

GCE

Religious Studies

Unit **G587**: Hinduism

Advanced GCE

Mark Scheme for June 2017

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All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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These are the annotations, (including abbreviations), including those used in scoris, which are used when marking

Annotation	Meaning of annotation
	Level one – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level two – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level three – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level four – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Level five – to be used at the end of each part of the response in the margin.
	Highlighting a section of the response that is irrelevant to the awarding of the mark.
	Point has been seen and noted, e.g. where part of an answer is at the end of the script.

Here is the mark scheme for this question paper.

	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
1	<p>Assess the view that liberation is the only thing that matters to Hindus.</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates might begin by giving an account of the concept of liberation in relation to the cycle of samsara and rebirth within it. Liberation means an end to this cycle, and a liberated individual will no longer be reborn.</p> <p>Alternatively, candidates might explain liberation as one of the four purusharthas (aims of life), and the one that is often described as the ultimate or supreme aim. There are different paths through which a Hindu can achieve liberation and candidates might identify these and use them to elaborate on the concept of liberation.</p> <p>Some candidates might choose to consider liberation from the perspective of philosophical schools of Hinduism such as the Advaita Vedanta, which conceives of liberation as attaining the knowledge that the atman and Brahman are one. Candidates might contrast this with the Vishishtadvaita Vedanta in which liberation is the eternal bliss of the atman, dependent upon the divine but not absorbed within it. Other understandings of liberation include that in the Samkhya school where moksha arises from knowing the difference between purusha and prakriti and that of Bhakti where liberation is the union with God achieved through devotion.</p> <p>Some schools, such as the Advaita and Samkhya schools, take the view that an individual can be jivan mukti (liberated while still alive/embodyed) and the atman will not be reborn. Candidates might consider why some Hindus reject this idea and what the implications of it are for a Hindu focussed on achieving liberation.</p>	[21]	

