



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies A

Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Study of Second
Religion

Option 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 2025

Question Paper Log Number P78609A

Publications Code 1RA0_2E_2506_MS

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2025

General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Paper 2: Study of Second Religion 2E – Hinduism Mark Scheme

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • All matter is made up of three gunas (1) • Some people associate the tri-guna with the primary colours (1) • Tamas is one of the gunas (1) • The balance of a person's gunas can explain their behaviour (1) • The gunas reflect the stages of creation, maintenance and destruction (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
1(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason. Up to a maximum of four. • Samsara is important for Hindus because it explains the nature of life (1) and the fact that life is cyclical (1) • Belief in samsara is important to some Hindus because it helps to explain the structure of society (1); that some people have particular roles because of how they lived their previous lives (1) • Samsara is important to some Hindus because it gives a sense of hope (1); that, however difficult this life may be, a future life may be better (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/ development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each belief. Award further marks for each development of the belief up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - For society to run smoothly, it was often thought that a person should only do the duty of a person of that status (1) so, for example, it was thought to be wrong that a Brahmin should fight (1). 'It is far better to perform one's natural prescribed duty, though tinged with faults, than to perform another's prescribed duty, though perfectly.' (Bhagavad Gita 3.35) (1) - Varnashrama dharma helps Hindus to understand the different duties they have to perform (1) and how those duties change in the course of their life (1). 'The duties for human beings are described in the Vedas, and the Vedas are manifested by God Himself.' (Bhagavad Gita 3.15) (1) - Varnashrama dharma helps to explain the duties of people with different roles within society (1) for example, the things that are proper to Brahmins (1). 'The duties of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras—are distributed according to their qualities, in accordance with their gunas (and not by birth).' (Bhagavad Gita 18.41) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated belief/development - Development that does not relate both to the belief and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
1(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • For Hindus who believe in Nirguna Brahman, Brahman has no form or characteristics and so must only be spirit, or else he would have form • Brahman is the Supreme Being and anything other than a spiritual existence would limit him, as he would then be bound by things like time and space • Most Hindus believe that the atman is one with Brahman; if the atman is the spiritual part of a person's existence, then it would make sense for Brahman to be pure spirit. Arguments against the statement: • The fact that Hindus use murtis for worship, and the reverence with which they treat them, all means that there must be a physical aspect to Brahman's existence • The trimurti, and the various avatars of the different divinities, all mean that Brahman has chosen to exist in a physical sense and not just a spiritual one • Even the passages in Hindu scripture that are most mysterious about the nature of Brahman, such as 'who verily knows', still imply some existence that is not purely spiritual and transcendent, but flawed and more 'human'. Accept any other valid response.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

SPaG

Marks		Descriptors
0 marks	No marks awarded	• The candidate writes nothing • The candidate's response does not relate to the question. • The candidate's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.
1 marks	Threshold performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Candidates use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.
2 marks	Intermediate performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.
3 marks	High performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • Hindus care for the environment because Brahman is in all (1) • Some places in the natural world are associated with divinities (1) • Many Hindus think that some rivers are divine (1) • Some animals are associated with particular gods (1) • All living things have an atman (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a belief. Award a second mark for development of the belief. Up to a maximum of four. • Raksha Bandhan has its origins in the Mahabharata (1) and is a story about Krishna (1) • Krishna had a close bond with a lady called Draupadi (1) and when he cut his finger she bandaged it with part of her sari (1) • For some Hindus, Raksha Bandhan's origins are about the sense of belonging to family (1), which is why some married women return to their childhood home to tie a rakhi on their brother (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief/ development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each purpose. Award further marks for each development of the purpose up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Meditation allows Hindus to still the mind (1) and form a closer connection with the Divine (1) 'Indeed, they feel drawn toward God, even against their will...' (Bhagavad Gita 6.44) (1) • Many Hindus believe that meditation allows a person to form a deeper connection with the Divine (1) and that meditation is a superior form of worship to some other acts (1). '...Such seekers naturally rise above the ritualistic principles of the scriptures.' (Bhagavad Gita 6.44) (1) • Some Hindus believe that meditating allows them to throw off their attachment to worldly things (1) and get closer to attaining moksha (1). 'With the accumulated merits of many past births, when these yogis engage in sincere endeavours to make further progress, they become purified from material desires and attain perfection in this life itself.' (Bhagavad Gita 6.45) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated purpose/development • Development that does not relate both to the purpose and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the purpose given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2(d)	AO2 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • Pilgrimage is an essential part of Hinduism, which has many important pilgrimage sites across India. Many Hindus believe they gain good karma by visiting these sites • There are spiritual benefits for pilgrims, for example pilgrimage to the river Ganges is important because Hindus believe the river has flowed from heaven, as a source of purification for human beings • Many Hindus undertake pilgrimages when they enter the vanaprastha ashrama and regard them as an essential part of their ashrama dharma. Arguments against the statement: • There is no Hindu teaching that says that pilgrimage is essential to Hindu practice, it is seen as a possible source of merit rather than a duty • Many Hindus believe their most important religious duties are the ashrama, where they live their lives according to the responsibilities of each stage they have reached • Some people are unable to go on pilgrimage for practical or health reasons, and this inability involves no loss of merit according to Hindu teaching. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different points of view within the religious tradition (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.