GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

**A LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1
OPTION E: A STUDY OF HINDUISM
A120UE0-1**

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.

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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

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 20 marks
	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: - *religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching* - *influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies* - *cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice* - *approaches to the study of religion and belief.*
5	**17-20 marks** • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**13-16 marks** • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**9-12 marks** • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied. • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**5-8 marks** • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied. • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-4 marks** • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. **N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'**
0	• No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 30 marks *Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.*
5	**25-30 marks** • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**19-24 marks** • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**13-18 marks** • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**7-12 marks** • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-6 marks** • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	• No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1 OPTION E

A STUDY OF HINDUISM

SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

Either,

0 1 **(a)** **Examine the spiritual significance of the festival of Holi.** **[AO1 20]**

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

- Holi reminds people that those who love God will be saved and that those who abuse his devotees will suffer. This is a basic tenet in Hinduism and in many other world religions. It is a belief that gives devotees their trust in God to protect them against their adversaries. It also gives devotees the strength and confidence to follow the teachings of their religion even in the face of violent opposition.
- Holi, like all Hindu festivals can inspire faith in God. It celebrates God's victory over evil and his ability to protect his devotees. Celebrating the events that are the basis for the festival allow Hindus to express awe and wonder at God's power and actions. It spiritually allows devotees to express the greatness of God.
- It can help a Hindu advance on the spiritual path, away from sensual pleasures, towards communion with the divine. The festival celebrates the higher virtues of purity and righteousness. These are the kind of virtues that a Hindu needs to cultivate to attain moksha. During the festival people perform havan and offer the new grains that are harvested to the deities.
- Although there is a lot of amusement during the festival the most important aspect is the worship of God. Which can be fulfilled in many ways. It is the underlying feature to all the rituals and practices associated with the festival.
- Holi also helps people to believe in the virtue of being truthful and honest and to fight against evil. This is a very important part of a Hindu's dharma. Holi also strengthens social cohesion as it is celebrated by Hindus and non-Hindus and revitalises the bonds between people as people during the festival visit friends and relatives exchanging gifts.
- Holi also means sacrifice and the festival is a chance for people to rid themselves of impurities and to focus on the virtues they need to develop - mercy, generosity, selflessness, truthfulness and purity. The development of these virtues allows a Hindu to gain good karma and to ultimately attain moksha. This is expressed during the festival by the giving of charity to the poor.
- On the last day of Holi people take a little fire from the bonfire to their homes. They believe that this will make their home pure, and their bodies free from disease.
- Expect candidates to exemplify these values by referring to the practices of the festival.

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

(b) 'Hindu festivals are only valuable as community occasions.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 30]**

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

- It can be said that celebrations and celebrating is part of the nature of Hinduism. Hindus miss no opportunity to join with family, friends, neighbours and strangers alike to celebrate and have fun, to renew the home and the heart and, most importantly, draw nearer to God. Hinduism is a festival of festivals and perhaps it is true to say that they are more impressive and varied in Hinduism than in any other religion.
- Hindu festivals are without doubt community occasions and are very important and valuable for the perpetuation of the religion. Before each celebration, vows are taken, scriptures are studied and fasts observed in preparation which are all individual acts of intimate devotion that bring the devotee closer to God. However, as each festival begins they become a collective ritual. They provide the spiritual public square where Hindus engage with one another and affirm shared values. Festivals require the participation of the entire community and create harmony among its members, even if not all contemporary participants are aware of the festival's original character.
- Hindus celebrate a number of important festivals, such as Holi and Diwali, in which all classes of society participate. Festivals allow people within society to be different but also to find common ground.
- Festivals also form a lifeline that binds the Hindu culture to the family and to the community. For example, Diwali is symbolically a new start, a time to forgive and forget in all aspects of life including relationships with family and friends. It is the time for community and family celebration with prayers through puja, of togetherness, of sharing all resources, of food and gifts.
- Festivals connect and bring people together in unity and service. Hindu festivals also reflect and sustain the pluralistic values of Hinduism for diverse people to co-exist harmoniously.
- However, it can be strongly argued that they are more than just community occasions.
- Festivals are colourful and joyous expressions of spirituality, religion, philosophy, culture, service and social values. The spiritual aspect is founded on the human instincts of joy and happiness. The philosophical aspect is found in the struggle between the forces of good and evil with the ultimate triumph of the good.
- Festivals are also valuable as a time to donate and help those in need. It is giving resources of any kind, material or spiritual or physical. Seva during festivals means helping those less fortunate in society.
- Festivals are an expression of Hindu identity. For Hindus living in non-Hindu countries festivals are the most visible and memorable sign of their heritage. Festivals serve as a reminder of their identity and allegiance to Hindu traditions and ideals.

