



National Certificate of Educational Achievement
TAUMATA MĀTAURANGA Ā-MOTU KUA TĀEA

Exemplar for Internal Achievement Standard Religious Studies Level 2

This exemplar supports assessment against:

Achievement Standard 90823

**Explain the key beliefs within two religious traditions in
relation to a significant religious question**

An annotated exemplar is an extract of student evidence, with a commentary, to explain key aspects of the standard. It assists teachers to make assessment judgements at the grade boundaries.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

To support internal assessment

	Grade Boundary: Low Excellence
1.	<p>For Excellence, the student needs to comprehensively explain the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves explaining the wider implications of the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to the significant religious question.</p> <p>The student has comprehensively explained the wider implications of suffering from two perspectives; personal and religious (1), explaining the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism (2) in relation to the significant religious question of what is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism (3).</p> <p>For a more secure Excellence, the student could comprehensively explain the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism regarding the nature of suffering by providing evidence from the teaching of both Catholicism and Buddhism, through Church documents, Buddhist writings and teachings from authoritative sources within each of the traditions.</p> <p>For example, the student could provide evidence from <i>A Consistent Ethic of Life – Te Kahu- o-Te-Ora</i> (NZCBC 1997) and <i>The Four Noble Truths Teachings by Ajahn Sumedho</i> from http://www.buddhanet.net/4noble.htm to demonstrate the contribution they have made to the thinking of New Zealand and society in general regarding the nature of suffering.</p>

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics believe God is a good and loving Creator who has created us in his image and likeness. Because of this belief, Catholics need to understand why there is suffering in the world. One understanding is that we have free will so can make wrong choices that lead to suffering. This understanding was developed by St Augustine in the 5th Century and is supported in the Bible, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (John's Gospel). Catholics have developed other beliefs to understand suffering. For example, Irenaeus in 2nd Century, argued that suffering is necessary for spiritual development and is part of God's purpose. A more contemporary idea is that God suffers too. Through Christ's suffering and pain on the cross of crucifixion, God submitted to the same suffering that many people do. Jesus suffering is seen as showing his unconditional love as well as paying the price for our sin. "Every single human life is infinitely valued by God, valued so much that God himself accompanies each one, in good times and bad, and desires us all to dwell with him forever in heaven" (Catholic Net).

Catholic teaching on suffering is very significant as it is seen as a challenge to the teaching, which affirms that God is good. Those who want to argue against the existence of God often use this as an argument they say that if God is good and all powerful he would not allow suffering. However, this argument assumes people can know the mind of God. It is important for Catholics to understand the place of suffering and explain the even suffering and death are in God's control – "There is nothing in life, or death... that can separate us from God's love..." Romans 8:38-39. Most Catholics would affirm that suffering is a mystery of faith and quote St. Paul – "for now we see through a glass darkly but then we will see face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Suffering is central to the Buddhist tradition and followers of Buddhism focus on understanding the nature of suffering. The Buddha said, "Life is suffering." Buddhists are encouraged to explore what suffering is and means in their life. Buddhists believe the problem is that we want to hold on to things in life and not let go and this attitude leads to suffering. Suffering is clearly a very significance belief in Buddhism and its importance can be seen in the four Noble truths where the Buddha outlines the meaning of life, these are:

1. Suffering exists
2. Suffering arises from attachment to desires
3. Suffering ceases when attachment to desire ceases
4. Freedom from suffering is possible by practicing the Eightfold Path

Buddhists think that even meditation and mindfulness on their own will not achieve selflessness, because these actions can themselves be a source of pride. They believe human self-centeredness has to be overcome if true realisation and freedom from suffering is to occur

"When you've seen beyond yourself then you may find peace of mind is waiting there." George Harrison

For both traditions, the existence of suffering is important and both think suffering is real. They both think that people make choices that can cause suffering. The difference is that for Catholics creation is good and created by God and that God has a purpose for suffering even if we do not fully understand it. For Buddhists life is suffering and the goal is to find release from the cycle of suffering. Buddhists try to find a way of life that stops suffering coming into being and, that cuts off its causes in one's life, attitudes and behaviour. Real change and real improvement are only possible when the right effort is made at the right tasks such as following the Eight fold Noble path. Both traditions have an understanding that the way we live our lives helps us to accept the suffering we have and this often helps us to lead better lives in the long term.

