



Cambridge O Level

HINDUISM

2055/01

Paper 1 Hindu Gods and Festivals

October/November 2023

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2023 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **15** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Marking instructions General principles

- You are urged to use the full range of marks, bearing in mind that it is not necessary for a response to be 'perfect' to get the top marks.
- If it is as good as might reasonably be expected from an O Level student who has studied this syllabus then it should be rewarded appropriately.
- Adopt a positive approach: award marks based on what the candidate can do, rather than deducting marks for errors. Accept any recognisable spelling of names and terms.

Part (a) and (b) Questions (Assessment Objective 1) Depending on the format of the question marks are to be awarded:

Either: 1 mark for each valid response.

Or: for a combination of valid points, examples and development.

Part (c) and (d) Questions (Assessment Objectives 1 and 2)

Examiners should adopt a 'best-fit' approach. The Examiner must select the set of descriptors provided in the Mark Grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked. As the Examiner works upwards through the Mark Bands, s/he will eventually arrive at a set of descriptors that fits the candidate's performance. When s/he reaches this point, the Examiner should always then check the descriptors in the band above to confirm whether or not there is just enough evidence to award a mark in the higher band.

To select the most appropriate mark within each set of descriptors, teacher/Examiners should use the following guidance:

- If most of the descriptors fit the work, then the teacher/Examiner will award the top mark in the band.
- If there is just enough evidence (and the teacher/Examiner had perhaps been considering the band below), then the lowest mark in the band will be awarded.

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)(i)	Name the god who is also known as the creator in the Trimurti. Brahma, Brahma Dev	1
1(a)(ii)	Give <u>one</u> item that this god might be shown holding in a murti. A book (veda), a spoon, string of beads/mala, water pot, a bow, a sceptre.	1
1(b)	Describe how Kartikeya (Murugan) might be shown in a murti. Kartikeya is shown as beautiful and with his peacock vehicle, sometimes the peacock is trampling a snake. He carries a spear or a bow and arrow or a flag with a rooster. He might be shown with his hand in a protective palm-out gesture. In some regions he is shown with six heads.	3
1(c)	Explain how the features in a murti of Vishnu help Hindus to worship. Murtis represent beliefs about the deity. The items that they hold, and their appearance reflect their attributes and importance, allowing the worshipper to relate to the deity and learn about them. Some of the key features of a murti of Vishnu include showing him in a standing position or lying on a snake, there are other representations of Vishnu and these should be credited. If standing he is often shown on a lotus representing his divinity as his feet are not touching the earth. This shows that he is worthy of worship. When shown lying on a snake this recalls his role in the creation of the universe, showing again how he is worthy of worship.	5

Question	Answer	Marks
1(d)	<p>'The fierce aspect of Durga is more important than her caring aspect.'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of gods in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>Durga can be seen as a manifestation of Shakti, who some Hindus worship as the Supreme Being. She is often given the title Ma (mother) as a reflection of this.</p> <p>The divine Shakti, manifest as Durga and other goddesses, is the active, energetic, immanent power, combining with the masculine of Shiva to create movement and change. This divine power can take different forms and different goddesses are associated with different qualities; for example, some goddesses are considered primarily caring and others as primarily fierce. Candidates may argue that all goddesses embody both to some degree as fierceness can be an expression of a caring nature, for example to protect. Durga is traditionally considered a fierce warrior as she was created with this purpose, to kill the demon Mahisasura; as he could not be killed by a man the Trimurti created Durga to kill him. In murti she is shown holding weapons of many different kinds and her animal vehicle is a lion or tiger. Her very name means 'unattainable' or 'difficult to approach'. Candidates may argue that she is worshipped more for being fierce than caring.</p> <p>However, Durga is not only fierce, she does not use violence for its own sake. Killing Mahisasura can be seen as a caring act as it was done to protect others. Candidates may argue that Durga commits violence when necessary in the cause of compassion and protection for her devotees and that she is worshipped for this.</p> <p>Candidates may argue that as a mother figure Ma Durga is worshipped for her caring nature. She is sometimes called Ambika (little mother), a name also given to Parvati, who is generally considered a compassionate aspect of shakti. This suggests that Durga is not solely worshipped as the fiercer manifestations of the Goddess but for caring ones also.</p> <p>As with all deities, Durga's nature is more complex than that of a fierce warrior and candidates may acknowledge that this is the case and that her devotees do indeed worship her for her caring nature as well as her fierceness.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	<p>Name <u>two</u> objects that might be held by a murti of Ganesha.</p> <p>Examples could include, a conch, lotus, axe, sweetmeats, his broken tusk, pen or a noose. Bowl of Modaka.</p> <p>More modern murti of Ganesha hold more modern items, such as a mobile phone, and this should also be credited.</p>	2

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	<p>Outline the meaning of the trident held by a murti of Shiva.</p> <p>The trident or trishul has more than one meaning. The three tines can be said to represent the three deities of the Trimurti and/or their roles of creation, maintenance, and destruction. Shiva in his three states of sleeping, waking, dreaming, the equilibrium of the three gunas; sattva, rajas, tamas, past, present, future. The trident is also identified as a weapon to defeat demons and overcome evil. The 3 gunas.</p> <p>Any correct response will be credited.</p>	3
2(c)	<p>Explain why the deities of the Trimurti might be shown with female deities in a murti.</p> <p>The three deities of the Trimurti are male but they are also associated with shakti, female divine energy, as each has a female consort. Brahma is shown with Saraswati, goddess of knowledge and learning, Vishnu is shown with Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, beauty and prosperity, and Shiva is shown with Parvati, the model wife and mother.</p> <p>Candidates may explain the importance of the female deities both collectively and/or individually.</p> <p>They are considered important as both the male and female energy of the divine are vital for understanding of the nature of reality. This reflects the fundamental nature of the universe, the male energy is conscious but inactive while female energy is active but unconscious; this means the male deity cannot act without the female.</p> <p>Each female deity has their own importance for Hindus. Saraswati and Brahma have a son, Manu the father of mankind, who created humans and the varnas from his body, and author of the moral scripture The laws of Manu. Saraswati is also referred to as Veda-Mata, mother of the Vedas, which are considered her children. She is offered devotion by musicians and students.</p> <p>Lakshmi is worshipped during Divali (Deepavali) as goddess of wealth she is offered the account books and prayed to in thanks for the year and for a prosperous new year. Her marriage to Vishnu is also celebrated as the perfect union.</p> <p>Parvati is important as the model wife and mother. She has two sons with Shiva, Ganesha and Kartikeya. She is prayed to by brides and newlyweds. Her beauty is celebrated by many Hindus, some link their nose piercings to this.</p> <p>Each female deity ideally matches and complements the functions and roles of the male deity.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
2(d)	<p>'The gods cannot be worshipped without knowing their stories.'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of gods in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>Candidates may be aware that there are different ways to understand the gods within Hinduism and some might argue that it is easier to worship via a visual image, making stories less important. However, the symbolic features of a murti are explained through the stories so the two are linked. For example, the colour of their skin, position of their bodies, the way that they are dressed and the items that they are shown holding all represent/communicate something about the deity. Candidates are likely to use examples from the deities studied such as Durga's weapons and the story about Mahishasura or Shiva's matted hair as the source of the Ganges. The murti is a snapshot reflecting the key moment of the story that represents the quality, attributes and power of the deity in essence.</p> <p>Other Hindus may say stories are a distraction. There are other ways to worship the gods and offer devotion. Havan the fire sacrifice to the god Agni, is performed on special occasions such as weddings. This type of worship has its origins in the Vedas that give ritual instruction rather than tell stories.</p> <p>Many Hindus go on pilgrimage to worship. They believe that there are holy places where heaven and earth meet. Many of these are rivers, such as the Ganges, and mountains, such as the Himalayas. A pilgrim may travel to such a site to experience awe and wonder in the natural beauty.</p> <p>Meditation and devotion at such sites is a valid way to do this. However, many pilgrimage sites exist as a result of their connection to the stories about the gods in those places. For example, Mount Kailash, where Shiva meditates or Varanasi, the home of Shiva and Parvati or Oudh (Ayodhya), the birthplace and kingdom of Rama.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that the stories are vitally important when worshipping the gods. The Hindu Epics are the most widely read religious Hindu texts, they are translated into many languages and also transmitted in ways that do not require literacy, for example, orally and puppet shows or plays. It might be argued that it is the stories that make the gods accessible and allow the emotional connection required for worship.</p> <p>Creation stories may be discussed as further support of this point. Furthermore, some of the older gods are no longer worshipped and their stories are forgotten.</p> <p>As Hinduism is an umbrella term covering a wide range of belief and practice it is unlikely that there will be agreement amongst all Hindus on how important stories are for Hindus when worshipping the gods.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)	<p>Give two things covered by Vamana's steps.</p> <p>The earth and the heavens. Candidates could also state that Vamana stepped on the demon – this could also be one mark.</p>	2
3(b)	<p>Outline one story about a non-human avatar.</p> <p>Narsimha the man-lion defeated the demon Hiranyakashipu by bursting forth from a pillar on the doorstep at dusk. This is the animal avatar named on the syllabus but any of the other three animal avatars will be credited.</p> <p>Matsya the fish rescued Manu from the great flood.</p> <p>Kurma the tortoise supported the mountain that was used for the churning of the ocean of milk where the gods and demons competed for amrit, the nectar of immortality.</p> <p>Varaha the boar used his tusks to rescue the earth from the bottom of the ocean, where it had been laced by a demon.</p>	3
3(c)	<p>Explain what the life of Krishna teaches Hindus.</p> <p>Krishna's life is usually learnt from in stages that view him as either a playful child, a beautiful young man and/or a wise warrior king. He also appears as the charioteer in the Bhagavad Gita. Devotees traditionally identify with him at these stages of his life.</p> <p>Events of his life can teach about the nature of god, for example there are several miracles stories of his power overcoming evil, reinforcing that Vishnu maintains dharma, such as when he holds a mountain above the villagers of Vrindavan to save them from a flood or when he dances to defeat the many headed snake demon Kaliya.</p> <p>In stories of his adventures with the gopis Hindus learn about strong personal love. The love that is described; being filled with delight in one's company, constantly thinking about them, is what Vaishnavas believe can develop with god. His relationship with the gopis shows a playful side, an example that worshipping god and living the correct life can be joyous and fun. His love and passion for Radha is a model to symbolise the love between humans and the divine.</p> <p>Krishna is shown as living a full life in the material world. At the end of his life he returns to heaven, showing that this is his rightful place.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
3(d)	<p>'Avatars are the best way for Hindus to understand Vishnu.'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of avatars in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>The term avatar refers to Vishnu taking the form of a human or animal to descend to the world. This is most often at times of need, to defeat evil and restore dharma, as described by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita.</p> <p>There are commonly believed to be 10 avatars of Vishnu, with the 10th yet to come. Rama, Krishna, Vamana and Narsimha are named on the syllabus so candidates are likely to focus their argument on these four. There are other beliefs about the number of avatars Vishnu has, thus showing his importance.</p> <p>An avatar can help Hindus identify with and gain understanding of aspects of god. As the avatars of Vishnu descend to restore or preserve dharma they are an indication of the kindly nature of Vishnu as the maintainer god in the Trimurti, and/or of his all pervading nature. When Vishnu descends as an avatar their words and actions give further insight to help a Hindu understand god. This is particularly so with the two human avatars Rama and Krishna.</p> <p>The key teaching in the story of Rama is his devotion to dharma. However, he is also revered for his qualities of strength, both moral and physical, and his humility and loyalty all of which could help develop understanding of some aspects of god. Rama is worshipped by Vaishnava Hindus and this could be further support of how he helps with understanding of and relationship with the divine.</p> <p>Kirshna is worshipped by some Hindus as the supreme deity, suggesting that his stories can be vital to understanding god. Many Hindus identify with Krishna through his different representations, such as a playful and mischievous child, a passionate and beautiful young man and a wise warrior. His teaching in the Bhagavad Gita is key to living a dharmic life and seeking liberation through bhakti, jnana and/or karma yogas.</p> <p>His relationship with the gopis shows a playful side. His love and passion for Radha is an example of being a good partner, as well as a model to symbolise the love between humans and the divine. Again, this could help develop understanding of some aspects of god.</p> <p>However, not all Hindus would agree with the statement as it applies primarily to those who seek a relationship with a personal deity, through bhakti, and also those who worship Vishnu. Other branches of Hinduism, such as the Vedanta schools, focus on jnana as important to understanding god.</p> <p>There are also further ways to develop understanding of god and offer devotion such as through havan the fire sacrifice to the god Agni, pilgrimage, meditation and studying scripture. (only some of which contain stories of avatars).</p> <p>As Hinduism is an umbrella term covering a wide range of belief and practice it is unlikely that there will be agreement amongst all Hindus on the best way to seek and develop understanding of god.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
4(a)	<p>Give two forms that an avatar of Vishnu has taken.</p> <p>Human or more specific answers such as, king, warrior or dwarf. Animal or more specific answers such as man-lion, fish, or tortoise.</p>	2
4(b)	<p>Describe how Krishna is shown in a murti.</p> <p>His skin is blue. He is often shown playing the flute, surrounded by adoring gopis, with cows, or with Radha.</p> <p>He can be shown as a child, crawling or dancing, holding a ball of butter. He can also be seen as a charioteer, holding the flute.</p>	3
4(c)	<p>Explain what Hindus can learn from the story of Vamana.</p> <p>Vamana is the dwarf avatar of Vishnu who appeared when a demon had taken control of the earth. He asked the demon to grant him the land that he could cover in three strides. Seeing his small size the demon agreed. Vamana grew to giant size and covered the whole world in a stride, the heavens in another and his third stride was onto the head of the demon pushing him back into hell.</p> <p>Hindus can learn from this that good will defeat evil, if they stay loyal to god he will protect them and his enemies will perish. They can learn that Vishnu will come as an avatar to maintain dharma, ensuring things stay in their proper place. They can also learn about god's power as Vamana appears small but is able to use the power he has to grow and that teaches that he is cunning, he is cleverer than the demon.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
4(d)	<p>'The most important purpose of Krishna is to teach the three paths to liberation.'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of gods in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>Krishna is a human avatar of Vishnu. He is worshipped by some Hindus as the supreme deity. Avatars of Vishnu are believed to descend to earth at times of need to restore dharma, and this is considered the purpose of Krishna.</p> <p>Candidates may disagree with the statement and present supported arguments that the main importance of Krishna is in his many deeds and contribution to an understanding of Vishnu, as a focus of devotion, which he promotes as the best path to liberation. This argument could be extended by explaining that the most important purpose of Krishna is to reveal that liberation relies upon divine revelation and grace.</p> <p>Hindus can learn from Krishna in his different representations, such as a playful and mischievous child, a passionate and beautiful young man and a wise warrior. His relationship with the gopis shows a playful side, an example that worshipping god and living the correct life can be joyous and fun. His love and passion for Radha is a model to symbolise the love between humans and the divine.</p> <p>Candidates may present these stories and examples to demonstrate that Krishna is an example of behaving in the correct way, i.e. doing ones duty in accordance with rta, behaving in a dharmic way. His ability to overcome evil is expressed in stories of him performing miracles, for example when he holds a mountain above the villagers of Vrindavan to save them from a flood. His teaching in the Bhagavad Gita is key to living a dharmic life and seeking liberation through bhakti, jnana and/or karma yogas is just part of his purpose on earth.</p> <p>However, candidates may agree with the statement in that the ultimate aim for a Hindu is liberation from samsara, moksha and that three of the four margas are taught by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. These three form the essential way of life for many Hindus which may lead candidates to argue that teaching them was the single most important purpose of Krishna.</p> <p>The Bhagavad Gita is one of the most popular, most widely read and widely translated Hindu texts. It is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna that discusses many aspects of Hindu belief. Within it Krishna outlines three margas; bhakti yoga; devotion to a personal deity, karma yoga; selfless action, jnana yoga; knowledge. A fourth, Raja or Ashtanga yoga was added later, and these form the basis of a life seeking liberation for the vast majority of Hindus, thus it could be argued that it is the sole most important purpose of Krishna.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
5(a)	<p>Name two things that a family might do to celebrate Divali (Deepavali).</p> <p>Some answers might include, light Deva lamps, buy/wear new clothes, offer account books with thanks, pray for a prosperous financial year to come, give/receive gifts, clean and or decorate their homes, give/receive cards, see/hold fireworks displays, make rangoli patterns in doorways, place swastika sign above lintels.</p>	2
5(b)	<p>Describe what usually happens to the clay murtis at the end of Ganesh Chathurti.</p> <p>Traditionally the murti are carried through the streets in a procession to the sea or river where they are then immersed in water to dissipate. Smaller murtis may be immersed in a bucket of water. Some Hindus might take items from the image to keep.</p>	3
5(c)	<p>Explain the significance of fasting for Hindus.</p> <p>Fasting is to abstain from food and drink for religious observance. Hindus may fast to become closer to god, by fasting they are able to concentrate fully on god. Fasting is a way to deny the body's physical need to pursue its spiritual needs. By abstaining from food one can focus on the self as spiritual rather than physical, as atman rather than the body. Imposing restraint upon oneself focuses the mind more clearly. In this way fasting can be seen as an act of self-discipline as well as an act of worship or observance.</p> <p>Hindus may fast on certain days of the month or on certain days of the week, for example devotees of Hanuman may fast on Tuesdays and at festivals such as Navaratri and Maha Shivaratri to seek the blessing of Shiva and to reflect upon the solemnity of their vows and intentions.</p> <p>Fasting has also been used as a form of protest in the form of hunger strike, for example by M K Gandhi.</p> <p>Fasting has also been used as a form of purification before undertaking any spiritual activity.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
5(d)	<p>'All Hindus should celebrate Divali (Deepavali).'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of festivals in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>Candidates may argue in favour of the statement as Divali is one of the most popular and widely celebrated Hindu festivals. It celebrates the victory of good over evil and marks the new year, both of which are important to all Hindus. Divali is also celebrated more widely by Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists further suggesting its importance.</p> <p>Divali celebrates the story of Rama and Sita and takes its name from the rows of lights that were lit to celebrate their return from exile. As such it may be considered more important for Vaishnava Hindus than for others, such as Shaivites. Further support may be offered to this point by discussion of the remembrance of Lakshmi at Divali who is welcomed into the family home to bring learning and prosperity. Account books are also offered to Lakshmi in thanks for the financial year and in hope of prosperity for the coming one.</p> <p>Celebrating festivals can be seen as an expression of Hindu identity and important community occasions that unite family and friends and allow all to draw closer to god. In this way it could be argued that celebrating festivals is important to all Hindus and that Divali is one of the most popular and widely celebrated across the world.</p> <p>However, candidates may contrast this by arguing that many Hindus do not celebrate the festival. As Hinduism is an umbrella term for a wide range of religious and cultural beliefs and practices there is no one way to be a Hindu. For example, devotees of the philosophical schools such as Advaita Vedanta may not celebrate Divali as they are focused on the spiritual pursuit of jnana. They see the physical world as unimportant, a delusion (maya) that keeps atman trapped in samsara, and thus may not be concerned with celebrating festivals at all.</p> <p>As Hinduism is a diverse set of beliefs and practice it is unlikely that any one element has importance for all Hindus and candidates may conclude this with reference to Divali.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