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

Or,

0 2 (a) **Examine Hindu teaching about infertility.** [AO1 20]

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

- Hinduism, being a pluralistic belief system, allows for varied responses. However, the sanctity of life is a key principle in Hinduism along with karma. In traditional Hindu belief, having children is viewed as one of the most important aspects of marriage and conception is seen as a divine act.
- Infertility is sometimes seen as a result of karmic factors and women often go through social, psychological and physical suffering in varied degrees due to it. Emotional and mental factors, such as excessive pressure from family or social status for example, could also be a contributing cause. Or, it simply may be brought about by nature, being both divine and karmic.
- Once medical and emotional contributors are mitigated, persistent sterility is viewed by Hinduism as karmic or divine. Hinduism understands and accepts divine and karmic influence in all aspects of life.
- Hindus worship in temples to receive blessings for removing infertility in women/couples. In ancient literature childless couples, be it Sages or Kings, resorted to praying and doing tapasya to overcome infertility e.g. Maharaja Harischandra on the advice of Narada prays to Varuna for a son.
- Religious rituals for neutralizing negative karmic factors, like Putrakameshti Yagna, also might be undertaken, but is mainly by the wealthy as this is expensive.
- Ayurveda, the Indian traditional medicine system, defines infertility as a medical condition for which various treatments are prescribed, and these are available through many Ayurvedic clinics across the world.
- Hinduism accepts scientific methods for assistive reproductive technologies. Infertility treatments are acceptable usually within certain guidelines, most important being the sperm is from either the husband or a close relative. Similarly, in vitro fertilization may be considered acceptable if the sperm and egg are preferably not donated. However, modern Hindus might be more open to anonymous donors.
- Even though surrogacy is seen as a medical treatment, Hindus do not use it commonly as an option to treat infertility.
- Producing a child is one's biological duty applicable all human beings. Those who wanted to renounce the world were only allowed to do so after they had fulfilled all worldly duties. Only by producing children, were a man and woman considered biologically fulfilled.
- If a married couple have not managed to conceive after a reasonable time, they may then seek help. Artificial insemination with the husband's sperm should not be an issue, whereas the use of donated sperm may be seen as adultery even when the woman has not met the donor. Similarly, in vitro fertilisation may be considered acceptable if the sperm and egg are not donated.
- Most Hindus place a great importance on family life and so if they find themselves infertile, they might agree with the use of AIH and IVF to help them to give birth.

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

(b) **'IVF is totally compatible with Hindu teaching.'**

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 30]**

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

- For many Hindus the overriding principle in this issue is the principle of ahimsa. In Hinduism ahimsa means without violence. 'Himsa' means inflicting pain or injury on others. 'Ahimsa' therefore literally means not inflicting pain or injury upon others. It is common for more than one embryo to be produced by IVF and for some to be left over after initial IVF cycles. These embryos can be frozen for use at a later date by the couple, can be used for research or may be destroyed. This destruction according to some Hindus goes against the principle of ahimsa. They believe that the atman is present from the moment of conception and destroying un used embryos is an act of violence. However, others would argue that at an embryonic stage the atman is not yet present so if embryos are tested on or destroyed no life has been ended or harmed.
- Some Hindus would argue that being childless is due to karmic debt from a previous life, so it is pointless to use fertility treatment as the debt has to be paid at some stage.
- Other Hindus would argue that adoption from a relative would be a more appropriate alternative to IVF as the child's family background would be known. Giving a loving home to a child is a good intentional action which in turn produces good karma.
- Most Hindus would place a great importance on family life and so if they find themselves infertile they might agree with the use of IVF to help them to give birth. Hindu scripture describes four ashramas, the second of these is called grihastha. This is the householder stage, where it is their role to create a home and bring up a family.
- Others may view helping childless couples to have children as good action and in accordance with dharma
- Regarding fertility, the emphasis on reproduction is not just to on having children, but on having a male offspring. Many Hindus believe assisted reproductive technologies are acceptable. The most important condition is that the egg and sperm are from a legally married couple.
- S. Cromwell Crawford believes that Hindu bioethics would not find any difficulty with IVF, in relation to the harm/benefit ratio. This view is supported by Swasti Bhattacharyya to an extent. The needs and status of the woman need to be respected.

