

Examiners' Report
June 2018

GCSE Religious Studies B 1RB0 1E

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Introduction

This was the first examination series for the revised GCSE 9 - 1 Level 1 and 2 qualification in Religious Studies. Whilst the new specification shares some common feature with the legacy specification, the new qualification is markedly different, both in format and the range of skills and knowledge that it has been designed to test.

a type questions require that the candidate give three pieces of information in response to the question. It is important that the candidate not simply give a list of items, but that each piece of information conveyed is presented either in its own sentence, or at least in its own clause within a sentence.

b type questions typically require that the candidate should be able to present two pieces of information; typically two reasons for something, two attitudes to something, two ways for something. To gain full marks on this question, the candidate should aim to develop each of those reasons, attitudes or ways. This can be done by adding additional relevant information, by giving an example or by citing a religious source.

c type questions are answered similarly to b questions, except that here the candidate has the potential to gain an additional development mark from the use of a source of wisdom and authority that is relevant both to the question asked and to the point that they are making. The use of a source of wisdom and authority on its own does not automatically gain the additional mark but is a means for the candidate to gain a further mark where they have already given a developed response. On the basis (outlined above for b questions) that a source of wisdom and authority can be used as a means of developing a response, candidates can use two relevant sources of wisdom and authority in a c question to access the third mark for that particular explanation, reason etc.

d type questions represent the single biggest change between the legacy specification and the new. On the one hand they present as similar to the old specification's d question (an invitation to present reasons for and against, while giving a conclusion), but on the other hand the introduction of appraisal into the mark scheme means that we are really looking for the candidate to evaluate the various merits of the arguments for and against and not simply present them.

Overall, the most successful candidates tended to understand key terminology - and whilst 'keywords' are not assessed on this paper, it became apparent that some candidates had benefited from being taught them. Successful candidates were able to develop their responses, however simply, and were able successfully to deploy a range of sources of wisdom and authority to support and develop their responses. In d answers, the most successful candidates considered the various merits of the arguments they were presenting by, for example, appraising the relative authority of different sacred texts or the comparative validity of secular or scientific arguments in an integrated manner. In future examination series, this latter capacity would seem likely to be key to accessing the highest grades.

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and/or comments, for a selection of questions. The exemplification will come mainly from questions which show, to best effect, the highest levels of performance.

Question 1 (a)

The question calls for three beliefs about Shiva. A number of candidates gave responses about shivaites that did not answer the questions set.

Shiva is the destroyer and recreator.

Shiva's consort is Parvati.

Shiva is part of the trimurti.



The candidate is awarded 3 marks.

The candidate writes three sentences outlining three ways.

...is the destroyer and recreator (1)
...consort is Parvati (1)
...is part of the Trimurti (1)



It is important to avoid writing a simple list in response to **a** questions. In the examination, it might be helpful to ask yourself whether there is a verb with each piece of information that you give. You can use the same verb three times or three different verbs.

Question 1 (b)

The question asked for two reasons why the tri-guna are important for Hindus. Many candidates unfortunately gave responses about the trimurti.

- One reason why the tri-guna are important for Hindus is because they can be connected to personality traits. Therefore, the balance of the three gunas in someone's personality can explain their actions.
- A second reason why the tri-guna are important is because they make up prakriti - visible matter - which makes up everything. This means they are present in all aspects of the everyday world.



The candidate gives two reasons (...because they can be connected to personality traits...because they make up prakriti). The first reason is developed by the idea that the balance of gunas in a person's personality can explain their actions. The second is developed by the additional information that it 'means that they are present in all aspects of the everyday world.'

The candidate is awarded 4 marks.



Your answer for a b question does not need to be lengthy. In the case of this question, give a reason and then give the examiner some additional information *about that same reason*. It is important not just to give as much information as you know, but to make sure that the additional information you give also relates to the reason you have given.

Question 1 (c)

The question called for two reasons why artha is important for Hindus today. Many candidates confused *artha* with *arti* and consequently gained no marks for this question.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why artha is important for Hindus today.

Ahimsa
Good Karma

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

Firstly, artha is important today as it allows a Hindu to obtain good karma. In the Upanishad, it says 'He becomes pure by deeds, bad by deeds'. This shows that by helping people out by giving wealth will allow you to obtain good karma, allowing you to be liberated from the cycle of samsara; a Hindu's ultimate aim.

