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91918



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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Level 1 Religious Studies 2025

### 91918 Demonstrate understanding of a characteristic of religious or spiritual traditions

Credits: Five

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate understanding of a characteristic of religious or spiritual traditions.	Explain a characteristic of religious or spiritual traditions.	Examine a characteristic of religious or spiritual traditions.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**You should answer ONE of the questions in this booklet.**

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–8 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (//////). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

**Excellence**

**TOTAL 08**

# Page 1

## INSTRUCTIONS

Answer ONE of the questions below. Space for planning your answer is provided below.

## QUESTIONS (Choose ONE)

### 1. Beliefs

Practising religious beliefs requires dedication and time. Explain the religious beliefs that shape the way people organise their lives in two religious or spiritual traditions you have studied.

### 2. Material expression

Objects are often used in religious and spiritual traditions for prayer and worship. Explain why specific objects are used, for and during, religious practices in two religious or spiritual traditions you have studied.

### 3. Social organisation

Religions are often involved in social action. Explain how social action is used by two religious or spiritual traditions you have studied to bring about change to society.

*Note: 'Social action' refers to people coming together to bring about change. Social action can include education, political lobbying, protests, or charity.*

## SELECTED QUESTION

Copy and paste the question you have chosen into the space below.

Practising religious beliefs requires dedication and time. Explain the religious beliefs that shape the way people organise their lives in two religious or spiritual traditions you have studied.

## PLANNING

Catholics:

Belief 1 - "I believe in the Almighty God, creator of Heaven and earth." This belief shapes the way Catholics organise their lives. This is because the belief talks about God being the creator and to believe in his works in creation means to live them out. Therefore, because God is Almighty and powerful and created earth with a purpose, Catholics are called to treat God's creation with the upmost respect because he is Almighty and loving. Therefore, the call Catholics take action on to organise their lives is to care for the earth enviromentally.

- They pray every day
- Act out of love each day
- Donate to charities
- Attend Mass

It TAKES A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT/DEDICATION

Belief 2 - "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." This belief shapes the way Catholics organise their lives. The belief is talking about how sin is an inevitable part of life for Catholics, however they try to avoid it/be better by organising their lives according to the belief. Believing in the forgiveness of sins means that no matter the wrong doings a person has done, due to Jesus' sacrifice by death we have the opportunity to be forgiven if we repent. A way Catholics organise their lives according to this belief is through:

- Repentance and prayer
  - Reconciliation
  - Acting and speaking out of love / turning the desire to sin into something good / counteract
- It TAKES A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT/DEDICATION

Buddhism:

Belief 1 - Magga which is the action of the Eightfold path to stop cravings. Last Four Noble Truths. The pathway to overcome desires and cravings that keep humans trapped in unhappiness and dissatisfaction. This belief shapes the way that Buddhists organise their lives. Buddhist aim to reach enlightenment where they come to the realisation about the truth of life and have the end goal in sight to reach Nirvana the ultimate state of peace. First Buddhists have to believe in the Four Noble Truths which are

1. Dukkha
2. Samudaya
3. Nirodha
4. Magga

in order to take action in overcoming the desires and cravings which keep them trapped in their earthly, suffering bodies. This belief shapes the way Buddhists organise their lives because once they have come to terms with the first three Noble Truths, they are then able to follow Magga and the Eightfold Path to reach enlightenment and Nirvana.

One of the ways they organise their life is by following one of the beliefs in the Eight Fold path;  
- Right Action.

Belief 2 - Samudaya. Suffering origin where suffering comes from cravings and desires that keep humans attached to existence and reincarnation/ cycle of rebirth (samsara). Buddhists believe that suffering is an inevitable part of life that is caused from selfish cravings and desires. These desires keep them trapped in their existence and reincarnation which is the belief that once you die your soul enters life again in another body. A way Buddhists overcome the sufferings and desires is by meditation. This is a way they organise their lives as it becomes apart of their daily routine.

- Meditation "Om Mani Padme oum." - "Behold! The Jewel is in the Lotus"

## EXTENDED RESPONSE

Type your extended response in the space below. You should aim to write a concise answer of up to 800 words. You must answer using paragraphs. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your answer. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended maximum word count.)

**B** *I* U

The religious beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism have a way of shaping Catholics and Buddhists lives. To believe in a religious belief means to have total trust in the teachings of the religious concept, and to follow the belief whole heartily. In Buddhism the central teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path influences the way people organise their lives. They summarise the way to reach Nirvana. By believing in the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path, they are called to organise their lives according to their beliefs. In a similar way, the religious teachings and traditions Catholics believe in is summarised in the Apostles Creed and shape the way Catholics organise their lives. A creed is a statement of belief, meaning for Catholics the articles within the Apostles Creed are statement of beliefs that call them to organise their lives according to those beliefs.