<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates might observe that regardless of the school of philosophy or personal marga that is considered, the cycle of samsara and the concept of liberation from it remains a consistent theme. This suggests that it is of central importance within Hinduism.</p> <p>However, candidates might also argue that being the most important thing is not the same as being the only important thing. Achieving moksha can be understood to depend on other things – for example gaining the right knowledge (jnana yoga) or unwavering devotion to a specific deity (bhakti yoga). That means that these things must also matter and are of a more immediate concern to a Hindu actively striving for liberation.</p> <p>Another view might be that not everyone can achieve liberation during their current lifetime, and, that being the case, other concerns such as karma, ethical behaviour and social issues might matter more for some individuals. Candidates might point out that there are four purusharthas, not just one and while moksha might be the ultimate goal the other aims can be pursued in any lifetime.</p> <p>Some candidates might also argue that for some Hindus a ‘good’ rebirth in this realm might seem more important than an ultimate goal of liberation. If one is struggling in this life then Moksha might seem too far away or unattainable but a better rebirth next time could be felt to be in reach. Similarly, some Hindus might focus on achieving a rebirth in heaven, rather than a complete escape from samsara in their current lifetime. Moksha may be the only thing that matters across the entire span of many lifetimes but each individual rebirth may well have its own concerns.</p>	[14]	
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2	<p>'The Bhagavad Gita is more important than the Vedas in modern Hinduism.' Discuss.</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates might begin with a broad description of the Bhagavad Gita as a section of the Mahabharata epic in the form of a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. They might be aware of the history of the Mahabharata as a whole and the Gita specifically, including debates around its authorship and date of origin or they might note that it is generally categorised as a smriti ('remembered') text. This is in contrast to the sruti ('heard') status of the Vedas.</p> <p>Candidates might give an overview of the contents or a summary of the important Hindu concepts encountered within the text. These include dharma, Dharma Yuddha (righteous warfare), moksha, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga, varna, the gunas, the nature of the atman, rebirth or reincarnation and concepts of deity.</p> <p>Different interpretations and understandings have been applied to the Gita and candidates might review different ways in which it has been understood such as the battlefield being a metaphor for ethical and spiritual striving rather a description of literal warfare.</p> <p>As the text is also very popular, candidates might refer to the accessibility of the text, which exists in various translations and can be read by anyone. They might also be aware that the text has been personally important to well-known Hindus such as Gandhi.</p>	[21]	
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<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates might be aware that Hinduism can be broadly divided into āstika (orthodox) and nāstika (heterodox) schools and that one of the things which has been used to identify āstika Hinduism is an acceptance of the Vedas as authoritative. The Brahminical tradition of Hinduism, with its focus on varnashramadharmā is the form of the religion candidates are most likely to be familiar with and they might use this to argue that the Vedas are foundational texts for the religion.</p> <p>However, the modern practice of Hinduism employs understandings of varnashramadharmā that are rooted more widely than the Vedas alone. The concepts explored in the Gita may originate in the Vedas, but the later text offers expansion, clarification and/or exploration of them.</p> <p>Candidates might be aware that the original language of the Vedas (Vedic Sanskrit) predates its written form and translation into modern languages is difficult. This could be used to argue that more modern texts are vital to supplement understanding of their contents.</p> <p>However, candidates could also argue that the Vedas are largely manuals and commentaries about rituals and how they should be performed. This being the case what matters most is that priests are able to understand and perform the religious duties specified in the texts, so the majority of Hindus need not be concerned with their specific contents. It might also be noted that many of the forms Hinduism takes today bear little relation to the forms described in the Vedas; although the philosophy of the Upanishads remains influential this philosophy is influenced by other, later texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita.</p>	<p>[14]</p>	
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3	<p>Assess the significance of the Arya Samaj for modern Hindus.</p> <p>AO1 Most candidates are likely to be familiar with the origins of the Arya Samaj as a reform movement established to return Hinduism to the religion described by the Vedas. Candidates might outline the elements of Hindu practice the founder, Dayananda Saraswati, sought to change or remove such as image worship and the caste system or they might give an account of his work and teaching.</p> <p>Candidates might explain the core principles of the Arya Samaj, which include the infallible authority of the Vedas. The Vedas contain eternal truths about the nature of the divine and the world and these truths should be accessible to everyone. Candidates might explain how these beliefs relate to the social activities of the Arya Samaj in areas such as education and the rejection of untouchability.</p> <p>Some candidates might make connections between the Arya Samaj and the work of evangelising missionaries in India at the time the society was founded; comparing the aims of the society at that time with its aims and approaches today.</p>	[21]	
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<p>AO2</p> <p>The fact that the Arya Samaj was founded in 1875 and still exists across the world today might be used by candidates to make a case for its significance in modern Hinduism. They might argue that there is still a perceived need for the kinds of social reform the original society advocated and with increasing numbers of Hindus living outside India the need for Hindu unity could be said to be greater than ever.</p> <p>However, candidates might also argue that other Hindu groups and India's secular government are now involved in redressing the abuses of the caste system, the inequality of women and the matter of untouchability so that in these areas the Arya Samaj is one group among many. The group is also opposed to other aspects of Hinduism as it is commonly practised, including the use of murti in worship. Since this remains among the more popular and better known forms of Hindu practice candidates might suggest that the group has had little success with some reforms.</p> <p>The issue of the authority of the Vedas is another area on which candidates might focus their discussion. It could be argued that most Hindus recognise the origins of their religion in the Vedas but this is different to seeing the texts as a source of ultimate authority.</p> <p>Some candidates might contrast the Arya Samaj with the Brahmo Samaj, a close contemporary in terms of origin and with some apparently similar aims.</p>	[14]	
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4	<p>To what extent is meditation an important Hindu practice?</p> <p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates are likely to be aware that meditation is an umbrella term that can be used to describe a range of different practices. They might begin by identifying the aims of mediation and then considering the different ways in which these aims might be achieved or they might outline different forms of meditation as found within Hinduism.</p> <p>Candidates might define meditation in a Hindu context as referring to any means of focussing wholly on a specific object or idea or of withdrawing from the distractions of the world and concentrating wholly on the present moment. There may be a specific aim such as realising the unity of atman and Brahman or understanding the interactions of mind, body and world more completely.</p> <p>Some candidates might consider a complete system such as samkhya yoga, outlining the way in which physical and mental practices combine to achieve samadhi (total/absorbed concentration). Alternatively, they might consider different meditational practices such as reciting mantra, self-mortification (tapas), deep reflection on religious teachings from a guru or text (manana), the use of yantra (mystical diagram) as a meditational focus, the visualised experience of darshan by practitioners of tantra, or the practice of 'sitting near' (upasana) and concentrating on being one with a deity.</p>	[21]	Answers which focus generally on worship are unlikely to achieve the higher levels.
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<p>AO2</p> <p>Some candidates might argue that meditation is the most important Hindu practice because liberation can only be attained through realising the true nature of things. Alternatively, candidates might suggest that such knowledge is the core of jnana yoga, and achievable through meditation, but that other paths place the emphasis on different things. They might suggest that the importance of meditation is therefore dependent on which of the many paths towards liberation an individual has chosen to follow.</p> <p>Candidates might suggest that meditation as a generic term is more associated with Buddhism than with Hinduism, or they might point out that many religious traditions practice forms of meditation. However, understood as a process of focussing, concentrating or contemplating the specific connection to Hinduism is clear. Candidates might use this to assess the importance of the practice in terms of how well known it is as an element of the religion. Alternatively, candidates might consider the extent to which practices that are perceived as strongly connected with Hinduism, such as yoga, can be understood as a form of meditation.</p> <p>An alternative approach might be to consider the broad definition of meditation, and the range of forms meditational practices can take. This could be used to argue that meditation in various guises is found throughout all forms of Hinduism, if the aim is to focus or contemplate then for example murti puja could be considered a form of meditation upon deity.</p> <p>Some candidates might contrast meditational forms of worship with other forms such as pilgrimage or yajna.</p>	[14]	
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APPENDIX 1 – A2 Levels of Response

Level	Mark/25	AO1	Mark/10	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1-5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little relevant material • some concepts inaccurate • shows little knowledge of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L1</p>	1-3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little or no successful analysis • views asserted with no justification <p style="text-align: right;">L1</p>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6-9	a basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge limited and partially accurate • limited understanding • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • selection often inappropriate • limited use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L2</p>	4-6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some analysis, but not successful • views asserted with little justification <p style="text-align: right;">L2</p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts - spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10-13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some accurate knowledge • appropriate understanding • some successful selection of material • some accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L3</p>	7-8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful analysis which may be implicit • views asserted but not fully justified <p style="text-align: right;">L3</p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts - spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14-17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate knowledge • good understanding • good selection of material • technical terms mostly accurate <p style="text-align: right;">L4</p>	9-11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful and clear analysis • some effective use of evidence • views analysed and developed <p style="text-align: right;">L4</p>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
5	18-21	a very good/excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information • Accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;">L5</p>	12-14	a very good/excellent attempt using a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehends the demands of the question • Uses a range of evidence • Shows understanding and critical analysis of different views <p style="text-align: right;">L5</p>
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

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