

GCSE

Religious Studies

J625/05: Hinduism beliefs and teachings & practices

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Mark Scheme for June 2025

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

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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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARATION FOR MARKING RM ASSESSOR

1. Make sure that you have accessed and completed the relevant training packages for on-screen marking: *RM Assessor Online Training: OCR Essential Guide to Marking*.
2. Make sure that you have read and understood the mark scheme and the question paper for this unit. These are available in RM Assessor
3. Log-in to RM Assessor and mark the **required number** of practice responses (“scripts”) and the **required number** of standardisation responses.

MARKING

1. Mark strictly to the mark scheme.
2. Marks awarded must relate directly to the marking criteria.
3. The schedule of dates is very important. It is essential that you meet the RM Assessor 50% and 100% (traditional 40% Batch 1 and 100% Batch 2) deadlines. If you experience problems, you must contact your Team Leader (Supervisor) without delay.
4. If you are in any doubt about applying the mark scheme, consult your Team Leader by telephone or the RM Assessor messaging system, or by email.
5. **Crossed Out Responses**
Where a candidate has crossed out a response and provided a clear alternative then the crossed out response is not marked. Where no alternative response has been provided, examiners may give candidates the benefit of the doubt and mark the crossed out response where legible.

Rubric Error Responses – Optional Questions

Where candidates have a choice of question across a whole paper or a whole section and have provided more answers than required, then all responses are marked and the highest mark allowable within the rubric is given. Enter a mark for each question answered into RM assessor, which will select the highest mark from those awarded. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate has penalised themselves by attempting more questions than necessary in the time allowed.)*

Multiple Choice Question Responses

When a multiple choice question has only a single, correct response and a candidate provides two responses (even if one of these responses is correct), then no mark should be awarded (as it is not possible to determine which was the first response selected by the candidate).

When a question requires candidates to select more than one option/multiple options, then local marking arrangements need to ensure consistency of approach.

Contradictory Responses

When a candidate provides contradictory responses, then no mark should be awarded, even if one of the answers is correct.

Short Answer Questions (requiring only a list by way of a response, usually worth only one mark per response)

Where candidates are required to provide a set number of short answer responses then only the set number of responses should be marked. The response space should be marked from left to right on each line and then line by line until the required number of responses have been considered. The remaining responses should not then be marked. Examiners will have to apply judgement as to whether a 'second response' on a line is a development of the 'first response', rather than a separate, discrete response. *(The underlying assumption is that the candidate is attempting to hedge their bets and therefore getting undue benefit rather than engaging with the question and giving the most relevant/correct responses.)*

Short Answer Questions (requiring a more developed response, worth two or more marks)

If the candidates are required to provide a description of, say, three items or factors and four items or factors are provided, then mark on a similar basis – that is downwards (as it is unlikely in this situation that a candidate will provide more than one response in each section of the response space).

Longer Answer Questions (requiring a developed response)

Where candidates have provided two (or more) responses to a medium or high tariff question which only required a single (developed) response and not crossed out the first response, then only the first response should be marked. Examiners will need to apply professional judgement as to whether the second (or a subsequent) response is a 'new start' or simply a poorly expressed continuation of the first response.

6. Always check the pages (and additional objects if present) at the end of the response in case any answers have been continued there. If the candidate has continued an answer there, then add the annotation 'SEEN' to confirm that the work has been seen and mark any responses using the annotations in section 11.

7. There is a NR (**No Response**) option. Award NR (No Response) if:
- if there is nothing written at all in the answer space
 - OR if there is a comment which does not in any way relate to the question (e.g., 'can't do', 'don't know')
 - OR if there is a mark (e.g., a dash, a question mark) which is not an attempt at the question.

Note: Award 0 marks – for an attempt that earns no credit (including copying out the question).

