

A-LEVEL

Religious Studies

RST3G World Religions 1 (either Buddhism OR Hinduism OR Sikhism)
Mark scheme

2060
June 2016

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

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Examination Levels of Response
Religious Studies (Advanced) A2 Level Descriptors

<i>Level</i>	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic, which may be in depth or breadth. Information is accurate and relevant. A thorough understanding is shown through good use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate good knowledge and understanding of diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is demonstrated. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated convincingly.	28-30 41-45	A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Appropriate evaluation is fully supported by the reasoning. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related perceptively and maturely to the broader context and to human experience.	19-20 28-30	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
6	A generally thorough treatment of the topic which may be in depth or breadth. Information is almost all accurate and mainly relevant. Clear understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are clearly demonstrated.	24-27 36-40	A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed. Appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related clearly to the broader context and to human experience.	16-18 24-27	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown. Some knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	20-23 29-35	A satisfactory response to the issue(s) raised. Views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning. Some of the response is related satisfactorily to the broader context and to human experience.	13-15 20-23	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information; mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	Key ideas and facts are included; demonstrates some understanding and coherence using some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion. Limited knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	15-19 22-28	The main issue is addressed with some supporting evidence or argument, but the reasoning is faulty, or the analysis superficial or only one view is adequately considered. Little of the response is related to the broader context and to human experience.	10-12 15-19	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14 15-21	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	7-9 10-14	
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 8-14	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	4-6 5-9	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 1-7	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-3 1-4	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance	0	

RST3G: World Religions 1 (either Buddhism or Hinduism or Sikhism)

Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 1 Themes in Mahayana Buddhism

0 1 Examine the key differences between Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism.

Students may select a variety of differences as indicated below or combine various points together.

The Buddha / Buddha nature

Theravada Buddha is a human being who lived in a particular historical epoch but in Mahayana there are many celestial Buddha which existed throughout many epochs and universes.

Theravada

- Siddharta Gautama was a human being who lived at a specific time in history.
- There is no Buddha nature or celestial Buddhas to help one to nibbana but simply the human mental and physical capacities to gain liberation from samsara.
- Emphasis on the Buddha's humanity and ability for all humans to gain enlightenment and supra-mundane powers.
- Teaching of no-self (anatta) in contrast to notion of Buddha nature in Mahayana.

Mahayana

- Less importance given to the human / historical Buddha, more emphasis on transcendent Buddha, heavenly manifestations.
- Trikaya doctrine i.e. the three bodies / planes of existence of the Buddha. Three forms i.e. transformation body (semi-physical), enjoyment body (heavenly) and dharma body (beyond duality and conception).
- There are a multitude of universes each with their own Buddha.
- Belief in 'tathagata-garbha' the 'Buddha nature' which lies dormant in each individual and provides the potential for Buddhahood.

Goal / nibbana

Theravada

- Arhat. One who has destroyed the three roots of greed, hatred and delusion and gained enlightenment and becomes an awakened one, and will enter paranibbana on death and leave the world of samsara forever. Stream-enterer, once-returner, non-returner.

Mahayana

- Bodhisattva. A being who has gained enlightenment but who postpones final paranibbana and returns to the realm of samsara to lead others to liberation until all beings are enlightened. Seen as more compassionate than arhat goal.
- Merit can be passed from heavenly beings to devotees (parivarta).
- Skill in means. Not as prominent in Theravada.

Scriptures**Theravada**

- Pali Canon.

Mahayana

- Additional scriptures and great variety of more developed philosophical systems and forms, Zen, Pure Land.
- Tibetan Buddhism can be seen as a second turning of the dhammachakra.

Other key differences may be considered.

[30 marks] AO1

0 2 'The differences between Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism are irrelevant to most Buddhists.'

Assess this view.

In support

- Most Buddhists will follow the form of Buddhism prevalent in their culture ie Theravada in South East Asia and Mahayana in East Asia. Most Buddhists will only be aware of the form of Buddhism they are born into and will have little knowledge of other forms.
- There are sufficient teachings in common between Mahayana and Theravada such as the Four noble truths and eightfold path that any differences are not important.
- The common basis of sila (morality) transcends cultural differences.
- As Buddhism spread from India into China along the Silk route the teachings and practices were adapted to the cultures it encountered so adaptation rather than difference is relevant.

