds on the Buddha’s teachings of tanha (craving) and dukkha (suffering) in the Four Noble Truths and encourages Buddhists to develop generosity (dana).
- The third Precept (not to misuse the senses) could be considered very important for monastics as they take a vow of chastity in order to make spiritual progress but might also encourage lay Buddhists to be aware of how indulging their own senses might be harming others.
- The fourth Precept (to abstain from wrong speech) is important as it links very closely to the Buddha’s teachings in the Noble Eightfold Path (Right Speech); words can be harmful so, by using the right speech, Buddhists are also developing ahimsa.
- The fifth Precept (to abstain from substances that cloud the mind) is important as Buddhism is about being in control; if someone is in control, they are less likely to harm other living beings.
- Reference could be made to topical issues to exemplify the relative importance of various Precepts.

Where appropriate, relevant references are likely to include:

“Not to do evil, to cultivate good, to purify one’s mind – this is the teaching of the Buddhas.” Dhammapada 183

AO2 Marking Bands

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 based on some accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching, and moral reasoning. Some judgements are formulated and some different and/or alternative viewpoints considered. Uses and interprets some religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority generally accurately.	4–7
1	A weak analysis and evaluation, based on a limited and/or inaccurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning. A limited and/or poor attempt or no attempt to formulate judgements or offer alternative or different 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

Example 1

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [15]

The Five Precepts are one of the Buddha's main teachings, devised to help Buddhists live the Middle Way and, ultimately, achieve enlightenment (nirvana). The first of these precepts warns against harming or taking life, which encompasses a plethora of actions. On the surface, many take it to be similar to 'Thou shalt not kill' and other religious teachings that command not to kill living beings, but it means a lot more to Buddhists. The first precept advises Buddhists to practice ~~for~~ the Buddha's teachings of Karuna (compassion) and Metta (loving-kindness), which can be developed through metta-bhavana. Buddhists do not wish to kill humans or other living beings, but they also wish to show them respect and treat them with care and love, believing in Dependent Origination - the idea that everything ~~between~~ relies on each other for its arrival and survival.

Putting these practices into action is also very important for Buddhists, such as actively caring for the environment and protecting its welfare, possibly even through protest. Most Buddhists are also pacifists as they do not wish to bring harm to other people, and many are vegetarians so as not to kill animals solely for humans' pleasure or use.

However, there are four other precepts, which may be seen as being as, if not more important than this. For example, the second and fourth precepts advise against

using harmful actions or speech towards others. Again, believers aim to practice *karuna* and *metta*, so treating others with the ~~the~~ utmost respect, particularly the *Sangha*, is important for maintaining positive *karma*. Furthermore, the Third Precept describes misuse of the senses, which includes misuse of sex. This is also linked with respect and by following the Precept Buddhists maintain healthy relationships with others. The Fifth and final Precept warns against intoxication of the body and mind, largely through alcohol and drugs substances. Following it allows them to keep a clear mind for *pada* and working towards the end goal of *nirvana*.

Looking at each side of the statement, I disagree with it and, instead, believe that no one of the Five Precepts is more important than the others. Whilst the First Precept allows Buddhists to practice *metta* and *karuna*, I think that it is the combination of all five, partnered with other teachings like the Noble Eightfold Path and Four Noble Truths, that allows Buddhists to become enlightened.

↓
live a life following the example of the Buddha and

Example 2

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

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

[15]

The first of the Buddhist precepts is to abstain from taking life. This precept links to most of the other 5 precepts. It is relevant to ahimsa "harmlessness". It is sometimes seen as the most important precept as it is the first and taking life is seen as a cardinal sin within Buddhism as they believe everything is connected and ~~often~~ any living being could have been or may become a human at one point through the system of re-incarnation.

However alternatively Buddhists may believe the most important precept is the fifth precept where it is said to be a sin to drink or consume other substances that may cloud the mind. An example of how these two precepts link could be the fable of a drug beetle whereupon becoming intoxicated it got into a fight with an elephant. Naturally the drug beetle died. This shows how the fifth precept can lead to the first.

Another opinion could be that the first precept is the most important and that by "abstaining from ~~the~~ wrong speech" someone would retain more Karma.*

The five precepts are placed in order too stop buddhists from experiencing Dukkha, ~~and the~~

Overall it is safe to assume most buddhists would believe that the first precept is the most important as many of the other precepts are placed in order too prevent the first. ~~the~~

*In addition by abstaining from wrong speech a person could ultimately abstain from doing harm, linking these two precepts.

