



Cambridge International AS & A Level

HINDUISM

9487/02

Paper 2 Development of Hinduism

May/June 2025

1 hour 30 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:
Section A: answer **one** question.
Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Section A

Answer **EITHER** Question 1 **OR** Question 2.

EITHER

- 1 (a) Summarise the difference between the concerns of the Samhitas and the concerns of the Aranyakas. [5]
- (b) Explain how the different Vedic writings are related to one another. [10]
- (c) Assess the claim that Hinduism as it is practised today is **not** Vedic Hinduism. [15]

[Total: 30]

OR

- 2 (a) 'The ancient Sanskrit epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are part of a canon of Hindu scripture known as itihasa, which means this is "how it was". These are accounts of events which some consider mythological but which are nevertheless considered important in the development of Hinduism, usually as narrated by someone who was present during those events. The authors of both the Mahabharata (the sage Vyasa) and the Ramayana (the sage Valmiki) appear as characters in the stories attributed to them. The texts are also known as Mahakavya (Great Compositions) because of their poetic form and narrative structure.'

Summarise what the above passage says about the nature and significance of the epics. [5]

- (b) Explain how the Bhagavad Gita might be used by Hindus in their daily lives. [10]
- (c) 'The Ramayana is the only guide to dharma that a Hindu needs.' Discuss. [15]

[Total: 30]

Section B

Answer **EITHER** Question 3 **OR** Question 4.

EITHER

- 3 (a) 'Among Smartas there is the concept of ista-devata, that is of the particular form of God which one chooses as the focus of their worship and meditation. To reach the One Supreme each person must choose some manifestations, which is their ista-devata; but someone else may choose another manifestation and a different form of worship. As each progresses in their devotion and concentration they are led on to the One where the differences disappear. Thus, a true Shiva-bhakta has no quarrel with a true Vishnu-bhakta. They know that all ways to the One are equally valid and true.'

Summarise what the above passage says about Smarta views on the diversity of Hindu traditions. [5]

- (b) Explain why a Hindu might choose to practise Shaktism. [10]

- (c) Evaluate the claim that differences between theistic traditions are **not** important in contemporary Hinduism. [15]

[Total: 30]

OR

- 4 (a) Outline what the concept of ishvara tells Hindus about the nature of Brahman. [5]

- (b) Explain why it might be important for Hindus to understand the relationship between Brahman and the atman. [10]

- (c) 'Human beings can never really know Brahman.' Discuss. [15]

[Total: 30]

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