

AS

# Religious Studies

RSS09 World Religions 1 (either Buddhism or Hinduism or Sikhism)

Mark scheme

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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 Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

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

**RSS09: 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.**

**BUDDHISM****Question 1 Samsara and the three marks of existence**

**0 1** Outline the concept of samsara and examine the implications of a belief in samsara for the Buddhist way of life.

**The concept of samsara**

- Sanskrit word meaning 'round and round' in a cycle of becoming.
- The cycle of birth, death and rebirth through the law of karma.
- Various realms of rebirth: hell, hungry ghost, human, deva realms.
- At the centre of the process of samsara are ignorance and delusion, greed and hatred which cause rebirth into the physical world in ignorance again and again.
- Samsara can result in rebirth in the various realms of rebirth: hell, hungry ghost, human, deva realms.
- Reference to anicca and anatta and anatta is relevant only if linked directly to the concept of samsara.

**Implications of a belief in samsara**

- The Buddhist way of life is affected by this belief by giving Buddhists a motivation to escape this possibly endless cycle by developing good karma.
- The law of karma is fundamental to the process of samsara as the karmic effect of unskillful / wrong / harmful thoughts and actions keep all beings trapped in the wheel of samsara.
- Ignorance of the fundamental truths of dukkha, anicca and anatta also keep beings trapped in samsara.
- Good karma is developed through adhering to moral precepts.
- The eightfold path of morality, meditation and wisdom is the means of overcoming samsara.
- This belief would encourage Buddhists to practice morality, meditation and to fully understand the teachings of the Buddha.
- A belief in samsara would enable Buddhists to accept some of the suffering and injustices of present existence.
- A belief in samsara might be an incentive to become a monk to devote one's life to gaining wisdom and insight and freedom from the law of karma and samsara.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects of the question are addressed.

Maximum Level 4 if outline only.

**[30 marks] AO1**

**0 2** 'The concept of samsara can only be understood through experience.'

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- All Buddhist teachings are to be understood through experience before their truth can be verified.
- Since samsara is evidenced in the cycle of nature the concept of rebirth can be understood through observation of the processes of nature.
- The concept of samsara is dependent on the law of karma which can be seen and experienced through the effect of unskilful actions causing an on-going pattern of suffering.
- The human tendency to not learn from mistakes or change ways for the better is an example of the law of samsara and karma in experience.

**Other views**

- The concept of samsara can be understood on many different levels and in different ways.
- The deeper aspects of samsara and its connection with the law of karma can only be understood through insights gained through meditation.
- The truth of rebirth and the possibility of previous existences can only be understood through very advanced and special insights gained through meditation and the cultivation of wisdom.
- Samsara may be too complex and abstract a notion for some Buddhists to understand.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 2 The Four Noble Truths****0 3 Examine the various meanings of nibbana within Buddhism.**

Students may offer a general interpretation as well as specific definitions. Various meanings can refer to the variety of meanings both within one tradition as well as differences of meaning between traditions.

- It is the highest and ultimate goal of all Buddhists traditions.
- It is linked to the Four Noble truths and is the third truth, cessation of suffering and fourth truth is the way to attain nibbana.
- 'The farthest shore' which is beyond all the suffering experienced in this world.
- Freedom from the cycle of rebirth and samsara.
- The highest bliss and a transformed state of consciousness.
- It is the complete cessation of dukkha (suffering).
- Karma ceases to operate.
- Extinction or quenching the fires of anger, greed and delusion, of desire and craving.
- Destruction of the defilements / cankers of greed, hatred and delusion.
- Attained during one's lifetime as a transcendent timeless experience as well as in the future or beyond this life (paranibbana).
- Some schools of thought, especially Mahayana emphasise the otherness of nibbana as beyond understanding, whereas Theravada focuses on nibbana as a lived and profound experience.
- Meanings of nibbana are often debated and discussed and no definite answers prevail and it is claimed it is not possible to fully understand until one is enlightened.

Maximum Level 5 unless a variety of meanings are presented.

**[30 marks] AO1**

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**'The main aim for Buddhists is to achieve nibbana.'**

**How far do you agree?**

**In support**

- Most Buddhists attempt to follow the noble eightfold path of morality, meditation and wisdom which is the way and the means for attaining nibbana.
- Even if they do not attain nibbana in this lifetime their intentions and actions are aimed at attaining it in a future existence.
- The monastic tradition in Theravada Buddhism is set up to provide the ideal conditions for attaining nibbana.
- If this aim was not in their lives there would be little point in following the Buddhist path.
- Most Buddhists are making progress towards nibbana rather than achieving it in this lifetime.
- It is possible to achieve nibbana through developing the perfections of generosity and compassion.

