



---

A-level  
**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**7062/2C**

Paper 2C Study of Religion and Dialogues: Hinduism

---

**Mark scheme**

June 2023

---

Version: 1.0 Final



2 3 6 A 7 0 6 2 / 2 C / M S

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 Examiner.

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

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

#### **Copyright information**

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

Copyright © 2023 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

## Methods of Marking

It is essential that, in fairness to students, all examiners use the same methods of marking. The advice given here may seem very obvious, but it is important that all examiners follow it as exactly as possible.

1. If you have any doubts about the mark to award, consult your Team Leader.
2. Refer constantly to the mark scheme throughout marking. It is extremely important that it is strictly adhered to.
3. Remember, you must **always** credit **accurate, relevant and appropriate** answers which are not given in the mark scheme.
4. Do **not** credit material that is irrelevant to the question or to the stated target, however impressive that material might be.
5. If a one-word answer is required and a list is given, take the first answer (unless this has been crossed out).
6. If you are wavering as to whether or not to award a mark, the criterion should be, 'Is the student nearer those who have given a correct answer or those who have little idea?'
7. Read the information below about using Levels of Response mark schemes.
8. Be prepared to award the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks when the answer merits full marks or to give no marks where there is nothing creditable in an answer.
9. No half marks or bonus marks are to be used under any circumstances.
10. Remember, the key to good and fair marking is **consistency**. Do **not** change the standard of your marking once you have started.

## Levels of Response Marking

In A-level Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, levels of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Levels of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Levels are tied to specific skills. Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Levels of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully, responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. This should only be necessary occasionally and where this occurs examiners must indicate, by a brief written explanation, why their assessment does not conform to the levels of response laid down in the mark scheme. Such scripts should be referred to the Lead Examiner.

## Assessment of Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives. Where students are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. The quality of written communication skills of the student will be one of the factors influencing the actual mark awarded within the level of response. In reading an extended response, the examiner will therefore consider if it is cogently and coherently written, ie decide whether the answer:

- presents relevant information in a form that suits its purposes
- is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- is suitably structured and that the style of writing is appropriate.

## LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

### Levels of Response: 10 marks A-level – AO1

- Level 5**  
**9–10**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate, relevant and fully developed in breadth and depth with very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, good knowledge and understanding of the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion is demonstrated.
  - Clear and coherent presentation of ideas with precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**  
**7–8**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate and mostly relevant with good development in breadth and depth shown through good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, alternative views and/or scholarly opinion are explained.
  - Mostly clear and coherent presentation of ideas with good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**  
**5–6**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is generally accurate and relevant with development in breadth and/or depth shown through some use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, there is some familiarity with the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Some organisation of ideas and coherence with reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**  
**3–4**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is limited, with limited development in breadth and/or depth shown through limited use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, limited reference may be made to alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Limited organisation of ideas and coherence and use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**  
**1–2**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is basic with little or no development.
  - There may be a basic awareness of alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

**Levels of Response: 15 marks A-level – AO2**

- Level 5**  
**13–15**
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Perceptive discussion of different views, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought with critical analysis.
  - There is an appropriate evaluation fully supported by the reasoning.
  - Precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**  
**10–12**
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought, with some critical analysis.
  - There is an appropriate evaluation supported by the reasoning.
  - Good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**  
**7–9**
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought.
  - An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning.
  - Reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**  
**4–6**
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Presentation of a point of view relevant to the issue with some supporting evidence and argument.
  - Limited attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**  
**1–3**
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
  - A point of view is stated, with some evidence or reason(s) in support.
  - Some attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

0 1 . 1

**Examine why there are different Hindu views about the application of ahimsa.**  
**[10 marks]**

**Target: AO1.3:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice.

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.

