



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2024

**AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1
OPTION E: AN INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM**

B120UE0-1

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

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 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.

AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions [25 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"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">21-25 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">16-20 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">11-15 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">6-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-5 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions [25 marks] <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	21-25 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	16-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	11-15 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	6-10 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	1-5 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1

OPTION E: AN INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM

SUMMER 2024 MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

1. (a) Explain Gandhi's views on varna and the status of the Dalits. [AO1 25]

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

- Many people do not realise that although Gandhi was completely against untouchability he was in favour of the varna system. However, he also believed that varna and caste were two different things. Gandhi said "I draw as I have always done a sharp distinction between caste and varna. He believed that varna was to do with profession and did not create distinctions between people. That happened when caste was introduced and people were divided into high and low status.
- Gandhi believed that Varnashramadharma was the best and most practical way to organise Hindu society. In his opinion it had nothing to do with people being better or worse than each other. In fact he believed that it provided the basis for an equal society. He also believed that people could be born into one varna and belong to another depending on their qualities or character. Caste in his opinion was completely different. He referred to it as a disgrace that put people in bondage.
- There is no doubt that Gandhi was completely opposed to untouchability. He regarded it with contempt as it led to inequality and people being taken advantage of. He refused to accept the argument that it was the varna system that created untouchability and argued that it came from the fact that Hindus were turning their backs on traditional values. Gandhi believed that untouchability was simply wrong and campaigned against it throughout his life. In an interview in 1937 Gandhi said 'I am a 'touchable' by birth but an 'untouchable' by choice...what I want, what I am looking for and what I should delight in dying for is the eradication of untouchability, root and branch.'
- Gandhi changed the term 'untouchables' into 'Harijans' which means the children of God representing his belief that they should not be outside of society. He regarded the conditions they were forced to live in as a blot on Hinduism. He wrote about their status – "socially they were lepers, economically they were worse than slaves, religiously they were denied entrance to places that were misnamed 'houses of God'." He wanted them placed into the fourth varna.
- Gandhi's opposition to untouchability was not only expressed in words. His actions set Hindus a strong example. When he was only twelve years of age he argued against untouchability in his own home and as a young lawyer in South Africa he did the menial jobs himself to show their dignity. In India he adopted an Untouchable girl as his daughter and insisted that his political followers, many of them wealthy Brahmins, do their own sweeping, toilet cleaning, and rubbish disposal.

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

(b) 'Varna is not practical in today's world.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- It is also an issue to what extent the varna system is practical in modern society. It is also interesting to compare the practicality of the varna system in India with its importance within Hindu communities in non-Hindu countries.
- Many would argue that the concept is far more important in rural areas than in urban communities. The government of villages throughout India continues to be based on two concepts which are related to each other – varnadharma and karma. Many Hindus believe that varnadharma is a divine law and Mahatma Gandhi described it as 'the duty one has to perform' and the 'law of one's being. Following this duty helps Hindus move forward on the path to liberation as it gains good karma and leads to improved status in the next life.
- Other Hindus believe that the caste system has practical benefits. It gives order and structure to society and within that context gives each person a sense of identity and of belonging to a well-defined group within society, which also gives them a purpose in life. Members of a varna have much in common. They share a job specialty and abide by the same rules concerning diet and religion. Because of the rules of endogamy, each varna is also an extended family, for most members are related by blood.
- In urban communities there is a strange dualism. In cities people come into contact with thousands of different people every day, on public transport and in the workplace. It would be impossible to follow the traditional varna rules in this context. However, it would not be true to say that caste identity is not important because many of those who live in cities have retained a strong sense of varna identity. This has led to a kind of work/home dualism. During the day a person may be unconcerned with varna rules but at home in the company of members of the same varna, the ancient varna ceremonies and customs continue to be respected.
- Some would argue further that the growth of individualism has resulted in the fading away of social distinctions. People no longer desire to live in ghettos but work at dissolving differences and merging into mainstream society. However, this has led to an identity crisis among certain sections of society which has led to a greater emphasis on varna relationships.
- Many would argue that the varna system still has an important role in the major events of Hindu life like marriage and religious worship. There are many places in India where shudras are still not allowed to enter the temple or do any kind of puja. In some areas it leads to unequal access to natural as well as man-made resources. However, in modern India relationships between different people and different varnas has certainly become more relaxed. There is more interaction between the varnas and there has been a significant change in the occupation sector which is not now restricted to caste. Opposition still remains by some to inter-varna marriage.
- Varna is not compatible with the goal of equality in modern society. Some would argue that it is a system that disadvantages sections of society in favour of others.
- Varna according to many is not politically or socially acceptable.

