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# **GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2023**

**A LEVEL  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1  
OPTION F: A STUDY OF SIKHISM**

**A120UF0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

## **Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:**

### **Positive marking**

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

### **Rules for Marking**

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

### **Banded mark schemes**

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two-stage process.

#### **Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band**

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content. Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

### **Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark**

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

### **Awarding no marks to a response**

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

## A Level Generic Band Descriptors

<b>Band</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions</b>    20 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i></li> <li>- <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i></li> <li>- <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i></li> <li>- <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i></li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>17-20 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-16 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5-8 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-4 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</b></p>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

Band	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions</b> 30 marks  <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>25-30 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>19-24 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed.</li> <li>• The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-18 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed.</li> <li>• Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context.</li> <li>• Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence.</li> <li>• Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought.</li> <li>• Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied.</li> <li>• Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

**GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1**

**OPTION F: A STUDY OF SIKHISM**

**SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME**

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

**Section A**

Either,

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 (a) Explain how the Sikh festival of Diwali focuses attention on spiritual matters. [AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- The festival of Diwali commemorates an important event in Sikh history when Sikh heroism and willingness to risk life to save others including those from a different faith were evident. Self-sacrifice is an important Sikh virtue. The emperor Jahangir had imprisoned Hargobind. The emperor was asked to release him which he agreed to do, but Hargobind insisted that 52 Hindu princes were also released. Jahangir agreed but said only those who could hold onto his coat tails. Hargobind had a cloak made with string so each prince able to hold on to his coat tails and he enabled them all to escape.
- It also helps Sikhs to focus on bravery and courage in the face of persecution. It reminds Sikhs of their duty to protect their religion and beliefs.
- It reminds Sikhs of their spiritual beliefs as expressed in the symbolism of the festival. It is an expression of the duality within Sikhism of the importance of spiritual and temporal virtues.
- It also reminds Sikhs of important beliefs in their faith such as devotion to God and freedom and salvation.
- The celebration of the festival confirms and strengthens spiritual beliefs and virtues.
- The celebration reminds Sikhs of the struggle between good and evil and how good always overcomes evil, light overcoming darkness.
- Importance of unity within the Sikh community is celebrated during Diwali. The unity of the Sikh community has been and is essential to its survival as expressed in the Khalsa.
- Expression of Sikh values of equality which is one of the most important features of Sikhism and readiness to be a martyr for faith and to fight persecution.
- Importance of valour and compassion for others.
- Expression of Sikh values of equality and readiness to be a martyr for faith and to fight persecution.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

- (b) **‘Sikhism needs its festivals.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Sikhism is not a religion of festivals. It can be argued that the Sikh festivals are more historical in nature than spiritual and therefore not essential in developing religious spirituality.
- Festivals do not necessarily show any commitment to a religion. They can be celebrated by Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. and without any allegiance to a specific set of religious beliefs.
- Strong religious beliefs are not necessary to take part in festivals – people like to sing, dance and act but the words and actions are not important.
- Festivals can be more social occasions than religious ones – an excuse to eat and drink, sometimes to excess. They can also be argued to be cultural events which might express national or regional identity but not religious identity.
- They are times when people are caught up in the community spirit and simply follow their neighbours.
- However, celebrating festivals can be a way of affirming religious beliefs and of showing belonging to a religious community. An individual is expected to put into practice the belief system he believes in. This can be through celebrating festivals.
- Festivals can be a very public way of expressing religious identity. They are also a way of taking pride in that religious identity.
- They are also a way of presenting Sikhism, its beliefs and values, to non-Sikh communities.
- Festivals can be very moving religious experiences. The beliefs and values of Sikhism are clearly expressed through its festivals e.g. Vaisakhi which celebrates the forming of the Khalsa which emphasises values such as loyalty, courage, faithfulness and belonging.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

Or,

**0 2** (a) Explain Sikh teaching about infertility.

**[AO1 20]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Most Sikhs greatly value having children. All Sikhs are expected to have a family, and technology can be used to bring this about. If a couple are having difficulties with infertility this causes suffering and therefore many Sikhs would support the development within bioethics of fertility treatments for married couples.
- Most Sikhs believe that all life is sacred because it is given by God. Therefore, many Sikhs interpret infertility as being the will of God. It may be considered God's way of showing them that they are not meant to have children. In this respect bioethics could be seen as going against the will of God.
- It is common for more than one embryo to be produced by IVF, and for some to be left over when pregnancy has been achieved. Embryos can be frozen for use at a later date by the couple. In Sikh communities, the duty to have a family outweighs the concerns about the potential life of the embryos that are discarded.
- Some Sikhs permit research on spare embryos because they believe it has the potential to develop knowledge that could help humankind.
- Many Sikhs accept IVF, but have worries about AID, egg donation and surrogacy.
- Some Sikhs reject all infertility treatments involving technology because they believe that once an embryo has been created, it is alive and should not be killed. Therefore bio-ethical research can be viewed as being morally wrong. This is because they believe that life is present from the moment of conception. This is based on the teachings of the Japji Sahib and they would argue that an undeveloped life still has a soul given by God and for that reason should be respected and not destroyed.
- Sikhism is a relatively young faith (500 years old) and that it has no explicit injunction regarding fertility and assisted conception in either of its two main texts; the Guru Granth Sahib or the code of conduct. Nevertheless, the Guru Granth Sahib does say that creation of life is the will of God. Since God has given man the intellect and enabled him to use it in this way, it seems possible to view assisted reproductive techniques in a similar vein.
- Some Sikhs do not agree with bioethics as they see it as an unnatural abuse of creative power which is supposed to belong to God only.
- Bioethics is viewed by some Sikhs as encouraging immorality. In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), Artificial Insemination, of a woman with the sperm of a man who is not her husband is morally wrong. It can lead to all kinds of suspicion and place considerable stress upon a marriage, resulting, often in divorce, something that brings great stigma onto a wife, especially.
- Some Sikhs believe that the teachings of the Gurus could not have included modern technologies, but that they would have been accepted in some cases especially if they were to cure diseases and help the disadvantaged, demonstrating sewa.
- The views of D.S. Chahal, Dr Jodh Singh and W.O. Cole could be considered.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

- (b) **‘Sikh ethical teaching gives a clear guide for living for Sikhs today.’**  
**Evaluate this view.** [AO2 30]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Sikhs derive their ethics largely from the teachings of their scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, and the Sikh Code of Conduct (the Rahit Maryada).
- Guidance also comes from the example set by the gurus, and from the experience of the Sikh community over the last 500 years.
- Sikhism is a profoundly ethical religion. The Gurus had no place for forms of spirituality, which emphasised enlightenment and liberation (mukti), without social responsibility, for example, the life of an ascetic.
- To be a disciple of the Guru one had to be gurmukh (one whose face is turned towards God). Bhai Gurdas described such a person as one from whom God, the Guru, ‘eradicates his lust, anger and resistance and has his greed, infatuation and ego erased.’
- A clear guide can for living be found in teachings to avoid the five cardinal evils - kam (lust), lobh (covetousness), moh (attachment), krodh (wrath), and ahankar (pride).
- Likewise, another clear guide for living can be found in the teachings that promote practising truth, contentment, kindness, dharma, which is (nam), charity (dan), and ablution (ishnan).
- Sikh ethics give practical guidance on how to deal with ethical problems in the teachings regarding vegetarianism. In the panth vegetarianism is regarded as having an ethical dimension.
- The Khalsa code of conduct provides clear instruction on Sikh lifestyle e.g. forbids the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, except for medicinal purposes.
- Sikh teaching is clear on issues such as abortion which is generally forbidden in Sikhism, as it interferes in the creative work of God - who created everything and is present in every being. Most Sikhs accept that life begins at conception.
- However, it can be argued that the Sikh code of conduct does not give detailed answers to many ethical questions, but rather sets down general principles and provide a framework for Sikhs to answer those questions.
- The Sikh code of conduct is rooted in spiritual goals and principles which are not accepted or respected by some Sikhs who live in a secular society. It is also rooted in its historical context and as such it can be argued that it is not relevant to modern day issues.
- In bio-ethical terms the guidance given in Sikhism can be argued to be somewhat confusing - Sikhism believes that life is a gift from God, but it also teaches that we have a duty to use life in a responsible way. This can lead to different interpretations of bio-ethical issues such as IVF.
- It could be argued that on other issues such as Dharam Yudh the guidance given is not clear. Sikhs are expected to take military action against oppression, and there is no modern tradition of absolute pacifism amongst Sikhs, although Sikhs are strongly in favour of action to promote human rights and harmony between religions and states.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

## Section B

Either,

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 (a) Examine the political background to the Sikh aspiration for Khalistan. [AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- In 1799, Ranjit Singh captured Lahore and in 1801 established the Punjab as an independent state. Although a devout Sikh, he took part in religious acts with Muslims and Hindus as well.
- After Ranjit Singh died in 1839 the Sikh state crumbled, damaged by vicious internal battles for the leadership. In 1845/6 troops of the British Empire defeated the Sikh armies, and took over much Sikh territory.
- The Sikhs got on well with the British partly because they came to think of themselves less as subjects of the Raj than as partners of the British. The British took control of the Sikh religious establishment by putting their own choices in control of the Gurdwaras. Good relations between Sikhs and British came to an end in 1919 with the Amritsar massacre.
- In April 1919 British troops commanded by General E H Dyer opened fire without warning on 10,000 people who were holding a protest meeting. The troops killed about 400 people and wounded 1,000.
- When British India gained its independence in 1947; it was divided between India and the Islamic state of Pakistan. The Sikhs felt badly treated and reluctantly chose to join India. The Sikhs were unable to demand their own state, because there were too few of them to resist Pakistan's claim to the Punjab. Only by siding with India were they able to keep part of the Punjab, although not before appalling loss of life in communal massacres. Sikhs lost many of their privileges, much of their land, and were deeply discontented.
- The Sikh ambition for a state of their own was something that India would not concede. To do so would have allowed communalism (i.e. religious groupings) an unbreakable foothold in the politics of what was supposed to be a secular state.
- However, in 1966, after years of Sikh demands, India divided the Punjab into three, recreating Punjab as a state with a Sikh majority. This was not enough to stop Sikh anger at continuing oppression and the unfair way in which they thought India had set the boundaries of the new state.
- As Sikh discontent grew, the conflict gradually changed from a purely political conflict into a confrontation between Hindus and Sikhs; and then to real violence.
- In June 1984 Indian troops launched 'Operation Blue Star'. They attacked the Golden Temple Complex, killing many of those inside, and seriously damaging the buildings.
- This invasion of the holiest place of the Sikhs infuriated many Sikhs, even the non-militant.
- The Punjab is presently peaceful, although in the last two or three years the rise of Hindu nationalism, and renewed claims that Sikhism is nothing more than a Hindu sect, have given Sikhs cause for alarm.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

- (b) **‘The greatest influence on Sikh identity is persecution.’  
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 30]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Candidates may argue that persecution has been a significant and constant feature of Sikh history which has had a profound effect on their identity. Examples of martyrdom, the 1919 Vaisakhi massacre, the partition in 1947 of the Punjab, the loss of holy sites, the phenomenal numbers of refugees, and Operation Bluestar in 1984 could be used.
- Sikhism was plagued with violence after the Adi Granth was compiled - the Fifth Guru was falsely accused of treason by the Islamic Mughal Emperor, Jahangir, was tortured and died in a display of heroism that Sikhs consider as the first known martyrdom in Sikhism.
- In response to this Guru Hargobind militarised and politicised his position and fought three battles with Mughal forces. Hargobind established a militant tradition of resistance to persecution and established at Amritsar the Throne of the Eternal God (Akal Takht) from which the Guru dispensed justice and administered the secular affairs of the community. Without persecution these developments would not have taken place.
- Another significant martyrdom was an event that led to the creation of the Khalsa. Guru Bahadur was executed in 1675 in Delhi for being outspoken against Aurangazeb’s actions and refusing to convert to Islam.
- These events led the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh to transform the Sikhs into a militant brotherhood dedicated to defence of their faith at all times.
- The outward signs of this new order were the "Five Ks" to be observed at all times. Male Sikhs took on the surname Singh (meaning lion), and women took the surname Kaur (princess). It could be argued that the wearing of the 5Ks is the most visual expression of Sikh identity and that it is directly derived from persecution.
- However, candidates could argue that there are a number of other factors influencing Sikh identity. For example, there was a golden age of self-rule in the Punjab under Ranjit Singh which clearly shows that Sikhism can flourish and develop in times where there is no threat of persecution.
- It could be argued that Sikhism is shaped not by persecution but by its beliefs such as its concept of God and its concept of equality.
- It could be argued that it is shaped by its practices such as sewa.
- Another line of reasoning is that the greatest influence on Sikh identity is the Rahit Maryada. It is a code of discipline that unites Sikhs everywhere and safeguards key Sikh beliefs, values and identity.
- It also includes many rules and guidelines for Sikh life – personal life and relationship with God – Naam Japo meditation on God’s name and daily prayers; following honest professions; importance of family life and voluntary service; living life following in the example of the Gurus; practice of equality in gender and caste; the importance of communal life and maintaining the panth. These are all important expressions of Sikh identity.
- However, it is possible to present an argument that all expressions of Sikh identity are as important and valid as each other.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

Or,

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 (a) Explain how Guru Gobind Singh developed Sikhism as a religion with a strong identity. [AO1 20]

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- He founded the Khalsa at the Vaisakhi assembly at Anandpur. It can be argued that this was the most important event in the history of Sikhism, the event which safeguarded the religion for the future. It is also one of the most important developments in giving Sikhism a unique identity of its own.
- He finalised many elements of Sikhism such as the Guru Panth, the spirit of the Guru present wherever members of the Khalsa made decisions in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- He established the Sikh baptism ceremony and partaking of Amrit Sanskar as the Sikh initiation ceremony. These ceremonies are still an important part of Sikhism today.
- He introduced the 5ks and the distinctive appearance of Sikhs – uncut hair, a comb, a steel wrist guard, a sword and short breeches. These outward signs of the Khalsa are an important expression of Sikh identity.
- He instituted a new code of conduct for the 'Pure Ones' - tobacco, eating of meat slaughtered according to Muslim ritual and sexual intercourse with Muslim women were to be avoided.
- He replaced the family name with Singh and Kaur. Women were admitted to the Khalsa taking the name 'Kaur'. Also of the Panj Pyares one came from the Kshatriya caste, and another from the Jat and the rest from the Sudra group which was a symbol of caste and sex equality.
- He compiled the Dasam Granth which contains much of his own poetry and translations of classical texts based on the works of many poets employed by Guru.
- He proclaimed himself the last living guru and established the Guru Granth Sahib as the eternal Guru of the Sikhs, elevating it to the status as a living guru.
- His mission was above all religious – a restorer of dharma in the sense of true religion.

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

- (b) **‘Guru Gobind Singh is the true founder of Sikhism.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- His initiation ceremony for the Khalsa was fundamental to the founding of Sikhism and ensured its survival. It established the amrit ceremony and a form of initiation and gave Sikhism its unique identity. Many Sikhs also see the Khalsa as the cornerstone of Sikhism.
- Wearing of the five Ks is associated with Gobind Singh. It is argued by many that this is the most important expression of Sikh identity and beliefs.
- Without the charismatic leadership of Guru Gobind Singh, the courage required to resist and defend the faith would not have been aroused in the emergent Sikh community. It could be argued that the Sikh community would have lost not only its identity but also its beliefs and practices.
- Guru Gobind Singh was unique in his combination of the highest spiritual qualities and his understanding of military strategy to make the right decisions at this point in Sikh history. Without this militarisation of the Sikh community into the formation of the Khalsa it is doubtful whether Sikhism would have survived.
- He created the role model of saint soldier and was a great spiritual teacher and the founder of a military force. His was an ideal combination of practical defence and spiritual and moral principles. These principles are the two pillars on which Sikh lifestyle is built.
- He shaped Sikhism more than any of his predecessors. It can be argued that the fundamental events which shaped the nature of Sikhism as a religion happened during the guruship of Guru Gobind Singh.
- It was Guru Gobind Singh who proclaimed guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib which is one of the most important identifying features of Sikhism.
- However, many Sikhs would disagree with the statement and would argue vehemently that Sikhism in terms of belief was founded by Guru Nanak. In terms of belief Guru Gobind Singh simply developed those beliefs further.
- Guru Gobind Singh developed practices in response to the political and social challenges of his time. E.g. the development of the Khalsa and a more militaristic Sikhism
- Guru Nanak gave the spiritual teachings and as the founder of the faith his experiences are the basis of Sikh teaching and practice. It can be argued that these fundamental beliefs were not changed by Guru Gobind Singh e.g. beliefs about God.
- Outward identity was developed by Guru Gobind Singh, but spiritual identity is associated with Guru Nanak. It is Guru Nanak’s teaching on the relationship with God that is the basic belief on which all other Sikh beliefs are founded.
- Guru Nanak established the first Sikh community based on Sikh principles. Guru Gobind Singh developed it.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**

Or,

**0 5** (a) Explain Sikh teaching on karma and rebirth.

**[AO1 20]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

**Karma:**

- Cause and effect, action and reaction. Guru Nanak expresses this concept as 'One receives in accordance to what one does. As one sows so one eats.' (AG 662).
- Present life is result of past karma and present karma will determine future life – 'Man's life proceeds as his accumulated actions determine it. He receives joy or sorrow in accordance with what his past deeds have earned. But all is good that comes from you.' (AG 1107). However, present failures, unlike those of the past, cannot be attributed to karma. They are the consequences of maya or haumai. Maya is holding a materialistic view of the world and haumai is self-reliance leading to pride which blinds people to their dependence on God.
- God is creator of first karma, the origin of the universe and the destroyer of karma. The Adi Granth states that karma is inscribed according to the divine will.
- Karma does not mean that everything is preordained and that there is no freewill. It is a person's own actions that makes them what they are.
- The individual can improve his own condition through effort. God is not responsible for destiny.
- Karma can be changed by prayer and the Grace of God. In Sikhism grace is the word which describes the way God focuses his attention upon a person. No one is ever beyond his care. 'He takes care of everything, though he remains invisible.' (AG 7)

**Rebirth:**

- When something dies its soul is reborn. This transmigration is described by Guru Arjan – 'For many births you have become a worm or moth, an elephant, a fish or a deer.' (AG 176)
- Sikhs therefore believe in reincarnation of the soul in another form.
- The cycle of reincarnation means that a soul can be reborn many times.
- Guru Granth Sahib describes the body as clothing for the soul which is discarded at death.
- Sikhism asserts that human existence is best because humans are unique. 'By virtue of the fellowship of the saints (sangat) you have achieved your present status so perform the Lord's service, repeat his name guided by the Guru.' (AG 176)

**This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.**

- (b) **‘Karma is the greatest influence on Sikh lifestyle.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 30]**

**Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.**

- Karma determines future life and therefore living a life that attains good karma is important. Although a person has to accept the consequences of past actions, the present and therefore the future as well as his ultimate destiny are to a large degree in his own control. Therefore, the attainment of good karma through following a Sikh lifestyle will be very influential on his/her actions.
- The quality of each particular life depends on the law of karma. Karma sets the quality of a life according to how well or badly a person behaved in their previous life. This influences how Sikhs view life and attitudes towards life in general.
- Sikhs believe that karma can be purified through effort and by living a virtuous life. They also believe that it can be purified through the grace of God. This influences Sikh lifestyle as Sikhs live in a way that brings them closer to God and ultimate communion with him.
- Good karma can break the cycle of reincarnation and lead to the unification of the soul with God. This is the ultimate aim of Sikhism and therefore fulfilling this aim has a great influence on Sikh lifestyle.
- However, it is impossible to maintain that all Sikhs act at all times with regards to the concept of karma and therefore many would argue that Sikhs act without regard for the karmic consequences of their actions.
- Many Sikhs would argue that other concepts are as or more influential on Sikh lifestyle. Others would argue that a religion is not the sum of its individual parts but the whole. No one concept or belief is more or less important than the other. They are all interdependent and as such support and sustain each other.
- Sikhs focus their lives on their relationship with God and being a part of the Sikh community. Many Sikhs believe that their guiding principle in life is their personal relationship with God. This is the guiding influence on their lives and the major influence on their lifestyles.
- The only way out of the cycle, of birth, life and rebirth is to achieve a total knowledge of and union with God.
- Some Sikhs would argue that the greatest influence on their lifestyle is the Sikh code of conduct.

**Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.**