

# Cambridge O Level

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**HINDUISM****2055/01**

Paper 1 Hindu Gods and Festivals

**October/November 2025****MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 60

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**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.

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This document consists of **17** 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 descriptions 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.









**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
	Unclear
	Omission mark
	Development
	Evaluation
	Irrelevant
	Not answered question
	Correct point
	Benefit of the doubt

**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)	<p><b>Name the relationship between Ganesha and Kartikeya (Murugan).</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brothers.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
1(a)(ii)	<p><b>Name <u>one</u> thing Ganesha does for his devotees.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes obstacles</li> <li>• Places obstacles</li> <li>• Answers prayers</li> <li>• Grants boons</li> <li>• Blesses devotees.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
1(b)	<p><b>Outline the meaning of Durga's animal vehicle.</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <p>Durga's vehicle is a lion or a tiger and represents the qualities and abilities of those animals and Durga's possession of those qualities herself. Some interpretations take the animal as representative of uncontrolled tendencies which are controlled by the deity who rides the animal.</p> <p>Both lions and tigers symbolise strength, power, ferocity and courage, and these are all qualities Durga possesses, as she is a warrior with the power to destroy a demon that other deities could not fight.</p> <p>The lion is sometimes called king of the beasts, while Durga is often worshipped as Shakti, the Supreme Feminine.</p>	<b>3</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p><b>Explain how the features of a murti of Kartikeya (Murugan) teach Hindus about his nature.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Kartikeya is most commonly shown as a warrior, carrying a vel (spear) which represents his power to fight and conquer evils in the world.</p> <p>He is often depicted with six heads; these might be said to represent his ability to see in all directions, which contributes to his skill as a warrior. Other meanings attributed to the six heads are that they represent the need to be alert for the six main vices of human life or that they represent elements of human existence that need to be controlled through self-knowledge. All of these interpretations suggest Kartikeya is disciplined, self-aware and alert for danger on behalf of his devotees. Similarly, his peacock vehicle symbolises the need to overcome and restrain harmful inclinations and habits. He is sometimes described as embodying human perfection.</p>	5
1(d)	<p><b>‘Most worshippers of Ganesha are students.’</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of gods in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Ganesha is one of the most popular Hindu gods because he brings luck; this attribute may make him feel particularly relevant for students working towards high stakes exams. Similarly, his role as remover of obstacles may lead students to petition him for help with revision or accessing challenging course materials.</p> <p>However, the desire for good fortune and the need to remove obstacles are hardly unique to students. These roles mean Ganesha has devotees from all walks of life. He was given the boon of his blessing being sought before any important undertaking or religious activity and so it could be argued that anyone carrying out puja for any deity is also likely to recognise and honour Ganesha.</p> <p>These are not the only attributes ascribed to Ganesha. He is also considered a possessor of wisdom or intellect (buddhi) and the authorship of various sacred texts is sometimes attributed to him; this a quality that could be argued to be of particular interest to students or a quality of which the world in general is in need. The jnana marga (path of knowledge) is a path to liberation in Hinduism and followers of it might be considered students well past their time in human institutions of learning, although they might also be less likely to engage in bhakti (devotion) to any anthropomorphic deity.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)(i)	<p><b>Give <u>one</u> feature of a murti of Brahma.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four heads</li> <li>• Four hands</li> <li>• Prayer beads</li> <li>• No weapons</li> <li>• Holds a water pot</li> <li>• Holds a book.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
2(a)(ii)	<p><b>Give the meaning of <u>this</u> feature.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four heads/four hands symbolise the four cardinal directions and so Brahma's connection to the material world</li> <li>• Four heads/four hands might also symbolise the four Vedas</li> <li>• Holding a book symbolises the Vedas and Brahma as their originator</li> <li>• The absence of any weapon represents his role as the creator</li> <li>• Prayer beads (mala) represent time and the cycles of creation</li> <li>• The water pot represents amrit, the elixir of life, so it symbolises immortality; it could also be said to symbolise creation and/or fertility.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
2(b)	<p><b>Outline the connection between Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <p>These three deities are the Trimurti. They are the creator (Brahma), the maintainer (Vishnu) and the destroyer (Shiva). Together they are responsible for the cycle of creation and destruction that characterises the material world. Brahma emerges from sleep and creates a new world from the debris of the old one, Vishnu keeps this world in balance until dharma has decayed to the point where it must be destroyed by Shiva.</p>	<b>3</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	<p><b>Explain how the attributes of Durga are shown in stories about her.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Durga was created by the gods to destroy Mahishasura, who they could not kill themselves because he possessed a boon protecting him. They gave her a physical form that would make her a fierce warrior, with ten arms, and then each god gave her his own weapon to wield. The story illustrates her nature as a protector and a deity who actively removes evil from the world.</p> <p>Durga is often viewed as synonymous with Shakti, and she has many avatars. This include Brahmacharini who, as an aspect of Parvati, won Shivas' regard through her dedicated asceticism, demonstrating Durga's less fearsome aspects; Skandamata, the mother of Kartikeya (Murugan), who is described as the mother of courage; and Kalaratri/Kali who drank the blood of the demon Raktabija to stop him cloning himself as they fought.</p>	5
2(d)	<p><b>'Murtis do <u>not</u> show what gods really look like.'</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of gods in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Candidates might agree with the statement, arguing that the ultimate reality is nirguna Brahman and that murti represent aspects or forms of saguna Brahman only. This does not mean that belief in the existence of a real being looking exactly like the murti is necessarily rejected but rather that such a being does not reflect the whole or ultimate truth. From this perspective murtis provide a visual focus for puja and devotion, with the various attributes pictured reminding devotees of the qualities and characteristics they seek to connect with.</p> <p>In general terms murtis represent the nature of a particular deity, through the physical form of the body and the items associated with the deity. The image itself could be understood as a symbolic or metaphorical representation of that deity's nature, or it could be seen as a literal image of that deity. It might also be argued that a deity can appear in anyway it wishes to and therefore murtis might be exact representations of some instances but not of others.</p> <p>Some stories of specific deities could be said to imply that they appear to be ordinary, albeit very attractive, human beings but murti show them otherwise. For example, Krishna lived a human life, with his foster mother only realising his true nature when she looked into his mouth. This implies that his skin is not always, or necessarily, the blue it is generally shown as in murtis of him.</p>	10



Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)(i)	<p><b>Name the avatar who is considered to be the perfect man.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rama.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
3(a)(ii)	<p><b>How long was he exiled for?</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14 years.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
3(b)	<p><b>Describe <u>one</u> event that led to Vishnu becoming an avatar.</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <p>Avatars incarnate to protect dharma so the events that lead to them are usually associated with demons who act adharmically. Rama was born to kill Ravanna, who was invincible to the gods due to a boon from Brahma and who was abusing his power.</p> <p>Other avatars were also incarnated with the specific qualities necessary to slay demons who were otherwise protected: the demon Hiranyakashipu necessitated the incarnation of Narsimha by gaining boons which protected him from being killed during the day or night, inside or outside the house, in the sky or on the land, by any weapon, and by humans, deities, demons, or animals.</p> <p>Vamana incarnated for a slightly different reason; Bali (or Mahabali) was a devotee of Vishnu but had the power to return from death and so could not be defeated in war. When he conquered the heavens, the gods begged Vishnu to save them, and he incarnated as Vamana to restore the balance.</p>	<b>3</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
3(c)	<p><b>Explain why a Hindu might choose to worship an avatar of Vishnu.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>The avatars are Vishnu's incarnations in the material world; because they have specific forms and incarnate to perform specific tasks, they might become the focus of worship for Hindus with particular needs or interests that require those qualities of the divine. Vishnu, as the Supreme Godhead, could feel far beyond individual understanding while different aspects of his nature are central to his avatars and easier for humans to grasp and feel a sense of connection to.</p> <p>Some avatars, usually Rama or Krishna, are seen by some Hindu traditions as almost synonymous with Vishnu and are worshipped as the Supreme in their own right. This is a personal and saguna (with qualities) way of approaching the divine, and individuals following the bhakti marga may choose these deities as their Ista-devata.</p> <p>Some avatars are connected with specific festivals, such as Rama and Divali (Deepavali) and Hindus celebrating these festivals might include the avatars in their celebrations even if they are not usually particular devotees of those deities.</p>	<b>5</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
3(d)	<p><b>'Human avatars are too perfect to be useful role models for ordinary people.'</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of avatars in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Rama and Krishna are two of the most popular avatars of Vishnu; both lived human lives and are worshipped in that form.</p> <p>Rama is often described as the perfect man (Maryada Purushottam), demonstrating the dharmic ideal in all his roles and relationships. While this does offer an aspirational role model it is also the case that Rama was a king and, as such, his dharma was different to that of most Hindus. Krishna is generally given a very different character to Rama, often worshipped as the playful, mischievous child. However, he is also the charioteer in the Bhagavad Gita, sharing wisdom about dharma and liberation with Arjuna. On the face of it Krishna might be seen as less perfectly good than Rama and so perhaps a more achievable ideal to aspire to.</p> <p>Since the lives of the human avatars encompassed many things that ordinary human lives include love, marriage, parenthood, responsibilities they could be considered helpful role models, showing that all aspects of human life have value and can be lived well. However, it could also be argued that it is not reasonable to expect humans to reach the same standards of perfection as a god.</p> <p>As actual human beings, experiencing birth and death and everything in between, it might be argued that avatars cannot be perfect in the same way their divine form can be. If they have the same qualities and experiences that ordinary human beings have then their responses to them must be within the capacity of ordinary human beings.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
4(a)(i)	<p><b>Name the avatar of Vishnu who appeared as part human and part animal.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narsimha.</li> </ul>	1
4(a)(ii)	<p><b>What task did <u>this</u> avatar come to do?</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response. Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kill the demon Hiranyakashipu.</li> </ul>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
4(b)	<p><b>Outline <u>one</u> story about Krishna as an adult.</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <p>Krishna was removed from his birth family as a child due to a prophecy but returned to the land of his birth as an adult to depose his evil uncle Kamsa who was ruling as a tyrant.</p> <p>He later became friends with the Pandavas and, although he refused to wield a weapon in their war with the Kauravas, served as Arjunas charioteer. It is in this role he gave Arjuna the advice which became the Bhagavad Gita.</p> <p>The Mahabharata also tells how Krishna is killed after the Kurukshetra war, after having been cursed by the mother of 100 sons who died during it for not preventing their deaths. Her curse meant all of Krishna's family would kill one another and he would be unable to stop them fighting, he was then accidentally shot by a huntsman while meditating.</p>	<b>3</b>
4(c)	<p><b>Explain how the attributes of Krishna make him a popular focus for devotion.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors. Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Krishna is a human avatar of Vishnu, and he lived a full human life, including childhood, love, marriage and death. This might make Hindus feel that he can understand them and the challenges of their lives better than other forms of deity that have not lived such lives.</p> <p>Krishna is strongly associated with compassion, meaning his devotees can feel that he understands them and has a care for their struggles and difficulties even when they are not perfect.</p> <p>As a child Krishna is believed to have been playful and mischievous, and these are aspects of his nature that are valued by his devotees. His life is not an example of total renunciation or rejection of pleasure; he lived fully in the world and enjoyed it when he did so. He made friends and had lovers as human beings do.</p>	<b>5</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
4(d)	<p><b>‘Stories about animal avatars are only meant to be entertainment.’</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of avatars in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>The non-human avatars are less obvious role models for human beings than human ones. They have qualities and attributes that human beings do not have, and they incarnated in these forms because those attributes were needed in the situation they were coming in to. However, this does not mean that the stories overall cannot carry a deeper meaning or teach important lessons.</p> <p>Although human beings cannot literally take animal form (and rebirth as an animal is generally considered a backwards step) they can aspire to have the qualities represented by a specific animal. For example the tortoise is sometimes considered a symbol of discipline or self-restraint, which are virtues in Hinduism.</p> <p>It might also be argued that any story is intended to entertain, even if it is also intended to teach or inform. If entertainment were not a goal, then the information could be shared in a different way. Stories are engaging and memorable, they hold the attention in ways other forms of communication might not. So describing something as an entertaining story need not be assumed to be devaluing it.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
5(a)	<p><b>Give <u>two</u> devotional practices of Hindus at Divali (Deepavali).</b></p> <p>1 mark for each valid response.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting lamps/diya</li> <li>• Cleaning the home</li> <li>• Offering coins to Lakshmi.</li> </ul>	2
5(b)	<p><b>Give <u>three</u> beliefs associated with Divali (Deepavali).</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The festival remembers the return of Rama and Sita to Ayodhya</li> <li>• It is the time when Lakshmi and Vishnu were married</li> <li>• It celebrates the birth of Lakshmi</li> <li>• It symbolises the victory of good over evil or light over the darkness.</li> </ul>	3

Question	Answer	Marks
5(c)	<p><b>Explain why Hindus might observe Cavadi in different ways.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Cavadi is often associated with physical practices like piercing the skin or pushing a miniature vel (spear) through the cheeks or tongue. These, together with the carrying of the heavy cavadi (often also physically attached to the body) are devotional practices which are believed to cleanse sin as well as to demonstrate commitment and devotion to Kartikeya (Murugan). But the nature of these practices means that are not required of everyone; they are a choice. Even if an individual chooses to carry a burden for Kartikeya (Murugan) in the procession the specific nature of the austerity is personal: a cavadi can be as simple as a pot of milk or can take the form of making the procession on one's knees. The aim is to make a personal sacrifice to the deity and that nature of that sacrifice is personal because different people find different things challenging.</p> <p>The choice to participate in the final procession is also made for different reasons: people often do so as the fulfilment of a vow or as thanks for answered prayers. Others are simply demonstrating their devotion, offering their pain to their Ista-devata or seeking an experience of altered consciousness and connection with the divine.</p> <p>While a Cavadi procession to Kartikeya's shrine is the most dramatic aspect of the festival many Hindus choose to mark it with fasting and meditation in the days leading up to it.</p>	<b>5</b>

Question	Answer	Marks
5(d)	<p><b>'Sacrifice is an important part of all Hindu festivals.'</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of festivals in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>While there are some traditions within Hinduism that carry out animal sacrifice in the sense of killing an animal as an offering to the divine the popularity of this practice varies greatly. It is associated more with some deities than others, and even fierce deities are not universally agreed to desire or accept it. While this is a clear point in opposition to the statement, personal sacrifice in the form of fasting or other ascetic practices is more likely to be the focus of the discussion.</p> <p>Both Cavadi and Maha Shivaratri are associated with fasting, and Cavadi also with the carrying of heavy burdens and piercing the skin. All of these might be seen as sacrifices. They are made for many reasons: as an act of devotion to the deity, as the fulfilment of a vow, to give thanks for answered prayers, or as an offering in the hope of blessing. But these are not activities required of all devotees for every festival. Cavadi in particular has an association between the carrying of a cavadi and repayment in a spiritual sense, so individuals without a particular reason might be less likely to choose to participate.</p> <p>Although Cavadi is a dramatic festival to witness, observance of it is not widespread and in most other festivals the element of sacrifice is less obvious to an onlooker. It could be argued however that even a joyful celebration can be seen as a sacrifice of time which could be given to other things, made to honour a deity on a specific occasion. Similarly, festivals often involve sharing food which might be seen as a sacrifice made by those who can spare it on behalf of their fellow devotees.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
6(a)(i)	<p><b>Give <u>one</u> way Hindus might show devotion to Shiva during Maha Shivaratri.</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fasting</li> <li>• Staying awake all night</li> <li>• Making offerings.</li> </ul>	1

Question	Answer	Marks
6(a)(ii)	<p><b>What is being celebrated on Ganesh Chaturthi?</b></p> <p>1 mark for a valid response.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ganesha's birthday.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
6(b)	<p><b>Outline how a Hindu might celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi.</b></p> <p>Marks awarded for any valid combination of points, development and examples.</p> <p>Responses might include:</p> <p>Temporary murti of Ganesha are specially made for the festival and installed in temporary shrines; these might be kept at home or people might visit a community shrine to perform puja there.</p> <p>On the final day, they are carried in processions to a river or lake where they are immersed, and dissolved, to signify Ganesha's return to his home on Mount Kailash. Individual Hindus might join or watch the procession, which is accompanied by music and dance.</p> <p>In some places the festival is a time to give charity, which may take the form of personal donations of money or practical help such as volunteering ones time or skills; free medical checks are commonly offered for Ganesh Chaturthi in some parts of India and campaigns encouraging blood donation have also become a feature of the festival in recent years.</p>	<b>3</b>



Question	Answer	Marks
6(c)	<p><b>Explain why Divali (Deepavali) is such a popular festival for Hindus.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO1 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Nowadays the festival of Divali is celebrated all over the world so its popularity could partly be because it is one of the Hindu festivals many people have heard of. But it has historically been celebrated all over India as well, across different Hindu traditions and also by non-Hindus.</p> <p>This is possible because it does not represent only one thing or one story, which might be of less importance to some people than others. As a festival of lights the symbolism of light and hope dispelling darkness, evil and/or ignorance is something everyone can relate to. For many Hindus the festival invites Lakshmi, goddess of prosperity, into their lives and homes and this, again, is an almost universal concern for human beings.</p> <p>Other traditions celebrate other deities, often alongside Lakshmi. This might be because the same stories and/or attributes are associated with the different deities in different places, or because there are many different deities and stories associated with central significance of a festival of lights. The occasion of Rama's return to Ayodhya after his long exile in the forest, thus beginning the golden age of his reign, is one example.</p>	5
6(d)	<p><b>'It is important for all festival celebrations to show devotion.'</b></p> <p><b>To what extent do you agree with this view? You should use evidence from your study of festivals in Hinduism to support your argument.</b></p> <p>Responses will be marked using the AO2 marking descriptors.</p> <p>Candidates might consider some of the following:</p> <p>Festivals are usually considered enjoyable celebrations, and this can lead to concern that their religious significance is not being properly appreciated.</p> <p>However, this assumption that solemnity is the only way to show true devotion is not universally accepted and, for many Hindus, the joyous nature of the event is a form of devotion, with many of the practices being considered offerings to or celebrations of specific deities associated with the festival. For example, the lighting of diya lamps and fireworks at Divali (Deepavali) is not just decorative or beautiful but symbolic of the themes of the festival which, in turn, relate to the deities who bring the light and triumph over the evil.</p> <p>While practising Hindus are unlikely to agree that devotion is not an important element of a religious festival it could certainly be argued that many Hindu communities open their celebrations to non-Hindu neighbours and communities because of the inclusive nature of the religion. Since this is not generally done with an evangelical intention it might be seen as moving the festival away from a devotional focus, but it might also be argued that it enhances the overall celebratory spirit of the occasion.</p>	10