Beliefs about suffering are important not only to the religious traditions but also to wider society, as these two traditions have made important contributions to the thinking of societies where they are dominant or have been dominant historically. ①

In New Zealand, Catholics as part of Christianity have shaped quite a lot of our thinking and society general tends to think that people make choices, ②

which can lead sometimes to suffering— like drink driving, drug taking. ③

Other suffering which, happens because of earthquakes, is often termed an act of God – that it is just a part of reality that we must accept. Catholics understand that God suffers with us and has encouraged Catholics to work to remove suffering through groups like Caritas or St Vinnies. ③

Buddhism also suggests we should work to improve the situation for our fellow human beings ②

by living lives that reflect the peace and harmony reflected by Buddha himself. ①

	Grade Boundary: High Merit
2.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to explain in detail the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the details of the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question • explaining the significance of the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question. <p>The student has outlined the details of the key beliefs of Catholicism (1) and Buddhism (2) in relation to the nature of suffering.</p> <p>The student has explained in Catholicism and Buddhism the significance of the nature of suffering and their belief about its importance within their religious traditions (3).</p> <p>To reach Excellence, the student would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide an explanation of the wider implications of the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism in relation to the nature of suffering as observed in a variety of situations, such as natural disasters, structural sin or terminal illness • comprehensively explain the wider implications, the understanding of how Catholicism and Buddhism have contributed to society's thinking in these areas.

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics believe God is a good and loving Creator who has created us in his image and likeness. Because of this belief Catholics need to understand why there is suffering and now. One belief is that we have free will so can make wrong choices that lead to suffering in the world. This understanding was developed by St Augustine in the early Church and is supported in the Bible, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (John Gospel). 1

Catholics have developed other beliefs to understand suffering as well. For example Irenaeus, also argued that suffering is necessary for spiritual development and is part of God's purpose. 1

A more contemporary idea is that God suffers too. Through Christ's suffering and pain on the cross of crucifixion, God submitted to the same suffering that many people do. 3

Catholic teaching on suffering is very significant as it affirms that God is good and the existence of suffering can be seen as a challenge to this belief. 1

This is why it is important for Catholics to understand the place of suffering. 3

Most Catholics would agree that suffering is a mystery of faith and quote Paul – "for now we see through a glass darkly but then we will see face to face". 1

Suffering is central to Buddhist teaching, and followers of Buddhism focus on understanding suffering and what it means for us. The Buddha said, "Life is suffering". Buddhists are encouraged to explore what suffering is. Buddhists think the problem is that we want to hold on to things in life and not let go and this attitude leads to suffering. 2

Suffering is clearly a very significant belief in Buddhism and its importance can be seen in the four Noble truths where the Buddha outlines the meaning of life:

1. Suffering exists
2. Suffering arises from attachment to desires
3. Suffering ceases when attachment to desire ceases
4. Freedom from suffering is possible by practicing the Eightfold Path. 3

For both traditions, the existence of suffering is important and both think suffering is real for many people. They both think that people make choices that can cause suffering to happen to themselves and others. The difference is that for Catholics creation is good and created by God and that God has a purpose for suffering even if we do not fully understand it yet. For Buddhists' life is suffering and the goal is to find release from the cycle of suffering. This can be done through the way Buddhists behave. Buddhists try to find a way of life that stops suffering coming into being and, that cuts off its causes in one's life, attitudes and behaviour. Real change and real improvement are only possible when the right effort is made at the right tasks such as following the Eight fold Noble path. 3

