



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies B

Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Religion, Peace and
Conflict

Option 2E – Hinduism

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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: Religion and Ethics 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. • Antaryami means that Hindus are always close to the Divine (1) • Hindus believe that God is in the heart of everyone (1) • Antaryami is the 'inner controller' (1) • Antaryami is like a guru inside a person (1) • Antaryami means that the Divine is always able to help Hindus (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(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 4 marks. • Ahimsa means not causing harm (1) and applies to all living things (1) • Ahimsa shows reverence for all living things (1) and affects how Hindus interact with the world around them (1) • Ahimsa is the highest virtue (1) as taught in the Mahabharata (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
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each teaching. Award further marks for each development of the teaching up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - Hindus teach that life is cyclical (1), and that one life follows on from another (1). Brihadaranyaka Upanishad tells of the Self casting off one body for another (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4.4.3) (1) - Hindus teach that a life should be lived well (1) in order to bring a person closer to moksha (1). 'And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, so does this Self, after having thrown off this body.' (Brihadarnyaka Upanishad 4.4.4) (1) - Hindus teach that life cannot truly be destroyed (1) only the vessel in which it is carried is mortal (1). 'Just as the embodied soul continuously passes from childhood to youth to old age, similarly, at the time of death, the soul passes into another body.' (Bhagavad Gita 2.13) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated teaching/ development - Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the teaching 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: • The qualities of the Kali Yuga are pre-determined and people should expect there to be more suffering and evil because of it – it is something to be accepted and lived with • Some Hindus would argue that detachment from the things of this world is all the more important in the Kali Yuga. People should focus on their inner peace and connection to the Self • Some Hindus would simply accept the teaching of the Mahabharata that, because lives are shorter in the Kali Yuga, people will gain little knowledge and wisdom and become overwhelmed by sinfulness - it cannot be fought. Arguments against the statement • In the Kali Yuga people have to try harder to attain moksha. It is characterised by multiple reincarnations and the extension of the samsara cycle, but that doesn't mean that people should stop trying to make the world better • The war and conflict that come with the Kali Yuga also present opportunities for Hindus; for some, doing their duty like Arjun, for others, there is the opportunity to do good works and gain good karma • Even in modern times there have been great gurus and holy people. Their example suggests that other Hindus should continue to strive for holiness and goodness in the Kali Yuga. 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 mark	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. - Some Hindus believe that capital punishment is wrong (1) - Some Hindus accept capital punishment (1) - The Laws of Manu include capital punishment (1) - Some Hindus believe that the death penalty is against ahimsa (1) - Some Hindus believe that capital punishment is a deterrent (1). Accept any other valid response.	Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for each teaching. Award further marks for each development of the teaching up to a maximum of four marks. - Some Hindus believe that punishment should be a deterrent (1) which is why there are severe penalties for some crimes (1) - Some Hindus believe that punishment should be rehabilitative (1), which is why Manusmriti sometimes describes the process of asking someone to admit their crime instead of being punished (1) - Some Hindus believe that punishment should be restorative (1), which is why Manusmriti talks of fines or manual labour (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated teaching/development - Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(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. - Some Hindus believe that restorative justice is an important step towards forgiveness (1) because it allows the perpetrator to make amends for what they have done (1). 'Indeed, it is the opinion of the virtuous that the honest and forgiving man is ever victorious.' (Mahabharata 3.29) (1) - Some Hindus believe that, when a crime has been committed, the most important thing is to repair the human relationships affected (1) and not to respond with anger (1). 'How then can one like me indulge his anger which is so destructive of the world? The angry man commiteth sin.' (Mahabharata 3.29) (1) - Some Hindus believe that restorative justice can encourage empathy (1) because it ensures that the criminal understands the effects of their actions on the victim (1). 'I regard them to be perfect yogis who see the true equality of all living beings and respond to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were their own.' (Bhagavad Gita 6.32) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated belief / development - Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the belief given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2(d)	A02 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 A02 descriptors. A02 Arguments for the statement: • Some people commit crimes through ignorance. Krishna tells Arjun that promoting knowledge has positive karmic consequences because it enhances the mode of goodness. • Some crimes are committed by people experiencing poor mental health. Some Hindu may believe that punishing these people, instead of addressing the cause and helping them, would be unjust • If Hindus addressed the material needs of those in poverty there would be less crime, as those in need would not have to steal what they require for daily living Arguments against the statement: • Some Hindus are not in a position to address the causes of crime because they do not have the resources for it. The government should ensure no-one lives in poverty and has to resort to crime • People need to be responsible for their own actions. Almost all Hindus manage to live without committing crimes simply through their own strength of character • Tackling the causes of crime is futile in the Kali Yuga, because criminality is one of its defining characteristics. There are better things for Hindus to spend their time and energy on. Accept any other valid response.	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.
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'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.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • Diwa lamps are lit (1) • Diwali lasts five days (1) • Hindus draw rangolis outside their homes (1) • Sweets are eaten (1) • Lakshmi is honoured at Diwali (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(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 marks. • Some Hindus perform japa to show devotion to a particular deity (1) by reciting their name (1) • Some Hindus perform japa as a step towards meditation (1). The use of a mala helps to focus the mind until a worshipper can do without it (1) • Some Hindus perform japa to harness the spiritual power of a mantra (1); repeating it over and over allows it to fix in the person's mind (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
3(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Different ways of worshipping are important to Hindus because some forms of worship may be better suited to particular states in life (1). Bhagavad Gita (6.24) talks of the worshipper becoming detached from worldly desires (1) and this might be difficult for someone in the grihastha ashrama (1) • Hindus believe that whichever deity they choose to worship, they all show devotion to the Divine (1) and so people may choose the deity they prefer (1). 'Whatever celestial form a devotee seeks to worship with faith, I steady the faith of such a devotee in that form.' (Bhagavad Gita 7.21) (1) • Some forms of worship are considered to be better than others (1), for example jnana yoga is often considered superior to bhakti yoga (1). 'Better than mechanical practice is knowledge; better than knowledge is meditation...' (Bhagavad Gita 12.12) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(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: • Worship in the home is more convenient than going to a temple, especially for Hindus living in Britain. If people are to worship often, then the home is the best place • Worshipping at home may be better for people who practise meditation as they can arrange to have a space that it is more quiet and comfortable than a mandir • If a Hindu has a devotion to a particular deity, they can make that deity the focus of their home shrine; in the mandir that deity may be one among many. Arguments against the statement: • Mandirs are better places for worship than the home because they have been specifically designed for worship, and are often located in places of particular religious significance • Worshipping in particular places can bring a worshipper closer to a particular deity, for example worshipping at Varanasi, in the Ganges or at mountains like Mount Kailash • There are priests in the mandir and they may make it possible for acts of worship to be more meaningful than they would be if a person performed them at home on their own. Accept any other valid response.	15

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Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • Pacifism is a form of ahimsa (1) • Pacifism is shown in the Vedas (1) • Gandhi taught a type of pacifism (1) • Some Hindus believe that it is their duty to fight if necessary (1) • Being non-violent leads to good karma (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(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 marks. • Forgiveness is important to Hindus because it is one of the key virtues (1). It is associated with non-violence and peacefulness (1) • Forgiveness is a sattvic quality (1) and brings good karma (1) • Forgiveness is necessary if conflict is not to escalate (1); Gandhi is reported to have said: 'an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind' (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
4(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each teaching. Award further marks for each development of the teaching up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Some Hindus teach that war is morally justifiable (1) because Krishna teaches Arjun that it is his duty to fight (1). 'Therefore, arise and attain honour! Conquer your foes and enjoy prosperous rulership...' (Bhagavad Gita 11.33) (1) • Some Hindus believe that war can never be justified (1) because it is himsa (1) and the Mahabharata explains that ahimsa is the highest duty (1) • Sometimes Hindus teach that war is necessary (1), for example to protect those who have nobody to defend them (1). 'A Kshatriya, who has received according to the rule the sacrament prescribed by the Veda, must duly protect this whole (world)' (Manusmriti 7.2) (1) Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated teaching/ development • Development that does not relate both to the teaching given and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the teaching given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(d)	A02 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 A02 descriptors. Arguments for the statement: • Non-violence has been a key principle of Hinduism for millennia and there are therefore no circumstances under which a war can be justified • Modern warfare directly affects civilians far more than it ever did in the past. Situation ethics would say that the suffering it causes means that it can never be the loving thing to do • Wars are usually caused by greed, whether it is greed for power, or greed for resources. Artha, the responsible accumulation of wealth, is one of the four purusharthas and so wars cannot be justified. Arguments against the statement: • Krishna tells Arjun that he will incur sin if he refuses to fight, because it is his duty. This teaching from the Bhagavad Gita must mean that some wars are justified • Utilitarianism would suggest that war is justified if the result of the war is that more lives are saved. So long as the war is proportionate, it can be morally justified. • Failure to respond to aggressive states can result in them extending their activities and attacking still more people. Some Hindus believe that they have a duty to respond in such circumstances because Rig Veda teaches 'let your army be glorious, not the evil-doer.' Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider ethical arguments (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

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