Other views

- The split between Mahayana and Theravada occurred in India following the death of the Buddha, so decisions about key doctrines made at meetings of the monastic sangha and councils were very relevant at the time, especially to the monastic sangha.
- These matters of doctrinal difference are still of concern and importance today at international gatherings or conventions of Buddhist communities.
- For Buddhists in the west where all forms of Buddhism are accessible, these differences are important for those making choices about which form of Buddhism to accept and follow.
- Some of these differences between Theravada and Mahayana are so significant that they can appear to be conflicting or completely different traditions.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 2 Aspects of Buddhist Philosophy

0 3 Examine the concept of sunyata and its importance in the teachings of Nagarjuna.

The concept of sunyata

- In early Buddhism the term sunyata is primarily used in relation to doctrine of anatta (non-self) and the view that the five aggregates (skandhas) are devoid of a permanent soul or self.
- Madhyamaka challenged the notion of the substantial reality of dharmas.
- This notion came to be applied to reality as a whole so the whole universe is void of self.
- Twenty kinds of emptiness are recognised including the emptiness of emptiness.
- It is impossible to discover or uncover the eternal 'I' or 'not I' thus there is emptiness. Each phenomenon lacks an inherent nature and so are all said to share an empty non-nature as their nature.

Its importance in the teachings of Nagarjuna

- Middle school founded by Nagarjuna in 1st century CE. Perfection of Wisdom literature arose out of debates in Theravada schools about such doctrines as all phenomena (dhammas) are impermanent (anicca) and without self (anatta).
- The doctrine of emptiness received its fullest elaboration with Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna claims that a proper understanding of the early scriptures leads inevitably to seeing everything as empty.
- The abhidhamma of Theravada considered the emptiness of phenomena to lie in their impermanency while entities are subject to process of almost instantaneous change, they are less substantial and possessed of a true self nature.
- Nagarjuna claimed that this notion of self, albeit momentary, was at variance with the Buddha's teaching on non-self. The true nature of any phenomena was to be empty of self-essence of any kind.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects addressed.

[30 marks] AO1

0	4
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'Believing in sunyata significantly affects how Buddhists live their lives today.'

Assess this view.

In support

- Those Buddhists who believe in sunyata will reappraise their priorities in life which will affect their attitude to the danger of attaching too much importance to material possessions and success.
- Believing in sunyata will encourage Buddhists to develop good karma through observance of moral precepts which aim at reducing egoism.
- Believing in sunyata fully reveals the truth and reality of the characteristics of existence of anicca (impermanence) and anatta (non-self) which will affect the way Buddhists live their lives today in various ways.
- It will enable them to accept the ever-changing nature of reality and not cling to certain attachments as if they were permanent.
- It might encourage Buddhists to practise meditation in order to understand and realise the meaning of sunyata.
- A belief in sunyata can give a better meaning and purpose to life than the theories of contemporary science.

Other views

- The concept of sunyata is so abstract and difficult to understand that most Buddhists do not believe in it.
- Only philosophers and highly committed monastics will explore the meaning of sunyata and this belief is not the concern of lay Buddhists.
- Buddhists today might regard 'engaged Buddhism' ie social action in the community as more important and relevant than contemplating deep and abstract truths like sunyata.

No more than level 5 unless 'today' is addressed.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 3 Meditation

0 5 Examine the nature of mindfulness and the ways in which it is expressed in vipassana meditation.

The nature of mindfulness

- Mindfulness is full realisation of the coming into being and falling away of all bodily and mental states.
- Focuses on the rising and falling nature of all volitions, mental and physical to give insight into the truths of dukkha (suffering), impermanence (anicca) and non-self (anatta).
- Mindfulness is used to watch states of mind and label each state, eg holding, rising, placing.
- Suttas refer to the four foundations of mindfulness ie mindfulness of body, mindfulness of feelings / sensations (vedana) pleasant, unpleasant, neutral, mindfulness of mental states (thoughts) skilful and unskilful, and mindfulness of consciousness (citta) insight to meaning and implications of experience in relation to karma.

Vipassana meditation

- Develops mindfulness in order to give insight into the dhamma and the fundamental truths of Buddhism.
- The methods of vipassana create the mental conditions for a fully awakened mind.
- The practice of mindfulness within vipassana is used to identify mental states then develop pure awareness and attention to experiences as they happen.
- Vipassana applies mindfulness to all actions of walking, standing, eating and sleeping.
- It is especially applied to mindfulness of breathing and walking meditation.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects are addressed.

[30 marks] AO1

0 6 'Mindfulness is essential to all forms of Buddhist meditation.'

How far do you agree?

In support

- There are common elements to all forms of Buddhist meditation and mindfulness is one of them.
- Mindfulness is developing the capacity for present moment awareness which is the necessary basis for further developments in meditation practice.
- All forms of meditation particularly Zen, metta, samatha and vipassana require mindfulness as a starting point and a fundamental basis.
- Mindfulness has several aspects relating to quietening the senses, bodily awareness and detachment from or observing mental states which are found in different forms of meditation.

Other views

- The various forms of meditation have very different emphases and mindfulness is less important than some aspects.
- Samatha meditation which develops concentration and a still quiet mind is regarded as a preliminary to mindfulness in vipassana mediation.
- In metta meditation the essential element is having a compassionate heart.
- Mindfulness is a natural part of human capacities, is used in psychotherapy and so is not necessarily a meditation practice.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 4 Buddhist ethics

0 7 Examine the implications of the ethical teachings of Buddhism for Buddhists today.

Students may deal with the teachings and implications separately or together. The focus should be on implications.

Ethical teachings

In Theravada Buddhism the ethical teachings are the five moral precepts with particular reference to right action, right speech and right livelihood.

In Mahayana ethical teachings are expressed in the six perfections, generosity (dana), morality (sila), patience (kanti), energy (viriya), meditation (dhyana), and wisdom (with particular reference to morality).

Both traditions stress the quality of loving kindness (metta) and compassion (karuna).

The implications of ethical teachings for Buddhists today

This can be considered generically as the implications of following the ethical teachings in order to gain good karma and ultimately enlightenment.

- Following these teachings is an essential part of the eightfold path.
- The contemporary dimension can refer to the difficulties, issues and challenges arising out of following these teachings today.
- This can be a general point about the difficulties of maintaining high moral standards in secular and materialistic society which clashes with Buddhist values both in the eastern and western worlds.
- The wider purpose of the ethical teachings are to create a harmonious and society and culture based on morality and ethical principles.

More specific implications refer to:

Right action, right speech and right livelihood in the eightfold path and the five moral precepts, ie to undertake to refrain from harming living beings, from taking that which is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech and taking substances which cloud the mind.

- Not harming any living being raises issue of vegetarianism and compulsory military service for some Buddhists.
- Right speech includes not lying but also avoiding harsh and angry speech and malicious gossip and any form of speech which distorts the truth. Right speech is honest and insightful and leads to wisdom. Wrong speech is difficult to avoid in a culture of social media, advertising and even politics.
- Right livelihood has the implications of honest living and avoiding the excesses and wastefulness of consumer culture. Right livelihood includes those professions which serve human needs and the uplift of human nature and its wellbeing. Wrong livelihood is professions such as butchery, arms dealing, prostitution, gambling and any other illicit means of making a living.
- Notions of sexual misconduct varies according to culture and context.

[30 marks] AO1

0 8 'The ethical teachings of Buddhism are unrealistic for society today.'

Assess this view.

In support

- The culture of contemporary society both in Buddhist countries and in the west can be perceived as secular and materialistic in its predominant values so these ethical teachings cannot be easily applied and are unrealistic.
- Buddhist ethical teachings are based on eliminating the power of greed and hatred and developing unselfishness and generosity which is unrealistic for society today.
- All of the ethical teachings require a high level of commitment and determination which most people cannot sustain.
- Attitude towards avoidance of intoxicating substances is not easy to apply in modern society.

Other views

- The ethical teachings make common sense and are not difficult to put into practice.
- The moral precepts are based on good intentions and are undertakings to 'refrain from' rather than strict and absolute rules.
- Buddhist ethics are ideally suited to modern society as they are supported by meditation and wisdom.
- The ethical teachings are extremely realistic for society today when issues about respect for life in relation to diversity of human nature and cultures as well as the need to preserve and protect the environment are current and relevant ethical issues.
- Dalai Lama has consistently taught the importance of generosity, kindness and compassion for all people in the modern world.
- Buddhist ethics have much to offer modern society as rooted in humanitarian values.
- There are various levels of adherence to these teachings and perfection is not required. Most people would want to follow and apply these teachings as it produces a happier and more harmonious lifestyle.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 5 Foundations of Hinduism

0 9 Examine the relationship between the Indus Valley Civilisation and aspects of Hinduism today.

Students may refer to some of the following points.

- Archaeological evidence of advanced urban civilisation from 2000 BC onwards centred along valley of River Saraswati, Mohenjo Daro and Harrappa. These monumental buildings are manifested in Hinduism today in the shape of temple structures which are mountain shaped.
- Complex social organization / suggestion of hierarchy of social status and priesthood. This is reflected in Hinduism today in the special role and importance of Brahmin priesthood.
- Fertility figurines found in various buildings. This is expressed in Hinduism today through the worship of mother goddess, the notion of shakti the power of bringing life and energy to male deities and the high status of female deities such as Saraswati, Kali and Durga.
- Worship of natural forces, animals and sacred trees shown in stone carvings on tablets. This is reflected in Hinduism today in the ritual practices and worship associated with life giving natural sources such as rivers, trees and animals and mountains. Also animal deities and sacred cow.
- Clay seals with image of a seated yogi / fertility deity seated cross-legged with corn growing out of the chest. This is part of Hinduism today as a prototype of Shiva and associated ascetic practices and meditation.
- Large bathing tanks with elaborate brickwork. This is present in Hinduism today in ritual bathing and purification and similar tanks adjacent to temples today.
- Offerings at shrines and in domestic hearths. This is suggested in Hinduism today in domestic worship and puja in the home.

Minimum Level 4 for description of features of Indus Valley Civilisation without reference to Hinduism today.

[30 marks] AO1

1	0
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'Knowledge of the Indus Valley Civilisation is essential for understanding Hinduism today.'

Assess this view.

In support

- It is essential to understand the origins of certain beliefs and practices in order to understand the diversity of belief and practice in Hinduism today.
- The importance of certain practices such as puja and ritual bathing in rivers and tanks are based in these original practices.
- A distinctive feature of Hinduism is its continuity of belief and practice especially in rural areas and in south India where there has been less change than in developed areas.
- The role of the goddess is particularly significant in Hinduism and can be explained by its basis in Indus Valley Civilisation.
- The images and worship of Shiva can be more fully understood in relation to these early forms of expression.

Other views

- There can be many ways of understanding Hinduism. It can be known by experience and scholarly study in the present and contemporary situation as much by the past.
- The great diversity and forms of belief and practice are sometimes contradictory and makes Hinduism hard to understand.
- Hinduism has absorbed and assimilated many influences including the Aryan elements, Islamic and Christian beliefs and practices, so the Indus Valley Civilisation is one of many sources of Hindu beliefs and practices.
- Hinduism is constantly evolving and changing and assimilating new and different influences on its culture.
- It re-interprets its ancient beliefs and practices in the light of new political, social and economic conditions.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 6 Hindu dharma

1 1 Explain the Hindu understandings of both the role of women and the importance of the family.

The role of women and the importance of the family can be dealt with separately or together. Hindu understanding is rooted in the duties and customs prescribed by varnashramadharma particularly the grihastha stage of life which relates to the duties of the householder.

Role of women

- Various interpretations and views.
- Traditional views are expressed in the ancient law books of Manu in which women should be under the protection of their fathers until marriage.
- Wives are expected to care for the home, have children and nurture them in Hindu culture and contribute to her husband's extended family including caring for his parents.
- Women are given very high status as mothers and regarded as those who bring life into the world.
- The worship of female goddesses and reverence for their particular qualities as role models for women, gives women high status.
- Modern Hindu reformers campaigned for the equality of women and ending of unfair dowry practices as well as higher status for widows and opportunities for higher education.
- Role models in personal deities eg Sita.
- Women are responsible for religious rituals / domestic worship and for preserving Hindu way of life in the home.
- Motherhood is highly regarded. Goddess based on mother role as protector and nurturer of life.