	Grade Boundary: Low Merit
3.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to explain in detail the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the details of the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question • explaining the significance of the key beliefs within each religious tradition. <p>The student has outlined some of the details of the key beliefs of Catholicism (1) and Buddhism (2) in relation to the nature of suffering.</p> <p>The student has explained some of the details in Catholicism and Buddhism the significance of the nature of suffering and their belief about its importance within their religious traditions (3).</p> <p>For a more secured Merit, the student would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a more detailed outline of the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism in relation to the nature of suffering, and what both Catholicism and Buddhism believe about its importance within their religious tradition • provide evidence of both Catholic and Buddhist teaching from authoritative sources, such as Spe salvi Benedict XVI 2007 and http://www.buddhism.org.nz/buddha/ on the nature of suffering. The student could explain in detail the significance of spiritual growth and suffering in Catholicism and the role the Four Noble Truths have in suffering within Buddhism.

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics have a belief in a good and loving Creator who has created the world and we in his own image. Because of this belief, Catholics need to understand why there is suffering. Catholics believe in free will so can make wrong choices that can lead to suffering for us and in the world. This understanding was developed by St Augustine in the Early Church and is supported in the Bible, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way" (John Gospel). ①

Catholics also have other beliefs to understand suffering. For example Irenaeus, argued that suffering is necessary for spiritual growth and is part of God's purpose for us. This is why it is important for Christians to understand the place of suffering in our lives. ③

Most Catholics would believe that it is a mystery of faith. ①

Suffering is also central to Buddhist teaching and followers of Buddhism focus on understanding suffering in the world. The Buddha said, "Life is suffering". Buddhists are encouraged to explore what suffering is. They think the problem is that we want to hold on to things in life and not let go and this attitude leads to suffering. ②

Suffering is clearly a very significant belief in Buddhism and its importance can be seen in the four Noble truths where the Buddha outlines the meaning of life. ③

For both traditions, the existence of suffering is important and both think suffering is real. They both think that people make choices that can cause suffering. The difference is that for Catholicism creation is good and created by God and that God has a purpose for suffering even if we do not fully understand it yet. In Buddhism, their life is suffering and the goal is to find release from the cycle of suffering. Buddhists try to find a way of life that stops suffering coming into being and, that cuts off its causes in one's life, attitudes and behaviour. Real change and real improvement are only possible when the right effort is made to follow Buddhist teaching. In Catholicism, this would be similar to following the Ten Commandments. Many people do not understand what real suffering is and so find it hard to see how it is important to those who do suffer a great deal. ③

Buddhists believe if we follow the Eightfold Plan suffering can be eliminated, Catholics do not believe in the Eightfold plan. ③

	Grade Boundary: High Achieved
4.	<p>For Achieved, the student explains the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the key beliefs of two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question, including their meaning and source or origin • explaining the similarities and differences between the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to the significant question. <p>The student has outlined the key beliefs of Catholicism (1) and Buddhism (2) in relation to the nature of suffering.</p> <p>The student has explained the similarities (3) and differences (4) between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question (5).</p> <p>To reach Merit, the student would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide more detailed evidence in the outline of the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism in relation to the nature of suffering • provide more detailed evidence of an explanation of the similarities and differences between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question. <p>The student could explain in detail the significance of free will and suffering in the writing of St Augustine in Catholicism and the role the Eightfold Plan has in Buddhism and its relationship to suffering.</p>

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics have faith in a good and loving Creator who has planned a creation that is also good and loving. Because of this belief, Catholics need to understand why there is suffering that happens to all people a lot and to some people all the time. Catholics believe that we have a free choice or will so can make choices that are sometimes not good ones and so lead to suffering. This belief was written by a Church Father called St Augustine and is supported in the New Testament. ①

Suffering is central to Buddhist teaching and followers of Buddhism focus on find out what suffering was in their life. The Buddha said, "Life is suffering." Buddhists are encouraged to find out what suffering is. Buddhists think the problem is that we want to hold on to things in life in our life and not let go of them. They believe this attitude leads to suffering and it staying with you. ②

