

**CONFERENCE VERSION**



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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**AUTUMN 2020**

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

**B120UE0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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 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;"><b>Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions</b> 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"> <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>21-25 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>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>16-20 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>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>11-15 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>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6-10 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>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-5 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>• 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>

<b>Band</b>	<b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 25 marks</b> <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>21-25 marks</b> <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>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>16-20 marks</b> <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>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>11-15 marks</b> <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>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>6-10 marks</b> <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>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>1-5 marks</b> <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>• 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>

## **Component 1**

### **Option E: An Introduction to Hinduism**

#### **Mark Scheme**

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

#### **Section A**

1. (a) **Examine the main features of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.** [AO1 25]

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

##### **Vaishnavism**

- Vaishnavism is a branch of Hinduism that worships Vishnu or one of his avatars as the Supreme God. It is principally monotheistic but some would argue that it is pantheistic as Vaishnavites believe all other gods serve Vishnu.
- Vaishnavism is very devotional in nature and emphasises complete devotion to Vishnu or one of his avatars. It also emphasises the personal aspects of God and a personal relationship with him.
- Vaishnavism also teaches that God and the soul are distinct from each other.
- Their main aim is the attainment of moksha which is only possible after death when the soul realises union with Vishnu's body, as part of him yet maintaining its individual personality. Vishnu being the soul of the universe.
- For Vaishnavites the highest path to attaining Moksha is the path of Bhakti which allows devotees to communicate with and receive the grace of Vishnu.
- The most important Vaishnavite scriptures are the Vedas and Puranas and Vaishnavite worship is full of ecstatic dancing and chanting.

##### **Shaivism**

- Shaivism is the branch of Hinduism that worships Vishnu as the supreme God
- Shaivites are Monistic Theists – they recognise the existence of other gods but only as expression of the Supreme God.
- According to Shaivites God cannot be limited to any form or body and that is why Shiva is often worshipped in the form of a linga which symbolises the entire universe.
- Shaivism is a diverse, deep and mystic tradition. The aim of Shaivas is to break the cycle of birth, death and rebirth and to reach Moksha.
- Shaivas worship Shiva in two forms – as a linga and in human form.
- Shaivism places great emphasis on parts of the Vedas which specifically praise Shiva.

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

**(b) 'Vaishnavism and Shaivism are religions in themselves.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Many have argued that Hinduism cannot be regarded as one religion as it is so diverse in nature. Many therefore believe it would be more correct to refer to Hinduisms.
- Many argue therefore that Vaishnavism and Shaivism are not traditions within Hinduism but religions in themselves.
- Many regard them as being monotheistic - they are completely devoted to their one god and followers of Vishnu and Shiva are known by the name of their respective gods.
- Many Vaishnavites and Shaivites do not recognise any other gods. They refer to themselves as Vaishnavites and Shaivites rather than as Hindus.
- In terms of rituals, festivals and practices Vaishnavism and Shaivism differ greatly, each having their own specific traditions. They also have their own temples, dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva respectively.
- In the past there has been tension between them, tension that was more similar to tension between differing religions rather than between traditions within the same religion.
- However, some would refute the truth of the statement and argue that Hinduism although very diverse is one religion.
- They would argue that Hinduism is an all - encompassing tradition which has wide variety in terms of beliefs, practices and rituals.
- Hindus believe in one supreme God, Brahman and that Shiva and Vishnu are manifestations of Brahman as are all other deities within Hinduism.
- They would argue that the worship of Vishnu and Shiva is ultimately the worship of Brahman and that Shaivism and Vaishnavism are different paths to Brahman. In this sense therefore, all followers of Vishnu and Shiva are Hindus.

