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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2018**

**AS (NEW)  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
UNIT 1 - OPTION E  
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF HINDUISM  
2120UE0-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2018 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.

# **AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

## **MARKING INSTRUCTIONS**

### **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.

### **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	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 15 marks
	<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>
5	<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>
4	<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>
3	<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>
2	<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>
1	<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>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

<b>Band</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><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></p>
<b>5</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <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>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <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>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <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>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <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>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <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 RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**SUMMER 2018 MARK SCHEME**

**Option E: An Introduction to the Study of Hinduism**

**MARK SCHEME**

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

**Section A**

1. (a) Outline the main features of the Indus Valley civilisation **and** the Aryans and their culture. **[AO1 15]**

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

- **Indus valley civilization** belongs to the Bronze age between 2500-1500 BCE.
- Much of the archaeological evidence which has been gathered points to an urban culture which was highly advanced and had a very wealthy middle class and a centralised government.
- It appears that the civilisation was an amalgamation of people.
- It was a civilisation centred around towns which had large populations. Towns were built on a grid system and on platforms to protect them from floods which were a feature of the region. These towns were of a very advanced nature having their own water source and sewage disposal.
- Lifestyle of the people is based mainly on conjecture since the Indus Valley script cannot be translated and understood.
- Indus Valley people were traders and used small square seals and the pictures on them give information about the civilisation.
- They suggest because of the animals on them and people prostrating before them, some sort of worship.
- They also suggest belief in life after death and worship of the mother goddess.
- **The Aryans** originally came from Central Asia and called themselves Arya – noble ones – to differentiate from the inhabitants of the Indus Valley.
- Aryans were a pastoral people who brought the Iron Age to India.
- They were illiterate and passed their scriptures, the Vedas, orally in the Sanskrit language.
- Lifestyle was semi-nomadic and their society was patriarchal and tribal. The horse and cow were domesticated animals with the cow especially being a symbol of prestige.
- Houses were built of wood and reed and farming was the main occupation.
- They worshipped warlike gods, especially Indra.

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

1. (b) 'There is no doubt that Hinduism originated in the Indus Valley.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- In the Indus Valley Civilisation there was great use made of beautifully carved seal stones. These included a short portion of script and an image, usually of an animal. They also made clay models of men, women and animals which is seen as evidence of the worship of deities and a strong link to Hinduism.
- They were also buried with food and jewellery which is seen as a being evidence for belief in life after death and another link to Hinduism.
- The discovery of the Great Bath at Mohenjo-Daro is seen as evidence of ritual bathing or cleansing and is seen as a further link to Hinduism as many Hindus begin their day with a ritual wash.
- Another link to Hinduism is the discovery of female ceramic figures which suggest the worship of fertility goddesses and an important and unique feature of Hinduism is the worship of goddesses and belief in Shakti – the feminine power of the divine. It also suggests the use of murtis.
- However many scholars would argue that there is no clear link between modern Hinduism and the Indus Valley people and civilisation. One of the main problems is the difficulty encountered in understanding their inscriptions and writing system which unfortunately remains untranslated. This means that although much archeological evidence has been gathered the conclusions are mainly based on conjecture rather than fact.
- Other scholars would point out that there are also strong links to be made with the Aryan civilisation in terms of religion, social structure and language – the Vedas, varna system and Sanskrit.
- Others would argue that it is a matter of opinion which of those civilizations, if any, are the origins of modern day Hinduism and which has had the greater influence on beliefs and practices.

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



2. (a) Explain Krishna's teaching in the Bhagavad Gita on dharma and varnadharma.

[AO1 15]

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

- Candidates may give the background to the discussion which takes place between Krishna and Arjuna in which he presents the teaching on dharma and varnadharma.
- Candidates may also give a brief overview of the varna system so as to put the teaching in context.
- Arjuna the great archer was a member of the kshatriyas - the warrior, ruler varna and therefore his duty was to fight. Krishna sees Arjuna withdrawing and begins to persuade Arjuna that he should stick to his duty as a warrior and engage the enemy. This is the beginning of the conversation we know as the Bhagavad Gita which forms part of the Mahabharata.
- Arjuna was clearly worried because he was in a situation where he was going into a war where he would have to kill family and friends. He is facing a conflict of personal dharma. He therefore asks Krishna for advice.
- Krishna tells him not to worry as he will attain no bad karma from taking part in the war. Krishna points out that no action can harm anyone's true self: Atman is imperishable.
- He then discusses varnadharma and states that an action done out of a sense of duty with no attachment has no karmic effect. A clear teaching here is that evil is not to be found in actions themselves but in the intentions behind them.
- Krishna also explains the samsaric cycle of birth and death. He says there is no true death of the soul and the purpose of this cycle is to allow a person to work off their karma, eventually leading to a dissolution of the soul and an end to the samsaric cycle. Success depends on selfless service to God and karmic debt is attained through selfish actions.
- Krishna presents three main concepts for achieving this dissolution of the soul -- renunciation, selfless service, and meditation.
- It is Arjuna's honour and duty to fight. He is a member of the Kshatriya varna – the battle is the very reason for his existence.
- Finally Arjuna decides to listen to Krishna's advice by engaging in battle and in the end the Pandavas regain control of the kingdom.

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

2. (b) 'The relationship between Krishna and Arjuna is central to Hinduism.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Many would argue that the relationship between Krishna and Arjuna has a far reaching influence on many beliefs and aspects of Hinduism.
- The theological significance of the dialogue between the two friends is immense. Krishna explains the nature of the universe and Arjuna embodies the qualities of the ideal student. Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita explains the responsibilities of varnadharma and the relationship between that concept and personal dharma.
- Arjuna is a role model in his own right. Arjuna's willingness to accept the word of Krishna, even though it involved fighting against family, illustrates his ideal devotion to God. Together, the inseparable friendship between Krishna and Arjuna represents the cosmic inseparability of Brahman and atman, or the essence of the universe and the soul, one of the fundamental ideas of Hinduism.
- Others would point out that there are other features which are more or just as influential in Hinduism – the relationship between Rama and Sita which has far reaching influence on men and women in Hinduism especially married couples. The Trimurti and their influence on the two great traditions within Hinduism – Vaishnavism and Shaivism or other deities such as Durga who is celebrated at Navaratri, one of the great festivals of Hinduism.
- Others could argue for the centrality of concepts such as varnashramadharma. Some have argued that such is the influence of this concept that Varnashramadharma is Hinduism. It influences every aspect of a Hindu's life from birth to death.
- Another concept that is central in Hinduism is ahimsa which influences aspects of a Hindu's ethical response eg to abortion or euthanasia.

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

## Section B

3. (a) Outline the main features of Vaishnavism and Shaivism. [AO1 15]

**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 Shiva 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 15]**

**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 others would 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.**

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

[AO1 15]

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

- Candidates may refer to the Jainian origin of the concept - meaning radical non-violence founded on the belief that all living beings are worthy of respect and therefore all Jains are vegetarian.
- The meaning of the word ahimsa is literally 'without violence'. Ahimsa means not to inflict pain or injury upon others.
- However the meaning of ahimsa is broader than this – it also means positively showing love, forgiveness and friendliness and supporting peace.
- In Hinduism it is a spiritual concept, an integral part of the religion's philosophies. Many consider it to be the highest virtue and practising it leads to spiritual growth on the path to liberation.
- However in Hindu scriptures there is some debate about its importance – some stating that it is the highest duty whilst others point out the exceptions such as war, hunting, law enforcement and capital punishment. Some scriptures also promote the eating of meat. The Dharmasutra law books, written in the fifth or fourth century BCE contain regulations about eating meat and which animals were eatable.
- Gandhi gave the concept a new direction by interpreting it in a political sense. In this context his interpretation of ahimsa was also influenced by Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount where he tells Christians to practise agape love by turning the other cheek. For Gandhi ahimsa was not a passive concept which meant avoiding any type of confrontation it was an active concept requiring people to oppose and overthrow evil and injustice using nonviolent means.

