

Support materials for the Studies of Religion HSC examinations

Introduction

This support material consists of

- annotated examples of high-quality student responses for each religious tradition from the Section III questions in the 2009 Studies of Religion HSC examination
- example questions for both Section II and Section III
- a sample Studies of Religion Section II answer booklet that requires students to indicate the Question Number and Question Parts to which they are responding.

The annotated student responses are drawn from higher mark range responses. They demonstrate aspects and qualities of how a student answered the question set in the 2009 HSC examination. The responses may or may not be at the top of the mark range, however they do represent quality responses. There is a general comment and annotated comments for specific aspects of each response. These annotated samples are presented to assist teachers and students to prepare for the Studies of Religion HSC examination in 2010 and beyond.

The example Section II questions illustrate how these may be structured. The examination specifications have been made more explicit to remind teachers and students that these are 'short-answer' question parts; therefore each part will be worth less than 10 marks.

The answer spaces in the Studies of Religion answer booklet provide guidance for the expected length of the student response for each part. The number of pages of the Studies of Religion writing booklet reflects the actual length of typical student responses (based on average-sized handwriting). Students may write less than or more than what is expected and they will not be penalised. Their responses will be marked on structure and organisation, the quality of the arguments and explanations, and the relevance of the content to the question asked.

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 1

Buddhism Sample Response 1

General comment

This response incorporates valid descriptions of how both ethics and practice occur across the Buddhist tradition. In conjunction with this there is a commendable explanation of the beliefs of Buddhism that inform the approaches of the varying schools of the tradition. The response also includes appropriate supporting textual references.

The response made reference to the stimulus and provided scope to further integrate the references throughout the response.

Buddhist sexual ethics and the devotional practices of Wesak and meditation are informed by differing expressions of the Buddhist belief system. While all Buddhists are united in their commitment to attaining Nirvana, Mahayana and Theravada Buddhists promote different expressions of the principal beliefs to guide their adherents.

Strong opening statement referencing different expressions of Buddhism

Buddhism's approach to ethics and practices are centred upon the principal beliefs of; the Four Noble Truths, The Three Jewels and the Five (for laity) and Ten (for monks) Precepts. By adhering to these guidelines, along with living life in accordance with the Middle Way, Buddhists are ensured that they are taking a step closer to escaping Samsara, the cycle of rebirth and attaining the revered state of Nirvana.

Introduces principal beliefs with good use of terminology

Buddhist sexual ethics are based on the notion of causing no harm to oneself or to others. Thus, it does not encourage excessive or lewd acts and promotes sexual relations as natural and not to be suppressed.

The Third Precept (to refrain from sexual misconduct) in the Dasa Sila, is superfluous should Buddhists adhere to the other four. Sexual acts stem from desire, and desire is said to be the cause of suffering in the Four Noble Truths. To reconcile natural urges with Buddhist belief systems, practitioners must act in accordance with the Middle Way. Sexual promiscuity is explicitly forbidden, as it causes harm and hurt to all stakeholders and is the embodiment of uncontrolled desire.

Use of sexual ethics in relation to belief shows understanding of the interconnect-edness of belief and practice

Monks undertake a vow of celibacy and are separated from nuns in both the Thervada and Mahayana traditions, as they are the purveyors of a higher code of ethical behaviour, restricting any form of temptation. By adhering to the Dasa Sila (or the Ten Precepts), monks are able to foster enhanced spirituality and thus help the laity in their spirituality.

Further emphasis on the practical expression of beliefs

In Buddhism, unlike the Semitic religions, marriage is not a necessary foundation for sexual relations. In fact, in the Theravadic tradition, monks are explicitly forbidden from performing a marriage ceremony. Mahayanans though, often perform a ritual blessing for the couple, demonstrating the diversity of expressions of the Buddhist belief system. Thai monk Ajahn Chah says of marriage: “Practice your marriage like you would the Precepts. You have five fingers on your hand. Think of them as the Five Precepts. Do this, and your marriage will be a happy one”.

