



**General Certificate of Education
January 2013**

Religious Studies

RSS09

World Religions 1

Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhism

AS Unit J

Final

Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2013 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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	

Section A *Buddhism*

Question 1 Samsara and the three marks of existence

0	1	Examine the concept of dukkha and its implications for the Buddhist attitude to life.
---	---	--

Basic meaning of dukkha

Suffering. unsatisfactoriness of life; opposite of sukha, happiness.

Further development of the concepts: various levels and types of dukkha

Ordinary dukkha (Dukkha dukkha) i.e. The fundamental suffering of sickness, old age and death. Grief, lamentation and distress

Suffering produced by change. Linked to truth of impermanence (anicca). Even happiness changes.

Suffering due to the truth that there is no permanent self and the individual is composed of ever-changing physical and mental forces or energies. The truth of anatta. This is linked to the teaching of the five aggregates so the person is not their body or their feelings or mental formations or consciousness. Although the person is attached to these aspects and identifies with them. Surrender of ego is necessary to eliminate suffering caused by attachment to any of the five elements.

Some reference may be made to the causes of suffering as greed, hatred and delusion.

Implications of the concept for Buddhist attitude towards life.

- Acceptance that suffering is caused by previous deeds and intentions.
- Wish to reduce suffering in the future by developing good karma through good actions.
- Developing compassion for the suffering observed in others.

Maximum Level 5 if both concept and implications are not addressed.

(30 marks)

AO1

0	2	'The truth of dukkha is simply common sense.' How far do you agree?
---	---	--

In support of the view

Many aspects of dukkha are clearly evident in everyday life and there can be no avoidance of it.

Awareness that some people and cultures suffer more than others indicates that suffering may have a variety of causes.

The Buddha's teaching is only known through experience rather than acceptance of dogma.

Even those with fortunate and happy lives will experience loss and grief at some point; death is inevitable for everyone.

Against the view

The meaning and nature of dukkha is also quite beyond common sense and requires an understanding of the nature of existence and the three characteristics of dukkha, anicca and anatta.

The suffering associated with anatta is very difficult to understand fully.

The full meaning and depth of wisdom required to understand the nature and cause of dukkha is beyond common sense.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 2 The Four Noble Truths

0	3
---	---

Examine the contrasts between samsara and nibbana.

Samsara

- The endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth through the law of karma.
- Sanskrit, literal meaning 'round and round' in a cycle of becoming.
- Various realms of rebirth: hell, hungry ghost, human, deva realms.
- Cyclic process starting in ignorance is continued through the human tendency to attachment to material things and the life of the senses.
- The forces of ignorance and delusion, greed and hatred are the causes of rebirth into the physical world in ignorance again.
- The law of karma is fundamental to the process of samsara as the karmic effect of unskillful/ wrong / harmful living will keep all beings trapped in the wheel of samsara.
- Ignorance of the fundamental truths of dukkha, anicca and anatta keep beings trapped in samsara.

Nibbana

- Freedom from the cycle of rebirth and samsara
- Extinction or quenching the fires of anger, greed and delusion, of desire and craving
- Destruction of the defilements /cankers of greed, hatred and delusion.
- Attained during one's lifetime as a transcendent timeless experience as well as in the future or beyond this life (parinibbana)
- The highest bliss.
- It is the complete cessation of dukkha (suffering).
- A transformed state of consciousness.
- Personality factors and causal links /karma ceases to operate
- It is beyond the human mind and body and beyond the four elements.
- The 'farthest shore' beyond this world with its inherent suffering
- It is sometimes described negatively as the unborn, unmade, the unconditioned and the deathless

In Mahayana it is linked to the concepts of emptiness (Sunyata)

Contrasts

Should point to suffering /end of suffering

Conditioned/ unconditioned

Endless repeated cycle / timeless and transcendent

Determined by karma /free from karma

Caused by craving / free from craving

Both concepts should be fully dealt with and contrasts clearly indicated for levels above 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

0	4
---	---

'In order to attain nibbana, Buddhists have to become detached from life.'

Assess this view.

In support of the view

The monastic sangha in Buddhism exemplifies a way of life in which renunciation and detachment from worldly concerns are necessary for enlightenment.

Detachment from sensual pleasures and is essential for freedom from suffering (second Noble Truth)

Depends on interpretation of life, and if it refers to social and family life then life of monk is removed from this.

