

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE Religious Studies (5RS14)
Sikhism

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GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES 5RS14/01

Sikhism

The unit continues to attract a large number of entries from candidates not of a Sikh background. Candidates are advised to carefully study the specification glossary to understand key terms such as kurahit and vand chhakna. While part (c) questions were usually attempted successfully, candidates experienced greater difficulty in obtaining full marks for part (b) questions. They must look at the demands of the question and focus only on two reasons to support their views. They should explain each of these reasons in depth, perhaps by offering an example or supporting quotation.

Section 1

In question 1(c) candidates were able to explain why Sikhs reject the caste system and in question 2(c) they explained why social justice is important for Sikhs. While there was a clear explanation of the importance of equality, more precise examples could have been included. It was not evident in responses that all candidates had knowledge of the attributes of God in the same level of detail. There were also on few references to scripture in responses to question 1(b) on the idea of God as the Teacher. However, there was evidence of reflection in the range of good responses to question 1(d) on sewa and question 2(b) on whether people are reborn.

Section 2

In general, the section was well-answered but some candidates were unable to obtain full marks on question 4(c) as they discussed features of worship in the gurdwara rather than physical, architectural features. It is important for candidates to remind themselves of the section the question falls into and the how it relates to the relevant bullet point in the specification. On question 3(d), few candidates were fully aware of details concerning during Guru Nanak's visit to Tibet.

Section 3

Candidates performed less well on this section, but demonstrated a good understanding of the difference between melas for question 5(c) and gurdwaras for question 6(b). Candidate responses showed that they were able to reflect on the importance of worship in the gurdwara for question 5(d) and demonstrated good knowledge of the langar for question 6(d). candidates performed less well in showing their understanding of the akhand path for question 5(b) and kirtan for question 6(c).

Section 4

Responses to question 7(b) on the panj kakke and question 8(b) on the Nishan Sahib were confident and thoughtful. Candidates provided precise information in the question about the birth rituals {question 8(c)} although candidates must consider the importance as well as the content of the ritual. Responses to question 7(c) on social and community cohesion were less clear. Most candidates demonstrated solid understanding on the importance of the Rahit Maryada for question 7(d) and on wearing the Five Ks to school for question 8(d). All candidates should have a clear understanding of the key terms outlined in the

glossary; not all candidates were clear about the Rahit Maryada, a key term in the specification.

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