



Pearson

Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Religious Studies B (3RB0)
Paper 2E: Hinduism

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2018

Publications Code 3RB0_2E_1806_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2018

Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies
Short course: 3RB0 2E – Hinduism

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.

Overview:

- **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.

3RBO_2E_Q1a

The question asked was:

"Outline **three** Hindu beliefs about murtis."

Whilst the vast majority of candidates answered this question successfully, there were a minority who answered this question as though it were about the trimurti. In some cases, this was done in such a way that it was still possible for at least part of the answer to be credited. Candidates are reminded of the importance of reading questions carefully.

3RBO_2E_Q1b

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** reasons why kama is important for Hindus."

Few candidates were successful in answering this question, since the majority read the word *karma* instead of *kama*. Whilst keywords are no longer tested as they once were in the legacy specification, it would seem to be a worthwhile exercise for candidates to spend at least some time making sure that they are familiar with the subject specific vocabulary in the specification.

3RBO_2E_Q1c

The question asked was:

"Explain **two** ways the characteristics of Brahman are shown in Hindu scriptures.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority." A significant proportion of candidates focused on nirguna and saguna, although other approaches were taken, perhaps reflecting the influence of the other religion studied. Many candidates found it difficult to use a source of wisdom and authority in their response and they are advised, when revising, not only to concentrate on the different religious beliefs, but also on the sources that give rise to them.

3RBO_2E_Q1d

The question asked was:

“Moksha is the most important aim in life.’

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Hindu teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.”

The vast majority of candidates were able to secure at least some marks on this question. Candidates are however reminded that, where a question does not call for a non-religious response, any non-religious response given cannot be credited since the question is always to be assumed to be about Hinduism.

3RBO_2E_Q2a

The question asked was:

“Outline **three** features of danda.”

The majority of candidates were able to give multiple features of danda – those who did not secure full marks had often offered ‘danda means punishment’ – which, of course, is not actually a feature of danda.

3RBO_2E_Q2b

The question asked was:

“Explain **two** Hindu responses to non-religious attitudes about justice.”

This question presented particular challenge to the candidates, as it was really necessary to identify a non-religious attitude to punishment to which there might be a legitimate Hindu response. As this style of question becomes more familiar to candidates, it is to be hoped that a greater number will be successful in formulating an answer based on what they have learned. The advice offered about allowing time not only to read the question, but to understand it too, would have served candidates well with this question.

3RBO_2E_Q2c

The question asked was:

“Explain **two** Hindu teachings about the nature of crime.

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

A significant proportion of candidates found it difficult to access this particular question. Candidates preparing for the examination are advised always to refer back to the Specification and not just to revision resources and textbooks as it is the Specification that acts as the primary source for the examination.

3RBO_2E_Q2d

The question asked was:

“Sometimes the use of torture is the best option.”

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Hindu teachings
- refer to relevant ethical arguments
- reach a justified conclusion.”

Most candidates were able to offer a response to this question that enabled them to score at least some marks. The invitation to consider Hindu teachings and relevant ethical arguments could have presented candidates with a real opportunity to demonstrate the kind of appraisal that the new examination is looking for in **d** questions. Exploring this with next year’s cohort may prove to be a worthwhile exercise. Whilst this report does not contain examples, the report for 1RBO 1B contains an example of a Level 4 response to question 4d, and this may be of use and interest to those taking this 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 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?