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

Either,

| 0 | 3 | (a) **Explain the role of the Vedas in Hindu daily life.** [AO1 20]

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

- Many regard the Vedas as the most important since they are regarded as the oldest scriptures in the world. It is believed they were revealed by God at the beginning of time for the benefit of humankind and are therefore inseparable from Brahman. This gives them divine authority and importance.
- The Vedas are mainly comprised of hymns or mantras written in the Sanskrit language. They cover various subjects, from nature to everyday life and behaviour, and form the basis of all other religious writings.
- The Vedas are the law. Most beliefs, concepts, and ceremonies are based on information contained in the Vedas.
- 'Veda' means 'knowledge, wisdom or vision' and the laws of the Vedas regulate the social, legal, domestic and religious customs of the Hindu to the present day.
- The Vedas are made up of four compositions, and each Veda in turn has four parts which are arranged chronologically.
- The Rig Veda - generally considered to be the most important and according to scholars the oldest of the Vedas which contributed to the other Vedas. It is divided into ten books and has 1028 hymns in praise of various deities which are called Riks. It also contains the famous Gayatri mantra and the prayer called the Purusha Shukta – the story of primal man and is an important source of Vedic history. Although the Rig Veda deals mostly with the worship of deities and asking them for worldly benefits such as wealth, health, long life and protection it does refer to other subjects such as the procedure of marriage.
- The Sama Veda - this consists of chants and melodies, sung during worship and the performance of yajna, which carry great significance because of their musical and lyrical quality. Its purpose was liturgical and practical. The hymns are known as Samans and are sung by the Udgatris. The styles of chanting are important to the liturgical use of the verses and the hymns were to be sung according to certain fixed melodies. It can be called a book of hymns for religious rites.
- The Yajur Veda - this can be described as a handbook for priests for use in worship and the performance of yajnas (sacrifices). It is also called the book of formulas. It is divided into two sections – the earlier 'black' and the more recent 'white'.
- The Atharva Veda - this is the most recent of the Vedas and contains 20 books of hymns, mantras and magical incantations which generally are not associated with yajna but reflect the religious concerns of everyday life. Their purpose mostly is to cast charms and spells to protect against death and disease, attract lovers and prevent harm. There are also magical and ritual formulas associated with marriage and funeral practices.

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

(b) **'Hindu texts are still relevant for Hindus in the modern world.'**

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 30]**

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

- Hindu scriptures stress the importance of respect and humility and these moral principles are relevant today because these are the qualities which people look for in others in any relationship. They are timeless qualities.
- Another important concept in the Hindu texts which has impacted lives for thousands of years because it is applicable to all and is still relevant today is karma. Cause and effect is the basic concept that underlies the universe.
- The Vedas although some of the world's oldest forms of literature are still relevant today. They contain relevant philosophical and scientific knowledge.
- The teachings on Hatha yoga are also accredited by Western science to have health benefits.
- The values that Hindu scriptures promote, such as mutual respect, compassion, and humility, throughout its teaching are essential for uplifting an individual's self and help lay the foundation Hindu identity. These are very relevant in today's society.
- The Hindu epics and their teachings are still relevant in today's society because of the values they teach. Values are eternal and timeless and do not depend on the fashion of society.
- Many see stories about gods, goddesses, demons and avatars as completely irrelevant in a scientific world. Many regard them as belonging to an unenlightened age where they tried to explain phenomena which they did not understand with actions of the gods. These phenomena are explained today by science.
- Others would argue that Hindu texts promote beliefs and concepts that are irrelevant in the modern world – some would argue that the varna system is no longer relevant in a society based on equal opportunities and with it the idea of individual dharma having cosmic significance. Others would say that the principle of ahimsa is impractical in a world full of violence.
- Some would argue that the Upanishads are no longer relevant since they are designed to be studied with a guru and in modern society this arrangement is no longer practical.
- However, other Hindus would point to the relevance of the Upanishads as they teach jnana and therefore a way to achieve moksha. They also contain some of the key beliefs of Hinduism which are as relevant today as they have always been.
- Many Hindus would argue that the ideas found in the Vedas are the benchmark for authenticity in the modern world.

