

HINDUISM

Paper 2055/01

Paper 1

General Observation

There has been improvement in the overall standard. Some showed excellent presentation of materials, language, study and application of prescribed topics. Examiners also noted the confidence with which some candidates expressed themselves. Many displayed a clear ability to make comparisons and to recognize similarities and differences, supporting their arguments with confidence and coherence. On the other hand, large numbers only gave a description, ignoring each question's instruction to discuss or compare or explain.

Section A

This section requires study of prescribed texts and candidates are introduced to the philosophical and religious aspects of some key areas of Hinduism. Some scripts were of a very high standard. Some, however, were unable to explain even the most basic teachings from prescribed texts. The *Bhagavata Gita* is an area which most candidates seem to avoid, although it is one of the most popular texts.

Question 1

Many explained and argued intelligently. Some demonstrated an excellent range and depth of studied texts.

Question 2

Few attempted this question, and most of these were unable to go beyond the story and setting of the text to examine why Krishna's teaching is important.

Question 3

Many simply paraphrased whole texts without showing any understanding of the studied materials. They described key elements rather than discuss and argue. There were, however, some answers of a very high standard, analysing the essential views of Tulsidas and the importance of his teachings.

Section B

In this section, candidates study important elements associated with devotion and worship current in popular Hinduism.

Question 4

Answers to this question were generally of a reasonable standard, but few showed any developed thought. Answers were very often either too general or lacking in developed ideas.

Question 5

This question attracted many answers and details suggested that candidates liked this part of the syllabus. Some referred to the local traditions – for which they were given credit.

Question 6

While some were able to give relevant details on the avatara chosen, many relied too much on the narratives rather than exploring in depth the importance of the avatara they had selected.

Section C

In this section, candidates study ethical views and explore traditional teachings in the modern setting. This gives great opportunities to discuss topics in a very objective way.

Question 7

The first part of the question was generally well answered and some scripts were outstanding, but the second part was not explained well. Good candidates were able to make the difference between 'varna' and

'jati'. Examiners also noted how good candidates were successful in showing the reasons why the modern reformers had to tackle this issue.

Question 8

Instead of concentrating on the reasons why moksha is important, many candidates lost too much time in giving too many details on the four purusharthas. Weak candidates relied too much on their learned notes, rather than arguing about the reasons for moksha to be considered as the most important issue for any Hindu.

Question 9

Examiners noted that answers to this were too descriptive and lacking in substance and depth. Most ignored the question set and offered no discussion.

Section D

Candidates study here the on-going development that has characterised Hinduism since the Vedic age. They study some of the most dominant features of Hinduism in a new setting. The dynamism of leading personalities is also introduced here.

Question 10

Most answers to the first part were satisfactory, but few showed ability to discuss the second part with any competency. Candidates did not seem to have been well trained to make a comparison.

Question 11

For the most part, candidates reproduced learned notes without addressing themselves to the question and without any discussion. Most scripts displayed no understanding of the educational reforms of Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

Question 12

Questions on Gandhi are almost always poorly answered, even though he is such a popular figure of modern Hinduism. Those who chose to examine the question gave very general views on Gandhi's teachings. Their answers lacked any kind of development. Teachers need to devote special time to teaching Gandhi so that students understand and appreciate him.