Example 3

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

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

[15]

^{3 senses}
^{5 intoxication}
^{speech & stealing}
I would argue that all of the precepts are of equal importance. They all help a buddhist to reach Nivarna as they are a guide to get good karma.

Harming could be thought as the worst one to break so therefore you would get bad karma so it may be the most important not to break.

The fifth precept may be the most important. So you can keep your mind clear to help reach Nivarna.

The second precept, stealing, the third precept, misuse of senses, the fourth precept speech could all harm someone which could mean that it's the most important because if you break the others you break it.

Example 1

2d: 14

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view.
(You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.) [15]

The Five Precepts are one of the Buddha's main teachings, devised to help Buddhists live the Middle Way and, ultimately, achieve enlightenment (nirvana). The first of these precepts warns against harming or taking life, which encompasses a plethora of actions. On the surface, many take it to be similar to 'Thou shalt not kill' and other religious teachings that command not to kill living beings, but it means a lot more to Buddhists. The first precept advises Buddhists to practice ~~for~~ the Buddha's teachings of Karuna (compassion) and Metta (loving-kindness), which can be developed through metta-bhavana. Buddhists do not wish to kill humans or other living beings, but they also wish to show them respect and treat them with care and love, believing in Dependent Origination - the idea that everything ~~between~~ relies on each other for its arrival and survival.

Putting these practices into action is also very important for Buddhists, such as actively caring for the environment and protecting its welfare, possibly even through protest. Most Buddhists are also pacifists as they do not wish to bring harm to other people, and many are vegetarians so as not to kill animals solely for humans' pleasure or use.

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using harmful actions or speech towards others. Again, believers aim to practice karuna and metta, so treating others with the utmost respect, particularly the Sangha, is important for maintaining positive karma. Furthermore, the Third Precept describes misuse of the senses, which includes misuse of sex. This is also linked with respect and by following the Precept Buddhists maintain healthy relationships with others. The Fifth and final Precept warns against intoxication of the body and mind, largely through alcohol and drugs substances. Following it allows them to keep a clear mind for practice and working towards the end goal of nirvana.

Looking at each side of the statement, I disagree with it and, instead, believe that no one of the Five Precepts is more important than the others. Whilst the First Precept allows Buddhists to practice metta and karuna, I think that it is the combination of all five, partnered with other teachings like the Noble Eightfold Path and Four Noble Truths, that allows Buddhists to become enlightened.

↓
live a life following the example of the Buddha and

An excellent, highly detailed analysis. The initial analysis and evaluation of the First Precept is mature and well-written, showing a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of many aspects of the course. Consideration is given to the value of the other Precepts, with judgements being made. Religious language is used extensively and appropriately, showing understanding of many concepts. The Five Precepts are used as sources of authority, along with references to karuna, metta, dependent origination. In this answer reference to "Thou shalt kill" is acceptable as it is used to show that the First Precept is more than this. Band 4, 14 marks.

Example 2

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

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

[15]

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Another opinion could be that the fourth precept is the most important and that by "abstaining from ~~wrong~~ wrong speech" someone would retain more Karma.*

The five precepts are placed in order too stop Buddhists from experiencing Dukkha, and

Overall it is safe to assume most Buddhists would believe that the first precept is the most important as many of the other precepts are placed in order too prevent the first.*

*In addition by abstaining from wrong speech a person could ultimately abstain from doing harm, linking these two precepts.

A very good answer which shows a thorough knowledge of the Five Precepts. There is engagement with the statement from the start, with the value of different precepts considered throughout the answer. Evaluative language is well used to develop the argument. Religious language is used appropriately; reference to the Five Precepts acceptable as a source of authority. Band 3, 9 marks.

(d) 'For Buddhists, not harming any living being is the most important of the Five Precepts.'

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

[15]

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The second precept, stealing, the third precept, missuse of senses, the fourth precept speech could all harm someone which could mean that it's the most important because if you break the others you break it.

A satisfactory answer which starts with a judgement. Some different viewpoints are considered which are based on some accurate, general knowledge. The answer would benefit from using more specific knowledge to address the statement. Religious language is used but is limited to 'karma' and 'nirvana'. Band 2, 4 marks.