



**General Certificate of Education
January 2011**

Religious Studies

RSS09

**World Religions 1: Buddhism, Hinduism,
Sikhism**

AS Unit J

Final

Mark Scheme

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS09: World Religions 1

Section A Buddhism

Question 1

01 Examine the Buddhist concepts of anatta and anicca.

Candidates may refer to some of the following points:

Both are characteristics of existence and fundamental truths in Buddhism.

Anatta

- Translated as no soul, no self, or non-self.
- A rejection and challenge to the Hindu notion of a permanent, eternal, pure non-material essence within every living being.
- Buddha's teaching denied the existence of a permanent, substantial, metaphysical, independent self (atman) and proposed the truth of the ever changing dynamic of mental and physical elements which constitute each living being.
- The teaching of the 5 skandhas (constituent elements) of rupa (materiality), vedana (feelings and sensations), perceptions, ability to label and identify, mental formations (sankharas) and consciousness (vinnana).
- These constituent parts temporarily come together and constantly interact, evolve and change, and effect each other.

Anicca

- Impermanence and constant changing nature.
- Nothing stays the same.
- Universe in a constant state of movement.
- Feelings and thoughts in perpetual flux.
- All things exist dependent upon something else.
- In dependent origination doctrine the teaching of anicca is central in the assertion that all things that have a beginning will have an end.
- Realisation of anicca liberates a person from attachment.
- Linked to practice of vipassana meditation as watching the arising and falling away of the breath, of thoughts and emotional states.

No more than level 5 if only one concept dealt with, however fully.

(30 marks) AO1

02 'The concept of anicca can only be fully understood through personal experience.' Assess this view.

This relates to a fundamental and specific issues in Buddhist dharma i.e. is truth only known and understood experientially or can it be apprehended intellectually with wisdom?

In support of this view

- This teaching is rooted in the experience of everyday life in the most mundane aspect as well as more profound.
- Impermanence of life is fully realised through old age, sickness, and death, the sight of which encouraged the Buddha to seek for enlightenment.

In opposition to this view

- This mark of existence can only be fully understood when wisdom is cultivated through the practice of meditation.
- Insight into the nature of the mind reveals the constant state of flux and the ability to create still and pure states of mind.
- Similarly listening to and contemplating the teachings of the Buddha (dharma) brings about understanding.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 2

03 Examine the framework of the Four Noble Truths.

Framework requires both a statement of the Four Noble Truths as well as the way in which they relate together.

- Framework can also apply to the relationship of the Four Noble Truths to the analogy of a disease with symptoms (The nature of suffering and first noble truth) which has a cause and can be diagnosed (second noble truth and the cause of suffering)
- The cure can be prescribed (third noble truth, the end of suffering is possible)
- and then applied (the fourth noble truth, following the middle way)

The Four Noble Truths can be presented in a variety of ways

- First truth. All forms of life experience suffering or dissatisfaction with life and is (dukkha)
- Second truth. The cause of suffering is craving/ desire / attachment, (tanha).
- Third truth. When craving ceases suffering ceases (Nibbana or nirodha).
- Fourth truth. The way to end suffering is to follow the middle way or the eightfold path of right view, right thought, right action, right speech, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration (magga).

Highest level answers should be able to explain the relationship between the Four Noble Truths.

(30 marks) AO1

04 'The Four Noble Truths can never be fully understood until enlightenment has been attained.' How far do you agree?

In support

- An understanding of the cause of suffering cannot come merely from experience of life.
- It requires insight into the nature of reality as it is, which is part of the enlightenment experience.
- Following the Eightfold Path fully and attaining the perfection of all aspects will result in enlightenment and therefore only fully known at that point.
- The Buddhist scriptures state that these are such profound truths that full understanding is not possible until enlightenment is attained.

Other views

- There are many different levels of understanding of these truths and all are valid.
- At one level they make sense in the experience of life.
- With some willingness to reflect on these truths and adjust thoughts and behaviour then more understanding will be gained.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 3

05 Examine the nature of morality in the Eightfold Path.

- Moral precepts rather than fixed laws or rules.
- Sila (morality) is both personal and individual and for the benefit of others and the wider society.
- Three sections Right action, Right speech and Right livelihood.

Right action. Most of the answer will focus on this.

Right actions consists of the five moral precepts
To undertake to refrain from not harming other beings
To undertake to not take that which is not given
To undertake to refrain from false speech
To undertake to refrain from sexual misconduct
To undertake to refrain from taking substances which cloud the mind.