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

Or,

| 0 | 4 | (a) **Examine the Hindu moral principle of karma.** [AO1 20]

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

- In Hindu thought 'karma' means 'action' and the fruits of action and is the force that drives reincarnation. It is the principle of cause and effect and reflects the nature of the universe – any activity must be paid back.
- It operates on a moral basis – a good action whether mental or physical leads to a good effect and a bad action to a bad effect. This according to Hinduism is a universal law.
- In the Vedic religion a person's situation in this life is thought to be the result of karma, in the past life or lives as karma is accumulated throughout a person's reincarnated lives.
- It is therefore possible to purify karma and make it good leading the atman to return to Moksha to be united with God.
- There are different aspects of karma which are stored reactions that determine each soul's destiny:
- Sanchita karma – accumulated karma – this is the 'baggage' of karma from all past lives that is brought forward into the present life. It is accumulated over hundreds of births and is like a mountain with each lifetime adding to the store. This is the karmic debt which needs to be erased at some stage of existence to achieve liberation. This can be done through spiritual practices such as meditation. It can be erased through knowledge of Brahman and modified through doing good actions.
- Prarabdha karma – fruit-bearing karma - this is the portion of accumulated karma that has ripened and appears as a particular problem in the present life. It is the portion of karma assigned to be worked out in the present existence. It is a debt which has become overdue and must be paid back. It is the karma responsible for everything about a person's situation in the present life – body, family, race, nation and sex. It cannot be avoided or changed as it is already happening – it is bearing fruit.
- Agami karma – karma in the making - Agami literally means 'not come'. It is the karma that will take effect in the future. As a person tries to resolve past karma, it is unavoidable that new karma is created which may or may not be resolved in the present life. If they are not resolved, then they are stored so that they may be resolved in a future life.
- The law of karma is used in Hinduism to explain the problem of evil that persists in spite of an all-powerful God.
- Actions which lead to good karma are called punya (merit) and include activities such as following the principle of Varnashramadharma, giving to charity and going on pilgrimage. Actions which lead to bad karma are called papa (sin) and include activities such as avoiding one's duty.
- There are many misunderstandings concerning karma. One common misunderstanding is that karma is blamed for suffering. This is not true since blame and responsibility are two different things. Karma means understanding that everyone is responsible for their own lives.

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

(b) **'Karma is the greatest influence on Hindu lifestyle.'**

Evaluate this view. [AO2 30]

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

- The goal of a Hindu's life is to attain Moksha and therefore gaining good karma is fundamentally important in fulfilling this goal. It allows Hindus to break free from the cycle of samsara or to be reborn in a higher varna.
- This means that many Hindus will follow a lifestyle that will gain them good karma, a lifestyle that follows the main principles of the religion. It means following a righteous way of life.
- The concept of karma and belief in it influences many moral decisions taken by Hindus. One example would be in following the principle of ahimsa which generally means 'non-harm' or 'non-violence' towards living beings. Destroying life in a deliberate manner, especially some forms of life results in bad karma.
- Hindus also believe that the next life depend on karma accumulated in this life. Therefore, following a good lifestyle according to Hindus is the only way to ensure a better reincarnation in the next life.
- However, it is impossible to maintain that all Hindus act at all times with regards to the concept of karma and reincarnation. If this were true, there would be no crime in Hindu society.
- In addition, karma is in many ways a principle of cause and effect that is simply a law of the universe or 'the way things are'. Therefore, whilst its influence upon Hindus cannot be denied because it cannot be avoided, at the same time its influence is more that of an underlying principle than an aspirational or inspirational drive.
- Some Hindus believe that their guiding principle in life is their personal relationship with God which is expressed through daily puja and bhakti worship.
- Others believe that the present life should be their only focus.
- Many Hindus believe that Moksha is attained by carrying out dharma and therefore it could be argued that this is the greatest influence on a Hindu's life. Many would argue that Varnashramadharma is the heartbeat of Hinduism.

