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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2022**

**AS  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 1  
OPTION F: AN INTRODUCTION TO SIKHISM**

**2120UF0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2022 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

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

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

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

### **Positive marking**

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme. Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

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

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

### **Rules for Marking**

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

### **Banded mark schemes**

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

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

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

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance, if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

### **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>     15 marks</p> <p><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>13-15 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 shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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 /vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 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 shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>• Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 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 shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>• Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 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>• Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>• Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 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>• Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>• Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B.     A maximum of 1 mark 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 15 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>13-15 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>The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>10-12 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 response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>7-9 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>The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>4-6 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>Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</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> <li>Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>1-3 marks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</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 grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> <li>Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

**GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES – UNIT 1**  
**OPTION F: AN INTRODUCTION TO SIKHISM**  
**SUMMER 2022 MARK SCHEME**

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

**Section A**

1. (a) **Examine the significance of the concept of sewa in Sikhism.**

**[AO1 15]**

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

- Sewa is 'selfless service to others' and often takes the form of physical work, helping the community, gurdwara or langar, mental work, trying to understand the teachings of the Gurus and helping others to do the same, or by giving money to charity. This influences Sikh lifestyle and moral decisions when deciding if an action is in keeping with the aims of sewa or not.
- The practice of sewa also affirms and expresses the Sikh belief in the equality of all human beings.
- The Guru Granth Sahib also says there can be no worship without the practice of good deeds. Sewa influences Sikhs to live in a way that fulfils this aim.
- Sewa is service rendered in accordance with God's will and without expectation of reward. It should be done alongside simran or remembrance of God because in order to love and serve God one must love and serve creation within which God's light dwells. This view influences Sikh attitudes and behaviour towards others.
- Sewa is vital to the spiritual path cultivating humility and selflessness neutralising ego (haumai).
- It can be sewa of the mind (Man), i.e. developing and using talents and creativity and giving to others, giving material possessions and donating to charity (Dan) or physical service (Tan)
- It can be observed in traditional ways such as service in the gurdwara, especially providing and serving food in the langar; langar as the 'laboratory of sewa'.
- Another way sewa can be expressed is through Khalsa Aid, which serves suffering humanity by providing humanitarian assistance and financial aid to victims of disasters..
- Sewa promotes the Sikh principles through projects which promote education and material and financial support to needy communities.

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

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

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Many would argue Sikh teaching on sewa is theoretical rather than practical.
- Others would argue that it is an outdated concept and that the needs of others are met by the state and that the opportunities to serve others are limited.
- The concept is also too wide ranging to be practical since it includes all of humanity. Cultural and religious differences make it impractical.
- It could be argued that sewa is contrary to human nature. The main object of sewa is to eliminate the ego which at best is very difficult if not impossible. It should not be done with a secret or hidden agenda to win approbation, honour or position. Sikhism teaches that people should try to become less self-centred (manmukh) and more God-centred (gurmukh) and should live their lives in the selfless service of others (sewa).
- Sewa must be done because a Sikh wants to serve Waheguru and not for personal gain. This again can be difficult in practical terms.
- Another aspect of Sewa is dan - material service to other people, e.g., giving money to charities or giving time to help people who are in need. The practicality of this aspect depends on the personal circumstances of a Sikh
- It is an important aspect of Sikhism to provide a service to the community, including the Sikh community (Khalsa) and others. All Sikhs should be prepared to give up some of their time, talents and energy to help others. Sikhism requires service to Waheguru (God), to the Khalsa and to all of humanity. However, this service can be very practical and local in nature e.g. shoe-care at the temple, the cleaning of the premises, cooking and serving in the Langar.
- Another aspect of sewa is mental service, e.g., studying the Guru Granth Sahib Ji and teaching it to others. This is again practical in the life of a Sikh.
- Sikhs accept sewa as a necessary practical expression of their faith. As the Guru Granth Sahib states 'A place in God's court can only be attained if we do service to others in this world... Wandering ascetics, warriors, celibates, holy men, none of them can obtain moksha without performing sewa.'
- Sewa depends on a person's abilities and inclination. Sewa can be done in any field in which the individual is interested provided it is done with sincerity and without thoughts of the self.

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



2. (a) **Examine the significance of the concept of Kirat Karo in Sikhism.** [AO1 15]

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

- Kirat Karo is one of the three pillars of Sikhism. It means “to work and earn one’s living through hard work, to live a family way of life and practise truthfulness and honesty in all dealings.”. It creates a more caring and strong community. This is one of the most important ideals and values in Sikhism.
- To carry out good deeds and earn an honest and pure livelihood by exercising God given skills, abilities and talents for the benefit and improvement of the individual, family and society at large.
- To work with determination and focus and not to be lazy and waste time.
- To do this work without personal gain but with the motivation of dedicating the work to God.
- This is earning a livelihood without deceit or cheating. Honest earning keeps the mind pure.
- It is strongly advocated to do work and earn an honest living, and as well not to be a burden on anyone or on the society
- The Sikh faith rejects renunciation - detachment from home, family or work, and strongly advocates the house-holder’s life. This is one of the beliefs that distinguishes Sikhism from other Asian traditions.
- It is rooted in a community philosophy and not in an individualistic way of life as is common in many places today. Some would argue that the concept of ‘community’ is diminishing in the modern world.
- It is an expression of Sikh values.
- It is a cornerstone of the Sikh vision of a caring self-supporting community.
- Sikhs believe that faith without action is worthless and Kirat Karo expresses faith in action.
- Kirat Karo is an expression of a Sikh’s faith in and love for God.

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

**(b) 'Actions are more important than faith in Sikhism.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Many would challenge this contention on the basis aspects of religion cannot be taken out of context and that a religion, its beliefs and practices must be taken as a whole. They are completely related to each other. Actions are an expression of belief. In this context the three pillars of Sikhism are linked and inter-dependant on each other – Naam Japo - Keeping God in mind at all times; Kirat Karo - Since God is truth, a Sikh seeks to live honestly; Vand Chhako - Giving to charity and caring for others.
- Others would point out that the contention seems to suggest that faith and deeds can somehow be separated from each other. Many would refute that this is possible. Good actions follow from a believer's faith in God. They are not something which is external to that faith.
- In Sikhism it is clear that the main purpose of good deeds or actions is to become God-centred and therefore faith and action go hand in hand.
- Work in Sikhism is regarded as a form of worship as it is dedicated to God. The use of talents, which are regarded in Sikhism as God-given, is also seen as actions expressing faith. Faith is the basis for the actions.
- Sikhs don't think it pleases God if people pay no attention to others and simply devote themselves slavishly to religion. The concept reminds them of their religious and social obligations.
- Sikhism is a religion which puts great emphasis on practical actions to express faith. In fact, all actions in Sikhism are based on faith in God. The wearing of the 5Ks express spiritual values such as purity. The concept of sewa and the provision of langar in the gurdwara express the Sikh belief in equality.
- Motivation to act morally with selflessness is central to Sikh way of life. Many would argue that the basis for this motivation is faith in God, their aim to please God and to develop their spirituality.
- However, some would argue that this can be challenged on the basis it is possible to perform good deeds without faith in God and for humanitarian reasons.
- It could be argued that many Sikh concepts are social concepts and therefore could be acted upon purely for social reasons. Many would agree with this contention as Vand Chhako is the concept that focuses entirely on the needs of the community.
- Establishing a fair and equal community is a very important aim in Sikhism and the concept of Vand Chhako is very important in fulfilling this aim. It does not rely on faith in God. These actions stand by themselves.
- Kirat Karo focuses on the individual's duty to work which creates the wealth needed for a successful community

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

## Section B

3. (a) **Examine the spiritual significance of the Sikh festival of Diwali.** [AO1 15]

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

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

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

**(b) 'Festivals are not an essential part of Sikhism.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

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

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

**4. (a) Explain how Guru Gobind Singh influenced Sikh identity.**

**[AO1 15]**

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

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

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

**(b) 'Guru Gobind Singh completely changed the Sikhism of Guru Nanak.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Guru Gobind Singh's initiation ceremony for the Khalsa was fundamental to the founding of Sikhism and ensured its survival. It established the amrit ceremony and a form of initiation and gave Sikhism its unique identity. Many Sikhs identify themselves as Khalsa Sikhs and the amrit ceremony is regarded by many as the means of becoming a Sikh. Many Sikhs also see the Khalsa as the cornerstone of Sikhism.
- Wearing of the five Ks is associated with Gobind Singh. It is argued by many that this is the most important expression of Sikh identity and beliefs.
- He created the role model of Sant Sipahi (saint soldier) and was a great spiritual teacher and the founder of a military force. His was an ideal combination of practical defence and spiritual and moral principles. These principles are the two pillars on which Sikh lifestyle is built.
- He shaped Sikhism more than any of his predecessors. It can be argued that the fundamental events which shaped the nature of Sikhism as a religion happened during the guruship of Guru Gobind Singh.
- It was Guru Gobind Singh who proclaimed guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib which is one of the most important identifying features of Sikhism.
- However, many Sikhs would disagree with the statement and would argue vehemently that Sikhism in terms of belief was founded by Guru Nanak. In terms of belief Guru Gobind Singh simply developed those beliefs further.
- Guru Gobind Singh developed practices in response to the political and social challenges of his time, e.g. the development of the Khalsa and a more militaristic Sikhism.
- Guru Nanak gave the spiritual teachings and as the founder of the faith his experiences are the basis of Sikh teaching and practice. It can be argued that these fundamental beliefs were not changed by Guru Gobind Singh, e.g. beliefs about God.
- Outward identity was developed by Guru Gobind Singh, but spiritual identity is associated with Guru Nanak. It is Guru Nanak's teaching on the relationship with God that is the basic belief on which all other Sikh beliefs are founded.
- Guru Nanak established the first Sikh community based on Sikh principles. Guru Gobind Singh developed it.
- All the Gurus were deemed worthy of being conferred with guruship and therefore entrusted with the development of Sikhism. Their contribution to Sikhism is different, they contributed to developing not changing the religion of Guru Nanak. Every Guru further developed the work of his predecessor as well as reacting to his own circumstances at the time. Every contribution was of equal importance to safeguard Sikhism for the future.

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

**5. (a) Examine Sikh beliefs about God.**

**[AO1 15]**

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

- The opening sentence of the Sikh scriptures is only two words long, and reflects the base belief of all who adhere to the teachings of the religion: Ek Onkar "Ek" is One and "Onkar" is God - "There is only one God."
- Sikh understanding of God is mainly taken from the teaching of the Mul Mantra 'One God, True Name, Creator, Without Fear, Without Hate, Eternal, Without Birth, Self-revealed, By the Guru's Grace.'
- Sikhs believe in the Oneness of God. Unity of God as distinguished from the many gods of Hinduism.
- Sikhs believe that there is only one God but that this is the God of all religions. No single religion can claim to be the only true way to Waheguru, and different religions are just different ways towards Waheguru.
- Sikhs believe that God is eternal and has not come to earth in any bodily form. This distinguishes the Sikh notion from Hindu avatars.
- God is the creator of the world and is immanent in all things animate and inanimate.
- God has shown grace by revealing the gurbani (God's word) which is found in the Guru Granth Sahib, understood by Sikhs as the living presence of God.
- God is self-revealing and could not otherwise be known. Sikhs believe that God can't be understood properly by human beings, but he can be experienced through love, worship, and contemplation.
- God as nirguna and saguna, without form and with form, or without qualities and with them.

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

**(b) 'The most important Sikh teaching about God is that God is personal.'**

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- It is one of Guru Nanak's most important beliefs about God – a personal God who could be worshipped and loved. This understanding of God was derived from his own personal experience of God's court. There he became aware of God as one, personal and as pervading the universe. Because it derives from Guru Nanak's personal experience it gives the teaching importance and authority.
- Sikhism believes in a personal God. The devotee is compared to a bride yearning for union with her husband and waiting on his pleasure to do his bidding. This influences Sikh worship and lifestyle.
- The teaching on God as personal avoids the arguments for sectarian superiority within Sikhism. God is understood as personal but not in an anthropomorphic way. God does not grow old and changes are caused by God and he is not affected by them. In the teachings of Guru Nanak God is self-enlightened.
- Others would argue that the teaching on God as personal distinguishes Sikhism in many respects from Hinduism.
- However, many would argue that the teachings on God's other attributes are just as important.
- Some would argue for the importance of God as creator. As there are no creation stories in Sikhism, only a belief that the universe came into being because God willed it, the religion has no difficulty in coming to terms with scientific theories of evolution. In fact finding them congenial to the belief in an expanding universe derived from the mind of God. This means that Sikhism avoids much of the conflict between science and religion and makes Sikhism appealing in today's world.
- Others would argue for the importance of God as one as it is the feature which defines Sikhism as being a monotheistic religion.
- Others would argue for the teaching on God as Waheguru – a teaching which is unique to Sikhism.

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