Firstly, the belief of Magga, the last truth of the Four Noble Truths, shapes the way Buddhists organise their lives. Magga is the action of the Eightfold path to end cravings. It is the pathway that overcomes desires which keep humans trapped in unhappiness and

action of the Eightfold path to end cravings. It is the pathway that overcomes desires which keep humans trapped in unhappiness and dissatisfaction. A core goal for Buddhists is to reach enlightenment where the realisation about the truths of life take place and Nirvana the state of indescribable peace. However, without coming to terms with the teaching of Magga, enlightenment wouldn't occur therefore they would be trapped in the cycle of rebirth making them unable to reach Nirvana. An action Buddhists take to organise their lives according to the truth of Magga is Right Action. These set of actions comes from the pathway of the Eightfold Path. For Buddhists, Right Action is to act only out of love and peace. This means that Buddhists organise their daily lives around avoiding cruelty against animals, themselves and against others. This means not working in jobs involved in harming animals, not speaking ill upon another and restraining from falling into desires. This is a difficult but daily measure Buddhists take out to carry out the belief of Magga in order to reach enlightenment and Nirvana. Similar to the actions in Buddhism, Catholics also restrain from treating earth and the creatures from it with disrespect. The first article in the Apostles Creed is an important belief for all Catholics, "I believe in God the Almighty Father, creator of Heaven and earth." This belief shapes the way Catholics organise their life. When describing God as being the Father and Almighty, Catholics believe that He should be treated with the upmost respect. This is because like a Father, God loves his children (all of humanity), cares for them and looks out for them as a Father does, and provides them with all the knowledge and resources they need in life like a Father. Therefore, he deserves the upmost respect. The belief also states that God created Heaven and earth which furthermore calls Catholics to treat his creation of the animals, land, sky, and waters with the upmost respect since God had created it. Therefore in a similar way to Buddhists, Catholics go out of their way in their lives and organise to treat everything with respect. A way they do this is by avoiding gossip and negative speak about themselves and others, donate to humanitarian and environmental organisations such as Caritas and St Vincent DePaul, and act only out of love towards animals and humans. By following the actions that shape and organise their lives, Catholics develop a personal and spiritual connection to God as they are carrying out His will, therefore bringing them closer to their end goal of Heaven. The concept of Heaven is alike to the concept of Nirvana where Heaven is the end goal and an indescribable state of peace and love for Catholics. Therefore in similar ways, the beliefs of Magga and the Apostles Creed shape and organise the way Buddhists and Catholics live their lives.

Secondly, the belief of Samudaya, the second truth of the Four Noble Truths, shapes the way Buddhists organise their lives. Samudaya is the origin of suffering where suffering comes from cravings and desires that keep humans attached to existence, reincarnation and the cycle of rebirth (samsara). Buddhists believe that suffering is an inevitable part of life that is caused from selfish cravings and desires as they leave them feeling unsatisfied in all aspects of life, spiritually, physically and emotionally. A way Buddhists overcome these difficult desires and cravings is by meditating. Buddhists aim to meditate throughout every day to focus their mind on more positive thoughts, distracting it from the urge of the desires. Meditation is a mindfulness and focused state where ones mind is set on achieving peace. By meditating regularly on a daily basis Buddhists are able to train their mind to overcome their desires, therefore contributing to them becoming enlightened and reaching Nirvana. Like the actions Buddhists take to overcome suffering, Catholics pray to be forgiven for sins. The Catholic belief of, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins", within the Apostles Creed shapes the way Catholics organise their lives. The belief talks about how sin is an inevitable part of life for Catholics and is difficult to resist. This idea of sin being inevitable is similar to Buddhists believing that suffering is inevitable. Sin is ultimately separation from God due to ones selfish actions. Believing in the forgiveness of sins means that no matter the wrong doing a person has done, due to Jesus' sacrifice by death they have the opportunity to be forgiven if they repent. However like in Buddhism, Catholics try to counteract the desire of sin by organising their lives according to the belief. For Catholics, through praying and repenting they develop a deeper, personal and spiritual connection with God, therefore bringing them even closer to God and Heaven. Prayer is a focused, mindfulness state where Catholics bring their intentions to God with the hope that He will listen and deliver them with peace. By praying to God and repenting for their sins through prayer, God delivers them Grace and forgiveness, carrying out the belief of forgiveness in sins. Therefore, the beliefs within the Apostles Creed and Samudaya shape and organise the way Buddhists and Catholics carry out their lives.

In conclusion, beliefs in a spiritual context are central values that people hold to their core. They influence the way people act, think and say within their daily lives and call people to organise their lives for causes greater than themselves. However it takes time and dedication to do so and the religions of Buddhism and Catholicism express this in the same ways. They both believe that there are inevitable parts of life but to overcome those consequences, they need to turn to their beliefs and they do this through meditation and prayer. Both of which have similar properties. They also both believe that through acting out of love and peace, they will grow closer to their end goal in their lives. Both religions believe and trust in something greater than themselves, these beliefs shape the way they organise their lives.

## Excellence

**Subject:** Religious Studies

**Standard:** 91918

**Total score:** 08

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
One	E8	<p>The candidate has reached Excellence by examining clear and well-reasoned connections between the chosen characteristic and the ways it is applied within Catholic and Buddhist traditions, as required by the standard.</p> <p>They moved beyond explanation to show how specific beliefs and practices interrelate, offering insightful commentary on how actions such as charity, environmental stewardship, meditation, or ethical discipline arise from and reinforce core religious meanings.</p> <p>The response integrates examples in a way that highlights the broader significance of the characteristic within each tradition, showing how it shapes followers' daily lives, moral choices, and spiritual goals.</p>