Specific examples illustrate variations within the tradition

Support from a relevant Buddhist source

The practice of Wesak is the embodiment of all that is means to be a Buddhist. Adherents worldwide gather around May or June (depending on the lunar calendar) each year to celebrate the birth, death and enlightenment of Buddha Gautama. This practice, despite being celebrated by each variant of Buddhism worldwide, is demarcated by geographical and variational differences, as the Buddhist belief system is expressed in different ways. The Three Jewels of the Dharma, the Buddha and the Sangha are celebrated on Wesak, as laity and monks unite in a festival that lasts all day. In traditionally Theravadic countries, there is a focus on fostering a level of insight and deep contemplations as adherents strive towards the ideal of becoming an Arhat. Conversely, Mahayanas celebrate a more communal Wesak, as monks and laity join in chanting sutras.

Expressions of diversity in relation to the practice of Wesak

Alignment of Wesak with principal beliefs

On Wesak, adherents re-align their faith in the Four Noble Truths on suffering and contemplate their lives in terms of the Eightfold Path. Quotes from texts, such as the Sutta Pitaka’s Buddhaghosa, enhance the meaning of the Buddhist belief system, (Nirvana can only be reached – not produced by the Path). Both individually, and commonly, Wesak provides an opportunity to allow a re-evaluation of the belief that Buddhists live their lives by.

Reference to the stimulus in context of the discussion

This allows for an annual celebration, as well as contemplation, as Buddhists celebrate the Jewels and their significance and importance in their lives.

The importance of Wesak and its continual relevance to Buddhists to this day, is the ability of all Buddhists to show their personal and communal appreciation of the Buddha, his Dharma and the Sangha. In most countries, cultural festivities influence the expression of the practice of Wesak, however all perform the ritual of the “Bathing of the Buddha”. In China, red-dragon procession are incorporated into the celebration, whereas in Thailand, caged birds are released to symbolise freedom and equanimity.

Explanation of the universality and diversity of Wesak using specific examples

Sacred symbols are used in abundance such as candles, incense, statues and flowers representing impermanence or Anicca (one of the Three Marks of Existence).

Vajrayana Buddhism also takes on a different expression of Wesak, with heavy use of mandalas, mala beads and chanting to express their reverence for the Three Jewels. They congregate at sacred spaces such as stupas, temples and monasteries to foster a deeper and more meaningful celebration of Buddhism at Wesak.

Discussion of meditation reflects ideas expressed in the second stimulus (Dogen 13th Century Japan)

During Wesak, Buddhists also undertake intensive meditation and puja within the house. As a vital component within each Buddhists's life, meditation allows for a deep and profound contemplation of the principal beliefs.

The two stages of meditation, calm (samatha) and insight (vipassana) are combined to ensure a state of total inner peace within the adherent. As the practitioner takes refuge in the Three Jewels, there then is a focus on breathing and profound introspection.

The practice of meditation is undertaken by Theravada Buddhists with intense focus on cultivating insight to lead to Nirvana. Its importance to all Buddhists, regardless of Sanghic station is demonstrated by the fact that Buddhists from the Dalai Lama, to Ketut Sandhiartha (a lay person) practice and preach its importance and centrality to their faith. "Without morning meditation each day, I cannot find a sense of contentedness within myself" – Ketut Sandhiartha.

Specific examples reinforce the discussion

Buddhists may use the aid of beads, Buddha statues or incense to help their meditation, however it is said that '(Proper meditation is) single-minded intense sitting without burning incense, worshipping, reciting..., practising repentance, nor reading sutras', by the Japanese Dogen scripture. For each Buddhist, the practice of meditation differs, demonstrating the universality and transcendental nature of the religious tradition.

Incorporation of and commentary on stimulus

What unifies Buddhists is their common belief system, in the Three Jewels, the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path and living life in accordance with the Precepts. For Theravada (or the 'Small Raft'), sacred texts and scriptures such as the Tripitaka (or Pali Canon) are essential in helping them understand the true nature of Buddhism. Mahayana (or the 'Large Raft') focus on a communal attitude and compassionate deeds to help guide adherents towards Nirvana. Vajrayana Buddhists follow a highly mystic and ancient method that commonly uses charts and sacred symbols and objects to centralise their faith.

Summation of universal belief system showing awareness of differing expressions

Buddhism's ability to lend itself to various different expressions of its ethics and practices demonstrates its flexibility and adaptability. Sexual ethics are based upon the principal guidelines outlined by the Buddha Gautama, and lend themselves to variational differences. The holy festival of Wesak is also characterised by the many different ways in which adherents celebrate their culture and their faith. As said by the Venerable Mahinda: 'The true significance of Wesak lies in the Buddha and his universal message to mankind'. Meditation is also practised by all Buddhists, and its practice is different depending on each individual.