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

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Or,

0 5 **(a)** **Examine the challenges to Hinduism from secularisation.** **[AO1 20]**

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

- Candidates may begin by attempting to define secularisation – perhaps in terms of the replacement of the authority/explanatory role of religion with science or the loss of the relevance and significance of religion in the modern world.
- They may also give an overview of the challenges facing Hinduism in the context of secularisation – the growth of rational and scientific thought and the challenges this poses to traditional Hindu beliefs. The growth of religious pluralism and the belief that competition reduces credibility. A serious challenge to Hinduism in India is the secularisation of the Indian state.
- A wide range of responses in terms of teachings and of contexts may be considered.
- The ideas of Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda Saraswati about the nature of Hinduism, allow a plurality of ways of responding to secular society. Ram Mohan Roy believed that the perfect society could emerge from a combination of Western scientific rationalism and Eastern spirituality. He advocated the application of reason. Saraswati's response to secularisation or any other challenge to Hinduism was an aggressive defence. He also emphasised an education combining Western rational, scientific thought and Vedic religious education. Through such an education he hoped to create a new identity which could compete with the West on the West's own terms as well as ensuring that Vedic, Indian values were passed on.
- The concept of Hindutva gives Hindus a sense of identity, challenging what some see as its erosion in secular government policy. This is an exclusivist discourse which has led to the emergence of an aggressive Hindu nationalism. There is opposition and hostility directed at Western Imperialism characterised by multinational companies such as Coca-Cola and competing religious ideologies. It is a desire to leave the modern confusion of cultures and return to the past, a time of Indian greatness.
- Hinduism as a complete way of life encompasses science which may be understood to support Hindu beliefs.
- There may be emphasis on the social and psychological benefits of dharma and puja rather than the supernatural.
- Hinduism may offer an ethical stance and security that enables Hindus to function in a secular society. Educational projects and ashrams provide a focus for this teaching.

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

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(b) **'The only effective response to secularisation is the Hindutva response.'**

Evaluate this view with reference to Hinduism. [AO2 30]

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

- The term "Hindutva" comes from V.D. Sarvarkar, a Maharastrian Brahmin. Sarvarkar argued that Hindutva, or, nationalist "Hinduness," stems from 1) geographical unity, 2) racial features, and 3) a common culture, all of which combine to unite Hindus against all "others." The protection of this identity is the basis of the Hindutva response to secularisation.
- However, many scholars feel that far from protecting Hinduism, a structured Hindutva movement threatens the very essence of the religion. They believe that Hinduism's inclusive nature is the most effective response to secularisation.
- Hindutva promotes an exclusivist response and excludes multiple voices, schools of philosophy and even traditions from within the Hindu religion. Their aim is to 'Hinduise' everyone.
- Hindutva aims to protect Hindu identity by promoting a new nationalistic spirit. They want to make India a Hindu rashtra (Hindu nation) and refer to India's territory as 'Bharat' (a Sanskrit name with references in the Puranas), which they claim is a spiritual homeland for Hindus. Within this land Hindu beliefs, practices and rituals would be enforced. This would include the caste system. This rationale also requires minorities to assimilate into Hindu society.
- Following the 'overlapping census,' in 1976 India placed the word secular into its constitution. However, this did not mean the exclusion of religion from the public sphere, but rather, the recognition of all religions by the state. Many would argue that this co-operation between religions is the most effective response to secularisation.
- Many would argue that fundamentalism is only one response to secularisation and that other responses are just as effective or more effective. For example, there is also a process of renewal and continuing vitality of religious beliefs as people shift from traditional religions to a more individualistic spirituality centred on the self.
- Some would argue that religion is not declining, but simply taking a different, more privatised form.
- However, the proponents of the Hindutva response would argue that it is a cultural defence where religion provides a focal point for the defence of national, ethnic, local or group identity in a struggle against an external force such as secularisation.
- It can be argued that Hindutva is the most effective response to secularisation because of its political influence especially through the work of the BJP Hindu nationalist party.
- It could be argued that the traditional religious response to secularisation is the Hindutva response i.e. keeping separate from the surrounding non-Hindu community.
- Another effective response could be in finding common ground with science, seeing it as an activity that reveals the glory of God's creation. Also putting more emphasis on this world rather than the next, chimes with secular attitudes.

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