**Other views**

- Buddhists may have many aims in life and nibbana may not be the main one as it can seem to be too difficult to attain.
- Most Buddhists would aim for developing good karma in every way through moral actions and devotional acts.
- Nibbana is a remote and long distance aim for most Buddhists.
- Most Buddhists hope for a better rebirth rather than the liberation of nibbana.
- It is only certain monks who aim for nibbana and these are not the majority.
- Some might believe in their little glimpses of nibbana rather than a final state.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 3 The Eightfold Path****0 5 Examine the role of wisdom, morality and meditation in the Eightfold Path.**

This can be approached in a variety of ways with general principles of each part of the path defined and developed and then an examination or some examples of their role in the Eightfold Path. Students are not expected to refer to all aspects of the Eightfold Path, but rather the three general aspects.

**Wisdom: Right understanding and right thought.**

- Right understanding refers to the main teachings and right thought to right intention, free from hatred, greed or delusion.
- This gives understanding and insight into the truth and meaning of the teaching of the Buddha. Most notably the Four Noble Truths and the three characteristics of existence.
- Without wisdom the purpose of the other parts of the path would not make sense.

**Morality: right action / speech / livelihood**

- Right action / Five moral precepts.
- Right speech / honest and truthful speech.
- Right livelihood / not doing any harm to others.
- Each of these aspects create good karma and purify the thoughts and actions of the individual to produce a good person and a harmonious community.
- It contributes to enlightenment by creating the right conditions for human beings to develop their best moral qualities and undo bad karma.

**Meditation: Right effort / mindfulness / concentration**

- This creates a calm, clear and pure mind.
- It contributes to enlightenment by producing a deep experience of peacefulness and insight which enables the Buddhist to act morally and understand the truths.

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

Maximum Level 5 if all three demands are not addressed.

**[30 marks] AO1**



**0 6** ‘Morality is more important than meditation for Buddhists today.’**How far do you agree?****In support**

- Morality is the fundamental basis of Buddhism and accepted by all Buddhists, and the other aspects of the path are more optional.
- All Buddhists whether lay or monastic must observe the moral precepts before any progress on the path to enlightenment can be made.
- Attaining nibbana is a goal only achievable through good karma and good moral behaviour.
- It is not possible to practise meditation without a secure moral base.
- Morality is more important because it is based in actions in everyday life which is experienced and practised by all Buddhists today.
- Today the effects of right speech, right action and right livelihood are very important in human relationships and in social and economic circumstances.
- In countries with a predominantly Buddhist culture the practice of morality is much more widespread and important than the practice of meditation.
- Meditation can be seen as an individual and almost selfish goal whereas morality is based in selflessness.
- Meditation is the main concern of monastics rather than the majority of lay people.
- Engaged Buddhism aimed at social action and welfare programmes are considered to be an important aspect of Buddhism today.

**Other Views**

- Meditation is an essential and integral part of the eightfold path and just as important as morality.
- Without meditation the Buddhist cannot develop the right kind of mental and emotional states to follow the moral precepts.
- To those who have chosen the Buddhist path in the west today there is more interest and emphasis on meditation than morality.
- All aspects of the path are interdependent and to fully follow the Buddhist path today meditation and morality are needed.
- The value and benefits of meditation especially mindfulness in the areas of psychology and emotional wellbeing are more widely appreciated and understood today so it has increased in importance for all Buddhists.

No more than top of level 5 if no mention of “to-day”.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 4 The Sangha**

**0 7** Outline the discipline of the monastic community and examine the importance of monastic discipline in Buddhism.

**The discipline of the monastic community**

- Basic principle is the middle way between extreme asceticism of Hindu sadhus and hedonism.
- The detailed rules enable the monastic sangha to focus fully on spiritual development.
- Vinaya code refers to at least 217 rules.
- All monks (bhikkhus) and nuns (bhikkhunis) follow 10 precepts as part of their daily routine.
- Also adherence to rules of the monastery and the authority of abbot relating to cycle of the year. Including festival occasions such as Kathina (giving of robes).
- Part of the discipline is maintained through practice of confessions of transgressions of the precepts and vinaya discipline.