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

(b) 'Truth has an inherent force.'

**Evaluate this view with reference to Hinduism.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Gandhi believed that truth has an inherent force which could be used in different ways to overcome enemies.
- Truth is not a passive concept but an active one – it is what gives any resistance to evil its moral basis. Truth is a force born out of love.
- Gandhi believed that non-violence was not the weapon of the weak but that truth made people courageous and strong. It is the reason why true non-violent activists can accept violence on themselves without inflicting it on others – because truth is on their side.
- For non-violence to be strong and effective it must be based on truth and begin in the mind. Without this Gandhi believed it would be the non-violence of the weak and cowardly.
- Gandhi's understanding of truth is deeply rooted in Hinduism. Indian philosophers in their writings often state that there is no religion or duty greater than truth and that reaching pure and absolute truth is attaining Moksha.
- Gandhi saw ahimsa as a spiritual concept and that satyagraha therefore was assured of divine help. Gandhi believed truth was God and truth being "that which is" can never be destroyed.
- However many others would question what exactly is this power that truth is supposed to have.
- Others would argue that truth is relative and that knowing the absolute truth is impossible. What a person sees as truth may just as clearly be untrue for another. Therefore no one can claim to have monopoly over the truth.
- Others would argue that there have been many attempts made in history to overthrow evil which apparently had truth and justice on their side but were unsuccessful in attaining their goals.

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

5. (a) Examine the nature **and** importance of congregational worship in Hinduism. [AO1 15]

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

- Puja in the temple is an act which shows devotion to God. Most Hindus call at their local mandir whenever possible.
- There are many kinds of temples but all will have three main features – a murti or symbol of the deity, a canopy over the deity in order to honour it and a priest to care for the sacred image and to give each worshipper prasad, a gift from the deity.
- In some temples families sit together but usually men and women sit on either side of the shrine on the floor.
- The priest begins temple worship by lighting the sacred fire and burning small pieces of wood, camphor and ghee. He then performs the havan ceremony which includes purification of the individual before approaching God.
- Another ceremony performed is arti which is an offering of love and devotion to the deity.
- Circumambulation is a temple ritual. Therefore devotees walk around the garbha griha, the innermost chamber of the shrine housing the temple deity or deities, in a left hand direction keeping the shrine on their right. It expresses the belief that God is the centre of existence and that thought and actions should always be centred on God.
- Another ritual is the offering of food to God during worship – prashad. The offerings signify that the devotee is offering his heart to God.
- Congregational worship stresses the communal nature of Hinduism.
- The temple provides a social environment for the Hindu community to meet and prevents Hindus feeling alone.
- Congregational worship is also important in that a priest is present to conduct rituals. It is also a way of strengthening and expressing Hindu identity.

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

(b) 'Puja is not a religious experience.'

**Evaluate this view.**

**[AO2 15]**

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

- Candidates may try to define what a religious experience is before attempting to evaluate the statement.
- Some would agree with the statement as puja is often seen as a ritual which is done out of want not need. This questions the value of puja as an experience is only valued if it is done out of need.
- Others would argue that it is a chore repeated day after day and as such has no real meaning. The devotee is not open to a spiritual experience as the devotee is not searching for one.
- Performance of the ritual may not necessarily ensure moral behaviour during the day. This questions whether it is a religious experience because of its lack of influence. Religious experiences by definition have a strong and lasting effect on those who experience them.
- Many would argue that puja is a multi-sensory experience. It helps Hindus to establish, express and enhance their relationship with the deities. The main aim and focus of puja for the devotee is to make a spiritual connection with the divine – it allows the devotee to experience direct communication with the gods. This is a direct religious experience.
- Darshan is a reciprocal act between the worshiper and the deity. Not only does the devotee "see" the deity, but the deity is understood to "see" the worshiper.
- By doing darshan properly a devotee develops affection for God, and God develops affection for that devotee.
- The entire aim of performing puja is to create a protective layer of spiritual forces around the devotee, warding off all evils and negative forces, thereby creating an environment to lead a happy and peaceful life according to the values of Hinduism.

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