



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Religious Studies

RST3G

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

A2 Unit 3G

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.

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced) A2 Level Descriptors

Level	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 which 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

Section A Buddhism

Question 1 Themes in Mahayana Buddhism

01 Examine key similarities and differences between Mahayana Buddhism and Theravada Buddhism.

Expect more on differences than similarities but credit thoroughness whatever the balance.

Similarities

- Acceptance of four noble truths, eightfold path and goal of nibbana
- Practice of meditation
- Three refuges / jewels
- Importance of morality and deliverance from suffering

Differences

The attitude and understanding of the Buddha / Buddha nature

Theravada

- Siddharta Gotama was a human being who lived at a specific time in history
- The emphasis is on self reliance 'work out your own salvation with diligence' and no reliance on deities or rituals to gain liberation from samsara
- Emphasis on his humanity and ability for all humans to gain enlightenment and supra-mundane powers.

Mahayana

- Less importance given to the human historical, more emphasis on transcendent Buddha, heavenly manifestations.
- Trikaya doctrine. i.e. the three bodies / planes of existence of the Buddha.
- There are a multitude of universes each with their own Buddha.
- Three forms transformation body(semi-physical) enjoyment body (heavenly) dhamma body (beyond duality and conception)
- Belief in 'tathagatagarbha' 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)

Scriptures

Theravada Pali Canon

Mahayana additional scriptures and great variety of more developed philosophical systems and forms, Zen, Pure land, Tibetan. Can be seen as a second turning of the dhammachakra

Culture

Less strict rules for monastic sangha in Mahayana and less emphasis on it than Theravada. In Mahayana the laity have equal potential for spiritual development

No more than level 5 if only similarities or differences are dealt with.

(30 marks) AO1

02 'In Buddhism the similarities between Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism are more important than the differences.' Assess this view.

In support

- The basics are the same and the fundamental truths are accepted by both and any differences are merely cultural variations.
- The Mahayana is not different but a further development and elaboration of Theravada teachings and practice.

In refutation

- The understanding of the Buddha is radically different and leads to worship of celestial beings in Mahayana which is prohibited in Theravada.
- The centrality of the monastic sangha in Theravada is fundamental to Buddhist culture and is not so important in Mahayana
- The goal of nibbana is attained by very different means in each tradition; far more dependence on outside agencies in Mahayana.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 2 Aspects of Buddhist philosophy

03 Examine the teaching on sunyata (emptiness) with reference to the teachings of Nagarjuna.

- In early Buddhism the term sunyata is primarily used in relation to doctrine of anatta, (non self) and the five aggregates (skandhas) are devoid of a permanent soul or self. This notion came to be applied to reality as a whole so the whole universe is void of self. The doctrine of emptiness received its fullest elaboration with Naraguna.
- The Madhyamaka school was founded by Narguna (AD150-250). Madhyamaka means verse on the fundamentals of the middle way.
- 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 none the less substantial and possessed of a true self nature.
- Nagarjuna claimed that this notion of self nature, 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.

- 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.

(30 marks) AO1

04 How far do you agree that these teachings have little value for Buddhists today?

In support

- These are very abstract and complex ideas which have meaning and fascination for those Buddhists who need to understand the teachings in philosophical terms.
- The notion of sunyata is particularly challenging as it can lead to questioning the substantial reality of material existence and lead to a nihilistic outlook in which nothing has meaning and this could be said to have little value.
- It relates to more general issues about the extent to which philosophical speculations and discussion have any real effect on the practice of a religion.
- It is a Mahayana teaching and not fully accepted by Theravada Buddhists.

In refutation

- It has great value as a fundamental insight onto the nature of reality which distinguishes Buddhism from other schools of thought and religious traditions.
- If understood and accepted it leads to an understanding of anatta and could lead to a way of living which is selfless and not ego based.
- It reveals fully the three characteristics of existence of dukkha, anicca and anatta.
- It is part of the wisdom of the Buddhist path and gives meaning and credibility to the other aspects of this path i.e. morality and meditation.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 3 Meditation**05 Examine the aims and methods of meditation within Zen Buddhism.****General Aims in Zen Buddhism**

Sudden awakening of Buddha nature to enlightenment (satori) which happens in an instant

In depth understanding of and insight into the emptiness of all phenomena

Methods

Soto and Rinzai

Soto Background and Aims

Soto Zen had more popular appeal introduced by Dogen one of the greatest figures in Japanese Buddhism.

As a Tendai monk Dogen confronted the problem if people already have a buddha nature why do they need to exert themselves in religious practice to attain buddhahood. He advocated a strict and simple life of monastic discipline and **zazen** or sitting meditation. He used the Mahayana sutras to support the practice but emphasised practice over study. He was impressed by the personal example of the historical Buddha and in this tradition the Buddha became less a glorious heavenly being and returned to being a more human like teacher.

Method

- He advocated zazen sitting meditation as a return to the true Buddhism of the Buddha.
- A natural and straightforward method open to all and encompassing all other practices.
- He criticised the Rinzai reliance on the koan as too focussed on mental processes and stressed training the body correctly by using the lotus meditation posture of the buddha.
- The posture is strictly defined and with full lotus and precise placing of all parts of the body.
- A person must sit in zazen with constant awareness and with faith that he is already a buddha.
- The process is one of self forgetting in which the buddha nature gradually unfolds its infinite potential.
- It is a physical, mental, moral and intellectual discipline providing a fitting framework for selfless action.
- Zazen is not seen as a method to attain enlightenment, but is itself enlightenment.
- The Soto school uses 'mokusho' Zen (silent illumination) because of its sparing use of the koan and the identification of zazen with enlightenment.

Rinzai Zen Aims

- Teaches koan introspection emphasising seated meditation and focus on a koan in order to achieve a first enlightenment experience (kensho) through mental wrestling with an enigmatic haiku, mondo or koan
- Rinzai (1685-1768) revitalised by Hakuin Ekaku

Method

- Noted for its more audacious forms of Zen training including shouting, striking and dynamic exchanges between master and disciple centring on the Koan.
- The role of the master is to bring about a crisis in the student called the Great Doubt or great death so that in a moment of realisation 'satori' the student makes a great breakthrough.
- The enlightenment will then be evident in the student's every activity, whatever form it may take

Maximum Level 5 if both aims and methods of both not addressed.

(30 marks)

AO1

06 'Meditation is an essential part of Buddhist practice.' Assess this view.

In agreement

- Meditation is regarded as essential in Buddhism as the focus is on the nature of consciousness as the ultimate source of truth and knowledge.
- The most powerful way of understanding consciousness and change is through meditation.
- Meditation gives clear understanding of one's own nature and the ability to cultivate higher levels of consciousness and knowledge.
- Without meditation wisdom could not develop.

On the other hand

- The Buddhist path has many forms and aspects; for some traditions worship of bodhisattvas is essential as well as rituals and chanting.
- For all forms the essential basis can be morality as without this human nature cannot develop in a positive way.

(20 marks)

AO2

Question 4 Buddhist ethics

07 Explain the purpose of ethical living in Buddhism and how it might be put into practice.

The purpose of ethical living is:

- To gain merit to ensure a good rebirth.
- To accumulate good karma and eventually gain enlightenment.
- To cultivate positive qualities such as generosity, patience, perseverance, loving kindness which benefits oneself and ones' friends and family.
- The wider purpose is to create a harmonious and society and culture based on morality and ethical principles.
- Buddhist teaching refers to the roles and responsibilities of a universal monarch who creates a well balanced and harmonious society based on moral principles, justice and generosity.

Practice

Ethical living refers to the three aspects of right action, right speech and right livelihood which constitute sila/ morality.

Reference to Engaged Buddhism is worthy of credit although not essential to the answer.

Right action / 5 moral precepts:

- To undertake to refrain from harming living beings
- To undertake to refrain from taking that which is not given
- To undertake to refrain from sexual misconduct
- To undertake to refrain from false speech
- To undertake to refrain from taking substances which cloud the mind

Right speech includes:

- Not lying but also avoiding harsh and angry speech and malicious gossip.
- Any form of speech which distorts the truth.
- Right speech is both honest and insightful and lead to wisdom

Right livelihood includes:

- Those professions which serve human needs and the uplift of human nature and its well being.
- Wrong livelihood is such profession as butchery, arms dealing, prostitution, gambling and any other illicit means of making a living.

No more than Level 5 if only purpose or practice is dealt with.

(30 marks) AO1

08 'In Buddhism the motive of an action is more important than its consequence.' Assess this claim.

This is a general moral debate as well as a Buddhist one.

In support

- The second spoke of the eightfold path refers to right intention, which is the emotional basis for thought and these have to be rooted in non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion.
- They should be based in loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. The intention is therefore paramount in producing skilful or unskilful karma.
- It is more important in Buddhism as the emphasis is on the recognition and cultivation of positive mental states.
- The notion of skilful means – i.e. 'wrong act' for right intention is relevant here.

In refutation

- The action is always more important as the consequences of thought are the natural outcome.
- The action more directly affects others.
- The person is responsible for the action as much as the intention.
- In Buddhism the karmic consequences are inevitable and unavoidable.

(20 marks) AO2

Section B Hinduism

Question 5 Foundations of Hinduism

09 Examine the different kinds of scriptures contained in the Vedas.

- **The Samhitas**

- **Rig Veda**

- 1028 hymns in ten books (mandalas / circles) 12th-10th BCE
Hymns of praise to main deities of Agni, Indra, Soma, Varuna
Descriptions of myths of the birth of the world through a sacrifice

- **Yajur Veda**

- The veda of sacrificial formulae necessary for completing the Vedic sacrifices which were recited by an official priest in magical formulae. White yajna and black yajna

- **Sama Veda**

- The veda of melodies in three recensions. 2000 phrases accompanied by musical notations and melodies.

- **Atharva veda**

- The Veda of the atharva, the name of a family of Vedic priests, divided into 20 sections in verse and prose. Hymns in one part and magical recipes on the other e.g. charms for love, protection against demon possession.

- **Brahmanas**

- Later texts. Interpretation of Brahman.

- Prescriptions and explanations official ritual and parallels between myths and liturgy. The sacrifice is only effective if the rituals performed down to the smallest detail. The sacrifice appears to eclipse the powers of the Vedic gods. Certain passages indicate philosophical thought.

- **Aranyakas**

- Forest texts esoteric and mystical treatises attached to the brahmanas.

- Studies in a limited circle in the solitude of the forest.

- Transmission of secret teachings and theological commentaries. Indicate the end of the world view of Vedic ritualism and open the way to the Upanishads.

- **Upanishads**

- Most significant and philosophical. Means to 'sit, down, near by' and receive sacred and secret teachings. Identification of mystical connections or equivalences between human beings and the universe. 'Thou art that'

- They constitute the end of the Veda 'vedanta', the doctrinal conclusion of the Vedas. They depart from the mystique of sacrifice to develop a metaphysical doctrine which came to serve as the philosophical basis for conceptions in later Hinduism.

- 14 Upanishads for Vedic period most famous Chandogya, Brihadaranyaka.

(30 marks)

AO1

10 'The Vedas are the only true source of Hindu religious belief and practice.'
Assess this claim.

In support

- These scriptures are sruti and so considered to be authoritative.
- Considered to be true source by six schools of philosophy
- They originate in the mythical past and have a spiritual source.
- Directly linked to the ultimate reality Brahman.
- They have magical powers to reveal truths to enable Hindus to gain moksha.
- Ancient sages and rishis regarded as true source of knowledge passed on through generations.

In refutation

- The Vedas are not read or understood by majority of Hindus as a main source of belief.
- Other scriptures known as smriti have equally valid status as sources of belief and practice.
- The Bhagavad Gita is regarded as the supreme source by some Hindus.
- The Mahabharata and Ramayana epics are more important sources of belief and practice.

Debate could centre on nature of true source and extent to which truth is asserted.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 6 Hindu dharma

11 Examine Hindu understandings of marriage and family life.

Fulfilling dharma of each stage of life is very important for Hindus. Linked to notion of varnashrama dharma.

Marriage

- Joining of two families.
- Arranged marriage usually within the same caste.
- System of dowries although practice is symbolic now as has been discredited.
- Seen to be essential for the stability and coherence of society.
- Marriage ceremony expresses the blessings of marriage and roles of husband and wife.
- Several rituals (samskaras) to mark the change of status.
- Role models in personal deities e.g. Rama and Sita.
- Loyalty, fidelity and life long union.

Family life

- Grihastha stage of life prescribed in varnashramadharmā includes honest living, support of extended family. Large extended families with shared wealth and responsibilities. All help in bringing up children.
- Marriage and bringing up children is a religious duty.
- Motherhood is highly regarded. Goddess based on mother role as protector and nurturer of life.
- Specific duties for sons and daughters-in-law. Women live in 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; always looked after and the Vanaprastha (retired grandparents) roles and responsibilities.
- Religious rituals in the home / domestic worship.
- Means of preserving Hindu way of life.

Maximum Level 5 if both marriage and family life not addressed, although there may be some overlap.

(30 marks) AO1

12 To what extent are Hindu understandings of marriage and family life out of line with contemporary society?

Candidates may refer to India or UK or both.

- In some respects the traditional role of wife and mother is out of step with equality of status for men and women.
- The notion of dependency on family members is out of step with notions of self reliance and independence for especially for adolescents.
- The integration of religious rituals with domestic life not in tune with a scientific and rationalistic outlook.
- Arranged marriages not acceptable as choice of partner not personally decided.
- Love matches are more the norm.
- Basis of caste for choice of partner could be seen as outdated.

On the other hand

- Many of the values are not only respected but are a role model for contemporary society
- Care of elders within the family in seen as the best way to care for elderly
- The sharing of responsibilities within family is also seen as useful in contemporary society especially for working mothers.
- Family system constitutes a good welfare system and less reliance on the state.
- Arranged marriages admired for sound matches and lack of divorce.
- Functions better and mirrored in modern dating agencies.

(20 marks)

AO2

Question 7 Hinduism and society in the modern world

13 Examine the aims and achievements of Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission.

Aims

Vivekananda

- A disciple of Ramakrishna and attempted to put his teachings into practice as Ramakrishna a mystic rather than social reformer.
- Both he and Ramakrishna wanted to bring renewed vitality to Hinduism in the modern world and drew upon spiritual experience not just in Hinduism but also in Islam and Christianity.
- Both claimed all religious paths lead to the same goal. Regarded all religious leaders, Christ, Buddha and Krishna as incarnation of God.
- Opposed the brahmin oppression of lower castes and child marriage

Ramakrishna mission

- Raise opportunities and status for women.
- Advocated applied vedanta in social action and reform
- Emphasised service / or Karma yoga as a means to salvation as well as renunciation

Achievements

- Advocated Hindu values / truths at World Parliament of Religions in USA – 1950's.
- Carried out tours of south and west India teaching modern Vedanta
- World missionary tours
- Approximately 200 centres of Ramakrishna mission throughout the world, offering health care education
- Dispensaries in India
- Schools and universities based on Ramakrishna's ideals in India

No more than Level 5 if only aims or achievements are dealt with.

(30 marks) AO1

14 'Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission failed to modernise Hinduism in the twentieth century'. Assess this view.

In support

- The reforms and initiatives had hardly any impact on mainstream popular Hinduism especially in rural areas.
- The religious teachings of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna only appealed to a westernised educated elite.
- Hinduism has so many different varieties of formal and practice and traditions that it would be too wide a phenomenon to reform anyway

Other views

- The particular teachings and social reform initiatives achieved by Vivekananda and Ramakrishna did have a significant impact on the how Hinduism is understood and perceived by western culture
- The social reforms in education and health care have made a significant impact on Hindu cultural life.
- The Ramakrishna Mission has centres throughout the world and is more important for extending Hindu dharma to non Hindu settings.
- There is an important place within Hinduism for pockets of reform especially as its society becomes more international and prominent in a global sense.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 8 Hindu philosophy**15 Analyse the main ideas of Vishishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism) of Ramanuja.**

- Ramanuja agreed with Shankara of non-dualism that Brahman is that which truly is without distinction but did not agree that there is nothing else real.
- He did not agree that everything that is not non material is not real or an illusion i.e. maya appearance and the projection of ignorance 'avidhya'.
- Individual selves (atman) and the world of matter are real but are dependent upon Brahman for existence hence qualified non dualism or vishishtadvaita.
- Atman (selves) and matter are instruments of Brahman in a relationship of souls and bodies.
- Body and soul. Matter and spiritual nature are both real but are inseparable. The physical and spiritual are dependent upon each other.
- Brahman can only be known through the physical and material world.
- Atman and Brahman are dependent upon each other
- Brahman is not naguna without characteristics but with characteristics i.e. saguna physical manifestations e.g. Vishnu /Narayana.
- Brahman is the cause of dependent realities.
- Although Brahman is beyond description much can be inferred about the nature of Brahman from his manifestations in the world i.e. avatars.
- Brahman is the source of grace and salvation to those who turn to him.
- Means to moksha are bhakti devotion to God which requires purity in matters of food, non attachment, constant meditation, performance of religious and moral duties.
- It is not absorption of atman with Brahman but self surrender in Brahman.
- The atman remains distinct from Brahman.
- He accepted three forms of knowledge pratyksa (perception) anumana (inference), sabda (verbal testimony).

(30 marks) AO1**16 To what extent was Ramanuja a non-dualist in his thinking?****Was not:**

- He is a theist more than he is a non-dualist in that he himself was a Vaishnavite Hindu and gave value to devotional acts as a means to knowing the nature of Brahman.
- He advocated bhakti yoga and asserted that the reality of Brahman could be known through the manifestations in the form of deities.
- He asserted the separation of atman from Brahman claiming the atman as not the same but dependent upon Brahman for existence.

Was:

- He agreed with many of the assertions of the advaita vedanta philosophers that Brahman was the ultimate reality and other realities were dependent upon it and thereby shared some of the same nature as Brahman.
- He recognised the higher level of spiritual reality from material reality.
- He was closer to non-dualism than later philosophers who were clearly theist.

(20 marks) AO2

Section C Sikhism

Question 9 Sikh identity, marriage and family life

17 Explain the form and meaning of anand karaj.

Sikh marriage

Form

A legal contract and union of families

- 1909 Anand Marriage Act legalised Sikh anand karaj ceremony.
- Although Rahit Maryada claims that caste is immaterial many marriages are usually arranged within caste.
- No formal engagement but girl's parents visit the boy's and present a kirpan, prashad and sweetmeats.
- Usually takes place on a weekday after a civil ceremony
- The bridegroom and family come to the gurdwara as guests of the bride's family who make the arrangements.

A religious ceremony

- The couple sit in front of the Adi Granth, the bride to the grooms left. She wears red and his turban is usually pink.
- Ardas is said
- The officiant (an approved Sikh) explains the ceremony's significance reminding them to show love and loyalty.
- Bride and groom bow in assent to the Adi Granth
- A pink scarf links them together.
- Four times the bride follows the groom clockwise around the Adi Granth
- Before each circumambulation, a verse from the Lavan (hymn composed by Guru Ram Das) is read and the ragis sing it as the couple walk around.
- The couple are garlanded and given money.
- The Lavan stanzas affirm the Grihastha householder ideal, devotion to the true guru and the ultimate union of the soul with god.
- The service concludes with six verses of Anand Sahib, the Ardas and distribution of kara prashad.
- The bride accompanies her husband to his parent's house, often briefly returning after a night to her parents before rejoining him (muklava).

[In India marriages are typically a three day affair which begins with the Braat (grooms family and friends) setting off for the girls house in the evening. They are received, entertained and hosted by the girl's family and spend the night at her house. The following day the ceremony takes place at the local Gurdwara or at the girl's home. Following the religious ceremony festivities, song and dance continue the remainder of the day with the groom and his family departing with the bride the following day.]

Meaning

- Blissful union.
- Union of two families.
- Symbolism of chunni linking them together.
- Consent and marriage in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib is all that is required to legitimise a marriage.
- Union of souls.
- Intention of life-long union.
- Reinforces Sikh values and social harmony.

No more than Level 5 if both form and meaning not dealt with.

(30 marks)

AO1

- 18** **'For Sikhs, anand karaj was more important in the past than it is today.'**
Assess this view.

In support

- The celebration of marriage in Indian subcontinent in the past was a grand affair due the union of two families. It was a way of demonstrating social status and identity as a minority culture.
- The emphasis on ceremonies was more important in the past.
- Marriage is a more personal affair now and more directed and determined by current fashions

In refutation

- It is even more important now especially in diaspora communities as a means of asserting identity and maintaining cultural practices and traditions.
- The union of Sikh families strengthens Sikh community.
- Need for valuing the love and loyalty of marriage as in contemporary society marriages do not last.

(20 marks) AO2**Question 10 Key concepts and beliefs**

- 19** **Examine the Sikh understanding of the nature of God as expressed in the Mul Mantra.**

The Mul Mantra states:

'One God, True Name, Creator, Without fear, Without Hate, Eternal, Without birth, Self revealed, By the Guru's grace.'

- Monotheistic concept of God
- God is eternal and has not come to earth in any bodily form
- God is without gender and is not described as mother and father
- 'Sat nam' or True Name is a mantra that Sikhs recite
- God created the world and is immanent in all things animate and inanimate.
- Although Sikhs may obey God's teachings, it is only by divine grace that they will achieve spiritual liberation or mukhti
- Guru's grace or 'is known through the Guru's grace'. God has shown grace by revealing the gurbani (Gods word) which is found in the Guru Granth Sahib, understood by Sikhs as the living presence of God.
- Explanation of the meaning of Guru, i.e. that which takes away darkness and gives life.

(30 marks) AO1

20 'The Sikh understanding of the nature of God has little effect on the way Sikhs live their lives.' Assess this view.

In support

- The way Sikhs live their lives is determined by many various factors including cultural expectations and traditions, ethical considerations and their own motivations and the extent to which they are religious or not.
- Some beliefs about aiming for a God-centred life and liberation might be more influential on actions.
- Belief in karma and reincarnation might be more directly linked to the way they live their lives.

On the other hand

- Belief in God is fundamental to all Sikh beliefs.
- Without their faith all the other beliefs have no meaning.
- It is possible for some Sikhs to be very strongly affected by this belief and live their life obeying God's teachings.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 11 Sikh ethics and conduct

21 Examine the concepts of miri and piri.

Miri and piri together indicate the relationship between the temporal and the spiritual aspects of life.

Miri is derived from Persian word "miri", and Arabic "amir" which means commander, governor, lord, prince, etc, and signifies temporal power.

Piri is derived from Persian "pir" literary meaning senior man, saint, holy man, spiritual guide, head of a religious order and stands for spiritual authority. The word miri and piri are frequently used together.

- Guru Hargobind institutionalised the concepts as he adopted a princely style right from the time of his installation in 1606 as the sixth Guru of the Sikhs, when as part of the investiture he wore on his person two swords, one representing Miri (political) command of the community and Piri with pin, spiritual leadership. He is known as Miri Piri da Malik, master of (Sikh) worldly matters as well as their spiritual matters.
- The combination of social community and political organization with a religious and moral philosophy became a distinctive feature of Sikhism through the creation of the Khalsa.

(30 marks) AO1

22 The concepts of miri and piri are impossible to put into practice in the 21st century.

In support

- Sikh way of life is firmly established and no need to defend the faith against persecution.
- These are very high ideals which are too difficult for most ordinary people.
- The integration of social community with religious principles is no longer an issue but more a natural way of life for Sikhs who express their faith in social action
- Need to sometimes separate religious matters from secular ones in 21st century especially in secular societies.

In refutation

- Even more relevance to day as religious life and spiritual principles need to be based in practical action.
- Awareness of social justice and rights and responsibilities is very possible to express in practice today.

(20 marks) AO2

Question 12 Equality and sewa

23 Examine ways in which sewa is expressed by Sikhs in contemporary society.

Sewa is selfless service without rewards

- It is a way of expressing devotion to God and love of the community.
- It can be of mind, i.e. talents creativity, body or material possessions
- Every mundane act done in a spirit of selflessness and as a way of serving god, Waheguru
- The dignity and sanctity of labour
- Acting in a loving and caring way in everyday life to everyone
- Still expressed traditional ways such as:
 - service within the gurdwara particularly providing and serving food in the langar cleaning shoes , cleaning and maintaining the gurdwara
 - Generosity, hospitality to all comers
 - Giving to charity time and money
 - Service to the wider non-Sikh community.

In contemporary society:

- It is still a way of conquering self centredness and developing humility.
- Sewa is giving time and money to victims of natural disasters; many examples of it in India earthquakes and flood.
- **Khalsa Aid** serves suffering humanity by providing and co-ordinating humanitarian assistance by offering aid and assistance to victims of disaster.
- Attempts to combat poverty support and uphold human dignity and freedom
- It promotes the Sikh principles through education, material and financial support.
- It has Humanitarian Aid Projects in remote parts of Africa and India
- Youth/children projects in conjunction with schools and local authorities

Higher level answers to show clear understanding of the nature of sewa ,a good range of points and awareness of contemporary expressions of sewa

(30 marks) AO1

24 'Sewa has lost its original meaning for Sikhs'. Assess this view.

In support

- The original meaning was to overcome the injustices of caste system and challenge existing notions of social hierarchy and status.
- It was necessary for communities to depend on selfless service to maintain a reasonable quality of life.
- Now the services, especially in the gurdwara are just token gestures rather than necessary.
- The purpose now is more for spiritual upliftment than social need.

In refutation

- It maintains its original meaning and purpose but extends it to a global dimension
- It is even more important due to the global inequalities.
- It was and always will be a central and fundamental Sikh concept and practice.

(20 marks)

AO2

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