Secondly, artha is important as it coincides with the teaching of ahimsa. If people in other countries are suffering, a Hindu should give wealth in order to stop their suffering as ultimately, Brahman resides in everything.



c) items provide marks for five points, 2 for the reasons, 2 for the development of each reason and one for an accurate source that relates to the reason given.

The candidate is awarded 5 marks.

The first reason is the gaining of good karma. A relevant, attributed quote is then added before the first point is developed by the reference to the breaking of the cycle of samsara.

The second reason is that it enables Hindus to help poor people in other countries, developed by the relationship between this and ahimsa and the connection with Brahman.

The candidate is awarded 5 marks.



In effect, these questions are answered just like the **b** questions, it is just that you can gain an extra development mark by giving a *relevant* source of wisdom and authority.

The source of wisdom and authority does not have to be quoted perfectly, but must be recognisable to the examiner.

You don't need to tell the examiner exactly where the quote comes from, it is enough to say that it is from the Manusmriti.

Question 1 (d)

Please see 4d for an example of high level performance on **d** questions.

Whilst there were many good responses to this question, a not insignificant number of candidates did not understand the question's intention and responded as though the question were about whether people ought to suffer, or even how others should respond in the face of that suffering, and subsequently did not get as many marks as they could have done since at least part of their response was thereby irrelevant.

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Hindus believe in samsara - the cycle of ~~the~~ birth, life, death and rebirth. This cycle is affected by karma (~~doing good~~ (actions having direct consequences). Many Hindus would agree with this statement as they believe suffering is due to sin in a past life, they ~~repay~~ repay this sin through suffering. * In the Bhagavad Gita it is told that man will suffer 'according to his actions'

Many Hindus also believe that when they suffer they should ^{chosen} ask ~~of~~ their ~~chosen~~ god to forgive them. Many Hindus seeking freedom from illness and suffering pray to Durga. ^{mercy because} ~~she~~ she is the goddess of ^{health} ~~health~~. This want to be forgiven shows some Hindus agree with the statement and believe suffering is their own fault.

Atheists would disagree with this statement as they believe unless someone has physically ~~harm~~ self harmed their suffering would not be their fault as it is ^{uncontrollable} ~~unintentional~~. This is due to their lack of belief in a higher power or ~~in~~ in a karma system.

Many Hindus would argue that if someone lives by the
the path of Karma Yoga they can ~~control~~ ^{control} ~~control~~ ^{control}
~~change~~ if they are to suffer or not by performing good
deed. This is shown in Hindu scripture that speak of the
ashrama. They would strongly agree with this statement.

In conclusion, I believe ~~that~~ ^{Hindu} ~~people~~ ^{Hindus} can make conscious
effort to build up good Karma, ~~and therefore control if~~
~~they suffer~~ - however this ~~may not always work~~ ^{suffering may be unavoidable}
due to ~~Karma's~~ ^{Karma's} consequences. (Total for Question 1 = 27 marks)



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Examiner Comments

The candidate is awarded 9 marks.

Question 2 (a)

Answers to this question were, for the most part, tightly focused on Hindu beliefs about the family, however there were a good many responses that simply gave explanations of different family types. Many posited the nuclear family as the archetypal Hindu family, perhaps on the grounds that for them it represents the traditional family construct of one where the parents have not been divorced and remarried - such responses typically failed to engage with the traditional importance of the extended family.

Question 2 (b)

Many candidates scored at least two marks on this question and there were many quite sophisticated answers.

Some Hindus accept homosexuality because there is nothing against it in the Rig Veda and there are statues of homosexual sex.

Other Hindus don't accept homosexuality because they wouldn't be able to have children which is a dharma in the householder stage, which helps them to achieve moksha.



This example gives a reasonable indication of just how succinct these answers can be whilst still gaining full marks (4).

Question 2 (c)

The candidate is awarded 5 marks.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that "where women are honoured, there the Gods are pleased". Because of this, Hindus might believe that women should be treated as important in the family. Therefore, some Hindus might interpret this to mean that Hindu men should perform the "less favoured" tasks. As well, the scriptures teach that all men and women are equal. Because of this, many Hindus may believe that the men and women should have equal duties, and therefore divide up their responsibilities between themselves.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate offers two distinct teachings, one on the importance of women in the family and one on the equality of men and women in the family. The source of wisdom and authority that is counted as development of the first point comes before the point that it develops - and examiners will credit this.

Question 2 (d)

The best candidates were able to articulate Hindu responses both for and against the statement given. Less confident candidates tended to default to responses that would have been equally at home in a general, secular discussion of reasons for and against divorce. Candidates are reminded that, where the question explicitly calls for reference to Hindu teachings and does not call for non-religious reasons, only those non-religious reasons that might legitimately be held by Hindus will be credited. Where reference is explicitly made to a religion other than Hinduism, the point cannot be credited.

The candidate was awarded 6 marks.

(d) "Hindus should not get divorced."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Hindu teachings
- refer to different Hindu points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

For	Against
• Breaks up families	• Lesser of two evils
• Can be harmful	• Equality in partnership

(12)

There are many Hindus who could agree with this statement due to the fact that divorce splits up not only the couple in question, but often, the majority of the extended family.

As Hindus believe in having big families, they might oppose divorce as it ^{could} protect the relations of other family members.

Similarly, Hindus might also oppose divorce because the Laws of Manu do.

If they are traditional Hindus, they may take old texts very seriously, and therefore have archaic views on some subjects.

As well, Hindus might not agree with divorce because it can harm the children of the people involved. Therefore, they might try and keep together in order to help and preserve the mental health of their children.

On the other hand, a lot of Christians believe that divorce is the lesser of two evils, and

that it's better to leave a bad situation rather than stay and be harmed. Therefore, they may advocate for divorce if remaining married will be damaging for one or more parties.

Also, Hindus think that within a relationship, both sides should be equal in decisions and privileges. Because of this, they might agree with divorce if a partner is being controlling or not allowing equality to happen. Therefore, some Hindus might use situation ethics in order to determine whether or not divorce is suitable.

(Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)

Finally, lots of Hindus believe the laws of man to be outdated, and therefore, irrelevant.

The stronger argument is the one which opposes the statement as there are many situations in which divorce is a less damaging, safer option than remaining married.



In the attached example you will see examples of integrated appraisal (such as the reference to "archaic views" and the Laws of Manu being outdated) that would be suggestive of a Level 3 response. However, at the end of the page the candidate refers to Christians and, even if it is likely that it is just a slip of the pen, the paragraph that follows can no longer be taken into account. Likewise, the paragraph that follows is, at least in part, contentious. These factors taken into account, the candidate was awarded the highest Level 2 mark.



Pay close attention to the bullet points in **d** questions, if non-religious views are asked for and not given, you cannot gain full marks. If non-religious views are *not* asked for and are given, they will be ignored by the examiner.

Question 3 (a)

Note that this question required the candidate to outline three *ways* Hindus care for the environment. Candidates who explained *why* Hindus care for the environment did not gain marks.

They are Vegetarians
They help Charities
They grow plants and trees.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate gives three short responses and gains two marks. Had the second response been "They help environmental charities" they would have gained full marks.

The candidate was awarded 2 marks.

Question 3 (b)

The vast majority of candidates seemed not to be entirely sure of what jnana yoga is and consequently tended only to gain marks for those responses that could equally well have applied to other forms of yoga. This was one of several questions where candidates in search of something to say defaulted to 'because their guru told them' - which, on its own, does not adequately answer the question unless we are told why the guru would have told them.

The candidate was awarded 4 marks.

• Hindus may practice Jnana yoga as it is a way of realising the world as maya an illusion and it makes them realise that the only thing that's real is Brahman. It is also a way of understanding Hinduism more through studying the scriptures and holy texts.



This is an excellent example of how one need not say much and still get full marks. The candidate gives two reasons (it is a way of realising the world as maya *and* it is a way of understanding Hinduism more) and develops both of those reasons through either exemplification or providing additional information.

Question 3 (c)

One reason why pilgrimage to sacred rivers is important is because the River Ganges, which is a sacred river, is believed to purify you of any bad Karma / sins. It is also said to gain ^{you} good Karma if you go there which helps Hindus achieve Moksha.

Another reason why it's important is because Brahman is within everything so therefore Brahman is within the sacred rivers and they are divine. This is shown in the Bhagavad Gita when 'I am the ocean... I am the wind... I am the Himalayas' This shows that Brahman is within everything.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate is awarded 5 marks.

...the Ganges washes away bad karma developed by helping to achieve Moksha
...Brahman is within the sacred rivers developed by they are divine. The relevant quote from the Bhagavad Gita results in the 5th mark being awarded.

Question 3 (d)

The candidate is awarded 9 marks.

Hindus have differing views about festivals and their importance.

Most Hindus would regard festivals as being very important. In festivals, a Hindu can pay respect to Brahman and his many aspects ~~to~~ through song, dance and storytelling. This helps Hindus to not only remember stories of the gods but also to use them to reflect upon their lives and take inspiration from them, using them to learn. Celebrating a festival is counted as part of puja, and showing respect to Brahman through celebration would gain a Hindu good karma, and bring them closer to moksha to be united with Brahman - a Hindu's main goal. Festivals are also seen as important because they are a fun, colourful way for Hindus to celebrate with and introduce the faith to their children - a good example of this would be Holi, due to the fun nature of the coloured powders but also how the original story is centered around children (Indika and Pahlad).

However, festivals may not be seen as being as important and relevant in today's society. Some might consider their principles and ideas outdated, as they were thought of a long time ago. Also, festivals are not the most important thing a Hindu can do - focusing on other things to gain good karma such as puja, giving to charity and doing good deeds could be considered more valuable to help bring a Hindu

closer to moksha, finally, some Hindus believe that the world is Maya - the world and everything in it is an illusion! Therefore, it is pointless to focus on festivals when they are, in fact, all part of the illusion and hold no real value. A Hindu who believes this would find it more valuable to develop a personal relationship with Brahman and overcome maya to reach moksha.

In conclusion, although festivals are important to many Hindus and they do hold value, it is not a necessity to celebrate them - for many there are more important priorities and there are other ways to reach moksha besides celebrating festivals.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate gives a competent for and against response, with a justified conclusion, that would not have been out of place on the legacy specification. There are elements of appraisal in the response, though these are not made as explicit as in some other candidates' responses.

Question 4 (a)

This question was answered successfully by almost all candidates who attempted it. The rare exceptions to this were the candidates who misread the question as being one about the different types of euthanasia and answered accordingly.

The candidate is awarded 3 marks.

Firstly, ^{some} Hindus don't allow euthanasia as it goes ⁽³⁾ against the sanctity of life. Secondly, some Hindus will allow euthanasia as it takes away prolonged suffering and coincides with ahimsa. Thirdly, some Hindus wouldn't allow it as 'you must be in full consciousness of Brahman at death' - Bhagavad Gita 7.25.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate gives three relevant Hindu beliefs. In part **c** questions, it is important that any chapter and verse references are accurate - in this **a** question, it is enough for the point made within the quote to be appropriate.

Question 4 (b)

The candidate is awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** ways Hindus respond to global warming.

(4)

Some Hindus respond to global warming by taking preventative measures such as trying to reduce their carbon footprint as they believe Brahman is in everything.

Hindus might also respond to global warming by joining activist groups which campaign for a more eco-friendly existence because as they think it will help to get good Karma.



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This candidate's response is an excellent example of how full marks can be gained quite simply. The candidate gives two things that Hindus do in response to global warming (reducing their carbon footprint and joining activist groups) and develops both of these by giving the motivation for the action (believing that Brahman is in everything and thinking that it will help them to get good Karma).

Question 4 (c)

Whilst many candidates were able to indicate and explain Hindu beliefs which support belief in life after death, there were many who gave non-religious reasons for believing in life after death and these could not be credited since they failed to answer the question as set.

The candidate is awarded 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** Hindu beliefs which support the existence of a life after death.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

① BG 2-22
Soul
② Karma
(5)

Firstly, the Hindu belief of the soul being eternal would support life after death. In Bhagavad Gita 2.22, it says: "the embodied soul does cast off its worn out body and enters another new". This shows that ~~this~~ death isn't the end as the purusha (spirit/soul) will continually be reborn until moksha is achieved.

Secondly, the Hindu belief of karma would support life after death. A person accumulates good and bad karma in a lifetime and must be rewarded or punished for it after death. This can be done through ^{being reborn in} a higher or lower ranking in the caste system or in a stage of life. Ultimately, karma and its consequences would support life after death.



The candidate gives two developed answers.

The first is the idea of the eternal soul, developed by the additional information that the soul will be reborn until moksha is achieved.

The second is the concept of karma developed by the illustration of what this might mean for the individual in terms of progression through the caste system.

The fifth mark is awarded for the relevant quote from the Bhagavad Gita.

Question 4 (d)

This question lent itself naturally to candidates demonstrating the kind of appraisal that will allow them to access the higher grades in the examination. Candidates who know that some Hindus regard certain sacred texts as more important than others, or who know that some Hindus regard certain texts as being of particular relevance to a certain context in the past (and consequently of lesser relevance in modern times) are likely to find it easier to demonstrate higher levels of performance in these questions.

Some agree with this statement because evolution is only a theory presented by scientists so there is no ~~pro~~ ^{direct} proof of evolution since we haven't been alive long enough to record and see the effects/process of it. Also, scientific theories are disproven and replaced by new theories constantly so the theory of evolution is just our current theory and understanding. Also, in Hinduism, they believe that ~~we are~~ ~~not~~ we are all part of Brahman and were created ~~purposefully~~ purposefully instead of slowly changing from God's creations.

However, some disagree with the statement because evolution has been a theory for a long time so is now widely accepted. It can also be seen in bacteria which go through processes quicker than prokaryotes so we can see how they evolve over a much shorter ~~time~~ time than humans which gives some proof of the theory. Furthermore, evolution can be seen in Hinduism through Vishnu's avatars evolving from ~~less~~ less evolved animals to mammals then to humans (Rama, Krishna and Kalki) which suggests that we could be evolved in the same way as Vishnu - the divine. Also, samsara shows the movement of atmans from plants to animals to humans with good karma which supports the idea of evolution as we're changing to become better and more evolved with good karma.

In conclusion, although there is no ~~any~~ definitive proof, I disagree with the statement because it is accepted by religions and scientists which suggests a wide understanding and ~~an~~ acceptance of evolution and it can be seen in religious (Vishnu's avatars) and scientific (bacteria rapidly reproducing and ~~and~~ evolving) views.



The candidate demonstrates Level 4 performance on this question by presenting arguments for and against, whilst systematically considering their worth at each step. Note that the candidate has been able to score 10 out of the available 12 marks, without needing to go beyond the available lines. The candidate did not need to give exhaustive examples, but impressed by what they did with the examples they gave.

The candidate is awarded 10 marks.



Read the question carefully, and make sure that you are answering the question that was set.

Check the bullet points in the question. If the question does not call for non-religious viewpoints, anything you have to say about atheists or humanists is irrelevant and will not be credited.

Even if you are short of time, make sure that you include a justified conclusion in your answer. A justified conclusion is likely to contain the word *because* somewhere in it.

For each argument you give, consider how strong it is relative to the other arguments in your essay plan.

Try not to 'bolt on' your appraisal, but weave it through your answer: a concluding paragraph that says 'in my opinion the stronger argument is...' is not, on its own, evidence of appraisal.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Any technical vocabulary used in the question paper will also be in the Specification. Check your understanding of this vocabulary, especially where there are similar looking words with different meanings (arti and artha, karma and kama).
- Allow yourself enough time to both read and understand the questions. Make sure that you explain things that require explaining and that you are in fact answering the question that has been set.
- The Specification gives some key texts for each section of the exam. Take time to learn some of these. When you use the quote in your exam, make sure that it is 'doing something' in your answer and not just dropped in as an afterthought. The quote will gain marks only if it is developing one of the points you've made.
- Read the bullet points in part **d** questions carefully and make sure that you cover them - if you are asked to provide non-religious reasons, make sure you do. If non-religious reasons are not asked for, you can save yourself time in the exam by not giving them. Remember that reasons from another religion are not non-religious and will not be considered as such.
- **d** questions require you to say how effective or 'strong' the elements of the argument you are giving are - but do not limit yourself to saying that x is stronger than y, tell the examiner why x is stronger than y. Is it supported by a more authoritative text for example?

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