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



**2. (a) Examine Hindu beliefs about Brahman.**

**[AO1 25]**

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

- Brahman is the name given to the Ultimate Reality that cannot be sufficiently explained. Brahman is considered to be eternal, genderless, omnipotent, without form and indescribable.
- The physical world is created and sustained through the breath of Brahman. Brahman is the origin of all things and each thing is a part of Brahman.
- Hindus believe that Brahman may be experienced in many different forms. Each god is an aspect of Brahman or identical with Brahman itself.
- Brahman is described as being composed of three qualities: sat, chit and ananda. Sat is pure being; chit is pure consciousness or awareness; and ananda is pure bliss. This means that Brahman exists, is aware and is blissful, but does not seek any further description.
- Brahman can be understood as Saguna Brahman (God with attributes) and Nirguna Brahman (God without attributes).
- Brahman is sometimes thought of as having attributes such as those of the Supreme Person and is given titles like Ishvara or Bhagavan (Lord). In the bhakti tradition the person who worships and adores God personally as Lord Vishnu is an example of someone who understands God with attributes.
- God is also described as having no attributes and no names since all descriptions are incomplete and limiting. Some devotees maintain that, because God is ultimately beyond all the words and thoughts which humans possess, then representations of God can only lead the person astray and limit God's true scope.
- Some Hindus hold a monotheistic view of the relationship between Brahman and atman believing that atman is only a part of Brahman. Others take a monistic view believing that everything is made up of one essential essence and that Brahman and atman are one.

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

**(b) 'Brahman and atman are identical.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Brahman and atman are often referred to as God and soul but these Western terms are misleading. It can be argued that a better understanding of both would be spirit. The relationship is much more profound and mysterious.
- The followers of Advaita Vedanta believe that Brahman and atman are identical. There are no separate atmans in living things only Brahman penetrating and supporting the entire universe. Moksha is achieved by recognising and experiencing this. Everything else is an illusion (maya).
- However, the proponents of Dvaita Vedanta would argue that they are different, separate and distinct from one another. This is the belief that two things exist, separate and distinct from one another – one is the atman (usually referred to as jiva) which exists independently within all living things and Brahman saguna the personal god underlying reality (usually referred to as Ishvara). They refute the non-dualistic Advaita philosophy.
- They disagree that everything is Brahman and believe that each jiva is an image of Ishvara – they are distinct and separate, have similar qualities but are completely unrelated.
- There are passages in the Upanishadas that seem to support the idea of the relationship between Brahman and atman being dualistic. However, the main message of the Upanishads is a monistic one that Brahman and atman are one and that the goal of a Hindu's existence is to experience the unity of this oneness that is the self becoming one with the universal Self. This is the meaning of the well-known words of the Chandogya Upanisad – 'Tat tvam asi' – 'That art thou'.
- In support of a monist view is the comparison of space in a jar and space outside it. The space in the jar is temporarily confined as the atman is confined in the body. However, the space inside the jar and outside it are the same and when the jar breaks they become one just as atman and Brahman are really one.
- Traditionally, this unity is achieved through the process of yoga. The Sanskrit term is yukta which means 'yoking' or bringing together.
- Many Hindus would argue that it is impossible to know the relationship between Brahman and atman rather than to say that it is without doubt a close relationship

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

## Section B

3. (a) **Examine the role of the Ramayana in Hindu daily life.** [AO1 25]

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

**Ramayana:**

- Ramayana one of the two great Indian epics and offers lifestyle models to Hindus
- Rama the hero of the epic lived his whole life by the rules of dharma. Hindus regard him as a hero and teach their young people to 'be as Rama' or 'be as Sita'.
- Ramayana is widely used to show moral values and ethics.
- It shows the ideal relationship between brothers. It also shows the duty of brothers standing up for each other in times of need. Lakshmana gave up all his status as a prince to voluntarily live with his brother in exile.
- It is also used to show the importance of honouring a promise made. When Dasrath began to weaken on actually keeping his promise and pleaded with Rama not to leave, Rama reminded his father of the value of a promise given.
- It is also used as a model of the 'ideal son' and deep love and devotion to parents. Rama states that he would not dishonour his father by breaking the promise he had made to Kaikeyi.
- It also teaches Hindus the values of life and the ways to uphold them. Characters in the Ramayana are role models in developing divine qualities – righteousness, purity, patience, devotion and forgiveness.
- The Ramayana deals with various aspects of daily life – love, duty to superiors, treachery, devotion to parents, selflessness.
- The character of Ravana teaches people can ruin themselves by following selfish ambitions.
- Dussehra is a great Hindu festival and is celebrated all over India. The festival relates to Rama's victory over Ravana.

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

**(b) 'The Vedas are the most important Hindu texts.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

**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.
- They embody the entire range of knowledge spanning the sacred and secular. Their truths are eternal and timeless.
- They are shruti texts not of human origin and are still used today for ritual ceremonies and as a source of great wisdom and truth.
- However, the Upanishads also have a very special status because they explain the Vedas and reveal sacred truths in philosophical formulas. They are not products of human intelligence but the whisperings of God to man.
- They are regarded as being as relevant and inspiring today as they were when they were first written. They are a mix of philosophy and practicality.
- They teach that everything must be done out of love for God and this is what gives them their importance.
- The great Hindu epics the Mahabharata and the Ramayana are smriti scriptures which means that the teachings are remembered rather than being directly revealed by a divine power. Some would argue that this diminishes their importance but others point out that they are well known by all Hindus.
- They are of human origin and guide the daily conduct of individuals. They also list the codes and rules which govern the actions of Hindu communities. They are open and accessible to all regardless of social background and education.
- Although the Bhagavad Gita is a section of the Mahabharata many Hindus give it a special status. It is the most famous and well known of all Hindu scriptures. Many believe it not only gives wisdom but very valuable practical advice for life.

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

**4. (a) Examine the concept of Varnashramadharma in Hinduism. [AO1 25]**

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

**Varna**

- The word 'varna' literally means 'kind', although it is sometimes translated as 'colour' and is sometimes referred to in English as 'caste'.
- The origin of the varna system can be traced to the Aryan invasion of India in the second millennium BCE. They devised a class system to organise the new society created by their arrival. Initially they created a system of three varnas, later expanded to include a fourth – the Shudra.
- Hindus would also point to the religious origin of the varna system which is its divine justification. It is not a human hierarchy but a divinely ordained system. In the Rig Veda, the Purusha Sukta hymn refers to the sacrifice of a huge primeval man or giant called Purusha from whom the four varnas came.
- Since the Brahmins (the priests), came from the creator's mouth they are the purest. It is also the mouth that is needed for chanting the sacred scriptures and leading others in important religious ritual.
- The Kshatriya emerged from his arms and are strong and meant to be soldiers and the protectors of others.
- The Vaishya because they came from his abdomen/thighs are meant for craft and responsible for keeping society's stomach full and provide the necessary things for the rest of society.
- The Shudra, because they emerged from his feet are considered as an impure or dirty part of a person's body and are therefore meant to be menial workers to support the rest of society.

**Dharma**

- Hindus believe that the universe is ordered and that each person has a role to play within it. If people fulfil their roles, then the universe operates harmoniously. However, if they act against or outside their given role they threaten cosmic order. Their role is their duty or dharma.
- Each varna has its own specified dharma and what may be acceptable to one section of society might be totally unacceptable to another.
- Every Hindu must follow general moral codes and each has duties according to his or her varna. This is varnadharma.
- Brahmin – These are the providers of education and spiritual leadership.
- Kshatriyas – These are the protectors of society.
- Shudras – These are the workers.

**Ashrama**

- There are also four 'ashramas' or stages of life through which an individual progresses spiritually.
- Each one has its particular focus and duty (dharma). The four stages are brahmacharya (student stage), grihastha (householder stage), vanaprastha (retirement stage) and sannyasin (renunciation).

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

**(b) 'The varna system can never be justified.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Gandhi defended the varna system arguing that it had been unjustly criticised because people did not realise or understand the difference between varna and caste.
- Ambedkar saw the varna system as unjust and the cause of untouchability.
- Many outside the religion of Hinduism see the varna system as being unjust. However, many Hindus would argue that these criticisms are often based on misunderstandings or lack of knowledge. They point to social divisions and inequalities based on wealth and/or family status in other parts of the world and that in comparison to some of these the varna system is more humane and gentler.
- Some would argue that the varna system leads to exploitation of the weak by the socially and politically privileged. Others would support this by arguing that it is socially divisive leading to lack of trust, prejudice and resentment.
- Others argue that because it gave preferential treatment to some it had a detrimental effect on the growth of the nation because it was based on birth rather than on individual talent.
- It can also be argued that it restricts the ambitions of many since the path that they wish to follow does not fit in with the duties of the varna they belong to.
- Others could argue that the varna system is used by the socially privileged varnas to oppress the lower ones.
- It can also be argued that the varna system is an important reason for many Hindus to convert to other religions.
- It is also responsible according to many of creating a class of people outside society.
- Many on the other hand would refute these claims arguing that the varna system gives order and structure to society where all people have an identity and purpose in life.
- Others would point to the varna system safeguarding Hindu traditions and faith.
- The varna system also since it is associated with jobs serves as a guild or labour union giving them protection against exploitation and helping to set a fair wage.

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

**5. (a) Examine the spiritual significance of the events of Durga Puja. [AO1 25]**

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

- There are many stories which influence the celebration of Durga Puja and is one of the main reasons why this festival is celebrated in different ways in different regions. One story which forms the background to this festival is the Ramayana. The creation of Durga herself is also celebrated during the festival. The Mahabharata is another series of Hindu stories that play a role in the festival. Another story that has an influence on the festival and its practices is the story of Kautsa.
- Durga Puja or Navaratri starts on the first and ends on the tenth day of the bright half of Aswin (September-October).
- In Bengal her image is worshipped for nine days and then cast into water. The tenth day is called Vijaya Dasami or Dussera (the "tenth day"). Processions with her image are taken out along the streets of villages and cities.
- In Bengal, Durga Puja is a great festival. All who live away from home return during the Puja days. The goddess is welcomed with a mother's love and on the last day her image is sent away with motherly tears to signify Durga having to leave her mother.
- On Mahalaya Durga is invoked into her image and six days later the main festival begins.
- On Mahashasthi or the sixth day, Durga is decorated with the various weapons that she has received from the different gods to fight the buffalo demon Mahishasura.
- The following days, Saptami, Ashtami and Navami are important in their own way, starting with the setting of the banana plant which is supposed to bring in the life of Durga. Ashtami or the eighth day was the day when the demon was killed by the goddess and therefore plays a very important part in the festival. On Navami, aartis are held everywhere treating the goddess with conches, mirrors, silver hand fans and other festive items.
- Finally comes the last day of Vijaya Dashmi, or the tenth day when it is time for Durga to go back to her husband, Lord Shiva, on Mount Kailash. There is a fond farewell by the ladies of the house with vermilion and sweets, as well as tears for the impending separation. She is led ceremoniously to the banks of the Ganga and immersed so that she can journey back to her husband.
- The main feature of the festival is the dancing around the shrine to Durga which has been built especially for the occasion. Many Hindus also fast, eating only one meal of fruit and sweet foods made from milk each day. Prayers are also offered for the protection of health and property.
- Durga puja concludes with the Kanya puja where nine young girls representing the nine forms of Goddess Durga are worshipped. Their feet are washed as a mark of respect for the Goddess and then they are offered new clothes as gifts by the worshipper.
- One feature of Durga Puja that is particularly significant is the worship of Durga as the mother goddess.

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

**(b) 'Puja in the home is more important than puja in the mandir.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 25]**

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

- Many would argue that home puja is more important since it is part of a Hindu's dharma. Hindus according to their religion do not have to visit a temple regularly to worship.
- Home puja is conducted every day and this gives it extra importance. It also enables the worshipper to build a personal relationship with God.
- Home puja also gives the woman of the household a role of importance in washing and feeding the murtis, something that would not be possible in a temple. In this respect home shrines can be said to be far more intimate.
- The extra importance of home puja can also be seen in its educational role in passing on the traditions of Hinduism through the family and to unite the family in the worship of their favourite household deity. In this context home puja can be seen by many as being more important than temple puja as it is the worship of a personal deity rather than the more generic gods at the temple.
- It can be argued that temple worship is more important in countries where Hinduism is not regarded as the official religion. Visiting temples gives Hindus in these countries an opportunity to meet as a community. The temple provides a social environment for the Hindu community to meet and prevents Hindus feeling alone.
- Temples play an important part in safeguarding Hindu culture especially in Western countries where it is easy for the religion to lose its identity.
- In Hinduism temples are regarded as where God lives and therefore are regarded as the best place to receive darshan, a glimpse of God. The murtis in a temple are thought to have much more significance than home murtis as they have been consecrated. Therefore, the presence of God is thought to be far greater in the temple than the home.
- Temples are also highly symbolic and help the worshipper to focus on God and to strengthening the relationship between them.
- Sanskrit is the language of Hinduism, the key to understanding its rich heritage and priests in temples speak Sanskrit and ensure its survival.
- Many Hindus would argue that home and temple puja are of equal importance and significance in Hinduism and in the everyday lives of Hindus.

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