



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2022

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

2120UE0-1

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;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 15 marks</p> <p><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;">13-15 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 shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 /vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">10-12 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 shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">7-9 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 shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">4-6 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. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-3 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. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication. <p>N.B. A maximum of 1 mark 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 15 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">13-15 marks</p> <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. • The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">10-12 marks</p> <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 response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">7-9 marks</p> <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. • The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">4-6 marks</p> <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. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-3 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES – UNIT 1
OPTION E: AN INTRODUCTION TO HINDUISM
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To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

1. (a) **Explain how the status of the Dalits has improved, with reference to the Bahujan Samaj Party.** [AO1 15]

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

- **Credit will be given to those candidates who provide information beyond the Bahujan Samaj Party, i.e. how the status of the Dalits has improved.**
- The word 'Dalit' means 'oppressed' and refers to a person outside the four varnas and considered below them. When the Aryan conquest of India became more widespread and more people came into their society, the Aryans created a new class – the Untouchables. They were put outside the varna or caste system altogether. In fact, they were 'out castes'. This was because they were seen as being capable of polluting those higher in society.
- Since Independence India has taken affirmative action to help what are officially called the 'Scheduled Castes and Tribes.' In 1997 India elected its first Dalit president.
- Many would argue that purity-based discrimination is no longer prevalent and the status of Dalits in society is no longer limited by caste prejudice.
- Dr. Ambedkar instilled consciousness among the Dalits and by virtue of his pivotal role in the framing of the Indian Constitution, they were given a number of rights in the Constitution on a legal basis to lead a life of dignity and self-respect.
- That's why Dr. Ambedkar, during his lifetime, had advised the "Bahujan Samaj" that if they wanted to fully enjoy the benefits of their legal rights, as enshrined in the Constitution, they would have to bond together all the Bahujan groups on the basis of unity and fraternity and bring them on a strong political platform and capture political power.
- It is true that a large number of Dalits remain in poverty, but this is not a direct result of caste.
- Many Dalits have been successful in business and public life and are now able to contribute in various ways to modern Indian society.
- These changes have come about through the efforts of various individuals and groups and especially through the work of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).
- It was founded in 1984 by Kanshi Ram, a member of the Dalit community who was deeply inspired by the teachings of Dr Ambedkar. The word 'bahujan' literally means 'the majority of the people' and 'samaj' means 'society' and the BSP represents mainly the oppressed sections of society
- Its aim is the 'social transformation' and 'economic emancipation' of these communities. The BSP opposes strongly the social system practised by upper-caste Hindus, especially Brahmins. It is therefore a pro-Dalit party which has campaigned strongly to improve the social status of Dalits and has succeeded in having a meaningful impact on Dalit lives.
- However, Dalits still suffer from discrimination especially in rural areas. This discrimination affects access to education and medical facilities and restricts the availability of housing and what kind of work Dalits can do. Many would argue that this discrimination is not restricted to rural areas but is also found in urban surroundings as well.

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

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

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 15]

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 non Hindus 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 gentle.
- 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 and leads to a 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 since it is associated with jobs serves as a guild or labour union, giving those within it 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.

2. (a) Examine the concept of ahimsa in Hinduism.

[AO1 15]

