



Cambridge International AS & A Level

HINDUISM

9487/02

Paper 2 Development of Hinduism

May/June 2023

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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PUBLISHED**Generic Marking Principles**

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

PUBLISHED**GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:**

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Generic marking grids

These level descriptors address Assessment Objectives (AOs) 1 and 2, and should be used in conjunction with the indicative content for each question in the mark scheme.

Assessment Objectives**AO1: Knowledge and understanding**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified topics and texts

AO2: Analysis and evaluation

Analyse and evaluate the specified topics and texts

Generic marking principles

- 1 Examiners should start at the lowest descriptor, if the answer meets all the criteria they should then move to the next level and so on. The Examiner should repeat this process until there is a match between the overall answer and the descriptor. Examiners should use a best-fit approach when deciding upon the level, it is possible for a different level to be chosen for each AO.
- 2 If the Examiner identifies all aspects of the level descriptor within the answer then the highest mark for the level should be given. Examiners should also make reference to the indicative content when deciding on the mark within a level to ensure that there is sufficient relevant content evident within the answer for the level and mark. Examiners should be prepared to credit material in answers which is not contained in the indicative content.
- 3 The Examiner may need to make a judgement within a level or between two or more level statements. Once a 'best-fit' level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:
 - Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, you should award the highest mark.
 - Where the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, you should award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range.
 - Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, you should award the lowest mark.

5 mark questions

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks
Level 3	Explains significance of knowledge • Uses a range of detailed, accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates understanding through a well-developed response. • Addresses the question. • Some engagement with the wider context, if relevant.	5
Level 2	Range of knowledge partly addressing the question • Uses a range of knowledge with some accuracy. • Demonstrates understanding through use of appropriate knowledge, may be less well developed. • Partially addresses the question. • Uneven engagement with the wider context, if relevant.	3–4
Level 1	Limited answer to question with limited knowledge/understanding • Identifies a limited range of knowledge which may not be accurate. • Demonstrates basic understanding. • Response is relevant to the topic, but does not directly address the question. • Little reference to the wider context, if relevant.	1–2
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

10 mark questions

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks
Level 4	Explorative with detailed significant knowledge • Uses a range of detailed and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates understanding through well-developed connected discussion. • Addresses all aspects of the question. • Good understanding of the wider context if relevant.	9–10
Level 3	Explains significance of knowledge • Uses a range of mostly accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates understanding through developed discussion. • Addresses most aspects of the question. • Some engagement with the wider context, if relevant.	6–8
Level 2	Range of knowledge partly addressing the question • Uses a range of knowledge with some accuracy. • Demonstrates understanding through use of appropriate knowledge, may be less well developed. • Partially addresses the question. • Uneven engagement with the wider context, if relevant.	3–5
Level 1	Limited answer to question with limited knowledge/understanding • Identifies a limited range of knowledge some of which may not be accurate. • Demonstrates basic understanding. • Response is relevant to the topic, but does not directly address the question. • Little reference to the wider context, if relevant.	1–2
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