Most lay Buddhists are only concerned about a better rebirth rather than the goal of nibbana

In refutation

The goal of nibbana is available to all beings, not just those who renounce the world.

The goal of Buddhism is rooted in morality which is developed and expressed through involvement in social, family and community life.

Even Buddhist monks are fully involved in life as they interact with lay people and are concerned about the well being and happiness of all sentient beings.

The development of the perfections in Buddhism requires generosity and compassion which are directly related to involvement in life.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 3 The Eightfold Path

0	5	Examine the relationship between wisdom, morality and meditation in the path to enlightenment.
----------	----------	---

This can be approached in a variety of ways with general principles stated and then supported by examples of each aspect of the path defined and explained or some examples of how they relate to each other and are interdependent.

Wisdom: Right understanding and right thought.

Necessary for morality to enable right decisions to be made and understanding of consequences of actions.

Related to meditation as insights of anicca and anatta arise through the experience of meditation.

Morality : right action /speech / livelihood

Related to meditation as without a clear conscience impossible to develop clear, calm mind

Related to wisdom as truths of the dhamma need to be understood through the experience of meditation

Meditation: Right effort /mindfulness / concentration.

Related to right intention; thought can be applied to meditation as it needs to be rooted in compassion, and wisdom also arises out of meditation.

Related to morality as it develops the qualities of mindfulness and metta which ensure positive mental states and actions based in metta, generosity and non anger.

All three aspects of the path are necessary and interdependent on the path to enlightenment.

The three aspects and their relationship must be dealt with for marks above Level 5.

(30 marks) AO1

0	6	'For Buddhists, wisdom alone is necessary for enlightenment.' Assess this claim.
----------	----------	---

In agreement

The development of wisdom as deep understanding of the truth of dhamma is enlightenment itself.

The development of wisdom includes the other two aspects as they would automatically develop out of it.

The other two aspects of the path, morality and meditation are based in action and practice but without wisdom the ability to make moral decisions and to purify the mind would be impossible.

Since wisdom refers to right view and right thought, if these are not developed then the other aspects of the path remain superficial and limited in their effectiveness.

In disagreement

All three aspects are needed to give meaning and reality in every day experience.

Morality can be seen as having enough meaning and purpose in itself as each aspect of morality requires wisdom to do it.

Wisdom can imply intellectual understanding of the dhamma but the Buddhist understanding of truth is that is gained experientially through morality and meditation.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 4 The Sangha

0

7

Examine the nature and discipline of the monastic community in Buddhism.**Nature**

Refers to the general purpose and form of the monastic sangha in Buddhism.

- The monastic sangha was established by the Buddha as an expression of the middle way for a holy man in India. It required renunciation of worldly concerns but not the extreme asceticism of the Hindu sadhus. It was designed to provide the best opportunities and conditions to gain enlightenment.
- It established a close interaction and dependence between the monastic and lay community.
- The monastic sangha guides the lay community in moral and spiritual matters, acts as counsellors and support in times of adversity.
- In Theravadan Buddhist countries the monastic sangha is an integral part of the culture and all men are ordained as monk for a short or long period of time as a culturally accepted period of moral and spiritual training.
- In other traditions of Mahayana Buddhism the monastic sangha have a variety of forms and functions from lifelong commitment to spiritual practice, sacred ritual and ceremonies. Studying and teaching the Buddhist dhamma and a place for the education of children, especially orphaned boys.

Discipline

- They have to accept the authority of the abbot and observe rules. The discipline refers to the rules set out in the Vinaya texts which consist of at least 217 rules these include:-
- Celibacy, not eating after midday, not handling money, not sleeping on a high bed, not attending entertainment or musical shows, Other areas of discipline refer to the requisites, i.e. alms bowl, robe, razor, tooth brush
- The discipline relates to the cycle of events and rituals for the year and monks are required to learn the patimokkha (all the 227 rules) and other chants for full moon days and other occasions.
- They have to accept the authority of the abbot and observe rules about rains retreat and travelling to other monasteries

No more than level 5 unless both nature and discipline are addressed in the answer.

(30 marks)

AO1

0	8
---	---

'The monastic way of life in Buddhism is a form of escapism.'

How far do you agree?

In support of this view

Monks give up all worldly responsibilities and do not have to earn a living.