The importance of the family

- Family life is regarded as the main way of preserving and maintaining Hindu values in society.
- Grihastha stage of life prescribed in varnashramadharma includes honest living, support of extended family.
- Large extended families with shared wealth and responsibilities. All help in bringing up children.
- Fulfilment of duties ensures good karma.
- Marriages are arranged and viewed as a joining of two families.
- Marriage and bringing up children is a religious duty.
- Specific duties for sons and daughters in law. Women live with their husband's family home and take responsibilities for looking after his parents. Mother-in-law a key person in women's lives.
- Extended families have joint responsibilities.
- Wider understanding of brother, sister, auntie, uncle. Strong brother sister relationships. Clear roles and responsibilities.
- Great respect for elder members of society, vanaprastha (retired grandparents) always looked after.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects of the question addressed.

[30 marks] AO1

1	2
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'The Hindu understanding of the role of women is outdated in the 21st century.'**How far do you agree?****In support**

- In some respects the traditional role of wife and mother is out dated in comparison with notions of equality, of status for men and women in the marriage relationship.
- Arranged marriages not acceptable in 21st century as choice of partner not personally decided as love matches are more the norm especially in western society.
- The emphasis on the woman's concerns with domestic rituals in the family context seems outdated in the scientific, rationalistic and secular outlook of contemporary society.
- In rural areas in India more traditional attitudes and practices prevail which are not in keeping with modern 21st century way of life.
- In the modern world, women are encouraged to be independent and leave home.

Other views

- The Hindu understanding of the role of women in the home and society varies according to the social and economic environment in India.
- In rural areas the traditional role of women is more appropriate to the social and economic context.
- In urbanised and advanced areas women have equal opportunities with men and have important and powerful roles in society.
- Some of the values and advantages of the extended family as opposed to the nuclear family are respected and regarded as helpful and supportive in contemporary society especially for working mothers.
- Equality for women in work and social and cultural situations is not as prevalent or advanced in Hindu society in comparison with the contemporary western world.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 7 Hinduism and society in the modern world**1 3 Examine the aspects of Hinduism that Gandhi tried to reform in the 20th century.**

- Untouchability. He aimed to completely eradicate this. Established equal status for dalits (untouchables) in his ashram and called them Harijans ‘children of God’. He did not attempt to abolish caste but to reject untouchability as it was against ahimsa. He undertook fasts to achieve the opening of temples to untouchables. He was in some conflict with Ambedkar’s approach in the latter’s attempt to persuade untouchables to convert to another religion.
- Hindu Philosophy was re-interpreted by Gandhi to make it relevant to Hindus campaign for national identity and independence. His writings on his ‘experiments with truth’ satyagraha / seeker after truth. Moksha acquired through ceaseless work for benefit of others and Hindu community.
- The Bhagavad Gita was re-interpreted and advocated by Gandhi to be a ‘Gospel of action’. Every action could lead to God realisation and source of teaching on non-violence. Karma yoga reinterpreted as selfless service in the community.
- Ahimsa raised to supreme importance as a moral principle. Means active love and complementary to the truth. Eg ‘Love the evil doer whilst hating the evil done’. Linked to satyagraha the weapon of truth.
- Emphasis on social action rather than needless ritual and priestly status. Influenced by Christian gospels and western philosophy related to equality, democracy and caring for the needy and made Hindu teachings and philosophy accessible and respected by Europeans.

[30 marks] AO1

1 4 'Gandhi made a vital contribution to the reform of Hinduism in the 20th century.'

Assess this view.

In support

- Gandhi's vital contribution was in his re-interpretation of Hindu teaching and advocacy of ahimsa and satyagraha changed Hindu teachings in the modern world.
- His successful campaign for independence which had a profound effect on all Hindus in asserting their identity, raising the status of Hinduism in India and the wider world.
- His non-violent protests which were rooted in Hindu teachings and values, raised the profile of the spirituality of Hinduism to the west.
- He established a model community which exemplified his values of selfless service, self-sufficiency and which inspired many others.
- He changed attitudes towards untouchability in a significant way, calling these castes 'the children of God'.
- Gandhi's treatment of untouchables brought about different attitudes in Hinduism as some temples were opened to them and eventually laws about discrimination against caste were made.
- Revitalised Hindu values and way of life in reassertion of the truths of ahimsa, satya and moksha.
- His writings and philosophy propagated a reformed Hinduism in which moral values and service in society had greater importance than previously.
- Many Gandhian institutes were established in India providing higher education based on Gandhian principles.

Other views

- Gandhi's contribution to Hinduism depends on interpretation of Hinduism as a philosophy or way of life. If focused just on worship and popular religious practices and deities then little effect.
- Only small effect was opening of some temples to dalits.
- Other reformers such as Ram Mohun Roy, Vivekananda and Dayananda Saraswati had more impact on Hindu religious practices.
- Dalits still not fully accepted as he wished.
- His writings were only read and appreciated by westernised elites.
- He was more of a political than a religious leader and used religious ideas to achieve political ends.
- He was despised by the orthodox Hindu community and was assassinated by one of them.
- He did not unite the Hindu community and caused some dissension within it.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 8 Hindu Philosophy

1 | 5 Examine the differences between Shankaracharya and Ramanuja in their understanding of the goal of liberation (moksha).

**The goal of liberation
(forms of yoga)****Shankaracharya**

- The higher way is transformation of consciousness through the development of wisdom and meditation in jhana yoga.
- The realisation that the inner self is the same nature as the all-pervading and ultimate reality of Brahman.
- Atman is identical with Brahman. They are the same reality.
- Used the aphorism ‘tat tvam asi’, ‘thou art that’ to demonstrate that pure consciousness is the basis of atman as it is with Brahman. All distinctions between subject and object are overcome.
- The union of atman and Brahman is termed ‘sat chit ananda’ ie knowledge, consciousness, bliss.
- Linked to two levels of truth, conventional and absolute.

Ramanuja

- Means to moksha are bhakti devotion to God which requires purity on matters of food, non-attachment, constant meditation, performance of religious and moral duties.
- It is not absorption of atman with Brahman but self-surrender to Brahman.
- The atman remains distinct from Brahman.
- Bhakti involves the use of images of intermediaries (deities) which Shankaracharya considered to be a lower path.
- Although Brahman is beyond description much can be inferred about the nature of Brahman from his manifestations in the world ie avatars.
- Brahman is the source of grace and salvation to those who turn to him.
- He accepted three forms of knowledge: pratyksa (perception) anumana (inference), sabda (verbal testimony).

[30 marks] AO1

1 6 'The philosophies of Shankaracharya and Ramanuja are in total conflict with each other.'

How far do you agree?

In support

- They are in fundamental conflict about the notion of the nature of Brahman as personal or impersonal with Shankaracharya asserting the former and Ramanuja the latter.
- They are in total conflict about reality or otherwise of the material world is another area of conflict, with Shankaracharya asserting that it is illusionary and Ramanuja that it is a manifestation of Brahman.
- Shankaracharya is a monist and Ramanuja is a dualist.
- Shankaracharya denigrates the worship of deities as lower path whereas Ramanuja claims it a valid way to relate to Brahman.
- Ramanuja is basically a theist as he accepts the essence of deities and avatars whereas Shankaracharya regards these entities as obstacles to the ultimate truth of Brahman.

Other views

- Ramanuja does not deny the impersonal reality of Brahman but qualifies his understanding to include this but also accepts the physical manifestation of Brahman in deities.
- Shankaracharya's understanding of the two levels of truth and ways of knowing include Ramanuja's ideas but also goes beyond them.
- Both philosophers accept some of the fundamental ideas of the other and can be seen as complementary rather than in conflict eg the concept of Brahman can be understood and accepted in both a personal and impersonal form.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 9 Sikh identity, marriage and family life

1	7
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Examine the meaning and significance of the anand karaj ceremony for Sikhs.

Meaning and significance can be dealt with separately or together.

The meaning of anand karaj

- It is a legal contract and usually an arranged marriage which means that the marriage is a legal and binding contract.
- The ceremony takes place in the presence of the Adi Granth which links the marriage to the Guru's teachings and sanctifies the union. The officiant (an approved Sikh) explains the ceremony's significance reminding them to show love and loyalty.
- The Lavan (hymn composed by Guru Ram Das) is read and the ragis sing it as the couple walk around. The Lavan stanzas affirm the Grihastha householder ideal, devotion to the true guru and the ultimate union of the soul with God.
- It is the union of two families which is shown through the various rituals performed. The bride accompanies her husband to his parent's house, often briefly returning after a night to her parents before re-joining him (muklava). In the east, marriages are typically a three day affair which begins with the Braat (groom's family and friends) setting off for the girl's house in the evening. The following day the ceremony takes place at the local gurdwara or at the girl's home.

Significance

- In the prayers and blessings of the ceremony of anand karaj Sikhs express the central role of married life as a source of happiness and fulfilment.
- Consent and marriage in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib also asserts the importance of marriage as a lifelong union is all that is required to legitimise a marriage.
- Marriage seen as a spiritual union as well as a physical one.
- It strengthens the Sikh community by the union of two families.
- The householder life was advocated by the Gurus rather than the ascetic or world renouncer.

Although there may be some overlap between meaning and significance both aspects need to be addressed for Level 5 and above.

[30 marks] AO1

1	8
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'The anand karaj ceremony is an essential basis for marriage and family life in Sikhism.'

Assess this view.

In support

- The ceremony is a public statement which legitimises the marriage and any children born of it and ensures more commitment to the married state.
- The ceremony shows how it is part of God's purpose and gives greater importance to the nature of the marriage.
- The celebration of marriage in Sikhism is the union of two families and an essential way of expressing and strengthening Sikh identity and culture.
- Since both families are fully involved in the ceremony it gives the marriage the essential support of all the family members.
- The union of Sikh families strengthens Sikh community.
- The Gurus emphasised the importance of marriage and family life as against the celibate life of holy men and monks as it was seen as the best way to serve God and the community.
- It is even more essential now in diaspora communities as a means of asserting identity and maintaining Sikh cultural practices and traditions.

Other views

- In contemporary society the influence of western notions of marriage and family life can affect some aspects of Sikh culture.
- Marriage is a more of a personal choice now and less the union of two families.
- The extended family is not always the cultural norm.
- The ceremony and ritual do not make the marriage work and could be a demonstration of wealth and social status.
- The essential basis of marriage and family life are the personal and moral qualities which are developed through living this way, such as loyalty, sense of responsibility, commitment and love.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 10 Key concepts and beliefs**1 | 9 | Explain the Sikh understanding of the concepts of maya and karma.****Maya**

- Maya is any object, thing or a person which takes the Sikh away from God.
- Maya is equated with wealth (material goods) and attachment to worldly possessions.
- Maya is interpreted as a veil or curtain concealing the ultimate reality, the spiritual reality of God.
- Maya produces error and illusion in the human mind, and creates difficulties in the individual's progress to a state of knowledge and bliss.
- Three aspects or qualities of maya – related to Hindu ideas of sattva, raja and tamas, goodness, passion and ignorance. In Sikhism Sat Gun produces knowledge, Rajo Gun produces greed and attachment, and Tamo Gun produces laziness and delusion.
- A person affected by maya suffers from the delusion of believing that those things which are fleeting and impermanent are permanent and of ultimate value.
- It is ignorance and delusion so a person attached to maya cannot escape the cycle of life, death and rebirth.
- A person under the spell of maya is not able to distinguish truth from falsehood, the ever-lasting from the ephemeral, the essence from mere appearance.
- The normal consciousness of man is egoistic, so he cannot grasp the possible unity between himself and all humanity and his oneness with God.

Karma

- All thoughts and actions which have good or bad consequences according to the intention and outcome.
- The underlying principle is that karma is the law that brings back the results of actions to the person performing them.
- Linked to maya because all living beings are under the influence of maya which binds the soul to the body and to the earth. Above these three qualities is the hukam and human beings perform activities under the control and the hukam.
- Human birth is a highly desirable state and is due to commendable past actions and deeds in the past.
- Only by continued good actions and the Grace of the God can Liberation (mukti) be attained.

Maximum Level 5 unless both are dealt with.

[30 marks] AO1

2 0 'Sikhs must believe in maya and karma to give meaning and purpose to their lives.'

How far do you agree?

In support

- These beliefs give Sikhs the incentive to aspire for the higher goal of mukti.
- Karma explains present conditions, both adverse and beneficial, and enables Sikhs to accept the present as a result of the past actions.
- A belief in maya gives Sikhs a reason to get rid of their egoism and become God centred so as to transcend the temporary nature of the material and physical world.
- Beliefs like karma and maya are essential in giving a spiritual and philosophical basis for following Sikh moral and social values.