15 mark questions

Level	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	Assesses alternative conclusions with analysis of points view - Analyses the importance and/or strength of different points of view. - Uses accurate evidence to support a coherent and well-structured discussion. - Addresses all aspects of the question. - Coherent conclusion which evaluates knowledge and points of view and assesses alternative conclusions.	13–15
Level 4	Coherent conclusion supported by evidenced points of view - Discusses different points of view in some detail. - Uses accurate evidence to support a well-structured discussion. - Addresses most aspects of the question. - Coherent conclusion to the question which evaluates knowledge and points of view.	10–12
Level 3	Clear conclusion with different points of view - Recognises different points of view and discusses at least one in some detail. - Uses accurate evidence to support discussion. - Partially addresses the question. - Clear conclusion to the question which is linked to a range of knowledge and points of view.	7–9
Level 2	Attempts conclusion with a supported point of view - Discusses one point of view - Uses supporting evidence for one or more relevant point. The support may not be wholly relevant or accurate. - Partially addresses the question in a limited way. - Attempts a conclusion to the question which is linked to knowledge and/or a point of view.	4–6
Level 1	Basic conclusion with a point of view - States a point of view. - Little or no supporting evidence. - Response is relevant to the topic, but does not directly address the question. - Attempts a basic conclusion.	1–3
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
1(a)	Outline the relationship of the Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 5 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Although they are often treated/used as separate texts the Bhagavad Gita is a section of the Mahabharata, set on the eve of the war that is a central theme of the larger text. While the Mahabharata is primarily in the form of an historical story (itihasa) the Bhagavad Gita consists of a dialogue between two characters within the larger story. For many Hindus the Bhagavad Gita is a shruti text, the words of Krishna himself, unlike the rest of the Mahabharata, which is smriti.	5	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
1(b)	Explain how the main characters of the Ramayana might influence Hindus in their everyday lives. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 10 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: The Ramayana is the story of Rama's exile to the forest and the subsequent kidnap and rescue of his wife, Sita, by the demon Ravana. The story is generally considered to be about dharma and it is explored in a variety of different contexts, including dharma as it relates to both family relationships and social responsibilities. Many of the characters have to negotiate conflicting dharma at various times and this allows the complexities of real life to be considered in relation to the ideals of dharma. As well as Rama, who is considered to be the Maryada Purushottam (perfect man) many of the characters in the Ramayana are presented as ideals in relation to their specific social or familial roles. Rama, as the perfect man, and Sita, as the perfect wife, have the ideal marital relationship. Rama's relationship with his brother, and particularly Lakshmana, epitomise brotherly love. Other relationships and choices made by the characters demonstrate different aspects of dharma, such as Rama's acceptance of exile in obedience to his father and Bharata accepting the burdens of kingship. The meeting with Shabri and Rama's interactions with her also demonstrate the significance of bhakti as a form of worship.	10	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
1(b)	However, simply recognising the ideals being presented by the story is not, in itself, likely to impact on the everyday lives of Hindus. There must be some attempt to use those examples in decisions and practices. Given the historical context of the story and the social status of the characters very few Hindus are likely to meet opportunities to directly reproduce the actions of any of the characters, but by understanding the principles their lives demonstrate in more abstract terms it would be possible to apply them in the contemporary world. The stories illustrate the consequences of different moral choices and so support informed decision making, in order to apply dharmic principles. It is also worth noting that a case can be made for the fallibility of many characters when faced with challenges, for example Lakshmana's violent response to Shurpankha's advances could be seen as a failure of his warrior's duty not to harm women. These kinds of events may make the characters feel more useful as examples for ordinary Hindus, offering reassurance that perfection is not necessarily required as long as one strives to live a dharmic life. Different branches of Hinduism are likely to have different relationships with the Epics; for Vaishnavas the Ramayana brings to life the attributes and qualities of some of their deities while other Hindus may experience the story differently. The stories are also teaching tools for future generations, they teach Hindus about adharma, the avoidance of bad karma, and the role and importance of avatars. All of this helps Hindus towards the ultimate goal of moksha.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
