

# HINDUISM

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Paper 2055/01  
Paper 1

## Key messages

- Candidates should respond to command words; 'explain' requires more than knowledge, there should be some application. Some candidates just wrote blocks of knowledge for 'discuss' without application or evaluation.
- Candidates should use the marks as guide to how much to write, many wrote the same for the **part (b)** and **(c)** questions despite a difference in marks.
- Some candidates would benefit from better use of key terms, for example pluralism was used in place of polytheism.

## General comments

There were very few rubric errors and the vast majority of candidates completed their answers within the time allowed. The level of knowledge was generally good with even lower scoring candidates demonstrating a basic knowledge. There were some impressive higher end responses to the essay/discussion question with detailed knowledge that was eloquently discussed with critical analysis and a judgment in the conclusion. The mark allocation should be used a guide to the length of the response, many candidates were writing as much for 3 mark responses as for 5 mark responses. Responses to command words were variable with many candidates just stating knowledge for both explain and discuss questions.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

This question was not as popular with far fewer responses than to **Question 2**.

- (a) (i) Well answered with almost all candidates gaining the mark available with a correct response. Many candidates responded in a full sentence when just one word was sufficient and would save time.
- (ii) Well answered with most candidates gaining the mark with a correct response.
- (b) Most candidates were able to recall a story about Kartikeya, with many gaining three marks.
- (c) All candidates were able to gain some credit for their response, with some knowledge about Shiva's animal vehicle, although only stronger candidates moved beyond knowledge and were able to explain the significance.
- (d) Most candidates showed knowledge of devotees of Shiva. The highest scoring candidates discussed different views regarding the stimulus and evaluated with a conclusion. Lower scoring candidates focused on outlining who may worship Shiva without discussion or evaluation.

#### **Question 2**

Much more popular than **Question 1**.

- (a) Well answered with most candidates gaining 2 marks.

- (b) Well answered, candidates showed good knowledge of positions, items held and appearance. Some candidates wrote much more than is required for a 3 mark response.
- (c) Lots of good knowledge shown of the animal vehicle; lion or tiger. Many described this well but only strong candidates were able to explain the significance of the animal and go beyond description.
- (d) Lots of information about Durga and most candidates made some attempt to comment on her importance, often comparing her to the deities of the Trimurti. There were some excellent discussive and evaluative responses. Some candidates scored lower marks as they did not really evaluate or reference the issue of importance sufficiently.

### **Section B**

#### **Question 3**

This question was slightly more popular than **Question 4**.

- (a) (i) Well answered, most candidates gained the mark. A variety of spellings were credited.
- (ii) A mixture of correct and incorrect responses. Some candidates named the umbrella or water pot. Many gave items held by Vishnu such as the conch, which was credited, discus or lotus flower.
- (b) Well answered, nearly all candidates recalled the story of Vamana and Bali and the three strides/steps. Many candidates wrote much more than required for 3 marks.
- (c) Well answered in terms of knowledge, most candidates recounted the story. For full marks candidates needed to explain how Narsimha was needed to break the protection boon, few managed this more than implicitly.
- (d) Candidates showed sound knowledge and most gave an opinion with regard to the stimulus. Some excellent high scoring answers were seen with much evaluation/analysis and different views.

#### **Question 4**

- (a) (i) Not all candidates gained this mark, but many were able to correctly state the name.
- (ii) Some that gained the first mark did not gain this, most left blank if they did not know. Some gained the mark and a variety of spellings were credited.
- (b) Well answered with most candidates gaining the marks. A range of stories were recalled.
- (c) Candidates displayed good knowledge of Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu but few were able to add explanation relating to how the avatar protected dharma.
- (d) Candidates showed good knowledge of both Narsimha and Rama avatars and their stories. Most candidates were able to give the basic analysis that Rama is easier to identify with and teaches more as he is human. Some candidates wrote excellent responses. Those with lower marks should move beyond stating two views and give some evaluation of those viewpoints.

### **Section C**

#### **Question 5**

Very few responses to this question were seen.

- (a) Piercing and carrying a burden/cavadi were the most common responses.
- (b) Some candidates found this question challenging and did not gain the full 3 marks.
- (c) This question was generally not well answered as although candidates were able to recall a story they could not fully explain why Hindus do not sleep during the festival today. For higher marks, the story needs linking to the practice today.

- (d) Fair attempts were made to answer this question by outlining other practices from festivals but few candidates were able to evaluate and make a reasoned judgment. Some produced excellent evaluative discussion.

### Question 6

The majority of candidates attempted this question.

- (a) (i) Well answered with the majority of candidates gaining the mark.
- (ii) Well answered, most candidate gained the mark. Sweets being the most common response.
- (b) Many candidates recounted the story of Ganesha getting his elephant head, not all referenced his birthday/creation by Parvati. Most candidates gained some marks but not all achieved 3 marks. Many wrote more than is required for a 3 mark question.
- (c) Lots of knowledge about the end of Ganesh Chaturthi and the immersion of the murti with most candidates stating what this symbolised. Higher scoring responses were able to explain why this was done rather than just describing the ritual.
- (d) Most candidate were able to give detail about Divali, describing the lighting of lamps, alongside other practices. Higher scoring responses explicitly addressed what the festival is about rather than outlining what is done.

# HINDUISM

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Paper 2055/02  
Paper 2

## Key messages

- Candidates would benefit from referring to the mark allocation to determine the amount of time they should spend answering each question.
- Answers need to respond to the command word used in the question, e.g., 'how' or 'why'.
- Questions with higher marks require candidates to show more than one point of view and to demonstrate a critical response. Sometimes responses were a little too descriptive for Assessment Objective 2 where demonstrating the significance of the issues raised is more applicable.

## General comments

There were some very good responses. The most successful answers included critical discussion and evaluation and some of the reasoned arguments used were thoughtful and appropriate. Some candidates needed to focus on the requirement of the question and respond to the key command words 'how' and 'why' rather than look at the general topic area the question was set from. Some candidates wrote lengthy answers for questions carrying three marks. Candidates who scored the highest marks in the **part (d)** questions were able to show critical engagement with the question throughout their responses.

## Comments on specific questions

### *Section A*

**Question 1** was more popular than **Question 2**

#### **Question 1**

The two beings met by Rama in the Shri Ramacharitamans of Tulsidas were clearly identified in **part (a)**. In **part (b)**, responses did not always pick up the idea of the grieving man specifically and tended to focus a little more on the scripture itself. **Part (c)** was answered very well in most responses. Candidates knew what the discussion between Arjuna and Krishna was about and were able to explain it in reasonably good detail. Some very impressive responses here. In **part (d)**, many considered the virtues of each path but also came to the justified conclusion that the statement was pretty much true. Those that argued for one of the paths to liberation being more important the others offered soundly judged comments and critical insight.

#### **Question 2**

Candidates were able to answer **part (a)** effectively and very effective responses were given for **part (b)**. **Part (c)** proved a little trickier for some candidates and whilst the Bhagavad Gita is clearly a well-known text it is important that candidates focus on the question asked here, which was about a personal relationship with God. Some of the more successful responses did outline some background details but then focused on the love and devotion a person might show to a personal deity and stressed the importance of a person's inner feelings rather than formal rituals. In **part (d)** there were some good comparisons made between the three paths under consideration. Some responses followed a line of argument exclusively on the path they were focused on, but many did offer a real contrast between the one they focused on and the other two. Either route could have scored well if the critical evaluative comments were part of the response.

### *Section B*

Responses were evenly spread between **Question 3** and **Question 4**.

### Question 3

In **Question 3**, **part (a)(i)** and **(ii)** were generally correctly answered with the first two varnas being the most popular responses. **Part (b)** was generally well answered with many identifying the vanaprastha stage as the 'retirement' stage of life. Sometimes the responses did not include three clear points, or a development of points made to warrant three marks being awarded. In **part (c)**, there were some very clear responses explaining dharma and then explaining the concept of varna. These focused on the nature of duty within social groupings. In the stronger responses the system being originally set up to allow everyone to have a role to play in society was identified. In **part (d)** the responses did not always address the issues raised by the statement. Stronger responses suggested overall that while all have some importance the purusharthas do not necessarily have equal importance, or focus, for all ashramas.

### Question 4

Most responses gave two correct samskaras for **part (a)**. In **part (b)**, many candidates were familiar with descriptions of what happens at the samskara they chose to write about. Often this detailed description was very accurate and well written. In **part (c)**, this question only required candidates to focus on one of the four ashramas. Although some responses gave explanations of two or more ashramas, they would not have gained credit for an explanation of more than one. Some candidates found **part (d)** quite challenging. Many responses gave details of varna but needed to go further and evaluate whether the concept was outdated in the modern world or not.

### Section C

**Question 5** was not as popular as **Question 6**.

### Question 5

In **part (a)** the Kali Temple was identified in most responses, but not all of these identified the cat or temple cat as the animal that was worshipped by Ramakrishna as an aspect of the goddess Kali for **part (b)**. **Part (c)** was generally less well answered with responses not always showing a good knowledge of Ramakrishna's devotion to God. In **part (d)**, answers were more narrative than analytical, concentrating on Ramakrishna's life. Weaker responses needed to go further and refer to what he said and meant in connection with the statement that 'all religions are true' to gain more credit.

### Question 6

In **part (a)**, most responses stated the founder of the Society of Brahma in **(a)(i)**, and what it is more commonly known as in **(a)(ii)**. In **part (b)** candidates gained good marks on their descriptions of the teachings of the Arya Samaj. Many wrote in good depth and detail on the purification of Hindus from the lower varnas but most focused on the aim of everyone in India to be a Sanskrit speaking Hindu. In **part (c)**, most responses explained why the Arya Samaj emphasised education for all. Some stronger responses suggested that this was a reflection on Dayananda's combined western rational education and his Vedic religious education. These strongest answers included supported arguments and different viewpoints. For **part (d)**, stronger responses engaged with the question to discuss a variety of viewpoints, including the nationalistic vision of Hinduism that the Arya Samaj presented, alongside the movement's religious focus. The strongest responses critically engaged with the points they gave often highlighting both the political and religious nature of the reforms and/or ideas.