Each of these can be explained in more detail

- Each of these cultivate positive moral qualities of kindness, generosity, compassion and equanimity.
- Each of these lead to a clear conscience and form the basis for development of a pure mind in meditation.

Right speech. Truthful speech; no angry or hurtful speech; no idle gossip or lying.

Right livelihood. No breaking of 5 moral precepts through work – no killing / selling alcohol, prostitution etc.

No more than level 5 if clear explanation of each section is not given.

(30 marks) AO1

06 How far do you agree that morality is the basis of the Buddhist way of life?

In agreement

- All Buddhists, whether lay or monastic must observe the precepts before any progress on the path to enlightenment can be made.
- Meditation and wisdom are not possible without sila.
- Morality requires restraint of harmful instincts and habitual tendencies in human nature which is the basis of Buddhist way of life.
- Morality makes possible the fulfilment of the best aspects of human nature and so creates a better society.

Other views

- Do not need to be Buddhist to practise morality.
- Morality is possible without reference to other aspects of Buddhist path i.e. wisdom and meditation.
- Either wisdom or meditation could be considered as the basis of Buddhism and what makes it distinct from other ways of life
- All three aspects are essential.
- Monastic sangha is unique to Buddhism and could also be seen as essential to Buddhist way of life.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4

07 Examine the nature and discipline of the monastic Sangha in Buddhism.

Nature refers to form and purpose.

- Renunciation from worldly involvement yet dependent on lay community for upkeep
- Interaction and responsibilities to lay community
- In some Buddhist countries in S.E. Asia (Theravada) all men required to be monks for a period of time to encourage moral discipline
- Culturally accepted as a period of moral and spiritual training
- In other Mahayana Buddhist cultures, monastic sangha serves as form of education as well as social welfare.

Discipline

- Basic principle is the middle way between extreme asceticism of Hindu sadhus and hedonism.
- Rules enable monks to focus fully on spiritual development
- Vinaya code refers to at least 217 rules related to requisites
- Basic 10 precepts which include the 5 moral precepts for lay people plus
 - Celibacy
 - Not eating after midday,
 - Not handling money,
 - Not sleeping on a high or comfortable bed,
 - Not attending musical shows
- Also adherence to rules of monastery and abbot relating to cycle of the year with certain rituals about rains retreat, travelling to other monasteries and festival occasions such as Kattina (giving of robes)

No more than level 5 if only nature or discipline is dealt with.

(30 marks) AO1

08 'The monastic way of life is superior to the way of life of the lay Buddhist.' Assess this claim.

In support of the claim

- The discipline of the monastic way of life requires a considerable amount of self sacrifice.
- It can be considered superior as monks generally do not transgress any moral precepts, and if they do there is a session in which they confess these transgressions.
- Bhikkus are regarded with great respect by lay people as they represent the teachings of the Buddha.
- The monks are trained to embody the 10 perfections of loving kindness and compassion etc.

Other views

- Since monks do not earn a living or have worldly responsibilities and worries it can be regarded as inferior because it is an escape.
- Some men might use the monastic way of life as a way of being looked after in old age. Some monks are corrupt and do not observe the precepts.
- Some monks only take precepts for a short time for social respectability.
- The lay life is equally valid and not inferior to monastic life.

(15 marks) AO2

Section B Hinduism

Question 5

09 Examine the concept of avatar in Hinduism.

Basic definition

- The descent to earth of a deity in a human or animal form. Sometimes translated as incarnation.
- The earthly manifestation of Vishnu as the protector and sustainer of the universe.
- The supreme godhead appears on earth on 9 occasions in order to save it from destruction or peril.
- It is the belief in the restoration of righteousness and law (dharma) when it is endangered.

Expect some detailed exemplification, e.g.

The 9 avatars of Vishnu:

Matsya (the fish)
 Kurma (the tortoise)
 Varaha (the boar)
 Narasinha (the half man half lion)
 Parashua (Rama with the axe)
 Rama (human)
 Krishna
 Buddha
 Kalki (future avatar)

These are also linked to evolutionary sequence from sea animals to fully human beings

In addition

Some religious movements regard the founder as an avatar e.g. Caitanya movement Swami Narayan. Also extended to religious figures who have divine 'infilling' e.g. Gandhi, and Sai Baba.

(30 marks) AO1

10 Assess the claim that, for Hindus, God is unknowable except in a personal form.

In support of this claim

- The human forms of the supreme godhead are the main means by which Hindus can form a personal relationship with and loving devotion to God.
- Humans can only understand God in a human form as anything beyond this is beyond human understanding.
- A large majority of Hindus have a personal devotion to an incarnation of Vishnu especially Krishna and Rama and this is the most popular form of worship in a cultural sense.
- Bhakti yoga, knowing God through worship is one of the most accessible and universal forms of worship of God.

In refutation of this claim

- The human forms of God are manifestations and not the ultimate reality.
- The ultimate reality of God can be realised through a process of yoga in which the inner self (atman) is recognised as the same nature as the ultimate reality of Brahman.
- Vedanta philosophy asserts the worship of deities is a lower path and direct knowledge is the higher path.
- There are many ways of knowing God, and many interpretations of what it means to know God.
- Some deities have animal forms and some are semi divine e.g. Ganesha / Shiva

(15 marks) AO2

Question 6

- 11 Examine the similarities and differences between bhakti yoga and karma yoga as means to liberation.**

Bhakti yoga

- Complete submission in loving devotion of the person to a personal God.
- It leads to moksha (liberation) through faith in the personal deity and merging with this deity in love and submission as the higher goal.
- Expressed through emotional union through chanting of mantras, puja and singing bhajans.

Karma yoga

- Development of selflessness through performance of duties without desire for reward.
- Moral actions and development of innate goodness in human nature.
- Creation of harmonious and righteous society through adherence to caste duties.
- Attaining the final goal of liberation through activity in the world according to caste and stage in life duties.
- Requires removing attachment or selfishness from the fruit or rewards of deeds.
- The discipline of non-attachment.

Similarities

- Both require the development of personal moral qualities and overcoming egoism and attachment to selfish desires.
- Both lead to merging / identifying / uniting with the ultimate being through personal deity.
- Both are paths to moksha as they transcend ordinary or mundane personality to reach higher levels of knowledge union and bliss.

Differences

- Bhakti yoga is based on worship and emotional submission to deity.
- Requires special time and energy to religious rituals and practices.
- It is based in the power of loving devotion.
- Karma yoga is based on good deeds and following the Hindu way of life to perfection. Based on action in the world and service to others in a social context.

No more than level 5 if both differences and similarities are not addressed.

(30 marks) AO1

12 'Yoga is not essential in Hinduism.' Assess this view.

In support

- These forms of yoga require special attention and commitment and are additional to, rather than essential to, living the Hindu way of life.
- They are for adept or saintly types of people who put these religious practices before anything else.
- The Hindu way of life is based on dharma which can be lived through every activity and giving due respect to the family and the natural environment.

In refutation

- These yogas are essential to Hinduism as they are specific ways to reach the ultimate goal of liberation.
- Without these all that can be attained is a good rebirth which is not the ultimate goal.
- Hinduism strongly stresses the importance of a spiritual life as the highest aim and so these are essential.
- The Hindu way of life includes the stages of vanaprasta and sannyasin in which these yogas play an important part.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 7

13 Examine the role of the temple as a place of worship in Hinduism.

- Its role as a place of worship to particular deity e.g. Krishna, Shiva.
- To provide special place of worship for particular deities.
- To make a special petition for a blessing from the deity.
- To receive darshan (vision of deity)
This is a special blessing of the temple in which worshippers and their offerings are taken to the inner sanctum (garbha-griha) of the temple
- To provide opportunity for congregational worship especially at festival times / large processions from the temple.
- In villages the temple is the focal point for the communities and can provide help for the needy.
- In cities the temple is a place for training temple priests – a place of study and ritual.

(30 marks) AO1

14 'For Hindus, God is everywhere so there is no need for special places of worship.' Assess this claim

In support

- For Hindus anything which is a life giving force such as the sun, rivers, trees, animals such as the cow, contain the presence of God and so they regard such natural phenomena as worthy of reverence and worship.
- Right intention is all that is necessary in order to worship God, the place is insignificant.
- Many rituals are performed by Brahmin priests at the side of rivers and besides sacred trees.

In refutation

- Temples and shrines are necessary as the best form of expressing the supernatural powers of the deities.
- The sacred powers of these special sites are regarded as essential for worship.
- Some temples mark the birthplace or site of special event in the stories of lives of the Gods.
- Temples are the means by which the religious traditions and teachings are practised and preserved.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 8

15 Explain the four stages of life in Hinduism.

Brahmacharya (student)

- Studying Sanskrit texts and gaining full understanding of Hindu dharma
- Celibacy
- Attachment to a guru who initiates the student into Hindu rituals and teachings.

Grihasta

- Duties to get married , create and bring up a family
- Contribute to society and the welfare of those in need in the community
- Educate the young
- Engage in honest and productive livelihood

Vanaprasta (retired person)

- Duty to retire from full time work
- Devote time to spiritual and religious matters
- Educate and care for grandchildren

Sannyasin

- Complete abandonment of family ties
- Giving up home or dwelling place and all possessions
- Become dependent upon gifts and care for others
- Study scripture
- Practise rituals and austerities
- Prepare body and mind for death and final liberation

No more than level 5 unless all stages are examined, however fully.

(30 marks) AO1

16 'The Hindu way of life is perfectly expressed in the home.' Assess this view.

In support

- Puja, study and education in Hindu dharma and performance of key rituals in the life of Hindus are undertaken in the home.
- The family is the main place for understanding the Hindu way of life in which religious and moral values are part of daily life.
- In Hinduism there is no separation of religious and secular activities.

In refutation

- The Hindu way of life is equally expressed in the abandonment of family life and the renunciation of worldly activities.
- This is just as much an expression of Hinduism as family life.
- Pilgrimage and temple worship are also part of family life.

(15 marks)

AO2

Section C Sikhism

Question 9

17 Examine the life and teachings of Guru Nanak.

Life events

- 1469-1539
- Member of kshatryia caste in Punjab when Punjab under Muslim control.
- Highly intelligent and spiritual child; special qualities, married to Mata Sulakhni
- 1499 at 30 key event. Went missing, presumed drowned had revelatory experience 'there is no Hindu, there is no Muslim'
- Long period of teaching, usually with Mardana
- Made four major journeys east to Bengal, south to Tamil Nadu, North to Kashmir and Tibet, west to Baghdad.
- Influenced by Sufi mystics and sant poet traditions
- Established special community at Kartapur based on Sikh principles of honest living and service.

Teachings

- Oneness of God as the creator of this universe and is everywhere
- God is not born and does not die and is without visible form or shape
- Against idol worship as reaction to proliferation of Hindu deities and recognition of Islamic monotheism.
- All human beings are equal regardless of status or caste as Hindu community were degraded and exploited by previous Mughul regimes
- Criticised Hindu caste systems and created the langar, a free kitchen for all regardless of caste
- Advocated the singing of hymns to praise God through influence of poets Kabir, Lalla and Namdev.

No more than level 5 if only life or teachings is dealt with.

(30 marks)

AO1

**18 'Guru Nanak strongly challenged the religious culture of his time.'
Assess this view.**

In support of this view

- He was very critical of certain aspects of Hinduism and Islam, particularly the cultural rather than theological aspects of these faiths
- He challenged the empty piety of Muslims even in Mecca where he was challenged by the Qadi for sleeping with his feet facing the Kaaba.
- He encountered criticism from Hindus about eating meat.
- He criticised the extreme asceticism of certain sadhus.
- He taught that ritual would not have magical powers.

Other views

- His challenges did not have much impact of these religions although may have persuaded followers to abandon these faiths
- His community at Kartapur was significant in attracting many pilgrims and followers
- He had a minimal impact during his lifetime
- All these challenges and his unique teachings did establish the beginning of a new faith which in the long run had did challenge the existing faith successfully.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 10

- 19 Explain the meaning of Vaisakhi and the ways in which Sikhs celebrate this festival.**

The meaning

- It is a traditional harvest celebration
- It celebrates the formation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699
- It represents the transformation of Sikhs into a strong and clearly identified community of soldier saints.
- It created the basis of the Sikh baptism ceremony
- It established Sikh identity with 5 'K's.

The ways in which it is celebrated

- Usually April 14th in Punjab where it is a harvest festival
- In homes:
 - many parties and feasts
 - Sikhs dress up in new clothes
- In gurdwara and local community:
 - Nagar Kirtan ceremony and processions
 - Parading of Sikh scriptures through the town.
 - Five people representing the 5 panj piaras lead procession
 - The details of this key event in Sikh history are retold and re-enacted in various ways, highlighting the heroism of the first five panj piaras.
 - Gurdwaras are decorated and visited by everyone
- Kirtan – singing of hymns from Guru Granth Sahib – Akhand Path
- Continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib.
- Many langars held and opened to wider public.
- Dances and celebrations e.g. bhangra dancing
- Many Sikhs choose to be baptised in Khalsa at his time.

No more than level 5 if only one aspect dealt with

(30 marks) AO1

20 'The celebration of Vaisakhi makes little contribution to Sikh faith and life.'
Assess this view.

Supporting the view:

- This festival is more of a social event which has become more commercialised rather like the European Christmas
- Sikh life and faith is sustained by home life and regular attendance at the gurdwara.
- Sikh life and faith is expressed more effectively by service to the community and maintaining rituals such as amrit.

Other views

- It contributes to Sikh life and faith by providing opportunity for expression of religious faith and devotion especially in the Punjab.
- It reminds Sikhs of the heroism of their Gurus and the values and principles for which they sacrificed their lives.
- It maintains certain practices such as continuous reading of the Granth kirtan, nagar kirtan and being amritdhari.
- It strengthened the community by bringing families and community together to celebrate a common heritage.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 11

21 Explain the meaning and purpose of the main features of the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar.

Main features

- Lake – now extended and man-made
- Guru's Bridge – marble causeway
- Gateways arch to the bridge – Darshani Deorhi
- Entrances to the Temple on all 4 sides
- Main Temple building – Sri Harminder Sahib
- Guru Granth Sahib on jewel-studded platform
- Three storeys and lotus dome
- Shrines to gurus
- Langar

Meaning

- Pool – gives name Armit Sar
- Bridge – symbolises soul's journey after death
- 4 entrances – acceptance of an openness to, all comers
- Harminder – importance of Guru Granth Sahib
- Lotus dome – purification
- Langar – essential part of Sewa

Purpose

- Pool – many bathe in this; symbolic cleansing
- Guru's bridge – practical access
- Entrances – practical
- Harminder – to emphasise importance of Guru Granth Sahib, and to house very ancient copy

Shrines – to enable pilgrims to pay respects

Langar – to feed the thousands of visitors

N.B. meaning and purpose may be conflated, but there needs to be some attention to both of these for marks above Level 5.

(30 marks) AO1

22 **‘The Golden Temple has little relevance for Sikhs in the United Kingdom.’
Assess this claim.**

In support

- For Sikhs in the UK especially second or third generation, the main concerns are the ways of maintaining their Sikh faith and identity in the British context and the origins of their faith have little connection with this.
- Other issues such as the extent to which they maintain the 5 ‘k’s and the purpose of gurdwaras are more important.

In refutation

- For Sikhs in the UK the Golden Temple may well have more relevance and importance than for Sikhs in India.
- It is a testimony to the origins and focus of their faith. Need to have a connection with the source of their faith even more so if it is in a different cultural context.
- It is an opportunity for both spiritual renewal as well as an assertion of cultural identity, which is essential for Sikhs born in UK.
- All faiths, including Sikhs, have a need to have sacred sites which give a direct connection with the founders of their faith.
- Visiting such sacred sites gives more importance, purpose and reality to the Sikh faith. It is a focus for Sikhs all over the world to meet and recognise their common purpose.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 12

23 Explain the meaning and practice of langar for Sikhs.

Meaning

- Langar can refer to the kitchen / eating area; the meal itself, or the service provided.
- It was established in the past to express and ensure social equality and justice.
- It challenged Hindu notions of caste.

Practice

- The practice was encouraged by Guru Nanak to create fraternity and equality amongst his followers.
- The practice of all sitting on the floor together.
- Free food being provided to all by the community regardless of creed, race or ethnicity.
- Only vegetarian food.
- Means of practising seva and means of consolidating Sikh community.
- In contemporary society voluntary service to langar is a distinctive practice amongst the Sikh community.
- Privilege to provide langar.

Maximum Level 5 if both meaning and practice are not included.

(30 marks)

AO1

24 'Langar today has little connection with its original intentions.' Assess this view.

In support

- The social and political context today is totally different even in India, where the elimination of caste is not the main aim.
- Langar today has a social and symbolic function
- Langar is an expression of social acceptance and tolerance
- The practice of langar varies according to the country in which it is practised
- In some instances of caste distinctions are being re-established in gurdwaras today which is totally contradictory to the original purpose.

Other views

- The main principles of equality and service are the same as those which inspired its historical origins.
- The Sikh religion needs to adapt and evolve according to present day conditions and make langar have relevance today.

(15 marks)

AO2