Suffering is important for both traditions and both think suffering is real in the lives of people. They both think that people make choices that can cause suffering for them and others. ③

The difference is that for Catholicism creation is good because it is by God and so suffering is only because of choices made by people ④ while for Buddhists, it is not just about choices made but life in general is about suffering and the goal is to find release from the cycle of suffering. ⑤

Catholics believe that our personal suffering can be because of our own choices and that suffering in society can be because of a decision by a government. ④

Buddhists believe that if we follow the Eightfold Plan suffering can be eliminated. ⑤

Catholics do not believe in the Eightfold plan. ④

	Grade Boundary: Low Achieved
5.	<p>For Achieved, the student explains the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the key beliefs of two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question, including their meaning and source or origin • explaining the similarities and differences between the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to the significant question. <p>The student has outlined some of the key beliefs of Catholicism (1) and Buddhism (2) in relation to the nature of suffering.</p> <p>The student has explained some similarities (3) and differences (4) between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question.</p> <p>For a more secure Achieved, the student would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide more evidence in the outline of the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism in relation to the nature of suffering, e.g. providing more evidence of both Catholic and Buddhist teaching from authoritative sources on the nature of suffering • provide more evidence of an explanation of the similarities and differences between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question • explain the similarities of Catholic and Buddhist teaching about suffering caused by the destruction of creation, explaining why Buddhists would follow the Four Noble Truths in their understanding of suffering and why Catholics would follow the Scripture and Church documents.

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics have faith in a good and loving Creator who has created that is also good and loving, because of this belief, Catholics need to understand why there is suffering. Catholics believe is that we have free will so can make wrong choices that lead to suffering and hell or right choices that lead to heaven. This belief was written by St Augustine in the Early Church. ①

Suffering is central to the teaching of the Buddha and followers of Buddhism focus on knowing about suffering and where it fits in to the life of a person. Buddhism wants believers to let go of things in life, which might cause them to suffer. ②

Beliefs about suffering are important of both traditions but they have differences. Catholics believes God loves everyone and helps them cope with suffering. They also believe that creation is good and suffering comes about when people destroy creation, so there is no food for us to eat. ③

Buddhism believes people must change their attitude to become free of suffering and that the Four Noble Truths can help them understand what suffering is about. ④

	Grade Boundary: High Not Achieved
6.	<p>For Achieved, the student explains the key beliefs within two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question.</p> <p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outlining the key beliefs of two religious traditions in relation to a significant religious question, including their meaning and source or origin • explaining the similarities and differences between the key beliefs of the two religious traditions in relation to the significant question. <p>The student has outlined some of the key beliefs of Catholicism (1) and Buddhism (2) in relation to the nature of suffering.</p> <p>The student has explained a similarity (3), however the differences (4) between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question is also required.</p> <p>To reach Achieved, the student would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide more evidence from authoritative sources in the outline of the key beliefs of Catholicism and Buddhism in relation to the nature of suffering • provide more evidence of an explanation of the similarities and differences between the two religious traditions in relation to a significant question • explain the similarities of Catholic and Buddhist teaching about suffering caused by free will. They could also explain why Buddhists and Catholics believe suffering is not good for us.

[For the purpose of this exemplar the significant religious question is: What is the nature of suffering as understood in Catholicism and Buddhism.]

Catholics have faith in a good and loving Creator who has a plan for creation. Catholics need to understand why there is suffering. We have free will so can make wrong choices that lead to suffering. For Catholics suffering is your own fault as well. If you do things that are wrong then what else can you expect but to suffer. When things go right for you it is because you are doing good stuff and following what God wants you to do. God only wants you to do good things. ①

In other words not doing bad stuff or things. Suffering is central to Buddhist teaching and followers of Buddhism focus on understanding suffering. ②

Buddhists believe like Catholics that suffering is your own fault. Suffering is not good but bad. If you do not want to suffer then you should not do bad things or stuff, especially to other people or God. Killing people is not good and causes suffering. ③

The differences are in things like ways to not suffer. ④