

General Certificate of Education June 2010

Religious Studies

RST3G

World Religions 1 *Buddhism, Hinduism or Sikhism*

A2 Unit 3G

Final

Mark Scheme

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

Level	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks Unit 4 italics	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks Unit 4 italics	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 evaluated perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Systematic analysis and reasoning leads to appropriate conclusions. 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. A process of reasoning leads to an appropriate evaluation. 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. A conclusion is drawn that follows from 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 <i>8-14</i>	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 Section A Buddhism

Question 1 Themes in Mahayana Buddhism

0 1 Examine the distinctive featu

- Examine the distinctive features of Pure Land Buddhism with particular reference to its Japanese forms.
 - Devotional form of Buddhism
 - Amitahba Buddha
 - Transcendental Pure Land form of nirvana
- Chanting and evocation of Amitabha's name ensures birth in Pure Land
- From 10th century in Japan
- Increased in popularity through publication of handbook in Pure Land practice by Tendai priest Genshin
- Nembutsu is the practice of chanting Amitabha's name
- Independent school of thought in Japan through Honen (1133-1212) who propagated nembutsu as simple verbal expression of reliance on Amitabha whether performed in meditation or any other context
- Jodo school. Faith in Amitabha or Amida main cause of salvation
- Syllables of nembutsu have special power to unite the believer with the Buddha.
- Shinran made Honan's message simpler and more extreme. People had to give up 'self power' and only have faith in Amida. Deliberate cultivation of virtue and wisdom a form of pride. Even wicked people could be saved. He taught that path of other power was more difficult because salvation was by loving grace of Amida.
- Monasticism not necessary for salvation so initiated a kind of hereditary married clergy.

No more than level 5 if no specific reference to Japan.

(30 marks) AO1

0 2 'Pure Land Buddhism is entirely based on the saving grace of the Buddha.' Assess this claim.

- Some strong arguments in support of the view as the belief in 'other power' rather than 'self power' is a very strong feature
- Complete surrender to the saving grace of Amida Buddha is considered to be the only reliable way of entering the nibbana of the Pure Land
- However the practice of nembutsu (continuous and regular chanting calling on the grace of the Amidha Buddha) is also distinctive
- The complete dependence on Amida developed over time and is less distinctive of the earlier schools of Pure Land
- Evaluation could also refer to the implications of this feature which is the complete
 opposite to the original teachings of Buddhism which emphasised self reliance.
 There are also other aspects to following the Buddhist path including morality and
 development of understanding.

Question 2 Aspects of Buddhist philosophy

0 3 Examine the doctrine of paticcasamuppada.

- Paticcasamuppada means chain of dependent origination.
- This doctrine includes an explanation of karma and samsara and the second noble truth that suffering is caused by attachment and craving.
- It explains why all beings are trapped in the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth through an ignorance of the true nature of reality which causes beings to crave for sensual satisfaction when they need to break this cycle of ignorance and craving to prevent continual rebirth.
- Twelve causal links or 'nidanas' explain this chain of causes from ignorance, karmic formations, consciousness, mind and body, six sense bases, contact, feeling, craving, becoming, birth, aging, death and sorrow.
- May make reference to the Tibetan wheel of life which is the visual representation of this teaching.
- Reference to Nagajuna's Mahamyana interpretation related to doctrine of anatta / sunyata and the equation of samsara with nibbana.

(30 marks) AO1

0 4

How far do you agree with the claim that the doctrine of paticcasamuppada has little relevance in the lives of most Buddhists?

Agree

Complex and profound so may not be easily comprehended.

Also lack understanding of the process of law of karma and ability to perceive the nature of causality.

Other views

Great relevance (as in its essence) it explains human suffering, dissatisfaction and the mental and physical processes which cause unhappiness and lack of true sense of meaning of life.

Derived from this is the belief rebirth, samsara and karma which is very relevant for most Buddhists.

Question 3 Meditation

0 5

Examine the methods used in vipassana and samatha meditation.

Vipassana

- Uses techniques of mindfulness applied to all actions of walking, standing, eating and sleeping.
- Focus on the rising and falling nature of all volition mental and physical.
- Watches states of mind and labels each state such as holding, raising, placing, etc. applied particularly to walking meditation.
- Used to identify mental states and then develop pure attention / bare awareness to experience as it happens.
- Leads to present moment awareness and full realisation of the coming into being and falling away of all bodily mental states.

Samatha

- Requires cross-legged sitting posture.
- Selection of object for meditation, often the breath (breathing mindfulness) but several other objects used, e.g. kasinas and recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, dhamma, sangha.
- Develop elimination of hindrances of aversion, sense desire, sloth and torpor doubt and mental agitation.
- Cultivation of five jhana factors of applying the mind to chosen object, sustaining attention, joy, happiness and one pointedness. Use of nimitta or sign or image to hold attention with deep concentration.
- Transition through jhanas from first to fourth which is state of equanimity.
- This state allows entry to the four formless jhanas and then on to insight.

(30 marks) AO1

0 6

'Although there are different methods of Buddhist meditation, their aim is always the same.' Assess this view.

Candidates may refer to samatha or vipassana or the different methods in Zen / Mahayana schools or both.

Agree

- Both methods aim to enable the meditator to gain insight and progress towards
 nibbana
- Both methods develop mental purification and higher levels of knowledge and understanding of human existence.
- Both are complementary and interwoven.
- Samatha produces calm mind for contemplation of deep truths, vipassana gives insights which produces a calm and clear understanding.

Other views

- Aim of both methods do differ.
- Samatha is an altered state of consciousness and psychic powers, whereas as vipassana is developing and analysis of mental states leading to deeper understanding of the mind.
- Samatha aims to develop the jhanas both formed and formless, whereas vipassana does not use the jhana as part of the process.
- The aim of samatha is seen as a preliminary stage creating a calm mind for the further development of wisdom which is achieved through vipassana.
- Methods used are also different, samatha uses a still object, vipassana continually moving and changing object.

(20 marks)

AO₂

Question 4 Buddhist Ethics

0 7 Examine the nature and purpose of the six perfections in Buddhism.

Stages in the Bodhisattva path

- Generosity (dana) giving away wealth, and all that is precious to one's own life for the benefit of others.
- Perfection of moral virtue (sila) until his conduct is spontaneously pure.
- Patience (kanti) aided by meditation on loving kindness and compassion and forbearance in adversity.
- Perfection of vigour or energy (viriya) mindful alertness is accomplished.
- Perfection of meditation (jhana) four holy truths are accepted and ability to move between conventional and ultimate truth is possible.
- Perfection of wisdom; full insight into conditioned arising, non-self and emptiness.
 Equal to that of an arhat. At death he could leave the round of rebirths but his compassion prevents him from doing so.

Purpose

0

To develop the qualities of a bodhisattva who vows to postpone own nibbana until all sentient beings are freed from suffer and become enlightened.

(30 marks) AO1

6 'The achievement of the six perfections is an unrealistic ideal for Buddhists.' Assess this view.

In support

- The achievement of the six perfections leads to becoming a bodhisattva. This is a supra-mundane state and the result of skilful life over many rebirths.
- Bodhisattvas are rare in any life time.
- Each of the perfections have a mundane and supramundane level. Most Buddhists are only capable of mundane levels.
- Perfection any of these qualities is impossible to maintain and sustain.

Other views

- Many levels of each perfection and some level is possible for all Buddhists.
- Each being has buddha nature which naturally possesses these qualities.
- Commitment to Buddhist path allows for gradual development of each of these, so not impossible.

RST3G Section B Hinduism

Question 5 Foundations of Hinduism

0 9 Examine the concept of god in the Vedas.

- Change from polytheistic, henotheistic to monotheistic to monistic.
- Polytheistic, in form of personification of natural forces such as Indra (thunder and rain god), Agni (fire), Suyra (sun), Usha (dawn), Dayus (sky or heaven), Vayu (wind), Apas (waters), Soma (hallucinogenic juice).
- Henotheism. Several gods exalted to a higher status or place.
- Monotheism. Emergence of chief or leading gods who become creator, preserver and destroyer of universe such as Prajapati, lord of creatures and Visvakarman, the world maker.
- Concepts of 'rta' law of order and harmony keeping worlds of heavens in tune with earthly realms.
- Eventually degree of scepticism about forms of god and exploring possibility of impersonal energy or force. 'By its inherent force That One breathed windless....'

(30 marks) AO1

1 0

'The concept of god in the Vedas is so contradictory that it is incomprehensible.'
Assess this claim.

Agree

- So much variety and development that changing concepts seem to contradict and undermine authenticity.
- The notion of polytheism contradicts monotheism.
- The notion of transcendence contradicts immanence.
- The sense of all-pervading within universe as well as beyond it can seem contradictory.
- Worshipping many gods which are the same but are different, have different names or titles and attributes, may appear confusing.

Other views

- There is a gradual development which has a logic within it.
- Absorption of different cultural influences and further questioning and exploration applied to ideas of god cause evolution of concept rather than inconsistency.

Question 6 Hindu dharma

1 1

Examine the meaning and importance of the concept of dharma in Hinduism with particular reference to Sanatana Dharma.

Meaning of the concept of dharma

A fundamental principle in guiding moral behaviour and social relationships A right way of life, duties and responsibilities, principles of order and harmony.

The meaning of Sanatana Dharma

Eternal laws and fundamental absolute moral principles Ahimsa (non-violence) Satya (truth) Asetya (not stealing) Sauca (purity).

Importance

Dharma ensures order, harmony and integrity of human existence, otherwise evil forces of chaos and injustice would prevail. Sanatana Dharma upholds essential Hindu values and adhering to them as guiding principles will lead to a better rebirth or liberation.

Maximum of Level 5 if both meaning and importance are not addressed.

(30 marks) AO1

1 2

'Dharma is an abstract ideal which cannot be applied to the everyday life of Hindus.' Assess this view.

Abstract principles have less meaning without clear social and practical context to apply them.

Dharma is a concept, referring to goodness and the right way to live. It does not make sense without reference to varnashramadharma (caste and stage in life).

In Hinduism, the laws and duties regarding caste and stage in life determine moral action more than abstract principles.

It is not only an abstract concept but also an ideal which is always hard to live up to in a perfect way.

On the other hand, these absolute values form the framework and guidance for all kinds of individual decisions and ensure consistency between ideal and practice. Dharma is a sense of duty and righteousness which is very well understood and appreciated by most Hindus.

The general principles are needed to give guidance in a variety of everyday activities.

Question 7 Hinduism and society in the modern world

1 3 Examine the aims and work of Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahmo Samaj.

Aims

To eradicate from Hinduism all outdated practices which were based in superstition and ignorance.

This included idol worship and some rituals.

To incorporate into Hinduism some of the monotheism and moral clarity of western cultural values.

Work

- Reinstated monotheism, rejected use of idol worship and over-emphasis on ritual.
- Eclectic service including Christian readings.
- Campaigned against suti and equality for widows.
- New educational establishments for uplift of women.

(30 marks) AO1

1 4 Assess the view that the Brahmo Samaj did little to reform Hinduism.

Agree

Only westernised middle and upper classes able to relate to and appreciate the aims of Ram Mohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj.

Very minimal impact on ordinary Hindus.

Little change to belief and practice in a general sense.

Disagree

Some issues were fulfilled, e.g. suti and education for women had lasting effect, influence on later reformers considerable.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 8 Hindu philosophy

1 5 Examine Hindu teaching on the nature of human destiny with reference to the law of karma and samsara.

- Law of karma applied to the morality of thoughts and actions.
- Good deeds in accordance with caste and stage in life and performance of religious practices will lead to better material and spiritual conditions in future of this life and future existences.
- Similarly difficult and unfair circumstances in present can be explained by bad deeds in previous life.
- Samsara is an endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth due to remaining karma in which attachment and full realisation of true nature of self has not taken place then fall back into inexorable cycle of life, death and rebirth.

1 6

How far do you agree with the view that Hinduism is a fatalistic religion?

Agree

Present conditions are fully determined by previous existences.

If very unfortunate not much can be done to change them in this life.

Need great fortitude and faith to overcome resentment and maintain positive and appreciative attitude.

By following the Hindu way of life of moral virtue and religious observance there is the of possibility of bringing about improved conditions in future of this life and future rebirths.

Other views

All Hindus have the chance to gain liberation even if born into unfortunate circumstances. Possibility of changing future by good deeds in present life.

Many opportunities with various ways to liberation though good deeds, devotion to god and meditation to overcome karmic influences from the past.

Very powerful rituals in Hinduism such as yajna and cremation in River Ganges to wipe away bad karma of the past.

RST3G Section C Sikhism

Question 9 Sikh identity, marriage and family life

1 7 Explain the form and meaning of amrit sanskar in Sikhism.

- Based on the original ceremony instituted by Guru Gobind Singh.
- It is usually conducted in the Gurdwara by five baptised Sikhs.
- All the candidates interested in the initiation formally apply for admission.
- One of the five Khalsas members selected for the Amrit ceremony offers the formal prayer in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, which is followed by a random reading from the holy book.
- They stand in front of the congregation (if there is one) and ask their permission for admission into the Khalsa brotherhood.
- One of the Khalsa then instructs the aspirants in the following way: after taking Amrit you must:
 - 1. Believe in the teaching of the ten Sikh Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib.
 - 2. Recite five Banis (collection of hymns) every day.
 - 3. Wear the 5Ks, i.e. uncut hair, sword, comb, underwear and the steel bracelet.
 - 4. Live upon your own honest and sincere earnings.
 - 5. Treat all human beings as equal.
 - 6. Spread the name of the God.
- After the general acceptance of the above instructions, the Amrit (the holy nectar) is prepared. A big iron bowl is filled with fresh water and some sugar pellets are put in. All the five-selected Khalsa with a double-edged dagger stirs the water. Five holy Banis are recited while the water is being stirred.
- After the completion of the five Banis a prayer is said and a random verse is read from Guru Granth Sahib. Then the amrit is administered to each candidate, one by one, as follows:

Firstly, five sips of amrit are poured into the hollow made by the palm of the right hand of each entrant to drink one after another. Secondly, the amrit is sprinkled five times into the eyes and heads of the candidates. Finally, each candidate drinks a little amrit from the same bowl until is finished completely.

Meaning

Overall: Initiation into Sikh Khalsa in fullest way.

Expression of commitment to Sikh values, beliefs and ideals.

Each part of ceremony has meaning and relates to purification of physical and spiritual life.

Accepting moral and leadership responsibilities.

Maximum Level 5 for description without explanation of meaning.

1 8 'Sikh identity relies totally on outward symbols.' Assess this view.

Agree

Sikh identity is very much reliant on outward and public symbols as part of their history and culture. There is a need for outward signs such as initiation ceremonies to affirm their commitment to the Sikh way of life. Teaching of the gurus encourages outward signs of 5Ks to show courage in times of persecution.

Disagree

Identity a complex process and more personal than public. Should not need to have ceremonies as part of family and social life. Identity based in commitment to all aspects of Sikh way of life. Religious beliefs and values more important than outward symbols.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 10 Key concepts and beliefs

9 Examine the practice and purpose of kirt karo, nam japo and vand kakko in the lives of Sikhs.

Kirt karo

- To work and earn one's living through hard work, to live a family way of life, and practise truthfulness and honesty in all dealings.
- To carry out good deeds and earn an honest and pure livelihood by exercising God-given skills, abilities, talents and for the benefit and improvement of the individual, their family and society at large.
- To work with determination and focus, not to be lazy and waste time.
- To do these things without 'personal gain', which becomes the main motivation and dedicate the work to God.

Nam japo

- The term 'Nam' refers to the various names given to God as used by Sikhs.
- The remembrance of God by repeating and focusing the mind on his name and his attributes and qualities.
- The loud communal recitation of Nam is called Nam Japo. Vocal singing of Shabads or hymns, from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib or the chanting of the various names of God.

Vand kakko

To share wealth with others in the community, to give to charity, to distribute in langar (free kitchen) and to generally help others in the community who need help.

A Sikh is expected to contribute at least 10% of their wealth / income, called Dasvandh, to the needy people of the world or to a worthy cause.

Purpose

- Help humans to conquer ego, greed, attachment, anger and lust, the Five Evils and become more God-centred.
- To strengthen and affirm the Sikh community.
- To create a stable, generous and caring Sikh community.
- To develop positive moral qualities conducive to good karma and eventual liberation.

Maximum Level 5 for practice without explanation of purpose.

2 0

'In today's world it is impossible for Sikhs to live up to the values implied in kirt karo, nam japo and vand kakko'. How far do you agree?

Agree

Demands of modern living make it difficult to have honest livelihood and level of generosity required is more than most people could do.

Very high level of idealism and service to others expected not in tune contemporary moral values especially in secular society

Other views

These are basic humanitarian values and can be applied in number of ways and different levels. All are capable of this. The values implied in these practices are even more important in to-day's world due to social inequalities. These values are realisable in action and an integral par of Sikh's everyday life. Many Sikhs in diaspora have made valuable contributions to charity and local causes and are an example to others an non-Sikhs.

Question 11 Sikh ethics and conduct

2 1

Explain the Sikh concepts of sant sipahi (saint-soldier) and dharam yudh (just war).

Sant-sipahi (saint-soldier)

Sant is used to refer 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, which was first endorsed by Guru Hargobind, and later personified in Guru Gobind Singh.

The first duty of the Sikh is to be a 'Sant' or to be a wise and knowledgeable person. The word is a modified form of the word 'Sat' which can simply mean 'True' but can also be translated as meaning lasting, real, wise and judicious and who has a good understanding of Dharam or religion.

'Sipahi' is a soldier able to fight and engage in warfare.

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.

Sikhs were taught to be kind as well as fearless. However, the Khalsa is forbidden to ever engage in a first attack on any person for whatever reason. Only when all means have been exhausted and negotiations have failed can the sword be yielded in defence of a legitimate and worthy cause.

Dharam yudh (just war)

Muslim incursions were severe and oppressive and so required a response which developed into a battle against Muslim authority in Guru Gobind Singh's time. Guru Nanak insisted that tyranny and injustice must be resisted and Guru Amar Das told members the Kshatriya caste that it was their duty (dharma) to establish an effective protective fence of justice.

The rules of war.

- It must be an action of last resort after all other means of settling the issue have been exhausted.
- The motives must be pure, i.e. free from revenge and enmity.
- It must not be for the purpose of gaining territory and any gained in conflict must be returned after victory.
- The soldiers must be committed Sikhs who conduct themselves according to Sikh standards especially on the treatment of non-combatants and defeated.
- Minimum force must be employed.

Maximum Level 5 if only one concept explained.

(30 marks) AO1

2 2

How far do you agree with the view that the Sikh concept of sant sipahi is impossible for Sikhs to achieve?

In some respects, there is a contradiction in the concept itself as saintly life involved avoidance of involvement in worldly affairs and especially nearness to violent conflict. However, there are a variety of ways in which this can be interpreted as campaigning for good cause and acting with vigour and courage for issues of human justice is a valid way for Sikhs to practise this. Another view that the noble courage of Sikhs is needed within any fighting force and many are quite capable of this.

(20 marks)

AO2

Question 12 Equality and sewa

2 | 3 | Examine the teachings of the Gurus on equality in relation to gender and caste.

Gender

In Sikhism, the Holy Scriptures clearly state that the Sikh woman has always been regarded as an equal with man and has all the rights and privileges enjoyed by a man. She is considered to have the same soul as man and has equal right to grow spiritually.

It is practised today.

The Sikh woman is allowed to lead religious congregations,

- to take part in Akhand Path (the continuous recitation of the Holy Scriptures),
- to perform Kirtan,
- to work as Granthi or a preacher, and
- to participate freely in all religious, cultural, social, political and secular activities.

Caste

- All Gurus strongly against caste inequalities and declared caste irrelevant to salvation.
- The langar is a way in which caste equality is expressed and maintained in Sikhism today.
- Initiation into the Khalsa through amrit sanskar also negate the requirements of caste segregation.

(30 marks) AO1

2 4 To what extent are teachings of the Gurus on equality fully expressed in the Sikh community in the United Kingdom today?

Women fully involved in running and organizing of Sikh community and services in the gurdwara and langar serve an effective social leveller. However, intercaste marriage is rare and is far from being eradicated amongst Sikhs and some gurdwaras introducing caste restrictions.