Meaningful integration of stimulus as part of summation

All in all, these differences are only conduits to help each and every Buddhist finally escape the cycle of Samsara onto Nirvana. Differing expressions of the Buddhists belief system ensure its active role as an evolving religion tradition that models itself on the trifold aspects of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

Conclusion in respect to the goals of Buddhism regardless of form of expression

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 1

Buddhism Sample Response 2

General comment

A well-written response with sound referencing of the stimulus material. Good use of syllabus terminology with logical and well-structured arguments indicating a coherent and effective communication of complex information and ideas.

Buddhism is comprised of a diversity of beliefs. Moreover, it has been regarded not as a religion, moreso as a set of philosophical values in which the individual is ultimately in control. Having said this, through both Bhuddaghosa ad Dogen’s statements, it is clear a state of enlightenment is easier said than done. In order to understand the ramifications of these two quotations, it is paramount we analyse Buddhist ethics, and more specifically their approach to sexual ethics and the manner in which the three main schools of Buddhism (Theravada, Vajrayana and Mahayana) interpret and utilise these.

Strong opening paragraph – reference to stimulus

In order to firmly understand how buddhists might act in a situation of moral conjecture, it is paramount to understand the origin of all ethical guidance – the Three Jewels. The Three Jewels consists of the Dharma, the Sangha and the Buddha, each representing variable facets of ethical teaching. Giving some guidance as to how Nirvana may be reached (“by the Path”), the Dharma consists of key ethical teachings which help to shape one’s moral consideration. Primarily – the five precepts and the noble eightfold path. Secondly, the Sangha proves to be the monk and nun body of the Buddhist community providing ethical guidance through these actions and comments. Lastly – the Buddha. In order to make ethically sound decisions, one must have recourse to is teachings of kindness and generosity.

Explain the importance of understanding ethical guidance

In-depth discussion of Buddhist ethics, demonstrating understanding of complexities in Buddhism

In terms of sexual ethics from a Buddhist perspective, it is evident that the Dharma must be examined. Often sound in the Tripitaka or Pali Cannon, Buddhist ethical teachings such as the Five precepts and noble eightfold path prove to be of great prominence, and together, work in tandem to overcome the four noble truths (life is suffering, suffering is caused by attachment, suffering can be overcome, the noble eightfold path is the answer). As a result of applying these two teachings, it is clear that “Nirvana can only be reached by the Path” (Buddhaghosa).

Examples from Buddhist texts

Let us narrow our ethical scope down to that of sexual ethics. Upon initial examination, one might suggest that the third precept (I will not engage in sexual misconduct) is the primary point of concern when dealing with sexual ethics. However, this precept can be taken two ways – firstly, literally or secondly, “with stillness, simplicity and contentment/purify my body”. It is

Discussion of chosen ethic – sexual ethics highlighting specific precepts

this positive approach to sexual ethics that leads Buddhists (lay) towards enlightenment. In terms of a Buddhist monk or nun, certainly, things are different, as Dogen's quotation can be deemed to be applicable – that “proper meditation (upon the teachings of the Dharma) is single-minded intense sitting” and thus leads one toward enlightenment. Upon this note, it must be said that these ethical guidelines can be applied to all facets of life.

Thus let us explore these ethical doctrines in tandem with the teachings of various Buddhist schools – hence allowing us to demonstrate the reference of the quotation provided and the manner in which various schools opinions on homosexuality and pre-marital sex differ. Generally speaking, Buddhists tend to frown upon homosexuality – primarily because it hinders the procreative act of samsara – hence negating the production of any good karma, leading to a difficult path to enlightenment. Having said this, the Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana schools of Buddhism all apply the Dharma's ethical teachings in different manners, primarily due to extensive cultural influences. For the Theravadan school of Buddhism (especially found in South-East Asia) homosexuality is certainly frowned upon – it is seen as punishment from a previous life, raising questions of one's lack of ‘single-minded intense’ devotion, or any other acts by which bad karma was generated. Contextually speaking, Mahayana Buddhists have always seemingly condemned homosexuality primarily due to past influences of Confucianism (in which family is seen to be critical) upon their cultures. It is again negative in the sense that one is seen to be not following the noble eightfold path, devoting themselves to the right mind, the right action and the right conduct. As a result, they are condemned for deviating from the “path” that Buddhaghosa holds so dearly. Finally, the teachings in the Vajrayana school of Buddhism again differ – Tibetan Buddhists, under the leadership of the Dalai Lama, hold a rather pragmatic approach to homosexuality. Essentially, if the 1st of the 4 noble truths is avoided, ie the causation of suffering, and a Buddha oriented feeling of compassion and kindness is maintained, one's sexuality is not a major issue. Having said this, it must be made clear that for monks, it is completely necessary that chastity is maintained and sexual relationships are avoided, so as the individual can devote themselves to the fulfilment of the Dharma and more importantly, to engage in the “proper meditation” that Dogen speaks of.

In terms of pre-marital sex, again, Buddhists hold a diversity of beliefs as shaped by teaching and culture. For Mahayana Buddhists, again, the teachings of Confucius' resonate within their culture and as a consequence, pre-marital sex is not tolerated as it negates the family oriented atmosphere Confucius advocated. However, on the same level are the Buddhists of the Theravadan and Vajrayanan schools. In terms of Buddhists teachings, as long as all members of the pre-marital relationship do not feel any degrees of suffering, then it is acceptable. Precepts must be held (the positive approach taken however) and the noble eightfold path must be followed. If all this is done, pre-marital sex relationships are acceptable, and then one's karma is not compromised in their search for enlightenment. Culturally speaking, however, it is clear that Buddhists have not been faced with this problem of pre-marital

Explanation of ethical doctrines and teachings of Buddhist schools of thought

Discusses the impact of ethical teaching on different groups of adherents, eg monks

Importance of respect for all parties and the assurance of following the noble Eightfold Path

sex – generally, children are married to one another around the time of puberty and thus any chance of pre-marital sex is negated.

In summary, it can be seen that Buddhist ethics are certainly effected by primarily Buddhist teachings, and also the cultural environment of a Buddhist school. Through examining the Three Jewels, and in particular the Dharma (and all it encapsulates, it can be seen that the two quotes provided by Buddhaghosa and Dogen certainly are applicable to one's perception what is morally sound in the face of ethical dilemma such as homosexuality and pre-marital sex. It is clear through thoroughly following the five precepts and the noble eightfold path, not only can the four Noble Truths be overcome, but one can generate positive karma and continue the process of samsara in a hope of achieving enlightenment. Certainly it is clear that Buddhaghosa's statement makes reference to all Buddhist adherents – Dogen's statement more so to the Sangha – the community of monks and nuns.

Therefore, it is clear that Buddhism is made up of a diversity of beliefs and is a set of philosophical guidelines in which the individual is responsible for their own progression toward enlightenment, and furthermore, with adherence to central Buddhist teachings.

Sound
concluding
paragraphs
summarising
the major
arguments of
the essay

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 2

Christianity Sample Response 1

General comment

A well-structured and logically argued response which illustrates this student took time to plan their response before commencing writing. It takes each of the syllabus areas – significant person, ethics and significant practice; and continually attempts to link each aspect back to the question and quotation. It provides further support for the points made with appropriate examples and quotations from texts, other than that provided in the question.

The quote from the New King James version, Luke 24:30-32, is based around the resurrection of Christ. To followers of the Bible it proves Christ's resurrection which is significant as it is the basis of Christian beliefs. As a result Christians now practise traditional rituals such as baptism that confirm their belief and bring meaning to it. Christ rose again, just like he said he would, and this gives credibility to all of his other ethical teachings that Christians use to build their own moral and ethical views on issues such as bioethics. Christ's resurrection was so powerful it has inspired significant individuals such as Paul of Tarsus to spread the Christian religious tradition and give it new life and drive, making it appealing for adherents. For all these reasons the Luke 24:30:32 quotation is the basis of why Christianity is a living tradition in the life of its adherents.

Good opening paragraph links the quotation and the question to practice, ethics and a significant person and to how Christianity is a living tradition

Baptism has a different meaning to different churches across Christianity. While some believe it is necessary for salvation, others just believe they must obey Christ's instructions in Matthew 28 'all authority has been given to me on heaven and on earth therefore go baptising nations in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'. Either way as Christ has been resurrected his life is significant and Christian adherents baptise as a symbol that they want to follow God.

Shows that although the practice of baptism may vary, it is fundamentally important to the whole tradition. Reference to sacred texts supports the argument

In most protestant churches baptism by immersion is common. This is when the whole body is submerged in a pool of water and scripture is recited 'baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. This is symbolic of the death of your old self and dying with Christ, being buried, and then rising up again with a new life in Christ. Luke 24 confirms this resurrection as it say 'he talked with us on the road'. This is significant and makes Christianity a living religion as God's Holy Spirit is able to transcend and work on the heart of the adherent after they have accepted grace. The public stand of baptism and personal evangelism allows God's Holy Spirit to be real in their life.

Explanation of how baptism can assist adherents to live within the tradition

Infant baptism, which is most common in the Catholic Church, is usually done by aspiration or sprinkling of water. This also symbolises that the family is willing for the infant to be brought up as a Christian in the Church. In Luke 24:30-32 it states ‘then their eyes were opened and they knew him...’ which also confirms the resurrection of Christ. If Christ hadn’t been resurrected then sin would have won and Christians wouldn’t be able to worship a living God. But as he is resurrected Catholics believe through infant baptism that the original sin (from Adam and Eve) has been lifted and they can live in the hope of Salvation. This hope that is given to Christians through baptism also makes Christianity a living religious tradition in the life of Christians.

Explanation of the significance of baptism

Explanation of fundamental Christian beliefs and their place in the living tradition

As Christ has risen again like it states in Luke 24, Christians are able to have the assurance that Jesus Christ was not just man but was also God. This ensures them that he has the authority to forgive sin and offer grace. It also gives him authority to comment on scripture and that his teachings were of God. Christians base their ethical and moral values on scripture and the ethical teachings within it. For example Christ took the Old Testament and old scripture writing and gave it new life and drive. He taught Christian ethics that were more relevant. For example in Matthew 7 it states, ‘you have heard love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say love your enemy and pray for those who prosecute you’. He also teaches in Matthew 5, ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!’. These teachings are referred to by Christians today as they deal with dilemmas such as bioethical issues.

Example of how the interpretation of sacred texts can bring ‘life’ to new historical eras

Bioethical issues such as euthanasia present ethical problems for Christian adherents today. However they can refer to these teachings of Christ (which have credit through his resurrection) and make decisions. As Christ’s life provided Christian life with these ethical and moral guidelines, Christianity is made real and is a living tradition as Christians have guidelines to follow.

Links ethical issues with guidance from sacred texts

In Luke 24:30-32, it says that ‘He sat at the table with them, that he took bread and blessed it and broke it’. Christ appealed to a number of people after his resurrection. These people spread the word about Christ and many people heard. This event was so inspirational and big that it empowered many people to spread Christ’s teachings and the example of his life. One significant person in particular that had an impact on the Christianity of their day and continues to make Christianity a living tradition is Paul of Tarsus.

Reference to the question and the quotation throughout gives the response coherence

Paul of Tarsus started hating Christians when he heard about Christ’s resurrection and what he was about, but on his way to Damascus God revealed himself to Paul and he became a converted Christian. If Christ hadn’t been resurrected then he couldn’t reveal himself to Paul and Paul’s teachings would not have existed.

Links the life of Paul of Tarsus to the importance of the living Christian tradition and how he influenced the tradition

Paul lived a life that set an example to the Christians of the day and Christians today. Empowered by the resurrection of Christ, one of his main teachings was on justification by faith rather than Salvation gained by Works. This became the cornerstone of the early Christian Church and Martin Luther used his writings to launch the protestant Reformation. As the protestant churches popped up Christian adherents are now able to choose which denomination of

Uses the example of the Reformation to demonstrate the diverse ways that adherents are able to live the Christian life

Christianity they best fit in with. Different Churches bring out different 'life' for different people. Adherents can choose what best suits them.

The quote from Luke 24:30-32 is about Christ appearing to men after his resurrection and 'their eyes being open'. Christ's resurrection is a massive part of Christianity today. The ethics that have been taught in the Bible give Christians a moral and ethical basis for their lives. Significant people such as Paul have been inspired by the resurrection and, as a result, taught of God's grace, converting Christians and inspiring others. There are many symbolic practices, such as baptism, that refer back to the resurrection. Together they make Christianity a living religious tradition.

The final paragraph brings together and reiterates the main points of the assessment about Christianity as a living tradition

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 2

Christianity Sample Response 2

General comment

A good, logical and well-structured answer that uses appropriate terminology and relevant examples from the sacred texts of Christianity to explain how the significant person, ethic and practice promotes ‘Christianity as a living religious tradition in the life of its adherents’.

The student ensured that the stimulus was continuously used as a reference, thus supporting their arguments presented in the response.

Christianity, through its various sources of authority and religious teachings, is proved not to be static, but rather a living religious tradition in the life of its adherents. This can be seen through many factors, such as significant religious personalities, practices and ethical teachings that have stood the test of time and continued to be relevant to adherents in a modern context.

Good introduction using the stimulus as their grounding

Luke’s post-resurrection account highlights that whilst Jesus is no longer among Christians, his presence is still felt by adherents, as it was by his disciples whose hearts burnt within them when he appeared to them. The passage also highlights the importance of ritual in the Christian tradition, through the reference to the breaking and blessing of the bread. By following Jesus’ actions, Christianity keeps alive the authority of God, particularly in the ritual of baptism as it was Jesus’ great commission that adherents “... make disciples of all the nations, giving them baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. (Matthew 28)

Link to practice/ritual with good explanation of how practice ensures ‘a living tradition’

Such a ritual is also significant to ensuring that Christianity is a living tradition as there is a strong link between baptism and salvation, with Jesus stating “he who has faith and is given baptism will get salvation; but he who has not faith will be judged”, and that “... if a man’s birth is not from water and from the Spirit, it is not possible for him to go into the kingdom of God”. Thus, this particular tradition is important for both the individual (as they themselves become “temples of the Holy Spirit”) and also the community, as such rituals serve to establish a community of faith and keep the knowledge of Christian tradition and spirituality alive. As can be seen in the quote, such rituals ensure that Jesus “will be with (US) always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28), even after his own death and resurrection.

Use of other appropriate quotation from sacred text to further explain practice

Importance of rituals in promoting the lived nature of the tradition

Christianity is also a living religious tradition in the lives of adherents due to the abundance of historical personalities who have had tremendous impacts on the expression of modern Christianity. An example of such a figure is Hildegard von Bingen of the twelfth century, whose literary works and moral

teachings have made a significant contribution to the spiritual lives of Christians. Her book *Scivias* ('know the ways of the Lord') outlines in fabulous detail and coherency her visions from God, and her beliefs about the roles of adherents and the church. She stated that "what the individual heart needs is to be flooded with love, and what the church needs is to be holy". In addition, it can be said that Hildegard has influenced modern day Christians movements, such as Christian ecotheology and Christian feminism, even though she herself was not a feminist. This was due to the fact that she believed in the spiritual equality of women, writing "Man cannot be called man without woman, just as woman cannot be called woman without man". As such it can be seen that Christianity is still a living tradition as Hildegard was an inspiration for future generations of women to reclaim their spiritual inheritance.

Example of significant person and importance

Illustration of the contribution of significant person and the way they promoted the tradition

Similarly, Christian teachings are seen to affect the everyday lives of adherents through modern issues such as environmental problems. In confronting such situations, Christians are increasingly returning to source of authority, such as the Scriptures and religious doctrine in order to understand the ethical response they need to undertake. Environmental issues such as global warming and deforestation are becoming more and more apparent in the global community, and thus Christians have taken action by forming environmental organisations such as A Rocha and the Christian Ecology Link.

Use of the appropriate quotation from sacred text of Christianity and the way it can be applied when making ethical decisions

Genesis in particular is the foundation for Christian environmental ethics, as "god placed man in the Garden of Eden and instructed him to till it and tend to it". Thus, Christians today can interpret this passage in a way that is still relevant, treating the environment with care and respect. In addition, passages such as the Lord's question in Ezekiel, "Is it not enough that you grow crops from your pastures? Must you also trample the rest with your feet? Is it not enough that you drink clean water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?" highlights the fact that Christians must not prevent the environment's ability to regenerate, an issue that is currently of particular importance due to current environment degradation. Finally, the Ten Commandments are also proved not to be static, but can be reinterpreted over time, such as the Commandment "Do not Steal". In the face of environmental issues, Christians can apply this commandment to their own everyday lives by being more environmentally friendly, as to destroy the natural world would be to steal it from future generations.

Further example of appropriate sacred text and its application

Therefore, as can be seen through the quote from Luke's account of Jesus' interactions with his disciples after resurrection, and from the importance of tradition, ethical teachings and inspirational religious personalities, Christianity is a tradition that is significant to the everyday lives of its adherents. Although Jesus may have "vanished from sight", his teachings are still very much alive and the rich foundational texts that communicate the word of the Lord can be re-interpreted and applied in all adherents lives, regardless of their context.

Final paragraph provides a good summary of the arguments presented in the response

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 3

Hinduism Sample Response 1

General comment

A well-structured response showing a clear understanding of the Hindu religious tradition. The response relates directly to the question and brings in wider aspects of Hinduism as a living tradition and its place in the life of adherents.

The student integrated relevant language and terminology incorporating significant aspects of Hinduism.

The student's response could have been improved with more reference to and use of quotations from religious texts integrated into the response.

The goal of obtaining Moksha, and escaping the cycle of Samsara is what all Hindus strive to achieve. In order to achieve this goal, a Hindu must spend his life obeying the notions of Hinduism in order to obtain and develop Punya. It is stated in the Taittiriya Upanishad 'Do these deeds that are without blame'. These 'deeds' span and involve not only a Hindu's prayers but also encompass their private lives, including their sexual ethics and practice. In order to comprehend the varying rules and complexities involved in the Hindu sexual ethics system, one must first understand the foundations and components that the system stems from. This essay will aim to expand and explain the three major founding components, the nature of the Divinities, the sacred texts and the spiritual beliefs. I will then demonstrate how these components direct the shape a Hindu's sexual practice.

Introduction provides a direct response to the question, focusing on sexual ethics and practice

The lenient and varying nature of Hinduism through its polytheism, produces many worshippers of different Gods and Divinities, the nature of these Gods and Divinities are the founding components of the sexual ethical system followed in order to be 'without blame'. In Hinduism worship does not entail the sole actions of merely prayer or pilgrimage, the entirety of a Hindu's life is considered to be worship, therefore this includes sexual ethics too.

Comprehensive understanding of the complexities of Hinduism and various elements of the religious tradition

Depending on the chosen Divinity, a Hindu's sexual expression can vary, for example, followers of Shiva aim to follow appropriate sexual expression that is modified. However Hindus such as Gandhi believe celibacy is the true way of focusing on the divine. Whatever the belief and practice, all Hindus aim to follow and conform to the nature of the divine.

Understanding of the all-encompassing nature of Hinduism in the lives of adherents

The Hindu Sacred texts are the second component of the sexual ethics system. The main sources of information, the texts provide guidance and insight into correct sexual behaviour. These texts include; the Vedas, Upanishads and the

Mahabharata. The sacred texts explain the appropriate demonstration of Dharma and its significance, they also provide the foundations for the third component, which are the sacred beliefs.

The sacred beliefs are derived and stem from the sacred Hindu texts. These beliefs are the steps and changes of sexual expression within Hinduism. The most prominent and influential sacred belief upon sexual ethics is the Hindu Purusharthas as more commonly known as the 4 aims of life. In terms of their relation to sexual ethics, three are appropriate; Dharma, Artha and Moksha. The first aim of Dharma can be split into two components, Ashrama and Samanya Dharma. Ashrama refers to the four stages of Hindu's life – student, householder, forest dweller and monk. While Samanya Dharma is the appropriate restriction and behaviour.

Awareness of variations within the religious tradition

The aim of Artha, is the belief in the love and bond held within marriage, it reinforces the idea that sex is not only about procreation but is an intimate action between a married couple.

The 4th aim of Moksha is the most fundamental, as demonstrated earlier, in order to gain Moksha Hindu's karmic balance depends on the amount of heavenly merit (Punya) gained against dismerit (Papa). In order to gain Punya a Hindu must obey the Upanishads which state 'do those deeds that are without blame'.

Identification of sacred texts and links between texts and beliefs

The first stage of a Hindu's life is known as the student. Boys from around the age of 12 enter into a life generally in Ashrams in which they learn and obey the laws and rituals of Hinduism including the vow of Brachmacharya which is the vow of celibacy. Upon entering this life the boys are presented with a threefold chord which represents their 'renunciation of carnal thoughts, mind and deeds'. While boys study, girls also undertake a vow of chastity, Manu declares: 'A girl who is a virgin, is worthy of a sacramental wedding'. A woman is more desired and clean if she is a virgin. By holding this vow of celibacy a Hindu can obey by the sacred texts and maintain the will of the Divinities.

The second stage of a Hindu's life is of the householder. At the commencement a Hindu will give up his celibacy in order to marry a virgin bride. Within Hinduism, marriage is recognised as an eternal commitment of love and loyalty. This notion is recognised within the 7th promise made during the Hindu wedding ceremony which declares 'to be true loyal lifelong friends'. This commitment is echoed within the wedding prayers. Manu declares a man is not unified and complete unless he has his three parts, himself, his wife and his offspring. Therefore it is shown that a man and woman are not only allowed to partake in sexual practices in order for procreation but also as a means of echoing and reflecting the wedding promises. However due to the varying nature of Hinduism, opinions on the topic of sex within marriage vary depending on the source. The Hindu sages state that sexual activity should not be undertaken and to reinstate celibacy. This is echoed by Gandhi who for decades of his married life was celibate and undertook various experiments of determination to prevent lust.

Clear analysis of sexual ethics in Hinduism with use of relevant terminology

The 3rd stage of a Hindu's life is virtually the same as the second in terms of sexual practice and ethics, It is not until the 4th stage of a Hindu's life that the real change occurs. Within Hinduism it is accepted for the man of a household to renounce his life and possessions and pursue his spiritual awakening. Quite often the man will have a funeral which is a symbol of his death to his world. During this stage of his life a man will undergo celibacy once more with some wearing a chastity belt. Variations such as the Sadhus commence this lifestyle at a young age and skip the 2nd stage of life in order to pursue a spiritual escape from Samsara and obtain Moksha.

Good understanding
of aspects of
Hinduism displayed

Within Hinduism there are various inappropriate and wrong sexual practices. These include, adultery, prostitution, bestiality and homosexuality. Those caught and blamed for adultery can result in severe punishment. Manu calls for the man to lose his caste and the woman to be lashed. Prostitution in some sources is seen as wrong. However some ancient groups such as the Naga Babas and various groups approach temple prostitution, and in other ancient customs there are records of temple and group orgies. The worst of these are homosexuality and bestiality which call for severe punishments. However, the sacred texts state that if the act of bestiality is with a cow then it only calls for the same punishment as adultery.

Therefore, it can be seen that through the guidance of the various fundamental components, the belief system will guide a Hindu through their sexual behaviour in order to practice 'deeds that are without blame' and in doing so, raise the Punya of their karmic balance in the hope of obtaining Moksha.

Conclusion draws
together major
points of response

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 3

Hinduism Sample Response 2

General comment

A good, sustained and logical script with appropriate and understood application of terminology. Excellent use and interpretation of the quotation to support their response. The response makes reference to both ethics and practices.

Hindus attempt to live their lives in accordance with the way they believe God wants. This religious duty is referred to as dharma and is essentially everything that involves living a life of proper conduct; things that are “without blame”. In order to live life in such a way, Hindu adherents will follow a range of ethical guidelines based on principal teachings within Hinduism and approach ethical issues in such a way. This concept of dharma, or obligatory religious duty, encompasses the concepts of Karma, Samsara and Moksha, and the 10 Commitments. The concept of Karma is the most significant as it helps Hindus to live life without harm. Also, the Manusmriti (Laws of Manu), and other sacred texts, and sadhus and gurus, offer instruction regarding a range of ethical issues.

Understanding of how Dharma determines the ethical decisions taken by Hindus

The main goal of Hindu adherents is to accumulate positive good Karma so that one can become liberated from samsara (the endless cycle of birth, suffering, death and rebirth), and this key concept guides the Hindu approach to ethics and in particular, bioethical issues.

Effective use of relevant terminology

Bioethics is the philosophical study of the ethical controversies brought about by advances in medicine and biology. One such ethical controversy is that of abortion. Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy by the removal or expulsion of an embryo or foetus from the uterus resulting in its death. “Taking life means to murder anything that lives” (E Conze); that an abortion is believed to be murder it is considered to be inconsistent with the principles of Hindu denominations. The central principles guiding Hindus in this issue are Ahimsa, the action of the law of Karma, the strict rules of dharma defined in the sacred texts and the belief in samsara and moksha.

Integration of Hinduism into the everyday lives of believers

Abortion is considered to be in opposition of the sanctity of life and prohibition against the killing of any living thing as expressed by the greatest Hindu Dharma, ahimsa. “The idea of ahimsa comes from the belief that God gives life to all living creatures and human beings have no right to destroy it” (L Gibson). Ahimsa is the first of the 10 Commitments and literally translates as ