



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES A 8062/14

Paper 1: Hinduism

Mark scheme

June 2022

Version: 1.0 Final



G 4 0 0 4 8 0 6 2 / 1 4 / M S

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject examiners. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © G4004 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Mark Schemes for GCSE Religious Studies

This paper requires expert markers who have wide knowledge and understanding of the particular subject content of the Specification. With the exception of the multiple-choice question, many of the questions asked have many different creditable answers and students are able to bring to their answers their own knowledge, understanding and background. They will offer details, arguments and evidence which the examiner, with the help of the mark scheme, will need to judge as creditable or not. It is therefore important that the examiner has a good understanding of the principles and spirit of the mark scheme in order to be fair and consistent when marking students' answers. The Content included is designed to be as helpful as possible but in many cases is not exhaustive. So Content sections are introduced by the sentence:

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

this is to remind examiners that there may well be additional correct answers which, with their expertise, they will be able to allow. With all questions if an examiner has any doubt about answers being credit worthy they should consult their team leader.

Structure

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- The question; Each question is printed in full before its target and mark scheme. It is always important that examiners remind themselves of the exact question being asked. In particular, they will need to do this in instances where the answer appears to be 'straying' from the question set or perhaps offers a valid alternative not included in the mark scheme
- Target; The target provides the specific assessment objective which the question is testing. It reminds examiners of the skills the question is designed to test, eg knowledge and understanding, evaluation
- The total marks available for the question and if Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is assessed
- The typical answer(s) or content which are expected
- Generic instructions related to the question target of how to award marks (i.e. levels of response grid).

Themes papers guidance (Specification A & Short Course)

In questions where students may choose religions from which to illustrate their answer, there may be some general Content, ie credible comments which students will make which could be applied to any religion or perhaps to a secular viewpoint as well. Where these are appropriate they are usually given first. The Mark Scheme will also include, under separate headings, Content sections for each of the six religions allowed within the Specifications.

General Guidance

.../. means that these are acceptable alternative answers in the mark scheme, eg Guru Har Krishan / Guru Tegh Bahadur / Guru Gobind Singh.

Answers may include specialist terms, in Hebrew or Arabic for example. If this is the case, the mark scheme will usually indicate this by providing in brackets the English as well, eg 'Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)'. In such questions, answers will be credited whether provided in the original language or in English.

Some mark schemes use bullet points to separate content. Each bullet point refers to a different possible 'belief' or 'teaching' or 'way', depending on the question. Obliques (.../.) used within the bullet point indicate different ways in which the point may be expressed and points which may be made to give the further detail or development needed for the second mark.

Where a student has crossed out a complete answer, it should be marked if it remains legible, unless an alternative is provided in which case only the alternative should be marked. When part of an answer is crossed out, then only what remains should be considered.

In questions where credit can be given to the development of a point, those developments can take the form of:

- Example or evidence
- Reference to different views
- Detailed information.

1 mark multiple choice questions

Such questions have four alternatives and the one correct answer will be given together with the correct letter, eg 'Answer: D Trinity'.

2 mark short answer questions

The principle here is provided in the mark scheme: 'One mark for each of two correct points.' Students may give **more than** the two answers required by the question. In such instances,

- **Award for the first two answers only, wherever they appear.**
- If a student gives more than one answer on the first line and another answer / other answers on the second line, the 'first two answers' will be the **first two** on the first line and **only these two** should be considered for marks. Other answers must be ignored.
- If on the first line the first two answers given are correct, award two marks, regardless of what is written elsewhere in the answer.
- If the first two answers can only be awarded one mark yet there is a third answer that is correct, this correct third answer must be ignored and no mark given for it.
- However, if the student gives some **elaboration after the first answer**, which is clearly developing their first answer, (which they are not required to do), do not consider this elaboration to be their second answer (unless the elaboration happens to contain a second correct answer to the question asked), regardless of whether there are other answers provided. In this case, the second answer also, if correct, may be credited for the second mark

4 and 5 mark answer questions

Examiners should take care to note the target of the question. Clear information is provided for these types of question on how to award marking points. Examiners should carefully read the additional instructions provided for each type of question (eg for influence questions the final sentence in the general guidance box reminds the examiner that the second mark (detailed explanation) awarded in each case must show clear 'influence').

12 mark answer questions

The 12 mark questions test Evaluation skills (AO2). The mark scheme for these answers is based on Levels of Response marking in which the examiner is required to make a judgement on the completed answer taken as a whole.

Level of response marking instructions

In GCSE Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, level of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Level of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Level of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. If examiners have any doubt about what level to award a response, they should consult their team leader.

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before examiners apply the mark scheme to a student's answer they should read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. They should then apply the mark scheme. It may be necessary to read the answer more than once to be sure of assigning the correct Level.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in 12-mark questions.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

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

0 1

Hinduism: Beliefs

0 1 . 1

Which one of the following is the meaning of sanatana-dharma?

[1 mark]

- A End of suffering**
- B Eternal law**
- C Non-violence**
- D Personal freedom**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

Answer: B Eternal law

0 1 . 2

Give two beliefs about matter (prakriti).

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

1 mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Matter (Prakriti) is everchanging / it is inert / it is temporary / it is an illusion (maya) / Matter (prakriti) is one of the two energies which Brahman projected itself in (the other being purusha) to create everything in the universe / Matter (prakriti) goes through a cycle of three stages - creation, maintenance, destruction / Matter (prakriti) is the primal essence of everything, i.e. the basis from which everything exists and what everything is / Matter (prakriti) has three qualities (Tri-gunah; sattva = goodness; rajas = energy; tamas = darkness) which are built into everything, including human nature / The atman is trapped within temporary physical bodies which are matter (prakriti) / Matter (prakriti) blocks the jivatman from recognising its true identity, which means that the atman is blocked from moksha (liberation from rebirth), etc.

0 1 . 3 Explain two ways in which belief in a personal, loving God influences Hindus today.

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a 'detailed explanation' the 'influence' of the belief must be included.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- As they feel God shows love to them / so they feel they should show love to others / which may be in being kind / or giving aid/support / or in their job, etc.
- They will be thankful to God for that love / so become a devotee / worship regularly and sincerely.
- They might join a sect of Hinduism / in which they live by the codes of that deity / e.g. ISKCON movement / which requires devotion and submission to Krishna.
- They will feel blessed / that God is loving and so will protect them / and will be there for them / 'For the protection of the good, and for the destruction of the wicked, for the establishment of Dharma, I am born from age to age' – Bhagavad Gita 4:8.
- They will feel that they should worship this God / as this God is loving / and so should their family / so they will teach their family to also worship this God.
- They will feel that all their worship is personally seen and accepted by God / which might make them feel a greater sense of purpose / and of self-worth.
- They might feel God is too vast/complex / so believing in a more defined (i.e. personal, loving) God allows them to worship/focus / e.g. on how God can help, ie show love / e.g. Ganesha the remover of obstacles, etc.

0 1 . 4 Explain two Hindu teachings about free will.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Hindu belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First teaching

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate teaching – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate teaching – 2 marks

Second teaching

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate teaching – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate teaching – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Hindu belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Free will is the ability to choose one's actions / those choices generate good and bad karma (punya and pa'apa) / which karma is expressed through this and future lifetimes.
- Free will is the ability to choose within the religion / i.e., one's dharma / sanatana dharma or varnashramadharma / ability to choose one's yoga / i.e., bhakti, jnana, karma, astanga/raja.
- Hinduism teaches that free will is not complete freedom / it is like travelling on the road / free will has chosen the route and mode of travel / however karma impacts on free will / as do events and people along the way.
- A person can use free will to help others / to look for/recognise need and then respond positively to it / this brings good karma / reflects the virtues (compassion, humility etc).
- A person can use free will to hurt others / by ignoring need / by being selfish / this brings negative karma.
- Using free will to help others is a way of helping oneself / as it generates good karma / which helps bring a better rebirth / or to achieve moksha (goal of life for Hindus).
- Hinduism also teaches that free will is an illusion / humans think they have free will / but only the atman has free will, and it is deluded by being in a material body in this world (prakriti).
- Sri Ramakrishna taught that only God has free will / 'the world is his play' / as long as a person has not realised his true nature and that of God, that person cannot have true free will / all that person's thoughts and actions are affected by maya (illusion), etc.

Religious teachings might include:

'If one clings to his attachments, refusing to let go, sorrows will not let go their grip on him' – Tirukkural 45.347-8.

'It is said that great personalities almost always accept voluntary suffering because of the suffering of people in general. This is considered the highest method of worshipping the Supreme Lord, who is present in everyone's heart' – Bhagavat Purana 8.7.44.

'People who have realized God are aware that free will is a mere appearance. In reality man is the machine and God is the Operator, man is the carriage and God its Driver.' – Sri Ramakrishna.

'These actions which can cause hurt and suffering to any other living beings are to be considered pa'apa (sin); and punya (virtue) is defined by those actions which bring joy and happiness to others' - Mahabharata.

'The two paths lie in front of the man, pondering them the wise man chooses the path of joy...'
Upanishads

0 1 . 5 'For Hindus, the most important aim of life is moksha (liberation from the cycle of rebirth).'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Hindu teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- Since moksha is liberation from rebirth / being free of the barriers of maya (illusion) / knowing one's true self and God / 'Liberation is not possible without knowledge' – shruti scripture / then this must be the highest priority / as that liberation is the greatest achievement / with the most to gain.
- Moksha means to be freed of all the suffering of this world / any sane person would make that their highest goal / as no one wishes to suffer / 'By realising God, one is released from all fetters' - Vedas / also to be freed from the struggle with/against karma / which is part of the reason for the suffering.

- The scriptures discuss moksha at length / always discussed as the purest of aims in life / other aims are presented as less than this.
- Other aims can become barriers / e.g. kama (seeking pleasure) can become addictive / so a person never has enough material comfort/sensory pleasure / they then become more entrapped in maya and rebirth / 'When all desires stationed in the heart are dispensed with one becomes liberated undoubtedly, even while living' – Garuda Purana.
- Depends what is meant by 'most important' / if this means 'highest/most noble', gurus and scriptures would place moksha as highest, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- Other aims are all important because they are stepping stones to moksha / they are important in their own way / a Hindu will focus on what is most pertinent to them / so their idea of importance will change with circumstance.
- Not everyone is at the stage where they can focus on this aim / e.g. a young person is still learning the dharma / so it is not their most important / it is one of several / not everyone is focused on their religion / so to them material aims might be more important.
- Kama (seeking pleasure) is more important / as it is to have sufficient to be able to live a comfortable life (not excess) / this satisfaction allows other goals to then be pursued.
- Arta (material prosperity) is more important / e.g. for those with a family / as they need to ensure their family has everything they need / in order to fulfil their duty to them / in Hindu culture, marriage and family are expected of all.
- Dharma (living ethically) is more important / by keeping the three elements of dharma, a Hindu can make spiritual progress, even achieve moksha / dharma becomes the means to attaining moksha / i.e. the foundation of moksha / 'The desire for liberation arises in all human beings at the end of many births through the opening of their past virtuous conduct' – Upanishads.
- Sanatana-dharma (doing one's duty by following eternal law) / allows you to live the right way / e.g. by keeping the Hindu virtues / which leads to moksha anyway / 'better to do one's duty ill, than another's duty well' – Bhagavad Gita / this is a more pure form of attaining moksha, because of being focused on what is necessary now.
- Varnashrama-dharma (caste and stage duty) / as you have to look after your family to be able to get good karma / this takes up all wealth and energy / also to process successfully through the stages of life / which leads to moksha / this is a more pure form of attaining moksha, because of being focused on what is necessary now, etc.

0 2

Hinduism: Practices

0 2 . 1

Which one of the following is the type of Hindu worship known as bhajan and kirtan?

[1 mark]

- A A fire ceremony**
- B Being blessed by a priest**
- C Seeing the deity**
- D Singing hymns**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

Answer: D Singing hymns

0 2 . 2

Give two ways in which Hindus celebrate Diwali.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

1 mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Putting small lights/candles/lamps around the home / putting lighted lanterns onto water, e.g. the Ganges / retelling the story of Diwali – of Rama and Sita / attend the mandir (temple) for worship / special puja dedicated to Lakshmi, goddess of prosperity / clean the house / business people have their accounts blessed ahead of the new year / puja for Ganesha / Havan ritual / music and dancing, including fairs and festival events in the UK / exchange of cards and gifts / creating rangoli patterns outside the home / firework displays, etc.

Allow the elements of puja – chant mantras, pray, make offerings, partake in arti, receive prasad, etc.

0 2 . 3 Explain two contrasting ways in which gurus are important in Hinduism.

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs

First contrasting way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Contrasting may mean opposing or may mean different views.

If similar beliefs are given, only **one** of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- As teachers / for those who are focused on their spiritual journey / there is a very ancient tradition of gurus within the religion / many are considered saints/rishis / their writings are still used today / their sects still exist.
- They help to explain the scriptures / which they have greater understanding of / because of longer study / they are experts with a higher level of religious understanding than ordinary Hindus.
- Hinduism encourages every Hindu to use a teacher / 'guru' means 'the one who dispels darkness and takes towards the light' / thus the guru helps a student to see the truth of the scriptures.
- All Hindus have a teacher (guru) as they learn their religion / those who wish to focus or dedicate themselves to understanding the scriptures need a guru.
- It is easier to learn from a guru / as they have already moved closer to attaining, if not already attained moksha / they know the path, so know what to do/not do / their experience and knowledge can be used by the student.
- Following a guru demands obedience to them / this means the decision to follow a guru is a great undertaking / gurus represent a deliberate focus on and dedication to a wholly spiritual path / the guru is their focus of worship, so very important.
- Gurus are highly respected / for example, at Kumbh Mela, the gurus are the first to be allowed into the water at sunrise / many people attend Kumbh Mela primarily to find a guru (for long or short periods of time).
- Gurus can be seen as role models / as they may have attained moksha / so know how to.
- They have traditional importance / i.e., historically gurus were revered / which gives them status today.
- The goal of life for Hindus is moksha / anything that can help that is important / gurus help their students attain moksha, so must be important.
- Gurus preserve the faith/religion / because they teach others the correct understanding and ways of practicing it, etc.

0 2 . 4 Explain two reasons why Hindus support environmental projects.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Hindu belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Hindu belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Respect for life is a virtue / all life needs the environment to be clean and healthy / so it is incumbent on people to protect the environment / if not for self, but for descendants / who will inherit a depleted and damaged world if environmental issues are not sorted.
- Belief that God is in all things / including environment / 'Brahman is all' – Vedas / so respect for environment is a form of worship of God / bringing good karma.
- Earth is called 'Mother' / nourishing humans through the food provided, land to live on etc / so supporting environmental projects is a way that thankfulness can be shown to Mother Earth for her bounty.
- To keep pilgrimage sites viable and healthy / Green Pilgrimage Network / recognising the increasing numbers of pilgrims to sites are doing greater damage to them / even putting them under threat / Hindus see pilgrimage as a key element of worship / so need to protect pilgrimage sites.
- The story of Krishna defeating the poisonous serpent Kaliya / who had set up home near a watering hole, and every living being that went near was fatally poisoned / Krishna defeated the serpent and restored the pool to its original usable state / message being to clean up where there is environmental damage.
- Story of King Prithu who complained to Mother Earth when there was famine / Mother earth pointed out that human were just taking from the earth and not giving back / so she was withholding crops / told Prithu how to landscape the land and build reservoirs / Prithu did / famine ended / message being that humans have to look after the world.
- Because there is significant evidence of climate change or degradation / this personally affects Hindus / so supporting environmental projects is a pragmatic, even common sense, response, etc.

Religious teachings may include -

'Brahman is all' - Vedas.

‘Protect trees, trees will protect you’ – Vedas.

‘The Earth is my mother, I am the Earth’s son’ – Artharva Veda.

‘The earth, the air, the land and the water are not an inheritance from our forefathers, but on loan from our children. So we have to hand over to them at least as it was handed over to us’ - Gandhi.

0 2 . 5 'In Hindu worship, the main focus is on One God (Ultimate Reality).'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Hindu teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- The Ultimate Reality is all there is / 'Brahman is all' – Vedas / so it means that every act of worship must ultimately be focused on Brahman / regardless of what the immediate target of worship appears to be.
- Hinduism is a monotheistic religion / deities are functions of One God / easier ways to understand the complexity of One God / hence all worship is focused on One God via a representation / no matter what the representation that is being used / 'There is only One God, and God is all' - Gandhi.
- Hindus believe God is not far away / but rather within the heart and consciousness / hence any worship must be 'from the heart' / so they are constantly through any worship in contact with and focused on the One God / this is the essence of Hindu spirituality.

- All deities are just functions of God / so worship of any is still worship of One God / 'Brahman is pure consciousness, without parts, without form. In order to help the seeker in his efforts to surrender, symbols and qualities are added to Brahman.' – Ramatapaniya Upanisad.
- All sacred places/plants/animals are linked to the deities, or Trimurti / which is simply an expression of One God / hence they are linking back to the One God / so it is wrong to suggest Hindus are not focusing on One God when they are worshipping any of the Trimurti, or their avatars.
- Focusing on the Ultimate Reality as Nirguna Brahman means a believer is focused on Aum / they are not side-tracked or distracted by an image or statue / so their worship is more pure, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- The One God might be the ultimate focus, but is often not the primary process / it is clear that the believer is focusing on Krishna for example / other foci help to connect to One God / such as holy places, deities, etc.
- Given different deities represent different things / the various functions of God are split between these deities / it makes sense to focus on the specific deity / e.g. focusing on Ganesha before getting married and starting that new life.
- Hindus worship their specific deity / understanding their Lord to be supreme / but this is not the One God / e.g. Vaishnavites believe Vishnu or Krishna to be supreme; Shaivites believe Shiva to be supreme / 'Of all types of worship, worship of Vishnu is supreme. But even higher than that is the worship of those things related to Vishnu' – Padma Purana.
- Most people cannot focus on the One God / e.g. children or those with less understanding of God / God is beyond / Nirguna Brahman / hence they are unable to comprehend One God / find it easier to focus on something less complex / so Saguna Brahman is more comprehensible, relevant or relatable.
- Focus should be on the actual task in hand / e.g., the act of puja / so that it is done with enough devotion and intention to be properly valid / and not just done out of 'muscle memory' / present in the moment.
- Focus should be on what works best for the individual / nature can be a good focus / as you feel the presence of God / 'Brahman is all' (Upanishads), etc.