1(c)	Evaluate the claim that only shruti texts are relevant to understanding Hinduism. AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation. Response will be marked according to the 15 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Hindu texts are generally categorised as either shruti or smriti. Shruti means ‘heard’ or ‘revealed’ and these texts are not considered to have human authors. Smriti means ‘remembered’ and these are regarded as having been mediated by human authors. This could create the prima facie assumption that shruti texts are not only of generally higher status but will offer the core philosophies, ethics and instructions of Hinduism, with smriti being commentary or elaboration on these. This is true to an extent, with astika (Orthodox) Hinduism being commonly defined in relation to the stance taken regarding the authority of the Vedas. The issue of what is meant by understanding is also relevant, for scholars and priests this may be intellectual understanding rather than spiritual. As a dharmic religion, for ordinary Hindus, spiritual understanding is mainly attained through practice. It can also be argued that both practice and intellectual comprehension are necessary for complete understanding; this speaks to the importance of both shruti and smriti for understanding Hinduism. The Vedas are the texts which are most widely agreed to be shruti. There is a greater variety of opinion around other texts, with the Bhagavad Gita being a particularly prominent example. This is significant for the question because a person who regards the Bhagavad Gita as shruti is also likely to consider it to be the core religious text of Hinduism, making it essential for understanding Hinduism.	15	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
1(c)	The same question of which texts are categorised as shruti complicates the issue further when the influence of a text's contents on contemporary Hinduism are taken into account. Much of what is considered to be mainstream Hinduism today, including practices such as murti puja and concepts like varnashramadharma is not found in the Vedas, or even in texts with contested status. Varnashramadharma is most explicitly set out in the Manusmriti, for example, which are generally accepted as smriti (as their name implies). The origins of murti puja are perhaps more complex with references to the practice being found in the Puranas, Agamas and various Dharma Shastras. The extent of the link between practical activities and written material and the importance of custom and tradition is always open to discussion, particularly with something like murti puja where many practitioners may not have read the texts which relate to their practice. It might also be pointed out that unquestionably smriti texts, such as the Epics, which have known human authors, are the best known and arguably most influential Hindu texts in the contemporary world. This would seem to support the view that it is important to go beyond shruti texts to understand what is important to modern Hinduism. However, this is complicated not only by the aforementioned contested status of parts of these texts but also by the common Hindu perspective that sages and rishis are, or can be, avatars of deity – for example Shankara is often considered to be an avatar of Shiva. This would arguably render their writings shruti by definition. Modern gurus may work with this same idea, classifying texts which they find helpful in their teachings as unequivocally Vedic when that classification may be contested by others.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(a)	Outline the relationship between astika traditions and the Vedas. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 5 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Astika (Orthodox) is the term used to describe those Hindu schools of philosophy (darshanas) which consider the Vedas to be shruti ('heard' or revealed) and so to be authoritative. In this view other texts gain their meaning and authority by exploring and developing the ideas found in the Vedas, but they do not replace or supersede the earlier texts. The term astika is generally used in conjunction with the opposite, nastika (heterodox) which rejects Vedic authority.	5	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(b)	Explain why the Upanishads might be considered more important than other Vedic writings. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 10 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: The name Upanishad literally means sitting next to a seer or teacher and these texts are later in date than the original Vedas. There are 108 Upanishads expanding on the themes of the divine Brahman, the atman (soul or self), samsara and karma. The practice of Hinduism based on the Upanishads offers an alternative to the emphasis on sacrifice in the Vedas and replaces the primacy of the priesthood. The text also offers a more complex philosophical foundation for Hinduism. The Vedas consist of a collection of many different texts. Although there are said to be four Vedas – Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Artharva Veda – this is a somewhat misleading count as each of these four is further subdivided into four distinct sections or categories of writing: Samhitas (prayers and mantras), Aranyakas (meditations on ritual and sacrifice), Brahmanas (commentaries and interpretations of sacrifice and ritual) and Upanishads (philosophical writings). These different texts were not all written at the same time, or even close together; the total period of authorship of texts considered Vedic probably spans hundreds of years. With such a large range of texts within the canon it would be surprising if one section were not considered more important, or more relevant to contemporary Hinduism than the others.	10	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(b)	The Upanishads are sometimes called the Vedanta, or end of the Vedas. They share this name with several influential schools of Hindu philosophy, and the foundations on which those philosophies are built is Upanishadic texts. The influence of these philosophies on the development of contemporary forms of Hinduism suggests that the content of the Upanishads are better known than that of Vedic texts more generally. It might also be noted that the Upanishads as a category can be further sub-divided into a closed canon of major Upanishads – the earliest written – and the category of minor Upanishads, which could be considered open-ended. The Major Upanishads are more likely to be considered of primary importance, collectively, than the minor. Although specific minor texts might have great importance to particular traditions they are not generally considered to be shruti and their actual relationship to the Vedic texts they are named for is debatable.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(c)	‘It is possible to be a good Hindu without reading any sacred texts.’ Discuss. AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation. Response will be marked according to the 15 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Sacred texts serve a variety of purposes within a religious tradition, including recording history, establishing doctrine and giving ethical guidance. Hindu texts can undoubtedly be used in all these ways. The uses of text which are considered important will vary depending on how the concept of a ‘good Hindu’ is understood. The statement is concerned with whether engagement with texts in any way at all is an essential component of Hinduism. Texts can be read, listened to, or memorised and recited. For some paths practice and personal spiritual development will be what is necessary, for others it will be learning through direct engagement with the text. It might be suggested that the truth of the statement depends on what purpose sacred writing is considered to have, together with how important that is for practicing the religion. If, for example, it is considered primarily a historical record of the development of the religion then the statement might be supported, since knowing history is not a religious duty. By contrast, if there are considered to be core beliefs which must be held and understood, and which are set out in scripture, then the statement is likely to be rejected.	15	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. All relevant discussion will be credited. Candidates can argue for or against the claim as long as their discussion is focused on the question.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(c)	It might be argued that the very multiplicity of Hindu texts is a support for the importance of the written word within the religion, with the different types and styles of writing ensuring accessibility for all Hindus. However, the great range and variety of texts, and differing views as to the status and authority of individual examples, could also be used to undermine the view of texts themselves as important. It is arguably more important to act in accordance with what a scripture says than it is to have read the text for oneself. Hinduism recognises many different paths to liberation and only one of these, jnana marga, explicitly deals with knowledge in the sense that textual study might be said to include. It is also the case that the ashrama system places a high value on studying, with the Brahmacharya stage involving study with a guru that is also likely to include study of at least some sacred texts. This transmission is about more than simply reading the text; the disciple engages with it on a deeper level of understanding, guided by their guru. Some texts, such as the Tantras, can only be truly understood in this way and Hindus might consider self-study of these texts to be dangerous. Other margas could be said to incorporate, or at least leave space for, reading sacred texts – a devotee of a particular deity might consider it an act of devotion to read texts associated with that deity, for example – but it is more likely that Hindus on these paths will gain merit in other ways.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
2(c)	For many, perhaps most, modern Hindus murti puja is the central act of worship. This is a practice that does not require the presence of scriptures or any deep philosophical or metaphysical level of knowledge. Vedic rituals have their origins within scriptures, and priests have to know them and be able to recite the relevant parts of them but the obligation upon ordinary Hindus is more to do with practically facilitating the performance of the sacrifice for example by supporting the priests, or providing the oblation. It might also be noted that reading a text is not the only way to engage with its contents; Hinduism has a long tradition of memorising and reciting texts, often during ritual, which creates a different kind of understanding to simply reading words on a page.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
3(a)	Summarise what is unique about Smartism. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 5 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Smartism is a tradition that rejects the idea of sectarianism in religion. It is focused on a pantheon of five equal deities, including those at the centre of other major theistic traditions. Smartas venerate Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Shakti and Ganesha as equal forms of saguna Brahman and their worship is seen as a path towards realising the ultimate truth of nirguna Brahman. Smarta theology is based on the Advaita Vedanta and the bhakti marga thus serves as a path towards jnana marga. The practice of panchayatana puja is primarily associated with Smartism, and probably originated within this tradition even where it is practised more widely. In this form of puja all five of the deities are represented in a quincunx (one central and the others surrounding) with the worshipper's deity of choice at the centre.	5	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
3(b)	Explain the difference between monism and monotheism. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 10 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Monotheism is most simply defined as the belief in a single God but this is then complicated by questions about what is meant by the term ‘God’. The more specific definition of it as referring to a creator God with the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence is probably widely agreed with and certainly it is this definition which characterises the Abrahamic religions as monotheist. It is generally presumed to include a lack of belief in any other deity besides this one, although some forms of henotheism or panentheism might be placed within a broad category of monotheism. Monism is a philosophical position that regards a given concept – such as a person, reality or substance – to be single or unitary. The rejection of mind-body dualism in contemporary philosophy is therefore a monist position. Monist philosophy might postulate that there is only substance or essence of which all things are a part or, in a somewhat weaker form. It might postulate a unity of origin wherein all things emerged from the same source but that source is distinct from them. There are therefore clear overlaps between the two positions, depending on how God is defined and the concept or object which is the focus of monistic consideration.	10	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
3(b)	In a specifically Hindu context philosophies are likely to be categorised as monotheist or monist in terms of the understanding they have of Brahman. The Vedanta philosophies encompass the monist view that everything is Brahman (Advaita) and the monotheist view of Brahman as wholly distinct from the world and souls within it (Dvaita). There is also a third position which might arguably be placed in either category, in which Brahman and individual souls are made from the same substance but remain separate (Vishistadvaita).		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
3(c)	Assess the claim that Smartism is a form of polytheism. AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation. Response will be marked according to the 15 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: In the context of Hinduism in general absolute statements about the nature of Hindu belief in deity is problematic. Not only do different darshanas understand the divine in different ways but the terms used to describe types of belief are themselves open to degrees of interpretation and overlap. While it might seem easier to relate a specific, named tradition within Hinduism to one or other of these terms the likelihood is that there will always be room for some discussion. Polytheism is usually defined as belief in many gods but there can be diversity with regard to perceived relationship between different deities and levels of power or influence. Different branches of Hinduism can be understood as a result of these different understandings. Given that Smartism is concerned with the worship of five distinct deities – Vishnu, Surya, Shiva, Shakti and Ganesha – it might seem on the face of it to be obviously polytheistic. However, the relationship between saguna and nirguna Brahman and the association of Smartism with the Advaita philosophy of Shankara might also lead to the opposite conclusion.	15	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. All relevant discussion will be credited. Candidates can argue for or against the claim as long as their discussion is focused on the question.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
3(c)	Because of this philosophical association and the complex history of Hinduism in relation to colonialism and monotheistic traditions from other cultures, there may also be considered to be a negative weight or judgement on the idea of polytheism. Certainly, it is a term that many Hindus reject, even while recognising that there are many distinct deities visible to an observer of Hindu religious practices. An individual Smarta might therefore choose to describe their own practice as monotheistic, if they felt the need to describe or classify it at all, on the basis that they are focused on a single chosen ishtadevata from among the five central deities. Some scholars would describe this as henotheism – the primary devotion to one deity without denying or rejecting the existence of others – rather than polytheism on the basis that polytheism would require an equal devotion to all the deities. But the presence of all five deities during panchayatana puja could be used to undermine that position. Other Smartas, and scholars, would categorise their practice as monotheistic because they are really concerned with an ultimate single reality which they believe underlies the apparent multiplicity of saguna Brahman.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
4(a)	Outline the meaning of the phrase ‘sat, chit, ananda’. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 5 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: The phrase consists of three Sanskrit terms that translate as sat: being, truth or reality chit; consciousness ananda: pure happiness, joy or bliss. Each of these terms has meaning on its own but when collected together in as a phrase they mean something more than the individual definitions and it is sometimes written as a single compound word to reflect this (‘satchitananda’). This concept of ‘being, consciousness, bliss’ is a description of the experience of ultimate, unchanging reality that is Brahman. It is also a means of identifying the fundamental attributes of Brahman, because the whole or true nature of Brahman is beyond the grasp of human intellect.	5	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
4(b)	Explain how murti puja might help Hindus relate to Brahman. AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding. Response will be marked according to the 10 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: A murti is a form or image of a deity. When properly installed in a shrine or temple the murti is considered to be the living presence of the deity, it is the focus of worship and devotees receive darshan from it. Puja describes any form of ritual worship; murti puja is worship with a murti as the recipient of offerings. It is the murti's presence which blesses the offerings and which creates prasad by bestowing their grace onto food which is shared by the worshippers. The relationship between Brahman and these personal forms of deity is not universally agreed upon. For many worshippers the deity represented in the murti is the supreme godhead or ultimate reality and no additional concept is needed to describe that. Meditating on the murti is a means for worshippers to experience sat, chit, ananda. This helps worshippers see beyond the physical realm. Philosophically however many scholars connect murtis with saguna Brahman (Brahman with attributes). According to the Bhagavad Gita a focus on a manifest divinity with form is much more accessible for the human mind and murti puja therefore makes connection with the divine more accessible to ordinary people.	10	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. Other relevant material will be credited.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
4(b)	For some Hindus saguna Brahman is the ultimate reality, while for others ultimate truth is nirguna Brahman and the realisation that atman is not distinct from this. Murti puja can be helpful for Hindus holding either belief, with the experience of saguna Brahman being either a step along the way to true realisation of nirguna Brahman or a means of establishing a real, two-way relationship with another being.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
4(c)	‘In Hinduism the divine is neither masculine nor feminine.’ Discuss. AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation. Response will be marked according to the 15 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Because there are so many different ways to understand and represent the divine within Hinduism the most likely response to this statement is to argue that it can be represented as either, both or neither. However, the truth which underlies those representations may well complicate the argument. The different deities represented by murti are usually shown as either masculine or feminine in nature, with some like the Ardhanarishvara being a composite of the two. This is not a genderless representation but rather a physical division of a single figure into a male right-hand side and a female left-hand side. This seems to oppose the statement by presenting divinity as both, depending on the deity being worshipped. It further implies, particularly through the Ardhanarishvara, the important connection between male deities and their consorts. For many Hindus the female consort is the personification of the male deity's active power. For others the female deity has power to do things male deities are incapable of, for example, Durga was created to kill Mahisha. An extension of the idea that male and female power is divided is the understanding of creation as a dynamic between shiva and shakti, the masculine and feminine principles, in which both are equally necessary. In this understanding the divine would be both, rather than one or the other.	15	Candidates do not need to refer to all of this material to gain marks. All relevant discussion will be credited. Candidates can argue for or against the claim as long as their discussion is focused on the question.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Notes
4(c)	It is also possible to argue that divinity is neither. Masculine and feminine as applied to the principles of shiva and shakti could be argued not to derive from any essential essence intrinsic in them but rather from the ways the cultural context which gave rise to the philosophy that describes them viewed men and women. If it is intrinsic to shiva to be conscious a society which considers men to be more cognitively developed than women and looking to use that division to help understand a binary division of ultimate forces might choose to label that a masculine principle. That does not mean that masculinity in the sense humans possess it is an inherent aspect of the real nature of that principle. Alternatively, if the perspective taken on divinity is that the ultimate reality is nirguna Brahman (without attributes) then any form of gender is irrelevant to that reality. However, many Hindus are devoted to a specific Ishvara and the characteristics associated with that deity may be part of what forms the bond between deity and devotee. In these instances the worshipper may well consider the divine to be truly masculine or feminine since that contributes to their experience of that deity. The existence of Shaktism as a major theistic Hindu tradition suggests that it is important to be able to understand the divine in relation to ideas of the feminine. The emotional qualities of a personal relationship can determine whether emphasis on masculine or feminine qualities is chosen. For example, Krishna can be worshipped as an infant or an adult allowing for a broad range of emotional connections.		