8. The RM Assessor **comments box** is used by your team leader to explain the marking of the practice responses. Please refer to these comments when checking your practice responses. **Do not use the comments box for any other reason.**
9. Assistant Examiners will send a brief report on the performance of candidates to their Team Leader (Supervisor) via email by the end of the marking period. The report should contain notes on particular strengths displayed as well as common errors or weaknesses. Constructive criticism of the question paper/mark scheme is also appreciated.
10. For answers marked by levels of response:
- **To determine the level** – start at the highest level and work down until you reach the level that matches the answer
 - **To determine the mark within the level**, consider the following

Descriptor	Award mark
On the borderline of this level and the one below	At bottom of level
Just enough achievement on balance for this level	Above bottom and either below middle or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Meets the criteria but with some slight inconsistency	Above middle and either below top of level or at middle of level (depending on number of marks available)
Consistently meets the criteria for this level	At top of level

11. Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page – this annotation must be used on all blank pages within an answer booklet (structured or unstructured) and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Noted
	Benefit of Doubt
	Tick
	Cross
	Level 1
	Level 2
	Level 3
	Level 4

12. Awarding Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar to scripts with a coversheet

- a. If a script has a **scribe cover sheet** it is vital to check which boxes are ticked and award as per the instructions and grid below:
 - i. Assess the work for SPaG in accordance with the normal marking criteria. The initial assessment must be made as if the candidate had not used a scribe (or word processor) and was eligible for all the SPaG marks.
 - ii. Check the cover sheet to see what has been dictated (or what facilities were disabled on the word processor) and therefore what proportion of marks is available to the candidate.
 - iii. Convert the SPaG mark to reflect the correct proportion using the conversion table given below.

SPaG mark awarded	Mark if candidate eligible for one third (e.g. grammar only)	Mark if candidate eligible for two thirds (e.g. grammar and punctuation only)
0	0	0
1	0	1
2	1	1
3	1	2
4	1	3
5	2	3
6	2	4
7	2	5
8	3	5
9	3	6

- b. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet** attached to it the candidate **can** still access SPaG marks (see point 1 above) unless the cover sheet states that the checking functionality is enabled, in which case no SPaG marks are available.
- c. If a script has a **word processor cover sheet AND a scribe cover sheet** attached to it, see point 1 above.
- d. If the script has a **transcript, Oral Language Modifier, Sign Language Interpreter or a Practical Assistant cover sheet**, award SPaG as normal.

13. Subject Specific Marking Instructions

General points

It is important to remember that we are rewarding candidates' attempts at grappling with challenging concepts and skills. Reward candidates for what they know, understand and can do. Be positive. Concentrate on what candidates can do, not on what they cannot do.

[3] mark questions are assessed via points-based marking. For all other questions, your first task is to match the response to the appropriate level of response according to the generic levels of response given after the indicative content. Only when you have done this should you start to think about the mark to be awarded. **Please note – the bandings for Assessment Objectives are not dependent; there is no requirement for a response to be awarded in the same band for AO2 as has been awarded in AO1.**

There are different ways of reaching a high level. Some candidates will go straight to the higher levels. Other candidates will gradually climb their way there by working their way through lower levels first.

The mark scheme for each paper will list responses which a candidate might offer. The list will not be exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers, and where a candidate offers a response which is not listed, examiners will be expected to use their knowledge and discretion as to whether the response is valid. Examiners who are in any doubt should contact their Team Leader immediately.

Specific points

Do not transfer marks from one part of a question to another. All questions, and sub-questions, are marked separately.

Mark what the candidate has written - do not assume that the candidate knows something unless they have written it.

The levels of response start with one from the following list of flag words:

Weak, Limited, Satisfactory, Good

During the standardisation process, examples of work at each level will be used to define the meaning of these flag words for the examination. In particular the word 'good' must not be interpreted as the best possible response. It will be what is judged to be 'good' according to the generic levels of response, although better responses could be offered.

Remember that we are trying to achieve two things in the marking of the scripts:

- (i) to place all the candidates in the correct rank order
- (ii) to use the full range of marks available – right up to the top of the range; ‘Good’ means a good response *from a GCSE candidate* and can therefore be awarded the highest marks.