**Its importance in Buddhism**

- The discipline of the monastic way of life was instigated at the time of the Buddha to ensure the monk is not distracted by worldly responsibilities and can concentrate totally on gaining enlightenment.
- The discipline of the monastic way of life requires a considerable amount of self-sacrifice and commitment which makes the goal of enlightenment more possible.
- If they do not adhere to the rules they can be expelled from the monastery.
- The discipline creates very high moral standards and behaviour in the monks which is an inspiration and example to lay people.
- Monks (bhikkhus) represent and embody the qualities of the Buddha and are regarded with great respect by lay people as they show the way (dhamma) and teach the means to enlightenment.
- The monastic community are teachers and role models for the lay community in moral and spiritual matters so that have a big responsibility to maintain their standards.

Maximum Level 4 for outline only, and maximum Level 5 if examine only.

**[30 marks] AO1**

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**'Only monks can become enlightened.'**

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- It is accepted in some Buddhist countries that only monks and nuns live in the right conditions for enlightenment as this requires some degree of detachment from the attachments of worldly life.
- The monastic life requires celibacy in order to develop spiritual discipline which is less likely for lay people.
- Monks have and can give priority to seeking enlightenment.
- Enlightenment requires complete and total dedication and commitment to perfect morality, meditation and wisdom which is only possible for monks and nuns.

**Other views**

- It is perfectly possible for lay people to gain enlightenment if they follow the Eightfold Path including meditation and wisdom.
- There are examples of important lay people in Buddhist scriptures who become enlightened often through their generosity and compassion.
- Since the monastic lifestyle is an integral part of Theravada Buddhism, and all men are expected to become monks for a short time, so many of them do not seek enlightenment.
- Some men adopt the monastic lifestyle as a means of education and advancement or as an escape from worldly responsibilities.
- Not all monks maintain the high standards of morality and spiritual practice.

N.B. Some candidates may approach the question comparing monks with nuns rather than with the laity.

**[15 marks] AO2**

**HINDUISM****Question 5 The Hindu Concept of God**

**0 9** Explain both the nature and importance of the Trimurti in the Hindu concept of God.

This may be approached holistically or in relation to each of the deities.

**The nature of the Trimurti**

The Trimurti are the three deities of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva who are the creative preserving and maintaining aspects of Brahman the ultimate Godhead. They are the three aspects of one ultimate being.

**The importance of the Trimurti** can be addressed in a variety of ways.

**Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva****Brahma**

- Creator of the universe then retreated to the higher realms.
- Depicted as a four headed deity facing the four cardinal points showing he is creator in all directions.
- His role as possessor of supreme knowledge.
- He was the first living being emerging from the boundless ocean.

**Vishnu**

- The maintainer and preserver of cosmic harmony and order and the forces of goodness on earth.
- He pervades everything and is the power and cause by which all things exist.
- He can defeat and overcome evil.
- Mainly known through nine avatars in which Vishnu descends to earth in different animal and human forms to restore goodness, destroy evil and establish harmony.

**Shiva**

- The destroyer and recreator.
- Various forms; Maha yogi (meditating ascetic), lingam (powers of re-generation) Nataraja, Lord of the dance.
- He controls the forces of destruction but also initiates the energy of recreation.

**The importance of the trimurti in the Hindu concept of god**

- They represent the three aspects of the universal life giving energy of Brahman.
- They are different manifestations of the ultimate supreme reality of Brahman, the impersonal absolute.
- They show how the Hindu concept of God is expressed in the energies of creation, maintenance of harmony and order, destruction and re-creation of every aspect of the material universe.
- The Trimurti reveals the Hindu understanding of how the concept of God is linked to the cycle of birth, death and rebirth of the universe and human existence.
- The Hindu concept of God in the impersonal Brahman is beyond full understanding so the Trimurti gives Hindus a means of understanding and relating to the impersonal absolute in these three different personal forms.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects of the question are addressed.

**[30 marks]**

**AO1**

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1	0
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**‘Since Hindus believe in the Trimurti they must be polytheistic.’**

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- Hindus regard each deity in the Trimurti as three distinct gods with different functions.
- They are worshiped as separate deities and there are separate temples to each.
- Worship of Vishnu and Shiva are the foundation of the two main branches of Hinduism related to Vaishnavite and Shaivite Hinduism.
- Hindus are able to relate to and ultimately unite or merge with the supreme Godhead Brahman only through these intermediaries.
- A large majority of Hindus have a personal devotion to an incarnation of Vishnu especially Krishna and Rama and this is the most popular form of worship in a cultural sense.