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

- Ahimsa literally means 'without violence'. Ahimsa means not inflicting pain or injury upon others. It also means showing compassion to all living beings, the practice of love, forgiveness and friendliness, and the support of peace. It is an idea that comes from the Jain religion that every living being deserves respect.
- Ahimsa in Hinduism is also a spiritual concept, an integral part of the philosophies, principles and practices of the religion. It is one of the ideals of Hinduism as set out in the laws of Manu and is an integral part of Hindu philosophy.
- Hindus believe that ahimsa is the highest virtue and practicing it will help them grow spiritually and move forward on the path towards moksha. However, there is some disagreement between Hindus on the matter of killing animals and eating meat. Some Hindus are in favour of eating meat since some Hindu texts teach that eating meat leads to good health. Others believe it is wrong as it goes against the principle of ahimsa and has bad karmic consequences. In Hinduism there is no substantial difference between the soul of a human and the soul of an animal. Both are considered to be an atman and therefore divine in essence.
- Gandhi gave the concept a new direction by being the first to use it in a political sense and in this context his interpretation of ahimsa was influenced by Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount where he tells Christians to practise agape love by turning the other cheek. Gandhi took this literally, believing that by practising the non-violence of ahimsa pacifists not only held the moral high ground, but could actually overcome their enemies. It was the nonviolence of bravery and courage.
- Gandhi did not believe that ahimsa meant non-killing because he accepted killing was necessary for some individuals as it was part of their duty, and doing so in a detached way without anger or selfish motives would be compatible with ahimsa.
- Gandhi further developed the concept of ahimsa with his teaching of satyagraha. It literally means 'holding onto truth' or as others have referred to it 'truth force'

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

(b) 'Ahimsa is not relevant in today's world.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 15]

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

- Ahimsa to many is a very relevant ideal that could lead to a better relationship between people and world peace.
- Many would refer to Gandhi's example as being a strong endorsement of the principle of ahimsa as a relevant concept in the modern world, not only in the religious context but in the political one as well.
- Others would argue that many Hindu communities have successfully combined the principle of ahimsa with life in the modern world. This is seen in the context of care for the environment.
- Gandhi introduced a new dimension to the concept of ahimsa which he called satyagraha, which means truth force and many would argue it is this new dimension that makes ahimsa more compatible with life in the modern world.
- In a world full of violence and conflicts, of threats and counter-threats, many believe that ahimsa is neither relevant or viable.
- Many Hindus would point out that the principle in certain situations comes into conflict itself with other beliefs, practices and principles within Hinduism. This conflict can be seen in the issue of war and the belief in dharma.
- Modern society is far more complex than the society from which ahimsa originated and it is not easy or practical to apply an absolutist principle to the issues of modern society. Sometimes force is needed to maintain law and order and sometimes force and the use of violence is the only choice.
- Ahimsa is a principle that requires self-discipline and some would argue that modern communities are too diverse in nature to follow a single guiding principle such as ahimsa. Therefore, ahimsa could be relevant to an individual but not to society as a whole.
- The interpretation of ahimsa has an influence on its relevance in today's society. The underlying issue is whether it applies to human life or all life.

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

Section B

3. (a) Explain Krishna's teaching on varnadharma and the conflict that can arise from following personal dharma. [AO1 15]

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

- The story of Krishna and Arjuna and the conversation between them is the content of the Bhagavad Gita. It was spoken on the battlefield as two armies were getting ready for war. Although Krishna had agreed not to fight he offers to drive the chariot of Arjuna. Arjuna the great archer was a member of the kshatriyas - the warrior, ruler varna and therefore his duty was to fight. However, he was not prepared to kill his family and throws his bow to the ground. Krishna sees Arjuna withdrawing and begins to persuade Arjuna that he should stick to his duty as a warrior and engage the enemy.
- It is clear that Arjuna was worried about going to war and having to kill his family and friends.
On the one hand he knows he is a kshatriya and that his duty is to fight but on the other hand believes it is also his duty not to kill his family and friends. This is a conflict of personal dharma.
- Krishna tells Arjuna that he should not be worried by this and that he will not get bad karma from taking part in the war.
- Krishna then addresses the issue of varnadharma and argues that action done out of a sense of duty, without attachment, has no karmic effects. The varnas were a way of structuring society that originated in Vedic times and members of each varna had specific duties to perform. This was their varnadharma.
- The source of evil is not in actions, but in the intentions behind the actions. It is Arjuna's honour and duty to fight.