6(a)(i)	<p>What is meant by the term 'fasting'?</p> <p>To abstain from food and drink for religious observance.</p>	1
6(a)(ii)	<p>Why might a Hindu fast during a festival?</p> <p>To seek the blessing of god, to focus their mind on god, to become closer to god, to reflect on the solemnity of the occasion, to deny their physical needs over spiritual ones, to purify themselves.</p>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
6(b)	<p>Describe why a Hindu might stay awake to observe Maha Shivaratri.</p> <p>Hindus stay awake in an all night vigil, praying to Shiva, to remember his all night dance to overcome darkness and ignorance. They might stay awake to remember his devotee who stayed awake in a tree all night offering devotion to Shiva.</p>	3
6(c)	<p>Explain why some Hindus do <u>not</u> celebrate Maha Shivaratri.</p> <p>Maha Shivaratri is a festival that offers devotion to Shiva thus it might only be celebrated by Shaivite Hindus. Unlike many other Hindu festivals it takes place at night, rather than during the day, which is likely to mean that not all Hindus observe this festival, for example families, the very young and very old might not as it involves staying awake all night. Rather than celebration and revelry the festival is a solemn occasion, involving fasting, which might also deter or prohibit some Hindus from observing this festival.</p> <p>As Hinduism is an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of religious and cultural beliefs and practices it is common that not all Hindus observe/celebrate the same festivals.</p> <p>Geographical location might also determine whether a Hindu is more or less likely to observe this festival, for example it is widely celebrated in Mauritius, Varanasi and Tamil Nadu at the Annamalaiyar temple.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
6(d)	<p>'Celebrating festivals is <u>not</u> important in showing commitment to the key beliefs in Hinduism.'</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of festivals in Hinduism to support your argument.</p> <p>Candidates are likely to begin by considering shared beliefs in Hinduism and might focus on atman, Brahman, samsara, karma, moksha and dharma. The expression of these in the festivals studied is likely to be examined with candidates evaluating with regard to the statement.</p> <p>As Hinduism is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of beliefs and practice, as it is a dharmic religion a central concern is often action rather than belief. There may be some debate around 'shared beliefs' and disagreement over the importance of festivals.</p> <p>Celebrating festivals is not considered part of a Hindu's varnashramadharma, which is for many what guides their life, thus it may be argued that festivals are not an expression of shared beliefs. However, the importance of dharma is remembered at Divali when telling and celebrating the story of Rama, considered to be a model for a dharmic life so the alternative view may be offered.</p> <p>The expression of shared beliefs can be shown through practice, including the celebrating of festivals, part of which is celebrating shared beliefs. The customs, worship and devotion observed at festivals could be argued to reinforce and celebrate shared beliefs amongst Hindus.</p> <p>The shared beliefs in Hinduism are expressed and celebrated through festivals and candidates are likely to explain this with reference to the festivals that they have studied. For example, Divali celebrates the story of Rama and Sita which emphasises the importance of courage, loyalty, faithfulness, duty, virtue and following dharma. Maha Shivaratri is an occasion for fasting and meditation during an all-night vigil allowing devotees to purify themselves and contemplate the divine/nature of the universe.</p> <p>Many Hindus across the world do celebrate their shared beliefs through festivals. As pointed out by Vivekananda Hindus do everything religiously, it is their whole way of living and not isolated to individual ritual or actions.</p> <p>Not all Hindus celebrate festivals so candidates might argue that it is not necessary to express shared beliefs through festivals, but rather through other aspects of their daily observance.</p>	10