

# HINDUISM

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<p><b>Paper 2055/01</b> <b>Hindu Gods and Festivals</b></p>
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## Key messages

- Candidates should aim to manage their time across their responses.
- Candidates should pay more attention to command words such as 'Explain', and 'To what extent do you agree?'
- Candidates need to show more critical analysis in their responses to **part (d)** questions.

## General comments

Overall, the paper was accessible to candidates of all ability levels. There were some very strong responses to the challenging questions, where candidates could provide detailed knowledge along with critical analysis and a reasoned judgment linked to the teachings, practices, and issues in Hinduism in **part (d)**.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to name two of the Trimurti.
- (b) This question was largely answered in a descriptive manner where candidates described the importance of the third eye of the murti of Lord Shiva.
- (c) In this question, many candidates explained the importance of both human and animal incarnations of Lord Vishnu and gave reasons as to why they came to Earth.
- (d) Many candidates explained the importance of eulogising the gods of the Trimurti. The strongest candidates produced well-reasoned arguments to counter the given statement by supporting their answers with evidence such as the importance of worshipping other gods, for example, Durga, Ganesh or the Impersonal God.

Many candidates were able to score high marks in **Question 1**.

### Question 2

- (a) A vast majority of candidates could identify two objects held by a murti of Vishnu, such as a lotus flower, a conch shell, or a discus.
- (b) Few candidates could describe how Brahma is shown in a murti, such as harbouring a long white beard, 4 arms, bowl of water.
- (c) Many candidates could provide valid reasons as to why Ganesha should be worshipped.
- (d) Many candidates provided well-supported responses where they agreed with the fact that Shiva is the most important deity while providing counter-arguments by stating that Hindus might consider other gods/goddesses to be the most important as well.

### Question 3

- (a) (i) Most candidates could name the avatar Rama.
- (ii) Only a few candidates could give the correct answer, and it could be seen that the concept was quite unfamiliar to a number of candidates.
- (b) Candidates could identify the story of Vamana defeating Bali through his steps.
- (c) Most candidates were able to discuss one particular incarnation of Lord Vishnu in great detail such as the idealistic characteristics of Rama.
- (d) Many candidates provided different views regarding all Hindus having to worship Krishna.

### Question 4

- (a) Most candidates were able to outline any two devotional modes towards an avatar such as singing glories, and pilgrimage.
- (b) Candidates were able to narrate one story about Krishna and the gopis such as Rasalila.
- (c) In this question most, candidates were able to accurately explain the story of Prahlad and how Narsimha kills Hiranyakashipu.
- (d) Many able candidates could provide reasons for and against the statement that humans cannot learn anything from the example of avatars. Strong candidates were able to state how avatars became role models for human beings, substantiating their responses with examples.

### Question 5

- (a) The majority of candidates could list any two devotional activities that might be performed during Ganesh Chaturthi such as fasting, and cleaning.
- (b) Candidates successfully described the different activities that Hindus use to celebrate Diwali such as the distribution of sweets and making of rangolis.
- (c) Many candidates were able to explained why and how Hindus celebrate Maha Shivratri. Strong responses explained why fasting is observed rather than just describing the ritual.
- (d) Several candidates failed to understand the key words of this question 'expression of Hindu identity' and this resulted in weak or one-sided responses.

### Question 6

- (a) The majority of candidates were able to name any two deities associated with Diwali such as Rama, Lakshmi.
- (b) Most candidates could briefly describe at least one important detail concerning Diwali, such as the triumph of good over evil as explained in the story of Rama.
- (c) Most candidates were able to explain why sacrifices such as carrying Cavadees or body piercings on the occasion of Cavadi are important, rather than just listing the activities performed on Cavadi.
- (d) Many candidates agreed and also disagreed with the statement that Ganesh Chaturthi is only important for Hindu families. Strong candidates were able to demonstrate that even non-Hindu families participate in Ganesh Chaturthi, supporting their responses with evaluation and examples.

# HINDUISM

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**Paper 2055/02**  
**Scriptures, Ethics and Hindu Life**

## Key messages

- Candidates should use the number of marks as an indication of how long answers should be.
- Attention should be paid to command words, such as Explain, 'To what extent do you agree?'
- Candidates need to show more critical analysis in their responses to **part (d)** questions.

## General comments

Many candidates did not pay enough attention to the command words which resulted in the loss of marks. Some answers were too lengthy for **part (b)** questions. Many answers for **part (d)** questions were one-sided and did not include enough critical analysis. Some candidates answered all six questions instead of choosing one from each section, as the rubric stated. Candidates are therefore reminded of the need to pay due attention to instructions.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) (i) This question was attempted by most candidates, and they gave interesting meanings of the term 'jnana yoga'.
- (ii) Candidates also outlined Krishna's teachings on jnana yoga such as knowledge of atman and self-realisation.
- (b) Most candidates gave the correct meaning of the term 'Karma'. However, some confused 'Karma' with 'Kama'.
- (c) This question seemed to confuse candidates as more attention was given to Brahman as the priestly class rather than Brahman as the Supreme Being according to Bhagavad Gita.
- (d) This question was accessible to most candidates. Candidates were able to give balanced arguments regarding the relevance of Hindu scriptures today.

### Question 2

- (a) Many candidates instead of describing the brothers, many candidates described the qualities of Shabari, which resulted in much weaker answers.
- (b) Most candidates answered by giving a good description of the term Bhakti.
- (c) In this question, some candidates did not refer to the analogy of the Banyan Tree in Chandogya Upanishad. Instead, they referred to the analogy of the two birds on a tree in Mundaka Upanishad. However, strong candidates related the analogies to the nature of the Atman and Brahman.
- (d) This question was attempted by most candidates. These responses also gave balanced arguments to show the importance of other paths like bhakti and jnana as the best guide to living a good life.

### Question 3

- (a) (i) Most candidates were able to name the warrior Varna.
- (ii) This question was attempted by most candidates.
- (b) Many candidates attempted this question by outlining the common practices during Namakarana Samskara.
- (c) Many candidates only gave a mere description of the four ashramas. However, a few stronger candidates were able to explain the relationship between Ashramas and Dharma.
- (d) Most answers were one-sided. A vast majority could not give reasons as to why Sanyasa Ashrama is important, and how it leads to Moksha.

### Question 4

- (a) (i) and (ii) Most candidates were able to name the Purusharthas concerned with wealth and desire respectively.
- (b) Most responses to this question contained good descriptions of the Grihastha Ashrama.
- (c) This question was attempted by most candidates. Some responses explained the importance of Vivaha Samskara, whilst others focused on why Vivaha Samskara is not given much attention in modern society.
- (d) Most candidates were able to give reasons as to why some people cannot follow their Dharma and the difficulties encountered in following Dharma today. However, many answers were one-sided, and only a few candidates could provide evaluative responses by acknowledging that some people in this technologically driven society are still following and fulfilling their Dharma.

### Question 5

- (a) This question was accessible to most candidates as they mentioned the political reasons for which Gandhi fasted such as for the untouchables, unity, and non-violence.
- (b) Most candidates were able to describe one of the teachings of the Brahmo Samaj.
- (c) Candidates successfully attempted this question by referring to Gandhi's reforms for the untouchables, the Salt March and the importance of spinning mills.
- (d) Most candidates merely referred to the spiritual experiences of Ramakrishna. In doing so, they overlooked the weaknesses of Ramakrishna in establishing Hinduism as a world religion.

### Question 6

- (a) (i) and (ii) Candidates rightly answered this question with reference to Lord William Bentinck and his reform against Sati.
- (b) Most candidates gave strong responses by describing the social reforms of Swami Dayananda.
- (c) Some candidates merely emphasised the policy of non-violence of Gandhi rather than discussing and evaluating the relationship between non-violence and Satyagraha.
- (d) This question was well-attempted by most candidates. Most were able to explain the social reforms of Gandhi as well as his love for the scriptures such as the Bhagavad Gita, the Quran and the Bible. In the strongest answers, candidates were able to compare Gandhi with other reformers such as Dayananda and Ramakrishna who were more active in the religious field.