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# A-level RELIGIOUS STUDIES 7062/2C

Paper 2C Study of Religion and Dialogues: Hinduism

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Mark scheme

June 2024

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Version: 1.0 Final



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Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates 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 associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate 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, associates 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.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

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## Methods of Marking

It is essential that, in fairness to students, all examiners use the same methods of marking. The advice given here may seem very obvious, but it is important that all examiners follow it as exactly as possible.

1. If you have any doubts about the mark to award, consult your Team Leader.
2. Refer constantly to the mark scheme throughout marking. It is extremely important that it is strictly adhered to.
3. Remember, you must **always** credit **accurate, relevant and appropriate** answers which are not given in the mark scheme.
4. Do **not** credit material that is irrelevant to the question or to the stated target, however impressive that material might be.
5. If a one-word answer is required and a list is given, take the first answer (unless this has been crossed out).
6. If you are wavering as to whether or not to award a mark, the criterion should be, 'Is the student nearer those who have given a correct answer or those who have little idea?'
7. Read the information below about using Levels of Response mark schemes.
8. Be prepared to award the full range of marks. Do not hesitate to give full marks when the answer merits full marks or to give no marks where there is nothing creditable in an answer.
9. No half marks or bonus marks are to be used under any circumstances.
10. Remember, the key to good and fair marking is **consistency**. Do **not** change the standard of your marking once you have started.

## Levels of Response Marking

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

Levels 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.)

Levels are tied to specific skills. 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.

Levels 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. This should only be necessary occasionally and where this occurs examiners must indicate, by a brief written explanation, why their assessment does not conform to the levels of response laid down in the mark scheme. Such scripts should be referred to the Lead Examiner.

## Assessment of Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication will be assessed in all components and in relation to all assessment objectives. Where students are required to produce extended written material in English, they will be assessed on the quality of written communication. The quality of written communication skills of the student will be one of the factors influencing the actual mark awarded within the level of response. In reading an extended response, the examiner will therefore consider if it is cogently and coherently written, ie decide whether the answer:

- presents relevant information in a form that suits its purposes
- is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- is suitably structured and that the style of writing is appropriate.

## LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

### Levels of Response: 10 marks A-level – AO1

- Level 5**  
**9–10**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate, relevant and fully developed in breadth and depth with very good use of detailed and relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, good knowledge and understanding of the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion is demonstrated.
  - Clear and coherent presentation of ideas with precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**  
**7–8**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is accurate and mostly relevant with good development in breadth and depth shown through good use of relevant evidence which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, alternative views and/or scholarly opinion are explained.
  - Mostly clear and coherent presentation of ideas with good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**  
**5–6**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is generally accurate and relevant with development in breadth and/or depth shown through some use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, there is some familiarity with the diversity of views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Some organisation of ideas and coherence with reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**  
**3–4**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is limited, with limited development in breadth and/or depth shown through limited use of evidence and/or examples which may include textual/scriptural references where appropriate.
  - Where appropriate, limited reference may be made to alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Limited organisation of ideas and coherence and use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**  
**1–2**
- Knowledge and critical understanding is basic with little or no development.
  - There may be a basic awareness of alternative views and/or scholarly opinion.
  - Isolated elements of accurate and relevant information and basic use of appropriate subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

**Levels of Response: 15 marks A-level – AO2**

- Level 5**  
**13–15**
- A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Perceptive discussion of different views, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought with critical analysis.
  - There is an appropriate evaluation fully supported by the reasoning.
  - Precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 4**  
**10–12**
- A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought, with some critical analysis.
  - There is an appropriate evaluation supported by the reasoning.
  - Good use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 3**  
**7–9**
- A general response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Different views are discussed, including, where appropriate, those of scholars or schools of thought.
  - An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning.
  - Reasonable use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.
- Level 2**  
**4–6**
- A limited response to the issue(s) raised.
  - Presentation of a point of view relevant to the issue with some supporting evidence and argument.
  - Limited attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- Level 1**  
**1–3**
- A basic response to the issue(s) raised.
  - A point of view is stated, with some evidence or reason(s) in support.
  - Some attempt at the appropriate use of subject vocabulary.
- 0**
- No accurate or relevant material to credit.

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**Examine Hindu understandings of atman.****[10 marks]**

**Target: AO1.1:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: atman: the concept of atman and its relationship with the body and with Brahman, with reference to the views of Advaita Vedanta (non-dualism) and Samkhya (dualism) the parable of the chariot: Katha Upanishad 3.

Many Hindus understand the atman as spirit. It is the life giving force found within everything. The atman is immortal and eternal. Upon the death of a physical body, the atman transmigrates. Depending upon a Hindu's karma, the atman will be reincarnated into another life form or achieve the goal of moksha.

Some Hindus understand the atman non-dualistically. This means they view the atman as identical to Brahman, suggesting there is no separation between the atman and Brahman. Hindus who hold this view may follow Advaita Vedanta. Advaita Vedanta suggests that the world is full of illusion and ignorance. Illusion and ignorance encourage the idea that the atman is independent, separate and distinct. Yet, the atman is not. The atman is Brahman; Brahman is the only thing that exists. There is no independent individuality, and the atman is identical with all other beings in the universe.

Other Hindus understand the atman dualistically. Hindus who hold this understanding may suggest that the atman and Brahman are distinct, believing that there is a separation between the two. Hindus who hold this view may follow Samkhya. Samkhya suggests the atman is trapped in the empirical world of matter. All matter is made of three qualities and over time the atman becomes entangled in the world of matter, forgetting its true purpose. It is therefore essential to engage in Samkhya yoga to disentangle the atman from matter.

0 | 1 | 2

**‘The Trimurti makes it easy to understand the nature of ultimate reality.’**

**Evaluate this claim.**

**[15 marks]**

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: the Trimurti: the nature and roles of the three elements of the Trimurti and their relationship with Brahman.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

The Trimurti does make it easy to understand the nature of ultimate reality as it represents some of ultimate reality’s key roles, for example, Brahma the Creator, Shiva the Destroyer and Vishnu the Preserver. This helps Hindus understand the complexity of ultimate reality. However, some may argue that having ultimate reality represented as three separate gods may lead to more misunderstanding than understanding. This is because many Hindus see Hinduism as a monotheistic religion with one supreme ultimate reality, Brahman, rather than a polytheistic religion with multiple gods.

The Trimurti presents ultimate reality as Saguna, personal, making it easier to understand the nature of ultimate reality. For many Hindus, an element of the Trimurti may be a focus during puja. Physical representation may aid worship by offering a focus and allowing a personal relationship to be developed between the devotee and ultimate reality. However, others may say that understanding ultimate reality through the Trimurti is not a full understanding, so other practices must be used instead, for example, yoga.

Not only does the Trimurti allow knowledge of the male elements of ultimate reality, but it also allows knowledge of the female aspects too, making it easier to understand the nature of ultimate reality. Each element of the Trimurti has a consort and each consort plays a pivotal role in Hindu belief and practice. However, some may argue that ultimate reality is Nirguna, impersonal, without qualities, and beyond understanding. As such, gender distinctions are not important and add nothing to the understanding of ultimate reality.

0 2 . 1

**Examine how Hindu liberationist approaches influence society today.**

**[10 marks]**

**Target: AO1.2:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: practical Vedanta: the reinterpretation of Advaita Vedanta in the work of Vivekananda and its present expression in the work of the Ramakrishna Mission, a liberationist Hindu approach, supporting the poor and defending the oppressed.

One way Hindu liberationist approaches influence society today is that they influence the work of Hindu organisations who support the poor. The Ramakrishna Mission is a global organisation which undertakes projects to support those who are in poverty. For example, they freely support communities who have been affected by natural disasters, educate children who are orphaned, and provide medical treatments to those who are sick.

Another way Hindu liberationist approaches influence society today is their influence on the work of Hindu organisations who defend the oppressed. The Ramakrishna Mission undertakes work with groups who are facing prejudice and discrimination. For example, they encourage those who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community to embrace their sexuality and gender identity. Furthermore, projects run by the Ramakrishna Mission have provided support to members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

A final way Hindu liberationist approaches influence society today is through their thinking which defends the oppressed. Ramakrishna has given the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta a practical application. Today, Ramakrishna's interpretation of Advaita Vedanta is used by interfaith movements around the globe. It brings different religions together and searches for similarities rather than differences, and in doing so overcomes conflicts in society arising from religious disagreements.

0 2 . 2

**‘There is little agreement in Hinduism about the role and status of women.’**

**Evaluate this claim.**

**[15 marks]**

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Note that answers may, but need not, be limited to the consideration of the following specification content: debates about the role and status of women in Hinduism with particular reference to the contribution of Ram Mohan Roy.

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

There is little agreement in Hinduism about the role and status of women because migration has created a global Hindu community, and each community is influenced by the values of the surrounding society. These values may challenge traditional Hindu beliefs about the role and status of women. However, for many Hindus the dharma of women is universal and eternal. Despite Hinduism being a global religious tradition, there are still widely agreed beliefs within Hinduism regarding the status and role of women.

Teachings which describe the role and status of women within Hinduism may be rejected by some Hindus but not by others, leading to disagreement. For example, some Hindus may see the descriptions of the role and status of women in the Manusmṛti as incompatible with Hindu belief and practice today, while others accept the role and status it prescribes for women. However, all Hindus view the Manusmṛti as a source of authority and therefore agree that its teaching on the role and status of women is important, so there may be some agreement.

Contemporary debates, for example those surrounding Hindu widows and the access of women to some sacred sites, highlight the disagreement within Hinduism about the role and status of women. However, the continued contemporary acknowledgement of the work of Hindu reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy highlights the extent of agreement within Hinduism about the role and status of women. There is near universal agreement that some practices which mistreat and exploit women, for example, sati, are unacceptable.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not address whether or not there is little agreement in Hinduism about the role and status of women.

0 3 . 1

**‘Religious sources of authority do not require miracles.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and philosophy.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1.4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of different Hindu beliefs about the authority of the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, the Bhagavad Gita, the Manusmrti and Gurus.

#### **Philosophy**

There may be consideration of different understandings of ‘miracle’.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and philosophy.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Hume's realist viewpoint describes miracles as maximally improbable violations of natural laws, described by barbarous people. Some Hindu texts describe miracles, but their authority does not depend on these accounts. This is in line with Hume's view. However, shruti texts describe many miracles. If these accounts are untrue, the shruti texts cannot be trusted and therefore lose authority.

Some Hindus become gurus through their practices. For example, Swami Sivananda was a teacher of yoga, but he did not perform miracles. This demonstrates that the authority of gurus does not necessarily depend on miracles. However, the authority of some other gurus in Hinduism does come from their ability to perform miracles. For example, there are many accounts of Hindu gurus miraculously healing the sick in violation of natural laws. This suggests that in some cases, miracles are required.

Some Hindu teachings found in sources of wisdom and authority do not require miraculous explanations. For example, there are parts of the Vedas which discuss creation without reference to miracles. Both the Vedic teaching and modern science arrive at similar conclusions about creation. However, some Hindus claim that these teachings leave too many unanswered questions. Hindu accounts of creation by Krishna suggest that miraculous acts are at the heart of creation. This suggests that some Hindu religious authority may require miracles.

0 4 . 1

**‘Science shows that it is not reasonable to believe in ultimate reality.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and philosophy.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of how and why science has influenced Hinduism and how Hinduism has responded.

#### **Philosophy**

There may be consideration of arguments for the existence of God, their value for religious faith and the relationship between reason and faith; religious experience.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and philosophy.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Scientific discoveries about the origins of life and the universe may make a belief in a creator unreasonable. For example, science offers the Big Bang theory as an explanation for the origins of the universe. However, some Hindus may reject scientific explanations as completely unsatisfactory. They may look to a self-sufficient ultimate reality as an explanation for unanswered questions surrounding the how and why of creation.

Scientific challenges to religious experience may show that belief in ultimate reality is unreasonable. For example, science may question the validity of an experience of those who have taken drugs, suggesting the experience is a consequence of drug taking, and not a religious experience relating to any form of ultimate reality. However, whilst some Hindus recognise the effect drugs may have, they believe that some drugs may clarify, rather than falsify, the religious experience. Therefore a belief in ultimate reality may be considered reasonable.

The scientific method may make some claims found in Hindu sources of wisdom and authority about ultimate reality unreasonable, and suggest that Hinduism and science are in conflict. For example, science argues that reincarnation and memories of past lives are false, and can be explained by mechanisms in the dying brain. However, some Hindus may suggest that although claims about reincarnation cannot be verified empirically, belief in reincarnation and the goal of moksha may bring meaning and purpose to life. Therefore it is not unreasonable to believe in ultimate reality.

0 5 . 1

**‘Hindu ethics do not deal effectively with issues concerned with marriage.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and ethical studies.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of different Hindu views about marriage.

#### **Ethics**

There may be consideration of Natural Moral Law and Situation Ethics.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and ethical studies.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

One issue concerns who may be married to whom. Many countries recognise same sex marriage, while Hindu majority countries do not. This suggests that Hindu ethics do not deal effectively with this. However, some Hindus approach the issue in a similar way to Natural Moral Law, which is quite clear that procreation is the primary purpose of sex, and therefore same sex marriage is not permitted. For these Hindus, Hindu ethics do deal effectively with this issue.

Another issue concerns Hindus who live in societies where secular values are replacing religious values. Secular values may not normalise marriage, so Hindus may be influenced to turn away from Hindu marriage traditions. Therefore, Hinduism does not respond effectively to changing views about marriage. However, many Hindus still uphold the duties outlined in Varnashrama dharma. One such duty is to marry. Many Hindus value the positive impact that marriage has on their relationships and see it as the best way to raise a family. This suggests that Hindu ethics do deal effectively with issues concerning marriage.

A third issue concerns the acceptance of sex before marriage. Attitudes towards premarital sex are widely becoming more liberal, and some Hindus no longer see sex as something to save for marriage. As a result, traditional Hindu ethical ideals are being rejected in favour of more relativist ideals like those offered by Situation Ethics. Therefore, Hindu ethics do not deal effectively with changing attitudes towards sex. However, Varnashrama dharma advocates celibacy during certain stages of life, for example the student stage. This guidance shows that Hindu deontological ethics deal with sex outside marriage to some extent.

0 6 . 1

**‘Kant’s ethics are compatible with Hindu ethical teaching.’**

**Critically examine and evaluate this view with reference to the dialogue between Hinduism and Kant.**

**[25 marks]**

**Target: AO1:4:** Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including approaches to the study of religion and belief. (10 marks)

**Target: AO2:** Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study. (15 marks)

Material related to AO1 and AO2 may be presented discretely or holistically within the answer. Markers must read the whole of the response before either mark is awarded.

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

### **AO1**

#### **Hinduism**

There may be consideration of Hindu views about good conduct and key moral principles.

#### **Ethics**

There may be consideration of Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics, the key ideas of Kant about moral decision-making.

Maximum Level 3 for answers that do not include both Hinduism and ethical studies.

**AO2**

Answers may present, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments:

Duty can be considered a key aspect of both Kantian and Hindu ethical teaching. This means both systems of ethics are rooted in actions that moral agents ought to undertake. However, for Kant, duty is based on pure practical reason and derives from conscious choice. By contrast, Hindu duty comes from religious sources of wisdom and authority. For example, Sanatana dharma provides universal ideals regarding duty. Therefore, the different origins of duty may make Kant's ethics and Hindu ethical teaching incompatible.

Both Kant's ethics and Hindu ethical teaching reject the exploitation of others to achieve a moral outcome. Kant argues that nobody should be used as a means to an end, and Hindus use the principle of ahimsa to do no harm. However, for Kant, maxims must be universalised, while for Hindus, universalisability is not a significant ethical principle because a moral outcome differs based on Varnashrama dharma. This suggests that Kant's ethics and Hindu ethical teaching are incompatible.

Hindu ethical teaching and Kant's ethics both lead to an ultimate reward for good moral conduct. For Kant, the reward is the highest good, and for Hindus it is moksha, so they may seem compatible. However, for Hindus, both good and bad ethical decisions have consequences because of the ethical teaching of karma. Kant is not so concerned with the consequences of specific ethical decisions, so his views may be incompatible with Hindu ethical teaching.