

GCSE  
**RELIGIOUS STUDIES (SHORT  
COURSE)**

8061/1 Paper 1: Buddhism  
Report on the Examination

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### 01.1

75% gave the correct response of anicca to this question.

### 01.2

This question asked for two responses about the enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama. Some students referred to different aspects of his life such as the Four Sights or his ascetic life rather than specifically focusing on the enlightenment, hence did not achieve any marks. Some students scored one mark for a reference to the enlightenment itself but then gave an erroneous response for the possible second mark.

### 01.3

Most students were able to recall the meaning and significance of the Buddha's teaching on the Second Noble Truth (samudaya) but not all could see how this influenced Buddhists' behaviour today. This question was about 'influences' so students who just relayed information about the Second Noble Truth were not able to achieve the higher levels if they did not specifically refer to how this truth influenced Buddhists' lives. The 'influences' issue with the 01.3 questions on this paper, as before, should be the focus of student responses.

### 01.4

Less than half of responses were able to identify the six perfections with some students referring to the Five Moral Precepts instead and even the Noble Eightfold Path, where there can be some overlap with the six perfections. However, it is worth noting that the biggest issue was a lack of references to sources, although there were some who successfully linked it with the bodhisattva vow or said something generally from one of the perfections such as generosity with a quotation from the Lotus Sutra "Wishing to fulfil the Six Paramitas, I diligently practised generosity by giving alms such as elephants, horses,.... my own flesh and limbs without being parsimonious. I did not hesitate to sacrifice my life either."

### 01.5

On this evaluation question, some students used a rather unhelpful structure at times such as a response that gave an argument in favour of the statement, one against and then a Christian and an atheist response. This approach tended to limit student's ability to respond to the question well. Many students knew the Five Moral Precepts well and were able to articulate arguments in support of the issue as to whether it was easy for Buddhist to follow them or not as well as offer comprehensive arguments that suggested it was not always easy to follow the Five Moral Precepts. Some responses did all of this well and achieved the higher levels. Responses that did so were even more successful if they included a justified conclusion such as pointing out that the Five Moral Precepts are principles that Buddhists voluntarily practise so there is no punishment by a god or external power for not following them whilst counter-arguing this with the fact that some Buddhists may struggle with how they balance one precept against another, There were a number of ways a student could approach this question and still achieve the full 12 marks. Some

considered all five Precepts and argued the ease (or not) of following each one in turn. Some students looked at the issue more holistically and then gave examples from two or three precepts to justify their claims. However, some students produced vague responses, some of which were not based on Buddhism at all but a variation of the golden rule in Christianity.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.