This means that it is imperative you mark to the agreed standard.

Written communication, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Written communication covers: clarity of expression, structure of arguments, presentation of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling.

In the marking of these questions the quality of the candidate's written communication will be one factor (other factors include the relevance and amount of supporting detail) that influences whether an answer is placed at the bottom, the middle, or the top, of a level.

The following points should be remembered:

- answers are placed in the appropriate level according to the RS assessment objectives, i.e. no reference is made at this stage to the quality of the written communication;
- the quality of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar must **never** be used to move an answer from the mark band of one level to another;
- accept any reasonable alternative spelling of transliterated words from non-Roman alphabets in learners' responses.

SPaG is now assessed in e) part of the first question. Please refer to the grid overleaf when awarding the SPaG marks.

The Regulator now requires GCSE Religious Studies to assess the quality of extended responses by candidates. Marks are not specifically given for this assessment however. This assessment takes place in e) part of the second question. The levels descriptors for these are embedded in the Levels of Response, specifically AO2, and are *italicised for clarity*.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) Assessment Grid

<i>High performance 3 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Intermediate performance 2 marks</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>Threshold performance 1 mark</i>
Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder overall Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate
<i>0 marks</i>
The learner writes nothing The learner's response does not relate to the question The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

- Practice scripts provide you with examples of the standard of each band. The marks awarded for these scripts will have been agreed by the Principal Examiners, Senior Team Leaders and Team Leaders and provide you with 'benchmark' examples of the approach to marking.
- The specific task-related indicative content for parts d) and e) of each question will help you to understand how the band descriptors may be applied. However; this indicative content is not an exhaustive list of 'correct' responses: it is material that candidates might use, grouped according to each assessment objective tested by the question. This needs to be used in close conjunction with the relevant Levels of Response marking grid, which is positioned below the indicative content. The guidance column on the right of the mark scheme will provide further exemplification and support as to the interpretation of answers, where required. **Levels of Response marked responses should be read holistically before applying the relevant Levels of Response.**

Assessment objectives (AO)

Assessment Objectives	
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief including • beliefs, practices and sources of authority • influence on individuals, communities and societies • similarities and differences within and/or between religions and their beliefs.
AO2	Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion, including their significance and influence.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1	(a) Outline what it meant by the term ‘trigunas’. Responses might include: • Trigunas refers collectively to the three qualities or attributes of matter/prakriti • These three qualities are: Sattva, which is purity/goodness/harmony/consciousness/truth; Rajas, which is passion/energy/action/change; and Tamas, which is darkness/ignorance/chaos • They are the fundamental forces/energies/components which combine in different ways to create the material world and the nature of the things in it • They are present in different proportions within everything and everyone • Some Hindus see the qualities reflected in the gods of the Trimurti, with rajas being associated with Brahma, sattva with Vishnu and tamas with Shiva.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification. The use of the phrase ‘meaning of the term’ in the question means a response must show some knowledge of the definition of the word ‘trigunas’ in order to address the question asked. Listing the three names – sattva, rajas, tamas does not give a definition of this term, but can be part of development/exemplification. The connection with the Trimurti does not make these two terms synonyms – trigunas does not mean the Trimurti. Prakriti is distinct from God in some schools but in others matter is God therefore relating the trigunas to qualities of a manifest God is creditable; this is not the same thing as equating the Trimurti gods to the trigunas.

1	(b)	Outline the concept of nirguna Brahman. Responses might include: • 'Nirguna' means without qualities/attributes and nirguna Brahman is therefore formless/without a body, infinite and wholly unlimited • It is the Ultimate or Absolute reality/truth; for some Hindus it is the only thing that has real existence for others nirguna Brahman is all-pervading and/or everything is part of nirguna Brahman • It is an impersonal concept of the divine – meaning that there is no personal relationship between devotees and nirguna Brahman.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification. Being the creator is associated with saguna Brahman so not a relevant response. Nirguna and saguna Brahman are related concepts and responses that address this can be credited; however they are not in any kind of opposition to one another and responses which present them as such should not be credited.
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1	(c)	Outline ONE custom associated with Diwali. Responses might include: • Lighting small lamps (diyas) which are placed on thresholds and boundaries to welcome good fortune and/or deities such as Lakshmi or Rama • sometimes the placement of diyas is associated with specific aims: diya placed at the front door welcome peace and good fortune, while placing them outside and/or near where household rubbish is collected is believed to ward away death and diya on the roof represent a general protection of the home from evil • fireworks are set off as a celebration of the light and the power it has over darkness • rangoli patterns are made out of coloured powders and other dry materials, usually on the threshold of the home; they are associated with happiness and positivity and welcome the goddess Lakshmi into the house.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for a statement supported by any combination of development and exemplification. The question asks for a custom not for an account of what the festival celebrates; ‘festival of light’ or ‘new year’ are not an answer to this question in themselves but can be credited as relevant development if clearly connected with the selected custom. Accounts of associated stories do not answer the question without being explicitly linked to a custom.
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Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1 (d)	Describe how detachment might lead to freedom from samsara. Learners might consider some of the following: Samsara is the cycle of life, death and rebirth in which individual atman are trapped until they can achieve liberation from it. There are different paths to liberation, built on different ways of understanding the nature of nature of samsara and how the atman becomes trapped within it. Detachment can relate to several of these. As the English word implies it is the opposite of attachment, and it usually relates to removing or overcoming an attachment to the things holding the atman in samsara. One view is that the atman is trapped because it is too attached to the body that exists within samsara, and/or to the emotions, desires and ego that arise in relation to things within samsara. None of these things are real in the sense the atman is – they are changeable and transient while the atman is eternal. Being attached to unreal things as if they were real leads to the atman being confused about its true nature and clinging to things which cannot help it become liberated. Detachment is the process of freeing the atman from such attachments, through the realisation the ultimate truth about them. When it is understood as gaining wisdom, detachment is most directly connected with the Jnana marga. Raja marga also offers a path towards this kind of detachment via a progression from behavioural and physical disciplines through to forms of meditation that help the atman understand what is not real. Detachment can also be understood in the context of karma marga, where it relates to nishkam karma. Performing good actions in pursuit of good outcomes is a form of attachment – there is a desire for the fruits of the action and this binds the atman to the place where those fruits occur, samsara. Nishkam karma means not being attached to the fruits of one's actions. If this kind of detachment is achieved then the person is not creating any new karma and eventually, when all their accumulated karma has been fulfilled, liberation will be achieved.	6 AO1	Examiners should mark according to AO1. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>AO2</u>
3 (3)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	4 (10–12)	A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Hindu groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Hindu groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion
2 (2)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	3 (7–9)	A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Hindu groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion
1 (1)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	2 (4–6)	A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Hindu groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus

		1 (1–3)	A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
1	(e) ‘Men and women are equal according to Hindu teachings.’ Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should: - Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Hinduism - Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. Learners might consider some of the following: AO1: Hinduism includes the worship of both masculine and feminine deities, often but not always as husband and wife. Durga is one goddess who is primarily worshipped independently of any consort, and she is believed to have been created to perform a task beyond the power of the male gods who made her. Sometimes deities (most commonly Shiva) are represented as half male and half female, split down the centre with the masculine side usually being on the right. This is known as the Ardhanarishvara (the half female lord) and it illustrates the inextricability of shakti (the divine feminine) from shiva (the divine masculine). Shakti is the active power of Shiva which can do nothing on its own. Shakti is also worshipped as the Supreme Godhead in Shaktism. The Vedas make no clear distinction between men and women in terms of who can perform rituals. The Upanishads give accounts of sadhvi, such as Maitreyi and Gargi Vachaknavi, not only in dialogue with sadhus but also educating them, and some important philosophical writings are attributed to them. In contemporary Hinduism too there are female gurus and women can renounce the world in the same way as men, although there are far fewer of them. Later texts, in particular the Manusmriti, do make a distinction between men and women. Women have a specific Sthri dharma, which is based on a woman’s domestic role as a daughter, wife and mother. In these sources of authority women are seen as having	15 3 AO1 12 AO2 3 SpaG (4/3)	Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question. Please refer to the SpaG response grid on page 8.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	fundamentally different duties to men. Concepts such as varna and ashrama do not apply to women directly but only through their husbands. Even the duties of a widow are related to the duty she is still considered to owe to her husband. AO2: The worship of goddesses in Hinduism clearly implies a recognition of power associated with femininity. The division of divinity into shiva and shakti and the different attributes ascribed to those two halves supports this. Ardhanarishvara in particular demonstrates the connection and interdependency of the masculine and feminine aspects of divinity. Each part is necessary for wholeness and for things to work as they should. Many people do interpret this to mean that women and men are equal in Hinduism as it is hard to reconcile goddess worship with the idea of female inferiority. However, this presentation of an idealist femininity might be used to prevent women from making choices that do not reflect traditionally feminine qualities, such as choosing not to be a wife and mother, and so the existence of female divinity does not necessarily guarantee freedom of choice. While there are certainly female gurus today – some quite famous – they are far fewer in number than their male counterparts. Many of them did not take the traditional route of studying with a guru and receiving initiation, which could be used to argue that equality of opportunity is not in line with an equal freedom to choose. Similarly, while there are certainly fewer female than male renunciates it is less clear why this should be. Some might argue that it is simply a less appealing choice to women, using the idea of essentially feminine qualities to support this, while others might argue that it is much harder for women to make such a choice in reality, even if it is technically allowed to them, because of other restrictions. Women may be less likely to be educated, have less freedom to leave their homes to seek teaching or guidance and are more likely to be considered responsible for dependent children and household obligations. Sthri dharma and the Manusmriti are often cited as evidence that women have a lower status than men, since they ascribe negative value to women doing things men are		

Question		Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
		permitted to do and they given women less personal freedom. However, many people consider that women are equally important to men but different in their nature and requirements. This argument is used to emphasise the importance of domestic work that has historically been undervalued but it might also lead to women being obliged to do such work, regardless of their own preferences, on the basis that it is their nature to do it. Modern feminist views generally reject 'equal but different' arguments on this basis, considering equality to mean that everyone is entitled to fair choices and the same freedoms.		

Question		Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2	(a)	Describe what kriyamana karma is. Responses might include: - Kriyamana karma refers to the creation of karma during the current lifetime, through the actions and choices made by the individual - it is also called agami or future karma because the fruits of it will be experienced/played out in future rebirths rather than the current one.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification. A general description of the overall concept of karma is not a complete response to this question but correct definitions of the term can be credited.
2	(b)	Describe the work of Sewa International (Sewa UK). Responses might include: - It is an international humanitarian non-profit organisation working in a range of areas, including access to education, women's rights, environmental concerns and disaster relief - activities include providing physical materials to ease specific problems both on an individual level (e.g., providing 'school kits' for children who cannot afford school materials) and on communal scale by building schools and establishing medical camps for areas with no hospitals - individuals can donate money, volunteer for local projects or sponsor individuals to help them achieve specific goals.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification. The concept of sewa is not a relevant response to this question. Sewa International is not a proselytising organisation.

2	(c)	Describe the role of a murti in worship. Responses might include: • A murti is an image (sometimes, but not necessarily anthropomorphic) of a deity • the murti is seen and treated as a physical manifestation of the indwelling presence of the deity the image represents; it is therefore the living presence of the divine in the home or site where the murti is placed • murti are linked with the concept of saguna Brahman, enabling worshippers to focus on/understand specific aspects of the Divine • The murti is the focus of the rituals of puja, receiving offerings (usually of food or flowers) and bestowing prasada (grace); prasada is usually shared by eating food which was previously offered and accepted - having been in the presence of the murti it now carries the deities blessing • Murti also give darshan, when the deity and the devotees eyes meet, and the deity's blessing is given.	3 AO1	Marks should be awarded for any combination of statements, development and exemplification. Examples of specific/occasional uses of murti, such as practices associated with particular festivals, can be credited.
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Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>
3 (5-6)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed description • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Good knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of the issues
2 (3-4)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the breadth and/or depth of issues
1 (1-2)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2 (d)	Describe how the different Hindu margas use sources of wisdom and authority. Learners might consider some of the following: The different margas are different paths to reach liberation. Each marga has a different focus, using a different means to attain the ultimate goal. Jnana marga is the path of wisdom; bhakti marga is the path of devotion; karma marga is the path of action; and raja marga is the path of meditation. The different paths exist because the diversity of people and the different lives they live makes it unlikely that one way will be appropriate or accessible for everyone. Sources of wisdom and authority include sacred texts and other spiritual writings. Some of these set out the requirements of a specific path, for example the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali explain the eight limbs (astanga) of raja yoga. This source is therefore more likely to be considered useful and important by a Hindu following that path than a Hindu concerned with bhakti. Jnana marga requires the study of different texts, traditionally with the guidance of a guru, in order to achieve understanding of the ultimate truths they contain. But within this broad category there are different traditions, built on different interpretations of the foundational Vedic texts so individual Hindus within the jnana marga might still consider different sources to be authoritative. While there are bhakti texts scripture in general might be less likely to be considered an important source of authority within this marga. The Bhagavad Gita teaches that anything offered with true devotion to God will be accepted and this could imply that the primary source of authority for bhaktas is internal to the devotee, via their connection with their Ishvara. Karma yoga, too, is less to do with knowledge and more to do with action and attitudes to the fruits of action so sources of wisdom and authority might be more likely to take the form of examples of people living an ideal dharmic life, such as Rama and Sita, or personal understandings of virtue and morality.	6 AO1	Examiners should mark according to AO1 Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question. There is no requirement to cover all four margas named in the specification to fully answer this question, but there does need to be reference to more than one of them. A response that consists entirely of a description of what the margas are cannot move above level 1.

Level (Mark)	<u>A01</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>A02</u>
3 (3)	A good demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question: • Good understanding of the question shown by appropriate selection of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with detail and/or developed explanation • Good knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Good knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	4 (10–12)	A good attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A variety of viewpoints explored with good use of reasoned argument and discussion • Good analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on different Hindu groups • Evidence of critical evaluation including comment on, and comparison of, arguments from different Hindu groups • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and a balanced conclusion to the discussion <i>There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.</i>
2 (2)	A satisfactory demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Satisfactory understanding of the question shown by some use of religious knowledge • Selection of appropriate sources of wisdom and authority with superficial explanation and/or description • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals, communities and societies	3 (7–9)	A satisfactory attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different viewpoints offered with some evidence of reasoned argument and/or discussion • Satisfactory analysis and evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Hindu groups • Evidence of comment on, and comparison of, arguments • Evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus and some conclusion to the discussion <i>There is a line of reasoning presented which is mostly relevant and has some structure.</i>
1 (1)	Limited/weak demonstration of knowledge and/or understanding in response to the question: • Limited understanding of the question shown by factual errors or generalised responses with little connection to the question • Points may be listed and/or lacking in relevant detail related to the issues • Weak knowledge understanding of different viewpoints within Hinduism • Weak knowledge and understanding of the influence on individuals,	2 (4–6)	A limited attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • Different views may be stated but with little or no development • Limited analysis and/or evaluation of the significance and/or influence of the issue on some Hindu groups • Response may contain some inaccuracies or misunderstanding of the issue in the stimulus • Little evidence of judgement on the issue in the stimulus

Level (Mark)	<u>AO1</u>	Level (Mark)	<u>AO2</u>
	communities and societies		<i>There is a line of reasoning which has some relevance and which is presented with limited structure.</i>
		1 (1–3)	A weak attempt to respond to the stimulus, demonstrating some or all of the following: • A single viewpoint may be stated with little or no support or justification or views may be stated as a list • Response may be simplistic, purely descriptive and/or very brief • No attempt to offer judgement on the issue in the stimulus <i>The information is communicated in a basic/unstructured way.</i>
0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit	0 (0)	No response or no response worthy of credit

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
2 (e)	‘Ahimsa is the most important virtue for Hindus.’ Discuss this statement. In your answer, you should: - Analyse and evaluate the importance of points of view, referring to common and divergent views within Hinduism - Refer to sources of wisdom and authority. Learners might consider some of the following: AO1: ‘Ahimsa’ literally means ‘harmlessness’ or ‘not injuring’. It is commonly translated as non-violence but is generally understood to encompass a broader range of behaviours than that implies. It has been the subject of much philosophical consideration, but it can be simply expressed as a moral obligation not to cause harm to any living thing. Ahimsa is considered a virtue in all the religions of Indian origin. It is mentioned in the Vedas, which are the earliest Hindu scriptures, and the Upanishads develop the concept into a moral virtue encompassing avoidance of harm not only through actions but also through words and thoughts. The Mahabharata explicitly calls ahimsa the highest virtue and the greatest truth. M K Gandhi held this same view, regarding ahimsa as the most significant form of dharma. He also described it as an active principle: it is not enough to stand aside from harm, one should stand in the way of it, whatever the personal risks involved. Gandhi believed that truly following ahimsa meant rejecting the very idea of having an enemy and said that a truly non-violent person should not even support the violent punishment of murderers, leading to debate over whether execution was an appropriate punishment for his murderer. Gandhi also taught that ahimsa is the means to realise truth, which for Gandhi, is synonymous with realising God. Some Hindu sources, including the Bhagavad Gita, raise the issue of justified violence and the Gita explicitly says that it is the duty of a warrior to fight in a righteous war.	15 3 AO1 12 AO2	Examiners should mark according to AO1 and AO2 descriptors. Please refer to the Level of Response grid above when marking this question.

Question	Indicative content	Marks	Guidance
	AO2: Different schools of Hinduism have different lists of the most important virtues (yamas) and most such lists include ahimsa. This certainly demonstrates its centrality to Hindu understandings of virtue but it does not make it unequivocally the most important principle. It could be argued that elevating one virtue above others is unhelpful. For example the first limb of astanga yoga consists of five yamas: ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truth), asteya (not stealing), brahmacharya (chastity) and aparigraha (non-possessiveness). These are not a progression from one to the next but a set of personal disciplines that someone committed to the path should observe at all times. Raising one to be more important than the others undermines the holistic nature of astanga as a path to moksha. However, it could also be argued that ahimsa in its broadest sense encompasses other virtues anyway – not being truthful has the potential to cause harm and so ahimsa incorporates satya (truth); not showing daya (compassion) means ignoring suffering and therefore it is an aspect of ahimsa. This would make ahimsa the most important virtue because a proper understanding of the concept arguably renders lists of distinct virtues meaningless. It might also be noted that ahimsa is not necessarily possible for everyone. The varna system includes kshatriyas (warriors) who may be required to fight. Gandhi interpreted the Bhagavad Gita, which explicitly says a warrior has a duty to fight in a righteous cause, metaphorically. He argued that it was about the ongoing struggle between dharma and adharma, rather than being a justification for physical violence. This is not a universal understanding however and it could certainly be argued that a duty to avoid harm could easily include justified violence in prevention of a greater evil. This might be seen as placing dharma higher than ahimsa, if both are considered virtues, but it might also be understood as a development of the concept of ahimsa beyond its literal meaning.		

AO Grid

Question	AO1	AO2	SPaG	Total
1a	3			3
1b	3			3
1c	3			3
1d	6			6
1e*	3	12	3	18
2a	3			3
2b	3			3
2c	3			3
2d	6			6
2e*	3	12		15
Total	36	24	3	63

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