They are totally dependent on the generosity of lay people.

They are removed from the anxieties and stresses of modern living.

They are free from family responsibilities.

They do not suffer from poverty or any kind of deprivation.

This can be used by some monks as a means of being looked after in old age.

Not all monks observe the precepts properly and take advantage of their status.

They have turned their back on the world.

In disagreement with this view

The commitment and discipline of the monastic lifestyle is very demanding and challenging and requires a considerable amount of self-sacrifice.

Monks have to set a good example in order to gain the respect of lay people.

They have to confess any transgressions of the patimokkha.

They are regarded as the embodiment of the Buddhist dhamma and must maintain high standards of decorum at all times.

They have to be committed and determined to express and demonstrate the highest qualities of morality and the wisdom of the Buddha

They do not enjoy the normal pleasures of life.

They have responsibilities as meditation teachers and often engage in social welfare projects.

(15 marks)

AO2

Section B *Hinduism*

Question 5 The Hindu concept of God

0	9	Examine the concept of avatar in Hinduism.
---	---	---

- The supreme Godhead appears on earth on nine occasions in order to save it from destruction or peril.
- It is the belief in the restoration of righteousness and dharma when it is endangered.
- The nine avatars of Vishnu are: Matsya the fish, Kurma the tortoise, Varaha the boar, Narasinha the half man half lion, Parashurama / Rama with the axe, Rama in human form, Krishna, Buddha, Kalki the future avatar.
- These have been considered to be in an evolutionary sequence from sea creature, to amphibian, to animal, to semi-human to fully human.
- Within the various Hindu sects one avatar is regarded as supreme above the others especially the Caitanya and ISKCON movement in which Krishna is the supreme being.
- The role of avatar is sometimes extended to religious figures that have the divine 'infilling' or a kind of sainthood e.g. Gandhi and Sai Baba.

Higher levels for reference to specific forms and the role of avatars in Hinduism

(30 marks)

AO1

1	0	'Avatars have more meaning for Hindus than any other form of God.' Assess this view.
---	---	---

In support of the view

Most Hindus relate to God through a personal deity such as an avatar, as it is more possible to worship a personal deity than relate to impersonal abstract forces. Some of the most popular movements in Hinduism are based on the avatars of Krishna and Rama.

All Hindu ritual and practice is centred on these various manifestations of the supreme reality.

Worship is an essential part of the Hindu way of life and this depends these personal deities.

It is recognised that the full and true nature of the ultimate reality is beyond human capability so avatars are required to enable the individual to know Brahman

Some Hindus believe that these deities especially Krishna have the power to bring them to their final goal of moksha.

Against this view

The ultimate form of God is Brahman and this is the most important form of God. Knowing God can mean knowing Brahman i.e. self-realisation and the union of the individual self-atman with Brahman.

This can be attained in a variety of ways though the forms of yoga.

For some Hindus, God is the impersonal absolute Brahman and this has higher meaning than worship of avatars

In the advaita vedanta school of philosophy the impersonal form is the highest knowledge and worshipping personal deities is a lower level of religious practice and truth.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 6 Means to liberation in Hinduism

1	1	Examine the relationship between atman and Brahman.
---	---	--

Atman

- Eternal, indestructible essence in all living beings.
- Non physical immortal perfect inner self.
- It leaves the body after death and moves into another body.

Brahman

- Two forms, transcendent or formless without attributes (naguna).
- Beyond the universe and immanent as the origin and support of the universe.
- The universal energy and life force which keeps the universe in existence.
- The supreme and ultimate reality.
- ‘Sat, chit, ananda.’ Knowledge, consciousness and bliss.
- Atman and Brahman are the same reality.

The relationship between them

- The realisation that the inner self is the same reality as Brahman is the ultimate goal. This brings liberation from the limitations of physical and material existence.
- Some theistic schools of thought assert that when the true self is realised and purified it can then be united with Brahman but is dependent on divine grace and to some extent distinct from Brahman.
- Other schools of thought claim the oneness and identification of atman and Brahman (Advaita Vedanta).

Relationship between the two must be dealt with for marks above Level 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

1	2	‘In Hinduism, believing in the concepts of atman and Brahman is more important than doing good deeds.’ How far do you agree?
---	---	---

This question refers to a fundamental issue as well as one specific to Hinduism, i.e. is faith more important than works?

In support of the view

Without a belief in the non-material or spiritual nature of the true self there is no point in doing good deeds.

The purpose of good deeds is to gain good karma and make progress in the spiritual path of ultimate union with God.

Belief in these concepts gives Hindus a spiritual perspective on life and provides motivation for attaining the ultimate goal of liberation.

In disagreement with the view

Nothing is more important for the individual and society than doing good deeds, which for Hindus means following their dharma or caste and stage in life.

Doing good deeds is the path of karma yoga and this can lead to knowing and experiencing the truth of the nature of the atman and Brahman.

Most Hindus are more concerned with following the Hindu way of life in all its aspects than beliefs about atman and Brahman.

Belief in atman/ Brahman is equally important as doing good deeds.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 7 Worship in Hinduism

1

3

Examine the practice and the importance of puja in the home.**Practice** refers to actions and meaning

- Puja is showing respect to a deity and treating it like an honoured guest.
- Puja consists of washing and cleansing oneself to be pure in the presence of the deity.
- Decorating the statues or murtis with garlands of flowers and coloured powders to show they are honoured.
- Ringing the bell to awaken the deity.
- Making offerings, which represent the five senses and five elements to express thankfulness for the gift of life.
- Chanting the Gayatri mantra to welcome God to reside in the heart and mind.
- Arti: waving lamp before murti and oneself symbolises the grace, power and wisdom of God entering one's mind.
- Prashad: taking from God the offered food to be blessed as a gift from God to the household.

Importance

- It reminds Hindus of the presence of God in their daily life.
- It sanctifies the household by including the deity in the household routine.
- It gives a spiritual focus to daily life in the world.
- It brings the family together in the common purpose and intention of adhering to sound moral actions during the day.

No more than level 5 if only practice or importance is dealt with.

(30 marks)**AO1**

1

4

**'For Hindus, puja in the home has more meaning than worship in the temple.'
How far do you agree?****In support of the view**

Puja provides a spiritual focus within the home.

It reminds Hindus on a daily basis of their commitment to their way of life.

These religious and spiritual practices in the home have a high priority in the Hindu way of life and are part of their religious duties according to their stage in life.

Puja in the home reinforcing Hindu values within the family and traditions of being a Hindu.

In disagreement with the view

Temple worship has more prestige and significance than worship in the home because the priests can confer special blessings.

The temple is seen as the home of the deities and to enter this place has great importance and power.

The temple priests can perform rituals here which cannot be done at home.

By making offerings to the deities in temple special requests can be made and blessings given.

Without the temples Hindu religious traditions would not be preserved.

In villages the temple is the centre of religious and communal life.

(15 marks)**AO2**

Question 8 The Hindu way of life

1

5

Outline each of the four stages of life and examine their importance for Hindus.

Outline each stage.

- **Brahmacharya** (student) Study the Hindu dharma / celibacy/ attachment to a guru who initiates student into Hindu rituals and teachings starting at sacred thread ceremony
- **Grihasta** (Householder) Duty to get married / create and bring up a family / provide for the material needs and security of the extended family / contribute to society and the welfare of those in need in the community / care for elderly parents / educate the young / engage in honest and productive livelihood
- **Vanaprasta** (retired person) duty to retire from full time work and devote more time to spiritual and religious matters / educate and care for grandchildren.
- **Sannyasin** (homeless wanderer) Abandon family ties / give up home and possessions/ dependent on care and gifts from others/ study scriptures / practise meditation / prepare mind and body for death and final liberation.

Examine Importance

- Each stage of life requires the fulfilment of these duties to ensure good karma
- It maintains the Hindu way of life
- The social integrity and harmony of society depends on the performance of these dharmas.

Max level 4 for outline only

(30 marks)

AO1

1

6

'The path of the householder is more difficult than the path of the holy man.'
Assess this view.

In support of the view

The distractions of worldly life mean that the householder cannot devote time to spiritual practices.

The householder aims for a better rebirth rather than liberation.

Most householders have a great deal of responsibilities and stress in their lives and cannot abandon these to renounce the world.

It is their duty to support holy men in their quest for liberation.

Against the view

The performance of duties in an unselfish and generous way is a means to liberation through the path of karma yoga.

The householder's priorities are different from those of a holy man rather than being more difficult.