**Other views**

- The Trimurti is a manifestation of Brahman and so asserts the oneness of the ultimate reality.
- They are three aspects of the one life force so it is not polytheistic it is monotheistic.
- All Hindus accept the ultimate reality of Brahman expressed in the OM symbol and worship the Trimurtu as a means of uniting with Brahman.
- Hinduism is both polytheistic and monotheistic.
- Hindus have a variety of conceptions of God and no one perception prevails.
- There are many ways of knowing God, and many interpretations of what it means to know God.
- Some Hindus claim that the God is beyond human understanding so any visual perceptions of the deity are acceptable as they are means of understanding the ultimate oneness of God.

**[15 marks]**

**AO2**

**Question 6 Means to liberation in Hinduism****1 1 Examine the nature of the three forms of yoga in Hinduism.**

The main forms referred to are jnana, bhakti and karma yoga. However credit will be given to students who refer to other appropriate forms of yoga. Students may give a generic explanation of the nature and purpose of yoga and then develop this by illustrating the nature and purpose through particular forms.

Yoga develops and perfects both mental states and forms of action which enable Hindus to realise their true self, the atman, as the same reality as the ultimate God, Brahman. Yoga leads to moksha or liberation from the endless cycle of rebirth, transcending ordinary or mundane personality to reach higher levels of knowledge, union and bliss.

**Bhakti yoga**

- Complete submission in loving devotion of the person to their personal God.
- Expressed through emotional union through chanting of mantras, puja and singing bhajans.
- Presented as the main way to liberation in the Bhagavad Gita in which Krishna is the object of devotion and his loving grace brings the worshipper to their ultimate goal.
- It leads to moksha (liberation) through faith in the personal deity and merging with this deity in love and submission as the higher goal.

**Jnana yoga**

- It is the attainment of higher consciousness through renunciation and asceticism.
- It requires investigation into the wisdom of the holy Vedas understood both rationally and intuitively or non-rationally.
- It is way of knowledge, meditation and insight and development of mental capacities and faculties leading to clear understanding of the profound truth of the nature of self and God.

**Karma Yoga**

- The development of selflessness through performance of moral and religious duties without desire for reward.
- Requires removing attachment or selfishness from the fruit or rewards of deeds and the discipline of non-attachment.
- Attaining the final goal of liberation through activity in the world according through caste and stage in life duties.

All three forms of yoga must be addressed for Level 5 and above.

**[30 marks]**

**AO1**

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**‘Yoga is essential for Hindus.’****How far do you agree?****In support**

- The conscious development of each form of yoga is the only way to attain moksha which is the ultimate goal of all Hindus.
- Hinduism strongly stresses the importance of a spiritual life as the highest aim and so these are essential.
- Each form of yoga relates to various aspects of the Hindu way of life ie moral actions, religious devotion and meditation and study so yoga is naturally interwoven into the Hindu way of life.
- For those who practice bhakti yoga they would regard it as essential to their life and their happiness and spiritual wellbeing depends upon the practice of it.
- Karma yoga can be seen as essential in Hinduism as it is based on the moral duties and customs which underpin everyday actions and human relationships.

**Other views**

- Hinduism can be considered in various ways as a cultural system or as body of philosophy and religious teachings.
- As a cultural system the practice of any one of three yogas is not essential but is optional.
- Hinduism is based on dharma which can be lived through every activity and giving due respect to deities, family and the natural environment.
- Although most Hindus will naturally aim to create good karma by adhering to their moral values and traditional customs they are unlikely to develop the aspect of selflessness to its fullest full extent which is required by the cultivation of karma yoga.
- Jnana yoga is mainly practiced by sannyasin and occasionally practiced by some Hindus for short periods on retreat in ashrams.
- Bhakti yoga is a personal choice and not essential to the maintenance of Hinduism as a cultural system.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 7    Worship in Hinduism**

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**Examine both the design of Hindu temples and the purpose of the various features.****The design of temples**

The general purpose of the features is to facilitate an attitude of respect and devotion to the deities. The layout represents a journey from the outer world to the inner world of the soul and a realisation of the nature of God. There are several features with some variation of form.