One reason for different applications of ahimsa is because there are different interpretations of Hindu ethics. Some Hindus suggest that their Sanatana dharma is to follow ahimsa absolutely and argue that if an action leads to harm, then it is never morally justifiable. Other Hindus use ahimsa as one of many ethical teachings and approach each situation differently. They may suggest that in some situations harm is a necessary outcome to achieve the best course of action.

Another reason is because of a Hindu's Varnashrama dharma. In some stages of a Hindu's life, there are circumstances in which the principle of ahimsa can be broken, and acts of violence and harm are permitted. For example, warriors may use violence in the conduct of war. Yet, in other stages of life, a Hindu must uphold the principle of ahimsa and avoid the use of violence and harm wherever they can, for example, in the renunciation stage.

A final reason is because there are different cultural influences on Hinduism. Hinduism is now a global religion, and as a result, Hindus now have a multitude of influences on their ethical decision making. Hindus who live in secular states outside India find it difficult to uphold ahimsa due to the influences of their new cultural contexts. For example, they may include beef in their diet which causes harm to cattle. By contrast, beef products are generally avoided in India, which makes it easier to uphold ahimsa.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that only explain different views.

0 1 . 2

**‘There is little agreement in Hinduism about the nature of Brahman.’**

**Evaluate this claim.**

**[15 marks]**

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

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.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Nirguna and Saguna Brahman: Nirguna Brahman as nothingness, without qualities, beyond comprehension and understanding; Saguna Brahman with qualities and as a personal God.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

There is little agreement about the nature of Brahman in Hinduism because Brahman is defined in different ways in Hindu sources of wisdom and authority. In the Upanishads, Brahman is defined as Nirguna, without qualities, whilst in the Bhagavad Gita, Brahman is defined as Saguna, with qualities. However, despite these differing definitions, all sources define Brahman as the Ultimate Reality and the Absolute.

There is little agreement about the nature of Brahman because Brahman is worshipped differently by different Hindus. Whilst some worship Brahman as impersonal, others worship Brahman as a personal God. Bhakti yoga traditions use murtis, which show Brahman’s multiple personal forms. Other yoga traditions worship Brahman using meditation and no external aids, for example focusing the mind on Brahman as cosmic consciousness. However, most Hindus agree that Brahman’s nature can be experienced and understood by engaging in a range of different Hindu practices, for example puja and pilgrimages.

There is little agreement about the nature of Brahman because of differing philosophical understandings of Brahman’s relationship to the atman. Whilst some philosophies are dualist, others are non-dualist. However, despite these differing philosophies, most Hindus agree that Brahman’s nature can be understood as the source of all things, and is manifested in all worldly entities.



0 2 . 1

**Examine how Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda Saraswati responded to western values.**

**[10 marks]**

**Target: AO1.1:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

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.

Ram Mohan Roy, who founded the Brahmo Samaj was heavily influenced by interaction between the British and India during the 19th century. He and his followers sought to change Hinduism in the light of his understanding of Christianity, with a view to aligning Hinduism with western Christian ideals and values.

Roy changed Hinduism and India in many ways. For example, he campaigned for the equal treatment of women and was one of the leading figures responsible for banning the practice whereby widows were expected to throw themselves on their husband's funeral pyres to be burnt along with the body.

Another response was to revitalise Hinduism in order to counter western values. Dayananda Saraswati was a leading revivalist who founded the Arya Samaj. Saraswati and his followers wanted to make Hinduism a political force to counter the values of the British Empire and Christianity by promoting the supremacy of India and Hinduism.

Saraswati challenged western Christian teachings and promoted a return to the Vedas, raising awareness of Vedic teachings and spreading Vedic knowledge across India. He began a new movement to convert, and reconvert those who had left Hinduism, and to rid India of western influences.

0 2 . 2

**‘Hinduism responds successfully to issues raised by genetic engineering.’**

**Evaluate this claim.**

**[15 marks]**

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

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.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: Different Hindu responses to ethical issues raised by science: genetic engineering.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

One issue raised by genetic engineering is the view that since the Ultimate Reality is the life giving and creative energy in the universe, altering genetic material is interfering with the Ultimate Reality’s will for that organism. A successful Hindu response is that the Ultimate Reality gave scientists the ability to do this. However, humans are able to do many things which are not good, and just because people have the ability to alter genetic material does not mean that they should. There is a danger that people may subvert the Ultimate Reality’s will through genetic engineering.

Genetic engineering may have unforeseen consequences, for example, it might cause lasting harmful changes to the human genome. Hindus may respond successfully that the risk of harm is always present in any creative process, and provided that all possible steps are taken to minimise future harm, it would be wrong not to use the abilities that the Ultimate Reality has given. However, it could be argued that causing even the smallest amount of harm is unacceptable, and since only the Ultimate Reality can know the future, humans can never be sure that they will not cause harm through genetic engineering.

Hindus may argue with some success that genetic engineering can be used to prevent or reduce human suffering. This is by eliminating some genetic diseases or by increasing food production in order to reduce world hunger. However, suffering may be part of the Ultimate Reality’s will for the world, since through suffering people develop good qualities of compassion, charity and perseverance. Reducing suffering may prevent people from developing these qualities and so delay or prevent karmic justice.

0 3 . 1

**‘Philosophical arguments for the existence of God show that Hindu beliefs about Ultimate Reality are not coherent.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and philosophy.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1.4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of Nirguna and Saguna Brahman: Nirguna Brahman as nothingness, without qualities, beyond description and understanding; Saguna Brahman with qualities and as a personal God.

#### **Philosophy**

There may be consideration of any arguments for the existence of God and criticisms of those arguments.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and philosophy.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

The Cosmological Argument, which suggests that God is a necessary first cause, offers an image of God as an uncreated impersonal force. This does cohere with Hinduism because the creative nature of the Ultimate Reality is a personal being, Brahma. However, Hindus may argue that the Cosmological Argument operates as a justification for belief in an Ultimate Reality who creates, and not as a description of the Ultimate Reality's personal qualities.

Anselm's Ontological Argument proposes a necessary being 'than which nothing greater can be conceived'. It is a deductive argument which depends on a concept of God that does not cohere strongly with Hindu beliefs about Saguna Brahman, Brahman as personal and with qualities. However, some Hindu beliefs about the nature of the Ultimate Reality have an ontological basis, for example, Nirguna Brahman and this view is wholly coherent with Anselm's argument.

Paley's Design Argument suggests that the complexity, order, and apparent purposefulness of the world show evidence of a divine designer. For many Hindus, this does not cohere with Hindu beliefs about the Ultimate Reality as omnipotent and omnibenevolent, because the world contains evil and suffering. However, the idea of karma may effectively address the problem of evil. Evil and suffering are the result of individual karma for actions in a previous life, not the will of the Ultimate Reality. Arguments from design, therefore, can be considered coherent with Hindu beliefs.

0 4 . 1

**‘Philosophy does not support belief in the authority of the Vedas.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and philosophy.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of the Vedas: concept of shruti (that which is heard); the nature and authority of the Vedas, their use in worship and their importance; the distinctive nature of the Upanishads and their importance for Hindu thought.

#### **Philosophy**

There may be consideration of any relevant philosophical discussion, including religious experience, sources of authority and religious language.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and philosophy.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

For many Hindus, the authority of the Vedas derives from its status as a shruti text. This means that it was heard from the Ultimate Reality through the religious experience of the ancient seers. Philosophers disagree about the nature of religious experiences, and have questioned whether religious experiences have any divine origin, thus undermining the authority of the Vedas. However, Hindus may respond that religious experiences are widespread and well-attested, and Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony support the view of the Vedas' authority as divine revelation.

Philosophers, for example Ayer and Flew, have questioned the meaningfulness of religious language. This undermines the authority of the Vedas because if its contents are neither verifiable nor falsifiable, they are meaningless. However, other approaches to religious language may support the view that the Vedas are meaningful and have authority. Examples include Aquinas' view that religious language is analogical, or Tillich's view that religious language is symbolic.

For many Hindus, the Vedas hold authority because of their teachings. For example, in the final portion of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the nature of life after death is discussed. Yet many philosophers reject these ideas, suggesting life after death is impossible because the body is nothing more than physical matter. However, other philosophical approaches suggest that the Vedas do hold authority because the body is more than matter; there is a dualist relationship between the body and soul. These ideas are supported by, for example, Vedic teachings about the atman and reincarnation.

0 5 . 1

**‘Natural Moral Law gives Hindus clear guidance on issues surrounding wealth.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and ethical studies.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of Hindu responses to issues surrounding wealth.

#### **Ethics**

There may be consideration of Natural Moral Law and its strengths and weaknesses.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and ethical studies.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Natural Moral Law (NML) is a mainly deontological, absolutist system of ethics which offers guidance based on five primary precepts from which secondary precepts are derived. Acts are either right or wrong. Thus NML gives clear moral guidance on all matters, including wealth. However, the weaknesses of NML, including its oversimplification of issues, and its disregard for outcomes, make it unhelpful for Hindus when dealing with issues surrounding wealth.

One issue for Hindus is the question of what they should do with the wealth that they possess. NML seems quite clear that wealth should be used to pursue the primary precepts, so for example, Hindus should use their money to worship God. However, this has led to some temples amassing enormous wealth while many people experience poverty. Such an outcome seems intuitively wrong, which suggests that the guidance is not clear.

Another issue which arises is the extent to which Hindus may use resources and animals to create wealth. NML, as expressed by Aquinas, is quite clear that humans may cause damage to the environment and use animals in order to gain wealth. However, Hindus today may feel that the principle of ahimsa rejects this aspect of NML, and instead requires Hindus to use their wealth to care for the environment and animals. They may believe that the precept concerning preservation of life should be extended to animals as well as to human beings.



0 6 . 1

**‘Bentham’s consequential ethics have no value for Hindus.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and Bentham.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

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.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of good conduct: the importance of good moral conduct in Hinduism with reference to karma [...] Dharma the concepts of Sanatana dharma (universal dharma), Varnashrama dharma (dharma for class and stage of life) [...] Ahimsa: the virtue of ahimsa.

#### **Ethics**

There may be consideration of utilitarianism including the key ideas of Bentham about moral decision making, and teleological and consequentialist moral principles.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and Bentham.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Bentham's Act Utilitarianism is a naturalistic theory which defines good as the maximisation of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Some Hindus see pain and suffering as part of karmic justice. Therefore Bentham's basic premise is wrong, and his theory has no value for Hindus. However, it could be argued that Hindus have a purpose in life to relieve suffering. This is evidenced by the principle of ahimsa and the work of the Ramakrishna Mission, so Bentham's approach, though secular in formulation, is consistent with Hindu teaching and has some value.

Bentham's ethics suggest that each situation should dictate the ethical response. By contrast, for some Hindus, ethical decision making is rooted in duty and the following of religious laws, for example, the Manusmṛti. Therefore, Bentham's ethics have no value because of their relativistic nature. However, for many Hindus, the Manusmṛti no longer determine their ethical decision making. Instead, decisions are made situationally with consideration being given to the impact of the decision on those involved. This gives Bentham's approach some value for Hindus today.

Bentham's ethics may contain nothing of value for Hindus who consider the Bhagavad Gita and gurus to be the authoritative sources of beliefs. This is because Bentham does not depend on external sources of authority to define good or evil, or to identify moral values. However, many Hindus today do not depend on sacred texts or gurus as their only source of moral guidance. They may value human beings as the Ultimate Reality's creatures, and see in Utilitarianism a way of acting out the justice and love of the Ultimate Reality in the world.