The path to liberation is difficult for all stages of life.

The path of the holy man has many challenges in it too and can be seen as much more difficult than the householder due to the hardship and self mortification that is sometimes required.

(15 marks)

AO2

Section C *Sikhism*

1	7	Examine the life and teachings of Guru Nanak within the context of his time.
---	---	---

- Born 1469 as kshatriya Hindu in Punjab when under Muslim control

- Married with children

Question 9 **The Gurus** 1499 key event at age of 30 went missing for three days had a revelatory experience 'There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim. I shall follow God's path.'

1	7	Examine the life and teachings of Guru Nanak within the context of his time.
---	---	---

Many years travelling and teaching in all directions to Hindu and Muslim cultures. Bengal, Tamil, Nadu, Kashmir, and Tibet, Baghdad, Mecca, etc

The life of Guru Nanak requires selection of main events – e.g. Influenced by Sufi sant tradition

- Established a special community at Kartarpur based on Sikh principles of service, honest work and daily worship in gurdwara.

Teachings

- Oneness of God as the creator of the universe without visible form or shape related to Islamic Sufi beliefs.
- Against idol worship in reaction to many Hindu deities.
- Advocated equality of all human beings regardless of caste.
- Created langar/ free kitchen.
- Introduced the singing of hymns of praise to God.

The context of his time

must be in reference to the life and teachings. This should include

- The Hindu caste system
- Hindu emphasis and reliance on rituals
- The strict monotheism and prohibition on idol worship in Islam,
- The prevailing culture amongst the 'sants' of loving devotion to God through hymn and song.
- The Sufi emotionalism of worship and intimate relationship with God

All three elements must be addressed for marks above Level 5.

(30 marks)

AO1

1	8	‘Guru Nanak founded a new religion.’ Assess this view.
---	---	---

Agree

He totally rejected the Hindu caste system and did not accept it at all.
 He taught, and practised and expressed equality of social status and women which was new at this time.
 He criticised the extreme asceticism of Hindu sadhus and he emphasised the importance of family and community life.
 He did not encourage ritual or see the need for a priesthood but instead offered the ideal role of the guru as the inspiring teacher and friend.

Disagree

Many of his beliefs and practices were rooted in those prevailing at the time.
 The Sufi concepts of God was expressed in the Mool Mantra.
 The use of songs, hymns and poetry to worship God was very much influenced by Sufism
 He did little during his lifetime to change or replace these other faiths.
 His community at Kartapur attracted pilgrims but had little impact.
 His teachings brought about a new religion in the long run but not during his lifetime.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 10 Festivals

1	9	Examine the form and significance of Gurburbs.
---	---	---

The most important Gurburbs are
 The birthdays of Guru Nanak and Gobind Singh, and the martyrdom of Guru Arjun and Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Form

Akhand path. Continuous reading of The Guru Granth Sahib.
 Decoration of gurdwara with flowers flags and lights
 Specials hymns and poems from the Guru Granth Sahib are recited in praise for the particular Guru.
 Processions of Sikh scriptures through the streets.
 Musicians, singers and martial artists perform special forms of entertainment
 Special foods and parties.
 Free meals in langar.
 Sometimes a mela with various games and tournaments and celebrations .

Significance

Focus on the teachings of the particular Gurus
 Celebrated enthusiastically because of the moral qualities and achievements of the Gurus.
 Reinforce Sikh identity through commemorating key historical events.
 Reinforce Sikh values and teaching appropriate to the achievements and qualities of the gurus.
 Opportunities for the Sikh community to strengthen their commitment to each other and their faith.

No more than level 5 if only form or significance is presented.

(30 marks) AO1

2

0

'Gurpurbs have no importance in the lives of Sikhs today.' Assess this view.

In support of the view

Most of these gurpurbs celebrate past events and in the contemporary world there are more immediate social and moral concerns for Sikhs.

They tend to be more like festivals and celebrations and only enjoyed for the socialising and are not important to religious Sikhs.

More important aspects in the lives of Sikhs are sewa and worship and maintaining Sikh values in the family and community.

In disagreement with this view

These festivals bring the past into the present and help Sikhs affirm their identity especially in diaspora communities.

The purpose of these festivals is to express and reinforce the teachings of the Sikhs and gurus and their importance in establishing the Sikh faith and way of life in contemporary society.