- **Shikhara** a tower-like structure to represent the mountain sacred place. Temples are designed in the shape of a mountain which are considered to be suitable dwelling places for gods. The purpose of this is to show it is the dwelling places for the gods and create a suitable space for worship.
- **Garbha-griha** or womb house. The Inner sanctum where the murti is installed. Its purpose is to create a special space and opportunity to receive darshan ie a glance from the deity in which a relationship with the deity is established and the worshipper can make offerings and puja.
- **Vimana.** The central or inner part of temple.
- **Mandapa.** A hallway or platform in front or around the inner area, a pathway to approach the deity. Its purpose is to express progress / movement towards union with the deity and make petitions to the deity.
- **Gopurams** or ceremonial entrances or gateways often with a protecting deity or vehicle of the god eg Nandi bull for Shiva, Garuda or eagle for Vishnu. Its purpose is to show that the deity is protected by other deities. It expresses the sacredness of the temple and enables the worshipper to prepare for worship.
- **Other shrines** in large temples of the consorts of the deities around the mandapa or front entrance hall. The purpose to show that there are many deities present and all available for worship.
- **A circular path** around the inner sanctum so worshippers can circumambulate the deity shrine several times. Its purpose is to express the worshipper's devotion and willingness to undertake austerities.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects of the question are addressed.

**[30 marks]    AO1**



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**'Worship in the temple is not central to Hindu life.'**

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- Daily worship in the home can have more meaning and purpose for Hindus.
- In some villages there are many small shrines rather than one big temple.
- Many natural phenomena such as mountains, sacred rivers like the Ganges, banyan and certain trees have the same status and power as temples.
- Temple worship is optional and for special occasions.
- Many other more important aspects of Hinduism such as Hindu dharma, moral values and duties for stage of life and caste are essential to Hindu life.
- Temple worship is only important for the priestly castes and possibly in the varnaprasta stage of life.

**Other views**

- In Britain temple worship helps to maintain Hindu identity, community and religious practices.
- In some Indian villages the temple is the focus and centre for communal worship as well as community gatherings and education.
- Many Hindus regard temple worship as essential at special times in life when the favour and blessings are particularly needed and prescribed rituals can be performed by the priests.
- Some temples are the focus for pilgrimage which is regarded by some as a essential act to be performed at least once in a lifetime.
- Temples are a significant features of the Indian landscape in cities and villages and without them and the worship taking place in them Hinduism would not maintain or preserve its religious teachings and practices.

**[15 marks] AO2**

**Question 8 The Hindu way of life****1 5 Examine the roles of holy men in Hinduism.**

Holy men could be considered generically as having a fundamental role of following the fourth stage of life of sannyasin and renouncing all worldly ties to follow a purely spiritual way of life.

- Holy men such as sadhus, rishis and gurus are responsible for explaining, propagating and preserving the teachings of Hinduism and various ritual practices and yogic methods.
- Their role is to give good example to others of the importance and priority which should be given to spiritual life.
- They can offer guidance about all kinds of human concerns as well as interpretations and guidance from the Hindus scriptures and philosophy.
- There are various types of holy men although their roles can be similar there is some distinctiveness.
- **A sadhu** is any person who has renounced the world. Sadhus is a generic term for those who have renounced worldly responsibilities and who have dedicated themselves to the pursuit of religious aims. They might live in an ashram and depend on the support and generosity of devotees.
- **A rishi** was a sage or poet (in Vedic times). In the contemporary world a rishi is one who has received or gained powerful spiritual insights from deep meditation and other austerities. Rishi is the title given to one who has some deep wisdom and they offer guidance, teachings and religious practices to those who seek to attain liberation (moksha). Several notable ones have communicated the philosophical insights of Hinduism to the west. They communicate their wisdom in personal audiences or in special religious writings. They are spiritual guides and teachers in ashrams providing spiritual programmes and initiating Hindus into religious duties and experiences.
- **Gurus** teach and guide young people in the student stage in life and give advice to families. Gurus also act as a personal spiritual guide for those who are seeking spiritual Wisdom. They often reside in the ashrams where their followers or disciples can stay for retreats. They are considered to have great wisdom and almost supernatural powers, eg Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.
- **Temple priests.** These are holy men who have chosen to undertake training in Vedic philosophy and scriptures. They learn the Sanskrit language and details of the main rituals which are fundamental to Hinduism and perform them in homes and temples they often reside in temples and their role is to officiate at ceremonies and teach the scriptures.

Maximum Level 5 unless some range is expressed.

**[30 marks] AO1**

**1 6** 'The way of life of the holy man is superior to any other way of life in Hinduism.'

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- The ultimate goal for Hindus is the sannyasin stage of life in which worldly life is renounced all possessions and family ties are left behind.
- The goal of liberation can only be reached by adopting this way of life of the holy man.
- The material world is considered to be an illusion by some Hindus so giving up material things is necessary for the spiritual path.
- The holy man attains such high wisdom, moral purity and spiritual power that he becomes superior to the householder in every way.
- The holy man sacrifices the pleasures, comforts and security of worldly life in the householder stage to attain a higher goal of spiritual knowledge and liberation.
- Hindus have great respect and reverence for holy men as they embody the qualities of peacefulness and wisdom and are sometimes regarded as incarnations of deities.

**Other views**

- The Hindu way of life has many aspects which can be lived sequentially through the stages of life or as a holistic way of fulfilling their chosen dharma.
- The householder way of life is equal to the sannyasin stage in some respects as honest living and taking responsibility for the welfare of an extended family and the wider society is just as challenging.
- The path of karma yoga is often taken on by householders and they can fulfill their moral and religious duties selflessly as a way to moksha.
- Puja, study and education in Hindu dharma and performance of key rituals in the life of Hindus are undertaken in the householder stage in the domestic setting.
- Some holy men have become corrupted by their celebrity status and have brought disrepute to the lifestyle of holy men.
- Some holy men might use this way of life as an escape.

**[15 marks] AO2**

**SIKHISM****Question 9 The Gurus**

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**Outline the life of Guru Nanak and examine his main teachings.****The life of Guru Nanak requires selection of main events**

- Born 1469 as kshatriya Hindu in Punjab when under Muslim control.
- Married with children.
- 1499 key event at age of 30 went missing for three days had a revelatory experience 'There is no Hindu there is no Muslim. I shall follow God's path.'
- Many years travelling and teaching in all directions to Hindu and Muslim cultures. Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kashmir, Tibet. West to Baghdad, etc.
- Influenced by Sufi sant tradition.
- Established a special community at Kartarpur based on Sikh principles of service, honest work and daily worship in gurdwara.

**The main teachings**

- Oneness of God as the creator of the universe, without visible form or shape. Related to Islamic Sufi beliefs. Monotheism. God beyond categories of male and female. God is both saguna and naguna ie with characteristics and beyond characteristics.
- Aim to become God-centred (gurmukh) instead of self centred (manmukh).
- Upheld the central importance of the householder life style, honest work that is beneficial to society. God consciousness should affect all endeavours to create self-sufficiency and a selfless community spirit.
- Teaching of (nam japo) keeping God continually in mind, meditating on god's name, earning and honest living (kirt karo) and sharing the fruits of labour with others (vand kakko.)
- He taught the equality of all human beings regardless of caste and created langar / free kitchen to express this.
- He taught the importance of devotion to God which was expressed in the singing of hymns of praise and loving devotion to God.
- He partially challenged rather than totally challenged the religious culture of his time.

Maximum Level 4 for outline only and maximum Level 5 for examine only.

**[30 marks] AO1**

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1	8
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**‘Guru Nanak’s teachings totally challenged the religious culture of his time.’**

**How far do you agree?**

**In support**

- He was very critical of certain aspects of Hinduism most particularly the caste system which contradicted his teaching on equality of caste and gender.
- His concept of monotheism challenged the polytheistic aspects of Hinduism.
- He criticised the importance and power given to use of ritual in Hinduism and instead advocated loving devotion to God.
- He challenged what he considered to be the empty piety of Muslims.
- The religious culture of his day was aggressive, he challenged this with his emphasis on kindness, gentleness and making peace.
- The religious culture of the time was divisive so he attempted to bring together those with faith in God.
- He advocated a harmonious and caring community in the home, family and wider society exemplified in Kartapur which challenged the extreme asceticism of certain sadhus.

**Other views**

- Some of his teachings and attitudes were based on the religious culture of his time and not in contradiction of it.
- The Hindu and Muslim sant tradition of bhakti and loving devotion of god through singing and worship he incorporated into the forms of worship he initiated.
- The clear monotheism of Islam also reflected his own understanding of the oneness of God.
- Guru Nanak was both inspired and highly critical of the religious culture of his time and the new faith and community he created was not in contradiction to the others but a challenge to them.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 10 Festivals****1 9 Examine the significance of the celebration of the festival of Vaisakhi for Sikhs.**

The significance of Vaisakhi can be addressed in either or both its historical and contemporary aspects.

- Its significance lies in enabling all Sikhs today to fully value the conditions and challenges faced by their forefathers in the establishment of Sikh Khalsa and Sikhism as an important world religion.
- It celebrates the formation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.
- The details of this key event in Sikh history are retold and re-enacted in various ways, highlighting the heroism of the first five panj piaras.
- It represents the transformation of Sikhs into a strong and clearly identified community of soldier saints.
- It establishes Sikh identity with 5 'K's.
- It creates the basis of the Sikh baptism ceremony and many Sikhs choose to be baptised as members of the Khalsa at his time.
- It is associated with harvest and has this dimension to it.
- It is celebrated in the home and gurdwara with special ceremonies, processions and religious events.
- It gives the local Sikh community both in India and in diaspora a chance to express their pride in their identity and community through the Nagar Kirtan ceremony and processions Sikh scriptures through the town.
- It provides a renewal of faith and awareness of the importance of the Sikh teachings through events in the gurdwara including a continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib.
- The Sikh community opens up to the wider community through opening the gurdwaras and langars to all.
- It creates a joyous atmosphere for Sikhs to celebrate their faith through and bhangra dancing and kirtans, singing of hymns from Guru Granth Sahib.

**[30 marks] AO1**

**2 0** ‘The celebration of festivals is always important in the lives of today’s Sikhs.’

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- The celebration of festivals makes an important contribution to Sikh life and faith today, by providing opportunity for the expression of religious faith and devotion especially in the Punjab.
- They remind Sikhs of the heroism of their gurus and the values and principles for which they sacrificed their lives. They can bring these values into their lives today.
- Festivals reinforce the importance of certain practices such as continuous reading of the Adi Granth, kirtan, nagar kirtan and amritdhari.
- The celebration of festivals strengthens the community by bringing families and community together to celebrate a common heritage.
- Festivals express and reinforce the teachings of the Sikhs and their Gurus and their importance in establishing the Sikh faith and way of life.
- Festivals celebrate their triumphs over adversity in the past and the importance of courage and equality in Sikhism.
- The significance of festivals continues outside festival times as they act as points of reference for Sikh values and traditions.
- The significance of festivals has not diminished since historical times and has renewed importance in the lives of Sikhs today.

**Other views**

- Festivals re-enact past events and do not relate to present events today.
- Remembering past events and struggles against persecution may not be the image they want to project today and instead they may wish to promote kindness and peace.
- These festival celebrations may have less importance for younger Sikhs who regard the festivals as time for parties and socialising.
- Sikhs today have different priorities in the upkeep of their faith and festivals are less important than maintaining Sikh values and spiritual traditions of prayer and worship.
- The more secular environment of modern Sikhism makes these festivals have social rather than religious importance.
- Not all Sikhs may wish to join in the festivities but this does not mean they are less devout Sikhs
- Sometimes the emphasis on the practicalities of the celebrations distract Sikhs from the religious significance of the festival.

**[15 marks] AO2**

2	1	<b>Examine both the main features of the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar and the significance of these features.</b>
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Students may refer to the general significance of the main features as an expression of faith as well as the particular significance of each feature.

**The general significance of the main features**

- The temple itself is the centre of the Sikh faith and serves as a focus to unite Sikhs from all over the world.
- The features are designed to enable the Sikh pilgrim to go through a spiritual journey of cleansing and purification and receive the blessings through the rituals and reciting of the Gurus' teachings.
- The experiences of visiting the temple strengthens their faith, identity and community through sharing prayers and langar with the global Sikh community.

**The main features and their significance**

- **Lake of Holy water** surrounds the temple for pilgrims to immerse themselves in. Amrit Sar name of original lake, now a man-made pool. Considered to have healing qualities. **Significance:** The importance of bathing in amrit / nectar as a spiritual purification prior to entering the presence of the Adi Granth. Considered to have healing qualities.
- **The Guru's Bridge.** A marble causeway connecting the pathway around the pool to the main temple. **Significance:** symbolises the journey of the soul after death.
- **Pardakshna (parikarma)** circumambulatory path which runs around the main shrine and leads to (Har ki paure) the steps of God leading to the main shrine. **Significance:** time for preparation and mediation.
- **Darshani Deori.** The gateway arch to the bridge.
- **Entrances to the temple on four sides** in four directions. **Significance:** the openness to people from all four quarters of the world all races and religions.
- **Sri Harminder Sahib** the main temple building in the centre of the lake shrine.
- **Adi Granth** on jewel covered platform. **Significance:** the central importance of the holy book Guru Granth Sahib which is at the centre of the most beautiful temple.
- **Gumbaz (dome)** with lotus petal relief pattern and three storeys / platforms above it. Beautiful decorations show the significance of sacred and precious Holy Scriptures.
- **Guru-ka- langar.** Dining room. Central importance of sharing food together in spirit of equality.
- **Shrines to past Sikh gurus** and saints and martyrs. **Significance** of past events and examples of previous Guru and giving opportunity to express faith and respect for these Gurus. Commemoration of those who died for honourable causes.
- **Dormitories** for pilgrims. **Significance** as a place for pilgrimage and acceptance and hospitality.

