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## Examiners' Report June 2010

### GCSE Religious Studies 5RS06

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## Hinduism

This is the first year the new specification for Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies has been assessed; it has introduced new topics and new assessment objectives. There were quite a few entries for this new unit, which provides an interesting course based on the study of Hinduism combined with moral issues.

The new examination is comparable to the legacy specification and the candidates have achieved a wide range of performance levels.

Teachers and candidates should note these general points:

Candidates are asked to indicate which question they have answered by crossing in a square at the top of the paper, some candidates did not do this and should be reminded to do this as part of examination preparation.

The amount of lines given is more than adequate for candidates to achieve maximum marks. If candidates write more than can be inserted into the allocated space they may be using up too much time on that particular question and could place themselves at a disadvantage later in the paper. Almost all the candidates who used extra paper had already achieved the maximum marks of that question.

There was an increase in the number of candidates who did not complete the final section this year due to timing difficulties. Candidates should be encouraged to spend about twenty minutes per question leaving ten minutes to check through work at the ends of the paper.

### Section 1

This section was attempted successfully in general. 1(c) was generally well answered by most candidates, but less well answered by candidates who gave the religious response to unanswered prayers, which was not asked for in this question.

Question 2(c) created difficulties for some candidates who wrote about religious experiences without explaining how that experience would lead to a belief in God. It is important to ensure the question is fully addressed.

### Section 2

There were some thoughtful responses to 3(d) and 4(d). However, some candidates were unable to put forward three reasons why someone might disagree with them. It is important that candidates consider the reasons why someone might not hold the same opinion as themselves. 3(d) caused problems for those candidates who did not know that euthanasia is illegal in the UK (although turning off life support systems is legal). Stronger candidates were able to give examples from recent events in the news and indicated that they had personally considered the issue.

Only one of the six responses to a (d) question needs to refer to Hinduism.

### Section 3

This section involves a study of different attitudes found in a religious community together with the study of beliefs based on scripture or other sources. Some candidates found it hard to identify the range of attitudes to be found within the Hindu religion towards homosexuality, contraception, sex outside of marriage and divorce. In 6(b) most candidates were able to state their own opinion about whether attitudes have changed but some were unable to give reasons which meant they achieved low marks. Similarly candidates who incorrectly said that homosexuals can get married were not credited. 6(c) was well answered by the majority of candidates, who were able to give several reasons why Hindus are against sex outside marriage. Answers that did not achieve full marks were those that included reasons why some Hindus might be in favour. Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully as to where the response needs to include reasons for, reasons against or both for and against as these will change from question to question.

### Section 4

This section was answered satisfactorily however it was not answered as well as the other sections. Two main areas which caused problems for candidates and need to be addressed when teaching are the study of community cohesion, which replaces social harmony and the second is that candidates have a tendency to confuse race and faith.

In 7(b) stronger candidates recognised that this was a straightforward question asking for two benefits in a multi-faith society and so they achieved good marks. Lower scoring responses confused multi-faith with multi-ethnic. In 7(d) most candidates were able to respond to the quote but failed to give substantive reasons why religion might reduce (or encourage/tolerate) racism. Many candidates mixed up religious intolerance with racism and so failed to achieve the higher marks. The majority of candidates answered question 8(d) well but a number did not know what community cohesion was even though it is a key word.

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw boundary mark	80	66	56	46	37	30	24	18	12
Uniform boundary mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

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