They give Sikhs a chance to celebrate their triumphs over adversity in the past and the importance of courage and equality in Sikhism.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 11 The Guru Granth Sahib and the Gurdwara

2

1

Examine the uses of the Guru Granth Sahib by Sikhs today.

- In all gurdwaras and many Sikh homes, the Guru Granth Sahib is read every day. No Sikh ceremony is regarded as complete unless it is performed in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- On a daily basis, Sikhs receive a hukam or divine order in the form of a hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib, either in a Gurdwara or at home. The hukam is the first hymn of the holy book from the left hand page when it is opened at random.
- At the end of a service, after the ardas, the Adi Granth is opened at random and a portion is read.
- It is used as source of teaching for sermons
- Many Sikhs do this daily, regarding the verses as words from God which they will find helpful during the day. This is called vak lao, taking advice.
- On special occasions, the Granth Sahib is recited non-stop from cover to cover by a string of readers. This continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib is known as an akhand path. It is regarded as the highest and the noblest ceremony in the Sikh religion, and can be performed on any important occasion. It requires nearly 48 hours to complete the continuous reading.
- A saptahak path is a daily reading of Guru Granth Sahib to be completed in seven days. It is sometimes undertaken in private homes as a mark of supplication on special occasions. A sehaj path is a reading of Guru Granth Sahib that can be completed at any length of period beyond seven days.
- Used in rites of passage marriage and naming ceremonies.

(30 marks)

AO1

2

2

It is not necessary for Sikhs today to understand the language of the Guru Granth Sahib.’ Assess this claim.

In support

- The attitude of faith and devotion to the words of the Gurus and the general nature of the teachings is more important than intellectual understanding.
- The sound and music of the words especially when sung by musicians give an experience of spiritual upliftment which is the main purpose of the scriptures.
- The Guru Granth Sahib is a living teacher and each person will receive their own meaning from it.
- Attending the gurdwara and participating fully in the worship and the community experience is more important than analysis of meaning.

Other views

- Unless the meaning is understood the teachings will not be known and followed.
- The purpose of the Guru Granth Sahib is to communicate truth which must be understood and acted upon.
- The meanings can be interpreted in various ways but in order to be a true Sikh one must learn and understand the scriptures and incorporate them into one's life.
- In the gurdwara it is treated like a living person and shown the utmost respect.
- It is so significant and fundamental to Sikh life and faith that it is supremely real as a living teacher.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 12 Diwan and langar

2

3

Explain the concept of sewa and examine the ways in which it is practised.

The concept

- Sewa means to serve selflessly with honour and devotion.
- Selfless service for altruistic purposes on behalf of and for the betterment of the community, performed without any thought of reward or personal benefit.
- Sewa in Sikhism is imperative for spiritual life. It is the highest blessing - and a means to acquiring spiritual liberation. A Sikh often prays for a chance to render Sewa.
- It destroys egoism and cultivates humility and compassion for others.
- Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, institutionalized sewa, and based it on working towards the common good for all.
- For Sikhs, this means reaching out to serve and uplift all of humanity as an expression of devotion to God.

Ways it is practised

- A sewadar is one who performs sewa through philanthropic, voluntary, selfless, service.
- Cleaning shoes.
- Maintaining the gurdwara.
- Charity and voluntary work.
- Preparing and serving food in the langar.
- Concept of langar as 'laboratory of sewa'.
- Contributing to Khalsa Aid.

Higher levels should provide full explanation with some appropriate examples.

(30 marks)

AO1

2	4
---	---

'Sewa is the essence of Sikhism.'

Assess this view.

In support

It was the central and fundamental teaching of the Gurus to distinguish Sikhism from other ways of life

Sewa is the means of eliminating ego, which is a spiritual goal for Sikhs.

Sewa is still the essence today as there is even more need for sewa in today's materialistic society.

Sewa is effective in overcoming pride and selfishness and is universally relevant.

Sewa gives Sikhism its strength in faith and community life.

Other views

Several key concepts for Sikhs of which sewa is one rather than the main essence.

There is less relevance for sewa in contemporary society as there is less poverty.

Today's modern life style leaves little time for service; people may prefer to give money instead of time.

There are other and better ways of diminishing ego and pride.

(15 marks)

AO2

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion