



Cambridge International AS & A Level

HINDUISM

9487/03

Paper 3 Written Paper

October/November 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.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

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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.

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.

A Level Marking grid

Level	AO1 Knowledge and Understanding	Marks
Level 4	Explorative with detailed significant knowledge • Uses a range of detailed and relevant knowledge. • Confident understanding demonstrated through making connections between ideas and development of discussion. • Addresses all aspects of the question. • Exploration of the wider context if relevant.	10–12
Level 3	Explains significance of knowledge • Uses a range of accurate and relevant knowledge. • Good understanding demonstrated through explanation of significance of knowledge used in developing the discussion. • Addresses most aspects of the question. • Good understanding of the wider context, if relevant.	7–9
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.	4–6
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. • Limited reference to the wider context, if relevant	1–3
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

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. - Coherent conclusion which evaluates knowledge and points of view and assesses alternative conclusions.	16–18
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. - Coherent conclusion which evaluates knowledge and points of view	12–15
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. - Clear conclusion to the question which is linked to a range of knowledge and points of view.	8–11
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. - Attempts a conclusion to the question which is linked to knowledge and/or a point of view.	4–7
Level 1	Basic conclusion with a point of view - States a point of view. - Little or no supporting evidence. - Attempts a basic conclusion.	1–3
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	Compare the ways M K Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda understood Hinduism as a world religion. AO1 – Knowledge and understanding. Responses will be marked according to the 12 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: The term Hindu is generally understood to originate as a description for the people living next to the Sindhu (Indus) river and the religious practices of these people therefore came to be known as Hinduism. The concept of ‘world religions’ is an academic one, used as a framework for studying religious activities and behaviours as distinct from non-religious ones. It does this by regarding religion as existing in discrete units or traditions which are the same wherever they are found in the world. This approach was originally intended to enable the broadening of this kind of study beyond Christianity, but it is heavily criticised in the contemporary academic world for retaining a highly Christianised foundational understanding of what constitutes ‘a religion’. This academic approach is the world religions paradigm to which both Gandhi and Vivekananda were responding. Fitting a tradition into the world religions paradigm can be used to help it be taken seriously by those outside that tradition, thus potentially giving a voice to silenced communities. This was particularly important to Vivekananda. However, for both Gandhi and Vivekananda presenting Hinduism to the non-Hindu world outside India was an important consideration and the world religions paradigm was influential on both their understandings of how to do this. Neither questioned the idea that Hinduism was and is a single religion, incorporating belief, ritual, texts, and all other things deemed key aspects of the concept of religion. Gandhi was born into a Hindu family which was, in the broadest sense Vaishnava. His mother was a Pranami Vaishnava, a form of the religion which includes the Qur’an among its sacred texts, and which has strong Jain influences in its ethical attitudes. This seems likely to have influenced Gandhi’s understanding of Hinduism as a religion. He believed in Sanatana (eternal) dharma in the form of certain central principles – satya (truth) prominent among them – but rejected dogmatic approaches to religion, saying that anything that contradicts the fundamental moral principles could not truly be part of Hinduism. Gandhi used key Hindu texts, including the Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita, to explain his understanding of Hinduism as a religion. He believed that such texts were part of the roots of Hinduism, but also that Hinduism is as subject to growth and change as everything else and can exist in many forms. Similarly, he is often described as a pluralist, accepting that truths can be found within many different religious traditions. In his view every religion potentially contains a unique quality or element which could be of benefit to everyone. He regarded Hinduism as both tolerant and inclusive and also intrinsically connected with ethical living in both the personal and the social context.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	Vivekananda was influenced by the Brahmo Samaj and also concepts such as universalism. His understanding of Hinduism was presented in 1893 to the World Parliament of Religions. In this 'Paper on Hinduism' he presented Hinduism as a tolerant and pluralist religion, arguing that the apparent diversity of religions are all expressions of a shared fundamental truth: namely that God is the eternal and unchanging power behind the universe. The different concepts of God that are found in different religions and in the varied deities of Hinduism are reflections of different human needs within different cultural contexts. All gods are aspects of the single unchanging God, and each religion casts its own light upon that truth. He also described living ethically and with compassion for others as a universal spiritual goal. He believed Hinduism could make an important contribution to Western understandings of religion. Both Gandhi and Vivekananda were influenced by Advaita Vedanta in their understandings of God and the pluralistic nature of religion. Gandhi's emphasis on the pursuit of truth is not seen so strongly in Vivekananda's work; he argued instead for avoiding jealousy and self-centredness and trying to work together for the good of everyone. Vivekananda was also consciously concerned with presenting Hinduism in a way that would be recognisable to Western audiences; this was not the case for Gandhi. However, Gandhi's analysis of what seeking truth actually means leads to similar practical results. Vivekananda emphasised faith, in both God and oneself, as essential, while Gandhi was more ambiguous about belief in God.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	Evaluate the view that the Shramana traditions are entirely separate from Hinduism in the contemporary world. AO2 – Analysis and evaluation. Responses will be marked according to the 18 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: ‘Shramana’ means ‘striver’ and it can be a general term for anyone practising renunciation or asceticism. It originated as a name for an ascetic movement that developed within Hinduism alongside Vedic practices, and these contributed in turn to the development of yogic practices. The traditions generally considered to be described by the phrase ‘Shramana traditions’ are Buddhism and Jainism. Both these traditions have historical connections with Hinduism and all share concepts, albeit sometimes with distinct interpretations. Jainism is traditionally understood as developing through a succession of 24 Tirthankaras (literally ‘ford-makers’; spiritual teachers) ending with Mahavira, who taught that vows of ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truth), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (chastity) and aparigraha (non-attachment) are essential for liberation. Jainism is often described as atheist because Jain teachings reject the concept of all powerful deity. All these ideas can be found within Hindu darshanas. Buddhism originates in the teachings of Gautama Buddha, a moral person who achieved enlightenment. His religious background was Hindu and his quest for the truth began in Hindu practices, but he found they did not lead him to enlightenment. The core teachings of the Four Noble Truths encompass both the central philosophy of the inevitability of suffering and a path to achieve liberation from that. Again, these ideas can also be found in Hindu darshanas, although no single school incorporates all of them. It should also be noted that some lists of Hindu darshanas include both Buddhism and Jainism as nastika schools of Hinduism, arguing that at least some thinkers consider them strands of the same religion. Historical connections and a similar philosophical grounding are hard to deny. However, this does not mean the traditions should be regarded as parts of the same religion today. When practices are taken into account the traditions look very different, with Jainism being associated with extremes of asceticism, including rejecting possessions to the point of going sky-clad (digambara), while Buddhism is concerned with the Middle Way between extremes of asceticism and materialism. Again though, the ascetic forms found in Jainism can be found within other Hindu traditions, although perhaps less commonly. And, in practical terms, many Hindus live according to the principle that a good life is found between the extremes of asceticism and indulgence, which is the underlying principle that creates the concept of the Middle Way. In terms of how people identify their own practice however, all three traditions are likely to be considered as separate religions.	18

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	Some sources define Hinduism in terms of accepting the Vedas as authoritative, presenting this as a unifying element across the diverse traditions found within contemporary Hinduism. By this measure the Shramana traditions cannot be considered Hindu as both reject the authority of the Vedas. It is not a conclusive argument however as the category of nastika (heterodox) darshanas is used to describe Hindu traditions that do not accept the Vedas. The fact is that the Shramana traditions share a geographical place of origin with Hinduism, as well as both history and philosophical concepts. This could be used to support the view that the traditions are nastika forms of Hinduism, but it can also be looked at from the opposite perspective by identifying concepts which are clearly part of contemporary Hinduism but that either originated entirely within the Shramana traditions or were influenced by them; modern understandings of both moksha and samsara could be considered examples of this. It might also be argued that the issue only matters from the perspective of the world religions paradigm and that this perspective necessarily distorts complex realities. People who identify themselves with one particular tradition may nonetheless have an overlap in their practices or values with one or more of the others.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	Explain how Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga leads to liberation. AO1 – Knowledge and understanding. Responses will be marked according to the 12 mark level descriptors (AO1). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Patanjali's Yoga consists of eight limbs of practice, which gives it the name 'Ashtanga'. The eight limbs together provide a path through which an individual can achieve a cessation of mental modifications (citta vritti nirodha) in which state they are then able to perceive and understand their true nature. It is this understanding that leads to liberation. The eight limbs progress from the outer areas of the self, the body, through to the innermost parts of the mind. They begin with yamas (disciplines) which are the moral principles an individual should live by. Each of them, practised properly, helps an individual towards kaivalya, at the simplest level by helping them to achieve detachment. Ahimsa (non-violence) for example helps remove ideas of enmity and conflict, bringing the individual closer to harmony with everything around them. The yamas are things to be avoided. The second limb, niyamas (restraints), consists of things the individual should do. Each of these helps the individual reach a state where the craving for external joys and pleasures ceases. The third limb, asana (postures) and the fourth, pranayama (breathing) are concerned with the physical body. They ensure that it is healthy, comfortable and under the conscious control of the individual. This means that physical needs can't intrude on the desired mental state. The remaining four limbs are more concerned with internal processes. Pratyahara (withdrawal) is the process of drawing the mind away from sensory experiences. It does not mean pretending they don't exist, but rather removing the power of the sensory world to control body or mind so that the attention can be properly focused on self-knowledge and the inner world. This is a transitional state between the four outer limbs and the true journey inwards. Dharana (concentration) which follows it describes focusing the mind on a single point without drifting from it, this might be a mantra or a part of the body or even a concept or idea; the point is less the object itself than the single-minded concentration upon it. Dhyana (contemplation) takes this a step further into reflection or meditation upon that object, observing it and being aware of it in all its forms and possibilities without judgement or presumption. The ultimate state of samadhi (absorption) is when awareness that there is a person meditating disappears and only the object of that meditation is present. Patanjali distinguishes between samadhi with an object to assist (samrajnata) and samadhi without (asamprajnata); the former can lead to bliss but it is the latter which allows for the discernment of purusha and so liberation. Each of the limbs contributes to remove or untangle a different aspect of what keeps the purusha unaware of its true nature. When all eight limbs are practised together maya is overcome and the soul realises itself.	12

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	‘There is no need to understand Samkhya philosophy to practise Ashtanga Yoga.’ Discuss. AO2 – Analysis and evaluation. Responses will be marked according to the 18 mark level descriptors (AO2). Candidates might refer to some of the following: Samkhya is a Hindu philosophical tradition that explains the existence of the material world in terms of the relationship between two eternal elements, prakriti and purusha. Prakriti is matter, which is both changeable and unconscious. This matter, constituted by the three gunas, is what makes everything in the universe. The other element is purusha, conscious but unchanging. It is the presence of purusha which alters the equilibrium of prakriti and so causes creation. Purusha becomes entranced with prakriti, entangled in it and is confused into identifying prakriti as itself. This is what traps the self within samsara. Liberation is the realisation that the body and its thoughts and emotions are prakriti, but they are not the true self. Ashtanga Yoga is a process of seeking this liberation through citta vritti nirodha (cessation of mental modifications). As a practical process Ashtanga Yoga could perhaps be pursued without an understanding of Samkhya philosophy in depth. An individual would probably have to understand the concept of liberation in order to want to follow the path to seek it, but it could be argued that the practical steps on that path do not require knowledge of more than the steps themselves. However, the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, which sets out the method of Ashtanga Yoga, is associated with Samkhya philosophy and it was almost certainly written with knowledge of the cosmology that Samkhya proposes. Samkhya however is non-theistic; neither purusha nor prakriti constitute a God figure as most people understand this. Yoga by contrast incorporates Ishvara, a personal form of deity although the precise nature of the divine intended by Patanjali is subject to varied interpretations. The place of divinity in yoga could be said to obviate the need to understand the philosophy, with the individual yogi seeking the divine and/or liberation through that. The two systems are commonly linked together in academic thinking, with Samkhya regarded as the theory and yoga as the practical result. This does not necessarily reveal anything about the practical uses of either Samkhya or Ashtanga Yoga in Hindu lives. Yoga is a far broader concept than simply what is outlined in Patanjali’s Sutras but, as with any complex multi-faceted concept there is likely to be overlap between different interpretations of it. Ashtanga Yoga (more properly called Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga) is also widely practiced as a form of exercise outside of any religious context in the contemporary world; it does not share the eight limbs or the ultimate goal of Patanjali’s yoga, but it does demonstrate the possibility of a form of yoga practice distinct from a foundation in the philosophical and cultural underpinnings of that practice.	18

Question	Answer	Marks
3	‘The Vedanta philosophies are basically the same.’ Discuss. AO1 – Knowledge and understanding AO2 – Analysis and evaluation Responses will be marked according to the level descriptors. Candidates might refer to some of the following: The Vedanta philosophies are those traditions that focus on interpretation of the Upanishads. It is this which gives the name ‘Vedanta’ meaning ‘end of the Vedas’. The best known schools of Vedanta are Advaita (non-dualism), Vishistadvaita (qualified non-dualism) and Dvaita (dualism). In broad terms Vedanta philosophies explore the nature of the self (atman) and the ways it is connected with the material world and/or Brahman; in the three philosophies named above this exploration hinges on how many real or absolute substances there are and whether differences between them are real or simply perceived. Through understanding these things a means of attaining moksha can be identified. A first glance might suggest that the three schools have nothing in common; the names themselves imply a fundamental difference with one rejecting dualism, one advocating it and one seeking a middle ground between the two. It is certainly the case that the three philosophies are based on very different interpretations of the Upanishads and these result in very different ways of understanding Brahman and atman. In the Advaita Vedanta the basic principle is that the atman is not distinct from Brahman and that only Brahman is ultimately real. Therefore, achieving moksha requires realisation of this truth. By contrast, Dvaita Vedanta holds that both the world and Brahman are absolutely real and separate to one another. Brahman can meaningfully be translated as God in this context, being both personal and the creator of the world and the atmans within it. In this philosophy moksha consists of being eternally with Brahman, although distinct from it. Vishistadvaita occupies a place between these two, viewing atman and the material world as ultimately real, part of and dependent upon Brahman but not identical with it. The individual selves emanate from Brahman, created from its substance in the same way as a spider generates the web; they are made from the same substance and are separate, but yet equally real. These different ways of understanding the nature of reality result in different approaches to achieving liberation from samsara. Within Advaita Vedanta the path is wisdom, achieved through studying scriptures and learning from a guru. This is likely to be combined with meditation so that the experience of self as non-different to Brahman can be sought, but there is little place for worship in forms such as murti puja. In both Dvaita and Vishistadvaita there is a place for devotion to God. Dvaita Vedanta, in particular, couples this with living a dharmic life in order to attain God’s grace, as this is the means which liberates the self from samsara. There is also a determinism within Dvaita in the form of the belief that some atmans will not be liberated regardless of how they live.	1

Question	Answer	Marks
3	While any practical similarities are most apparent between Dvaita and Vishistadvaita the possibility of philosophical similarity shouldn't be ruled out. Both these two philosophies regard Brahman as personal and saguna and their understanding of the state of moksha is also similar. What differs is the philosophical reasoning that leads to those positions; hence it could be argued that Vishistadvaita's creator, Ramanuja, was actively seeking to bring two apparent opposites together. Philosophically it has much in common with the Advaita, beginning from a starting point of a single reality and grappling with the Upanishadic idea of 'Tat Tvam Asi' (That Thou Art). On a broader view than the details of the philosophies and the practical paths arising from them is a similar belief that it is important to engage with questions about the nature of reality and to do so in the light of what is written in scriptures. Their origins lie not only in the same texts but in a mindset that wants to understand and explain what is revealed in those texts.	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	‘Ishvara is an important concept in all Hindu philosophies.’ Discuss. AO1 – Knowledge and understanding AO2 – Analysis and evaluation Responses will be marked according to the level descriptors. Candidates might refer to some of the following: ‘Ishvara’ literally means ‘Lord’ and it is a term commonly used to refer to the personal forms of god worshipped in the context of bhakti. It is probably more commonly used within Shaivite and Shakta traditions, while the equivalent term ‘Bhagavan’ is associated with Vaishnavism. This is the divine in a personal form, able to enter into relationships with devotees. This form of divinity is understood as the supreme being by members of the relevant tradition, and Ishvara is therefore in control of the liberation of devotees. While this might be used to argue that Ishvara is only important within a particular theistic setting the conceptual understanding of the divine named by these disparate terms is broadly the same. Ishvara is undoubtedly of practical significance in the various forms bhakti can take and therefore it is important to many Hindus. Whether it has the same importance across different schools of philosophical thought is more debatable. There are many different schools of Hindu philosophy. Those which are specified for study are Advaita, Vishistadvaita and Dvaita Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga. Of these Advaita both recognises and critiques the concept of Ishvara while Samkhya does not really reference it at all and is often described as atheist in nature for this reason. This suggests the concept was irrelevant to Samkhya philosophers, not even needing to be rejected. In Advaita philosophy the perspective on Ishvara is complicated by the different levels of knowledge proposed. In the empirical sense Ishvara is accepted in Advaita as the cause of the universe. However, the ultimate nature of Ishvara is not the personal, saguna form of deity which might be presumed to be indicated by that term. The wisdom that is necessary for liberation, according to Advaita, involves recognising that the true nature of the self is not distinct from Brahman and the true nature of Ishvara is therefore not distinct from the self. In short, everything is Brahman. In practice this means that from the perspective of Advaita, bhakti worship is indicative of a lower-level understanding of the truth. The analysis given to the concept of Ishvara in Advaita philosophy gives it some importance, even if ultimately it is rejected as the individual achieves greater understanding.	30

Question	Answer	Marks
	In contrast to Advaita both Vishistadvaita and Dvaita regard Ishvara as the creator and the source of liberation. Similarly, Patanjali's Yoga builds on the cosmological model established by Samkhya, but also explicitly includes Ishvara; by focussing on Ishvara the individual ego can be surrendered and the detachment from samsara achieved. Whether or not a concept is important philosophically speaking is not answered solely by whether it is accepted as true or not. The rejection of its truth and/or relevance might be an important element of the philosophy and/or of practices arising from it. It might also be noted that the term can be interpreted in different ways, reflective of different understandings of divinity and/or the soul, and this is likely to impact on how important a concept it is perceived to be.	