Maximum Level 5 unless both features and significance are addressed.

**[30 marks]**

**AO1**



2	2
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**‘The Golden Temple complex is central to the Sikh faith.’**

**Assess this view.**

**In support**

- For Sikhs the Golden Temple is of central importance as it is the centre of their faith in terms of history and culture. Sikhs have a need to have this sacred site to give them a direct connection with the founders of their faith.
- It is a symbol of the Sikh faith expressed in the features of this beautiful building.
- The langar here is a role model of service repeated in all gurdwaras.
- Unity and equality of the Sikh community is of central importance and the Golden Temple at Amritsar expresses and represents this for all Sikhs.
- Visiting such sacred sites gives more importance, purpose and reality to the Sikh faith.
- It is a focus for Sikhs all over the world to meet and recognise and value their identity.

**Other views**

- The central concerns of Sikhs are the ways of maintaining their Sikh faith and identity in the Punjab and in diaspora, and the origins of their faith have little connection with this.
- Attention to and development of the spiritual goal of mukti, and devotion to Waheguru is more central to the Sikh faith.
- Other issues such as the extent to which they maintain the 5 ‘K’s and the purpose of gurdwaras are more central.
- Visiting the Golden Temple is an optional experience and other Sikh values and practices such as sewa are more central to Sikhism.
- Sikhs may not need to visit the Golden Temple as their own local gurdwara fulfills their needs.
- Sikhs in the UK, especially those born here, might have little connection with the culture of the Punjab.
- For Sikhs their holy book the Adi Granth, as a living guru, is more important than Amritsar.

**[15 marks] AO2**

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**Question 12 Diwan and Langar****2 3 Examine the concept and practice of sewa.**

Students may link concept with practice or use the practices to exemplify the concept.

**The concept**

- Sewa means to serve with honour and devotion.
- Selfless service for altruistic purposes on behalf of and for the betterment of the community.
- Sewa refers to 'selfless service', that is service performed without any thought of reward or personal benefit.
- Sewa in Sikhism is imperative for spiritual life. It is the highest blessing – and a means to acquiring spiritual liberation. A Sikh often prays for a chance to render sewa.
- Three aspects: service given physically (tan), service given mentally (man), ie using ones creative communicative or managerial talents to the community and also giving though sharing material resources (dhan).
- For Sikhs, this means reaching out to serve and uplift all of humanity as an expression of devotion to God.

**The practice of sewa**

- A sevadar is one who performs sewa through philanthropic, voluntary, selfless, service.
- The practice of sewa destroys egoism and cultivates humility and compassion for others. This is done by performing humble tasks at the gurdwara such as cleaning shoes, preparing and serving food in the langar and undertaking maintenance tasks.
- Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism institutionalised sewa, and based it on working towards the common good for all, so it is expressed in charity and voluntary work in the local Sikh community and the wider non-Sikh Community.
- The purpose of sewa is to create a better world based on principles of equality, kindness and peace so it can be expressed by contributing to Khalsa Aid and international projects either through financial donations or personal service.

Both concept and practice should be addressed for level 5 and above.

**[30 marks] AO1**

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2	4
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**'For Sikhs, practising sewa is more important than believing in God.'**

**How far do you agree?**

**In support**

- Sewa was the central and fundamental teaching of the gurus which gives Sikhism a distinctive emphasis.
- Sewa is the means of eliminating ego and effective in overcoming pride and selfishness which is a spiritual goal for Sikhs.
- The practice of sewa enables the Sikh to become God-centred rather than ego centred which leads to ultimate liberation.
- The teachings of the Gurus emphasised social action rather than pious devotional acts characteristic of those who simply have faith in God.
- The practice of sewa creates a harmonious, generous and united community which is of fundamental importance in Sikhism.
- Serving others is the same as serving God so the two are completely linked and equally important

**Other views**

- Faith in God is the fundamental basis of Sikhism from which all other beliefs and actions follow.
- Sewa can just be a humanitarian and charitable act, but faith in God gives it more meaning and purpose.
- The spiritual and religious practices of daily prayer, reciting God's name and reading the Guru Granth Sahib are just as important as sewa.
- There is less need for sewa in contemporary society than at the time of the Gurus.

**[15 marks] AO2**