CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge IGCSE™

SANSKRIT **0499/23**

Paper 2 Literature and Epic Civilisation **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 90

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

This document consists of **7** printed pages.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
✓	Correct point
SEEN	Page or response seen by examiner
BOD	Benefit of doubt given
—	Incorrect translation or point
^	Omission

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
General Note: In all cases reasonable alternative answers which are not specifically mentioned in the marking scheme will be accepted, and either some of the marks or all of the marks for that question will be awarded. Candidates may use upper or lower case initial letters for transliterating Sanskrit proper nouns. By 'construal' is meant understanding the overall meaning of the words as a sentence and conveying this in the English translation.			
Question	**Answer**	**Marks**	**Guidance**
1	**Mahābhārata Story 3**		
1(a)	the king [1] of the fishermen [1]	**2**	
1(b)	daughter [1] in marriage [1]	**2**	
1(c)	'If Satyavatī [1] will be your [1] wife then [1] her son [1] will be king [1].' *[1 mark for construal]*	**6**	
1(d)	the palace [1]	**1**	
1(e)	not to be king [1].	**1**	
1(f)	Another example is the deer's curse [1] on Pāṇḍu which prevented him from fathering children [1]. An example of vows being made in modern times is the marriage vow. [1]	**3**	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2	**Bhagavad Gītā. Ch 3 v 43; Ch 6 v 30; Ch 17 v 16**		
2(a)	'Thus having known that which is higher [1] than the intellect [1] sustaining the self by the Self [1] kill the enemy, O Arjuna [1], which has the form of desire [1] and is difficult to conquer [1].	**6**	Accept 'restraining' for sustaining Accept 'O might-armed' for Arjuna
2(b)	one who sees [1] Kṛṣṇa everywhere [1] and everything [1] in Kṛṣṇa [1].	**4**	
2(c)	Peace of mind [1] gentleness [1] silence [1] and self-restraint [1] (max. 3)	**3**	
2(d)	'Purity of being' would be helpful in modern society [1] as it would lead to less conflict and acrimony [1].	**2**	Or 'Purity of being' would not be helpful in modern society [1] as it would be seen as naïvety [1].

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3	**Sanskrit Epic Civilisation**		
3(a)(i)	the principle that actions [1] create an effect in the future [1]	**2**	Note – candidates should have two points for each term.
3(a)(ii)	spirit [1] whose reflection is prakṛti [1]	**2**	
3(a)(iii)	ignorance [1] the belief that māyā is the true reality [1]	**2**	
3(a)(iv)	transmigration [1] the process of continued rebirth [1]	**2**	
3(b)	*rajas* [1] – the quality of activity and passion [1] *tamas* [1] – the quality of dullness and inertia [1]	**4**	
3(c)	Any three of: *manas* – mind [1] the lower level that thinks and deliberates [1] *buddhi* – reason [1] the organ of discrimination [1] *citta* – the heart [1] where the deposits of actions are stored [1] *ahaṅkāra* – the organ that identifies the ātman [1] with something in creation [1]	**6**	
3(d)	One out of: *dvāpara* [1] – the bronze age [1] *tretā* [1] – the silver age [1] *kṛta* [1] – the golden age [1]	**2**	For '*kṛta'* [1] accept '*satya'* [1]
3(e)(i)	a collection of hymns [1] divided into four sections [1]	**2**	Accept: 'non-human' 'eternal'
3(e)(ii)	what has been remembered [1] secondary in authority to śruti [1]	**2**	Accept 'teaching of great sages'
3(e)(iii)	grammar [1]	**1**	

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<table>
<tr><th>Question</th><th>Answer</th><th>Marks</th><th>Guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td>3(f)</td><td>Awarding Essay Marks: Candidates are expected to write about 100 words, making relevant points, and writing Sanskrit terms accurately when required. Marks should be awarded on the basis of the following chart:
<table>
<tr><th>Essay Marks</th><th>Description of Mark Categories</th></tr>
<tr><td>10–9</td><td>Thorough knowledge and understanding of the essay title. Articulate and balanced response that demonstrates perceptive use of illustration. Shows very good personal insight when discussing issues. There may be some omissions and very minor errors. Conclusion drawn on the wider themes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>8–7</td><td>Good knowledge and understanding that considers the essay title. Mostly balanced response that demonstrates some perceptive use of illustration. Shows good personal insight when discussing issues. There may be some flaws and omissions and minor errors. Conclusion drawn on some of the wider themes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6–5</td><td>Sound knowledge and understanding that considers the essay title. Some demonstration of personal insight into the key issues with some supporting examples. There may be flaws and omissions and some errors. Conclusion attempted on the wider themes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4–3</td><td>Some knowledge and understanding that attempts to consider the essay title. Some attempts to show personal insight of the key issues with limited supporting examples. There may be flaws and omissions and some errors that limit perceptions. Conclusion is limited.</td></tr>
<tr><td>2–1</td><td>Basic knowledge and understanding that shows limited ability to answer the essay title. Little or no personal insight of the key issues with limited, if any, supporting examples. There may be flaws and omissions and some errors that limit perceptions. Conclusion is weak or not present.</td></tr>
<tr><td>0</td><td>No response worthy of credit.</td></tr>
</table></td><td>10</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4	***Pañcatantra* (page 88 lines 21 to 28, page 89 line 1)**		
4(a)	bathing [1] accessories [1]	**2**	
4(b)(i)	with a cheerful [1] disposition [1]	**2**	Accept 'face/mind' for disposition
4(b)(ii)	bahuvrīhi [1]	**1**	
4(c)	He hid the boy in a cave [1] in the river bank [1] and blocked the entrance with a great [1] stone [1].	**4**	
4(d)	Tell me, [1] where is [1] my son [1] who went [1] with you to the river? [1] *[1 mark for construal]*	**6**	
4(e)	The boy was carried away [1] from the bank [1] of the river [1] by a falcon [1].	**4**	Accept 'hawk' for falcon
4(f)	to report the incident [1] to the king's [1] court [1]	**3**	
4(g)	*A maximum of three marks awarded for any reasonable and full response. Candidates might mention, for example, three of the following:* i) simple prose ii) dramatic situations e.g. the boy hidden iii) moral dilemmas raised e.g. Was the merchant's revenge just? iv) dialogue interspersed in prose v) sarcasm e.g. 'satyavādin'	**3**	

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