



Cambridge International AS & A Level

HINDUISM

9487/01

Paper 1 Concepts in Hinduism

October/November 2025

1 hour 30 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
 - Section A: answer **one** question.
 - Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.



Section A

Answer **EITHER** Question 1 **OR** Question 2.

EITHER

- 1 (a) 'One person being considered superior to any other is a sin against god and man. Thus caste, in so far as it indicates a distinction of status, is an evil. I do, however, believe in varna which is based on hereditary occupations. The varnas are four because they mark four universal occupations: imparting knowledge, defending the defenceless, carrying on agriculture and commerce, and performing service through physical labour. When Hindus were lazy, they abused the varna system, creating many castes, with unnecessary and harmful restrictions such as on sharing food. The law of varna has nothing to do with these restrictions. When varna is properly practised it is the best way to ensure happiness.'

Summarise what the passage says about the concept of varna. [5]

(b) Explain the importance of 'caste' for understanding svadharma. [10]

(c) Assess the claim that varna and 'caste' are entirely different concepts. [15]

[Total: 30]

OR

- 2 (a) Outline **one** example of a situation where different dharmic obligations appear to contradict each other. [5]

(b) Explain how a Hindu might try to achieve a better understanding of their own svadharma. [10]

(c) 'It is easy to know what the dharmic choice is in any situation.' Discuss. [15]

[Total: 30]

Section B

Answer **EITHER** Question 3 **OR** Question 4.

EITHER

- 3 (a) 'For Hindus the very fact of our existence in these particular bodies proves the existence of karma and the law of rebirth. Why else would we be different from each other? Why else would we be on earth? We come into the world at birth with a load of karma produced by our actions in previous lives. Actions inexorably produce effects; good deeds result in good karma, which produces good fortune; evil deeds result in bad karma, which sooner or later results in punishment. To leave the cycle of births and deaths the chain that binds actions to karma must be cut through.'

Summarise what the passage says about the role of karma in samsara. [5]

(b) Explain why nishkama karma is considered a path to moksha. [10]

(c) Assess the claim that karma is an important part of all possible paths to moksha. [15]

[Total: 30]

OR

4 (a) Outline the differences between the bhakti marga and the karma marga. [5]

(b) Explain the significance of agami karma for a Hindu seeking liberation. [10]

(c) 'Attachment to the sensory world is the only thing that keeps people trapped in samsara.' Discuss. [15]

[Total: 30]

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