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

2. (a) Explain the importance of the four ashramas.

[AO1 25]

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

- The ashramas are the four main stages or periods of life – the student stage; the householder stage; the retired person stage and the ascetic stage.
- They are **important** since the purpose of observing them is to help a person achieve moksha, liberation from reincarnation which is the **ultimate goal** of Hinduism. There are specific duties associated with each ashrama.
- The **brahmacharya** – the student stage – is **important** because it is the **foundation of religious education and practice**. Traditionally boys were expected to live away from home during this stage and study with a guru for several years to foster spiritual values. However, today only a few Brahmin families follow this tradition to the full extent. It is also important since this stage begins for members of the three upper varnas after the ritual of the sacred thread when they are spiritually reborn. The duties at this stage include – studying the Vedas and other texts; living a celibate and simple life; serving the guru and collecting alms for him; learning how to set up and maintain household worship; developing appropriate qualities such as humility; understanding and performing various rituals.
- The **grihastha** – the householder stage – is the stage when a Hindu decides to marry and accept family responsibilities which include having children, forming a family, following a career and becoming an active member of the community. This is **important** as it **ensures continuity of Hindu family lines and traditions**. The duties at this stage include – making money / enjoying pleasure in an ethical manner; performing sacrifice / observing religious rituals; protecting and nourishing family members; teaching spiritual values; giving to charity.
- The **vanaprastha** ashrama– the retired person stage –begins when a man reaches retirement age. When his son has a family and is ready to take over the leadership of the household, he and his wife will retire. Some choose to withdraw into a secluded area, or they may involve themselves more with bhakti of a god or goddess. Others go on pilgrimage when they may be accompanied by their wife but all sexual relations are forbidden. This stage is **really important** as it means **devoting more time to spiritual matters** such as prayer, meditation and going on pilgrimage.
- The **sannyasin** – the ascetic stage –is only available to men who exhibit the qualities of a Brahmin. The sannyasin become wandering hermits, leaving their family and living a life dependant on God alone. They seek spiritual enlightenment and power. The duties at this stage include – controlling the mind and senses, fixing the mind on the Supreme; becoming detached and fearless, fully dependant on God as protector; becoming aware of the self and of God. Whilst this is probably the **most important** of the stages, it does not apply for everyone in life and so is a **‘special ashrama’**. Arguably, the other three stages are more important for the majority of Hindus.

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

(b) 'The ashramas are relevant to Hindus today.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- The ashramas are the four main stages or periods of life – the student stage; the householder stage; the retired person stage and the ascetic stage.
- Many would argue that the four ashramas mirror the structure of human life and that their relevance cannot diminish. However, it is their obligatory nature that is the root of contention.
- The ashrama system has many benefits. It gives each individual a clear framework within which to move through life and emphasises one's obligations to society, while at the same time providing an opportunity to develop one's spiritual side. It further enables each person to know their dharma, and thus to accumulate the good karma that they will need to progress up the varna system in a future rebirth or to achieve moksha. There is no doubt that this framework is a guide that gives life a purpose to many Hindus.
- The four ashramas remain an important ideal in Hindu religious tradition. They are one of the two pillars of Hindu socio-religious tradition, the other being varna. Both are linked together in the Hindu term varnashramadharma which many believe sums up Hinduism very well.
- The ultimate purpose of observing the four ashramas is to help a person achieve moksha, liberation from reincarnation. There are specific duties associated with each ashrama.
- The origins of the ashrama system, like the varna system, are very ancient and also very important within the context of dharma. Individuals can learn and practice their dharma within the ashrama system and by taking the dharmic responsibilities of each stage seriously can work at achieving moksha. However, although they were important foundations in Hindu social and spiritual life, today in modern Hindu society fewer people observe the system.
- It can be argued that the ashrama system is irrelevant to many Hindus. A third of the Hindu population is made up of Shudras, the lowest class in the varna system and the vast majority of them do not observe the four ashramas. Also the custom does not apply to women as they are religiously excluded from the ashrama system.
- In the beginning it was not obligatory for a Hindu to observe the four ashramas. After the first ashrama a person could choose which of the other ashramas he wanted to follow for the rest of his life. However, there was much opposition and criticism of this system as it went against the traditional teaching in Hinduism about the importance of marriage and having children. Therefore, the system was changed which required the individual to observe the four ashramas in one lifetime as a passage to liberation. It could be argued that the original system mirrors much that happens in modern society where many choose not to conform to the traditional structure of society. This makes the ashramas irrelevant to the structure of their lives and the practices of their lifestyle.

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

Section B

3. (a) Examine the nature and importance of puja in the home in Hinduism.

[AO1 25]

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

- “Puja” can be performed in the home, temple, during ceremonies and at festivals. Every Hindu home must have a personal shrine at an appropriate place in the house. It is imperative that every Hindu should do daily puja at home. A daily puja usually consists of a simple worship of offerings, such as an offering of light, water and incense, and/or fruit, followed by an aarti.
- Puja is a sanskrit word which loosely translated means reverence or worship and refers to the worship Hindus perform daily, especially of the sacred image – Murti. Worship of the Murti is central to Hinduism and helps many Hindus develop and express their relationship with God. They are more than meditational aids or representations of the different aspects of God. To many Hindus the Murti is considered to be God or the deity it represents.
- Hindus do not have to visit a mandir and therefore puja in the home, a daily occurrence, is the most popular form of puja. It is usually conducted by the most senior woman in the household.
- A Hindu home will have a shrine which is usually colourful and bright and contain offerings of food, water, fragrance and light. In other parts of the home there could be murtis or pictures of the deities except in the toilet or bathroom which are ritually unclean rooms. One of the most common places to find the main shrine is in the kitchen. This is not surprising as it is one of the ritually cleanest rooms in the house. Sometimes the murtis are kept in cupboards which are opened for puja. There could also be pictures of ancestors and of modern gurus.
- Most puja usually include bathing and dressing the deity and the offering of various items to the deity such as water, perfume, flowers and often lighting a candle or incense. It often ends with the offering of vegetarian food.
- It is immediately followed by the Arti ceremony. Most puja generally include a minimum of 16 devotional acts which include : The spirit of God is invited to enter the Murti by sprinkling rice grains on it and touching the eyes and heart of the Murti with a blade of grass dipped in ghee. A seat is offered to god by spreading rice grains in a copper dish below the Murti. Water is offered to wash the feet and the feet of the Murti are touched with a wet flower. Fresh water is offered as a drink to the Murti. The Murti is bathed symbolically with water and a honey-yogurt mixture. Clothes are offered to the Murti and a red cloth is draped around the neck and shoulders of the deity. Holy thread is offered and draped around the Murti. Sandalwood paste and red and yellow powder is put on the Murti’s forehead. Flowers are arranged around the Murti. Incense is lit and waved before the deity. Light in the form of a ghee lamp is waved before the deity. Food is offered to the deity. Fruit is offered to the deity. Flowers and prayers offered to the deity.
- The relationship between devotees and deities is personal. Devotional Hinduism is based on the love of the devotee for God. Love is the basis of the important relationship between devotee and deity. This relationship and devotion can be expressed in many ways as there are no specific rules that must be followed. Scriptures and law books provide guidelines but following them is an individual choice. The ways the relationship is expressed depends to an extent on family traditions. The preparation and offering of food to the deities at the home shrine allows many Hindus to serve God (Seva) and to express their sense of devotion and love. This cements the relationship between devotee and God. In Bhakti Marga a passionate, personal relationship between devotee and deity is developed.

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

(b) 'Puja is far more than a daily ritual for Hindus.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Some would agree with the statement as puja is often seen as a ritual which is done out of 'want' not 'need'; this questions the value of puja as an experience is only valued if it is done out of need.
- Others would argue that it is a chore repeated day after day and as such has no real meaning. The devotee is not open to a spiritual experience as the devotee is not searching for one.
- Performance of the ritual may not necessarily ensure moral behaviour during the day. This questions whether it is a religious experience because of its lack of influence. Religious experiences by definition have a strong and lasting effect on those who experience them.
- Many would argue that puja is a multi-sensory experience. It helps Hindus to establish, express and enhance their relationship with the deities. The main aim and focus of puja for the devotee is to make a spiritual connection with the divine – it allows the devotee to experience direct communication with the gods. This is a direct religious experience.
- Darshan is a reciprocal act between the worshiper and the deity. Not only does the devotee "see" the deity, but the deity is understood to "see" the worshiper.
- By doing darshan properly a devotee develops affection for God, and God develops affection for that devotee.
- The entire aim of performing puja is to create a protective layer of spiritual forces around the devotee, warding off all evils and negative forces, thereby creating an environment to lead a happy and peaceful life according to the values of Hinduism.
- Puja purifies the heart, generates harmonious vibrations, steadies the mind, purifies and ennobles the emotions and eventually leads to communion, fellowship or God-realisation.
- Puja changes the mental substance, destroys Rajas and Tamas and fills the mind with Sattva or purity.
- Puja is conducive to spiritual advancement.
- Puja can be linked to bhakti yoga.

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

4. (a) Explain different aspects of karma and their influence on types of reincarnation. [AO1 25]

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. According to some it reflects the Newtonian principle that every action produces an equal and opposite reaction.
- 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.
- There are different aspects of karma which are stored reactions that determine each soul's destiny – Sanchita karma – accumulated karma; Prarabdha karma – fruit-bearing karma; Agami karma – karma in the making.
- 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. Tulsidas, a Hindu saint said "Our destiny was shaped long before the body came into being." 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.
- In Vedic literature there are analogies which attempt to explain the three types of karma and their relationship – Sanchita karma is portrayed as a granary. The portion taken from the granary and put in the shop for future daily sale corresponds to agami. That which is sold daily represents prarabdha.
- 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. Reincarnation is necessary to work off the karma gathered in previous lives.
- It is therefore possible to purify karma and make it good leading the atman to return to Moksha to be united with God.
- The concept of reincarnation and karma are wrapped up in each other.

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

(b) 'Karma has no real influence on the lives of Hindus.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- It is impossible to maintain that all Hindus act at all times with regards to the concept of karma and reincarnation. If this assertion were true, then Hindu society would be a utopian society with no crime. It is not and therefore many Hindus act without regard for the karmic consequences of their actions.
- Some Hindus believe that their guiding principle in life is their personal relationship with God which is expressed through daily puja and bhakti worship. This is the guiding influence on their lives and the major influence on their lifestyles.
- Others believe that the present life should be their only focus. Their duty is to follow and implement their duty as Hindus in this life without regards to any future reincarnations.
- The goal of a Hindu's life is to attain Moksha and therefore gaining good karma is fundamentally important in fulfilling this goal. 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. One such principle would be varnashramadharma where a Hindu would be rewarded for following his duty according to his varna and stage in life. This is one reason why these principles are still important in Hindu society. Another important aspect of lifestyle that would gain good karma is following the four aims in life – dharma, artha, kama and moksha.
- The concepts of karma and reincarnation and belief in them influence 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. Breaking this principle generates bad karma. Therefore, in moral matters such as suicide, euthanasia and abortion the concepts of karma and future reincarnation would be factors that would influence any decision.
- Hindus accept their status in this life as being a consequence of accumulate karma in the past life. They also believe that the next life depend on karma accumulated in this life. Therefore, following a good lifestyle according to the guiding principles of Hinduism is the only way to ensure a better reincarnation in the next life.

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

5. (a) **Examine the importance of the Aryans and their culture to the development of Hinduism.** [AO1 25]

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

- The Aryans spoke a different language, worshipped different gods, and had different cultural practices. Their influence in India was prominent as the majority of Indians today speak and value the Indo-Aryan language and culture. The Aryans originally came from Central Asia, east of the Caspian Sea. It is a debatable issue amongst scholars whether this was a forceful invasion or rather waves of settlement over a long period of time.
- They first settled in the Punjab before gradually spreading southward and dominating north India. They called themselves Arya meaning noble ones so as to differentiate themselves from the inhabitants of the Indus Valley. They described themselves as tall and fair skinned and the people they had conquered or replaced as Drayus who were dark skinned and squat nosed. They considered themselves because of this to be superior to other races in India.
- Many scholars have suggested that the original purpose of the varna system was to keep these two groups apart and to keep the superior Aryans from being 'polluted' by the inferior inhabitants of the Indus Valley.
- The Aryans were primarily warrior-nomadic people and their main source of wealth was cattle. However, after the migration into India there was a greater urgency to retain copper, iron ore, and minerals for profits. During this time, the head of the household gained respect primarily through trade, manufacturing, or farming.
- The Aryan society was patriarchal and much of the importance was placed on the male, therefore an abundance of Aryan gods were males. The women in the Aryan culture were usually housewives and the women were said to be very skilled in weaving.
- In technological advancements, the Aryans were mostly interested in making chariots, tools and weapons and did not concentrate much efforts into building anything else. The Aryans annexed various tribes and communities on their journey towards India and were successful because they were nomadic people and their food supply of cattle was easy to transport. They had mastered the art of using horse-chariots for war and they also held great knowledge of heavy transportation using ox-carts.
- The male's communal life consisted of sabha, "denoting both the tribal assembly and its mote hall", which was for the males only, and featured gambling, fights, chariot races and female dancers. The Aryans had a simplistic culture; however, their language was influential and distinctive.
- The Aryans were a pastoral people in contrast to the inhabitants of the Indus valley who were urban. Although they brought the Iron Age to India scholars believe they were illiterate and therefore their scriptures, the Vedas, were passed orally in the Sanskrit language from one generation to another.
- They built no cities and their culture was on the whole very mundane. Their way of life was semi-nomadic and their social structure patriarchal and tribal. The Aryans had domesticated the horse and the cow – the horse has great significance in the Vedas and since there is no mention of horses in the Indus Valley records it has been suggested that the Aryans used a mounted invasion. The cow was a symbol of prestige in Aryan society. They built houses of wood and reed with farming cattle being their main occupation although other crafts such as carpentry and metal work were used in the villages.
- The Aryans worshipped warlike gods, in particular Indra who is called the 'smasher of cities' and is often used to support the Aryan invasion theory. There is no doubt their influence was considerable and in less than fifty years they had Aryanized Northern India.

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

(b) 'The origins of Hinduism can never be known.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Hinduism is the oldest of the six major world religions, many believing that it dates back 5,000 years and the search for its origins is both interesting and controversial. Its traditions are rooted in antiquity and contain so much diversity that many scholars argue that it is not Hinduism but Hinduisms that need to be considered.
- Another problem is that Hinduism as a concept is not originally an Indian one and much of the literature written about Hinduism comes from outside the tradition. Many also believe that it is not a religion at all but a culture, a way of life.
- The word 'Hindu' is not an Indian word but Persian and was used by the Mughals when they conquered Northern India in the sixteenth century to describe the people living around the Sindhu or Indus river. Interestingly the word was used to describe a people, a way of life and not a religion.
- The British when they conquered India adopted the term 'Hinduism' and applied it to all the different native religious ideas and practices.
- Many within the Hindu tradition would argue that Hinduism as we know it has no beginning, that it is timeless.
- Many scholars would argue that the Indus Valley period can be understood as a pre-Hindu period although many have argued that some features still remain in modern Hinduism – e.g. possible evidence of the worship of a goddess of fertility, ritual bathing and a prototype of Shiva. The problem is that the Indus valley script has not been deciphered.
- Others argue that Hinduism was brought by the Aryans from Central Asia. However, this invasion or incursion is seen by many as a flawed theory and has become a source of dispute and invasion theorists are often accused of imperialist motives in arguing that Hinduism really came from the West. Proponents of this theory argue that the Vedic culture was that of primitive Nomads who came from Central Asia with their horse-drawn chariots and iron weapons and conquered the cities of the more advanced Hindu culture because of their superior battle tactics. As evidence it was argued that no horses, chariots or iron have been discovered in Indus valley sites.
- In response opponents argue that very little has been discovered to support the theory and that archaeological evidence discredits it. Excavations have discovered horses not only in Indus Valley sites but also in pre-Indus sites proving that the use of horses was common in ancient India. There has also been evidence of the use of the wheel, and an Indus seal showing a spoked wheel as used in chariots, has also been found, suggesting the use of chariots.
- Another part of the Aryan invasion theory that has been challenged is the idea of nomads using chariots. Chariots are not the vehicles of nomads and are only suitable on flat land and would have been totally unsuitable for crossing mountains and deserts as would have been required for an Aryan invasion.
- Many see the origins of Hinduism in Aryan religion that was centred on the purifying qualities of fire and influencing the gods through ritual sacrifice. They also used Sanskrit and brought the Vedas.
- Although features of both Indus Valley and Aryan civilization persist in contemporary Hinduism it is impossible to speak of origins with any certainty.

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