Other views

- All Sikh beliefs contribute to giving meaning and purpose to life.
- Maya and karma are just two of many other beliefs.
- The belief in God could be the fundamental belief upon which all the rest depend.
- The example of the moral integrity of their leaders of the community can give meaning and purpose.
- The experience of living in the Sikh community is just as inspiring as personal belief.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 11 Sikh ethics and conduct

2	1
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Examine the concept of sant sipahi as it is expressed in Sikh life and faith.**The concept of sant sipahi**

- Sant refers to a wise knowledgeable and dharmic person or a person with knowledge of God.
- Sipahi means warrior or soldier.
- This is a philosophy and a lifestyle first introduced by Guru Har Gobind.
- The first duty of the Sikh is to be a saint, a wise and judicious person who has a sound understanding of Dharam or religion.
- The second duty of a Sikh is to be able and ready to fight for a worthy cause and for the protection of righteousness and the weak.
- The Khalsa should never engage in the first attack and only engage in warfare when all means have of negotiations have failed.

Its expression in Sikh life and faith

- It is expressed in the 5 'Ks'.
- It is expressed in the Sikh ideals and beliefs in defending the persecuted and helping those in need.
- The formation of the Khalsa as a group of men willing to die for their faith and defend those who were persecuted.
- Historical events in the lives of the Gurus in their attempts to defend the Sikh community against tyranny and injustice, their martyrdom and attempts to rescue and save others.
- Voluntary service to help those in need in dangerous places like war zones.
- Campaigning for issues of human justice.
- Volunteering for Peace Corps throughout the world.

[30 marks] AO1

2 2 'The Sikh ideal of sant sipahi is not relevant in the 21st century.'

Assess this view.

In support

- Sikhs no longer have to defend or fight for their faith in the conditions of severe persecution as in the time of the Moghul Empire.
- The ideal of combining sainthood with soldierhood is in itself an impossible ideal as sainthood requires detachment from worldly affairs but involvement in fighting and defence requires engagement with the world.
- In the 21st century there is clearer separation of sainthood from a fighting force or temporal and religious authority both for Sikhs and other religious communities.
- Sikh communities in the 21st century are more concerned with preserving and maintaining culture than engaging in the defence of the faith.

Other views

- The ideal of sant sipahi is even more relevant in the 21st century when violent conflicts require wisdom and clear moral principles applied to them to guide appropriate decisions and actions.
- The Sikh ideal of sant sipahi has universal relevance in the contemporary world and is not just confined to past conditions.
- The ideal of sant sipahi can be adapted to contemporary society.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 12 Equality and sewa**2 3 Examine the Gurus' teachings on gender.****Teachings of Gurus on gender**

- Guru Nanak stated that the Sikh women should be regarded as equal with men and have all the rights and privileges enjoyed by men.
- The gurus elevated the status of a woman in Indian society and valued and respected her role as wife and mother.
- Guru Nanak proposed social reform of womens' roles in society especially in relation to widowhood and inheritance.
- A woman is considered to have the same soul as man and have equal right to grow spiritually.
- Guru Amar Das advocated that women could remarry and he abolished suttee and appointed women teachers.
- Guru Gobind Singh admitted both women and men as members of the Khalsa and the role of Mata Kaur Sahib in stirring the amrit. Both women and men wear the 5 'K's' and follow Rahit Maryada.

[30 marks] AO1**2 4 'The teachings of the Gurus on gender are not reflected in Sikh communities in the United Kingdom (UK) today.'****Assess this claim.****In support**

- Within the more traditional and conventional Sikh communities in the UK some Sikh women may not have the same equality as non-Sikh women.
- Influence of western culture in the UK has produced a variety of attitudes towards role of women and some Sikhs may be very liberated and others more traditional.
- Cultural concerns are more influential, as Sikhs in the UK come from various parts of the world, than the prevailing secular culture.
- Not many gurdwaras have women in high status roles.
- Marriage is still based very much on caste distinctions which sometimes impacts on gender roles and prevents some women having equality.

Other views

- The teachings on respect for women and equal opportunities for Sikh women serve as an example in the UK where it is sometimes argued that women are not always respected.
- The teachings on gender for Sikhs are more easily applied in the UK where many different roles for women prevail.
- In the UK women are often involved in the running and organising of a Sikh community and in the services in the gurdwara.
- The practice of langar serves as an effective social leveller for men and women in the UK.

[20 marks] AO2