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

(b) 'Bhakti yoga is without doubt the highest path to liberation.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 15]

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

- Many will argue that all paths are of equal value since they all lead to liberation from the cycle of samsara and reaching the goal of moksha.
- Many believe in the superiority of bhakti yoga. It is presented as the main way to liberation in the Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna is the object of devotion and his loving grace brings the worshipper to their ultimate goal.
- When developed fully the experience of self-surrender to a personal god in Bhakti yoga has the same effect as jnana yoga.
- It is regarded as the highest path by many Hindus because it is based on love rather than intellectual understanding and a more selfish approach. bhakti yoga sees God as the embodiment of love.
- It is also a path open to all people.
- Bhakti yoga is presented as the main way to liberation in the Bhagavad Gita
- Others would argue in favour of karma yoga. Those who follow Karma yoga have to ensure spiritual progress in the face of life's many challenges and that in itself according to many gives it superiority over the other paths.
- It brings about a perfection of human nature with noble moral qualities such as right attitude, right motive, and always giving of your best.
- It is a path that involves every aspect of life and is not concerned just with specialised religious practices.
- It purifies the heart by teaching you to act selflessly, without thought of gain or reward and detaching yourself from the fruits of your actions and offering them up to God.
- Jnana yoga is considered by many to be the highest form as it develops spiritual powers beyond normal human abilities.
- Many would argue that this is the most difficult path, requiring tremendous strength of will and intellect.
- However, some would argue that jnana yoga is a closed path in the sense that it is not open to all and therefore cannot be superior to paths which are open to all people.
- It can be argued that the three paths – karma yoga, jnana yoga and bhakti yoga are each suited to a different temperament or approach to life.

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

4. (a) Examine Hindu beliefs about the Trimurti.

[AO1 15]

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

- Many Hindus understand the concept of Saguna Brahman through the Trimurti.
- The three gods of the Trimurti are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva and are regarded as different aspects of God – Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the destroyer. This can be seen in representations of the Trimurti as one God with three heads.
- They also represent earth, water and fire.
- Hindus see time as being cyclic and the Trimurti expresses this understanding.
- They also represent the three gunas, the three strands of life – Vishnu the sattva guna, Shiva the tamas guna and Brahma the rajas guna.
- Many believe they also represent various stages in a person's life. Brahma represents the student ashrama, Vishnu the householder ashrama and Shiva the retirement stage of life.
- Although they are male in nature they are associated with shakti (female energy) since each one has a female consort.
- Brahma is the creator of the universe and is usually depicted as a man with four heads, four faces and four arms.
- Hindus believe that Brahma after the end of each universe meditates before creating the next and that the symbols he holds represent this belief.
- Vishnu is known as the preserver both in the cosmic sense of preserving the universe as it should be and in a personal sense in the preservation of dharma.
- For the followers of Vaishnavism, he is the Supreme God and not just one aspect of him.
- Vishnu is frequently presented in blue to represent his all-pervading nature.
- Vishnu is worshipped in many forms including the tulsi or basil plant which many of his followers grow and use as murtis. However, he is mainly associated with his avatars.
- The third member of the Trimurti is Shiva who is the god of destruction. This must be understood in the context of Hinduism's cyclic understanding of life – in order to move through successive rebirths the atman must die and death is as important in the cycle of life as birth.
- He is the god of reproduction and is worshipped in the form of the linga, the male sexual organ.
- Shiva is the god of opposites – creator and destroyer, old and young, fierce and gentle and as Ardhanarishwara both man and woman.
- His trident represents the three aspects of the Trimurti.

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

(b) 'The Trimurti is the most important concept in Hinduism.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 15]

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

- It is difficult to evaluate in the context of a religion which concepts, if any, are more important than others.
- The concept of the Trimurti is a very important concept within Hinduism and is the basis for understanding many of the other concepts within the religion.
- The Trimurti expresses the concept of God in Hinduism.
- They are three different manifestations of the ultimate supreme reality of Brahman, the impersonal absolute. Many would argue that it is very difficult to form a relationship or worship an impersonal god and that the concept of the Trimurti helps to overcome these problems.
- The concept also represents the energies of creation, maintenance of harmony and order, destruction and recreation of every aspect of the material universe.
- The concept of the Trimurti also helps Hindus to understand the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.
- The specific features of each of the deities within the Trimurti also express the concept of God. This helps Hindus to understand the concept of Brahman Saguna – Brahman with qualities or attributes.
- Many believe that the Trimurti also represent various stages in an individual's life and therefore helps to explain the ashramas.
- Many would argue that there are other concepts within Hinduism which are as if not more important.
- Some would refer to the concept of atman and the importance of its relationship with Brahman.
- Others would suggest the concepts of karma and reincarnation because of their influence on the behaviour of Hindus in the present life.
- A concept that many would consider fundamentally important in Hinduism is Varnashramadharma because of its influence on all aspects of a Hindu's life.
- It is very difficult to divide a religion into neat little boxes as all concepts relate in some way to each other, and therefore, it is a difficult if not impossible task to decide if those concepts are more or less important than each other.

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

5. (a) **Examine how the festival of Holi has spiritual significance for Hindus.**
[AO1 15]

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

- Holi is an ancient celebration. There is more than one story about the origin of the festival. Some believe that the festival gets its name from Holika, the sister of Hiranyakasipu, the king of demons. However, other Hindus celebrate Holi in memory of Krishna.
- Holi is also a seasonal festival that celebrates the coming of spring with its renewed hope for abundance in nature and happiness in family relationships and friendships.
- Since Holi is a very joyful and happy occasion, it gives people a lift, making them feel good about themselves and the world around them.
- It is the celebration of the victory of good over evil and that truth will always prevail. This encourages Hindus not only to believe in the power of good and in the virtue of being truthful and honest, but also to stand up for them.
- Spiritually Holi is a festival that confirms and strengthens a Hindu's faith. The story of Holika and Prahlada inspires faith in God's power and his love and care for his devotees. It clearly shows that those who love God will be saved and that those who in any way act against him will suffer. This faith helps Hindus to move forward on their spiritual path towards their ultimate aim of Moksha, union with the divine. In this sense Holi reminds worshippers of their duties and goals in life.
- Holi also creates a sense of belonging by bringing the community together in celebration. This in turn is an expression of Hindu identity and values.
- Holi can inspire faith in God. It can help a Hindu advance on the spiritual path, away from sensual pleasures, towards communion with the divine.
- Holi also means sacrifice and the festival is a chance for people to rid themselves of impurities and to focus on the virtues they need to develop - mercy, generosity, selflessness, truthfulness and purity.
- Holi also strengthens social cohesion as it is celebrated by Hindus and non-Hindus. It revitalises the bonds between people as in the evening people visit friends and relatives, exchanging gifts.
- Holi also helps people to believe in the virtue of being truthful and honest and to fight against evil.

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

(b) 'Hindu festivals do not express religious identity.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 15]

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

- Festivals do not necessarily show any commitment to the religion. Festivals can be celebrated by Hindus and non-Hindus alike and without any allegiance to a specific set of religious beliefs.
- Others believe festivals are more social and cultural events which might express national or regional identity but not religious identity.
- Festivals are not part of a Hindu's Varnashramadharma and many would argue that Varnashramadharma is Hinduism and therefore if festivals are not part of this core concept then they are not an expression of identity.
- It can be argued that a person's religious identity is expressed through following certain key beliefs. An individual is expected to put into practice their belief system and one way to do this is through celebrating festivals.
- However, many Hindus would argue that many of the ways of expressing Hindu identity are an important part of celebrating festivals and that festivals are an effective and accessible way of expressing identity.
- Festivals give Hindus the chance not only to express their identity but to take pride in it.
- The beliefs and values of Hinduism are clearly expressed through its festivals e.g. Diwali celebrates the Ramayana which emphasises values such as loyalty, courage and faithfulness.
- Hinduism is a religion of festivals and therefore it could be argued that celebrating festivals is an inherent part of a Hindu identity.
- They are also a very public expression of that identity and a way of presenting Hinduism, its beliefs and values, to non-Hindu communities.
- Hinduism gives freedom to the individual to choose the belief system that suits him or her best, Hindu identity can be expressed in a number of different ways which includes festivals. Diversity of ways reflects diversity of beliefs and practices within Hindu society.

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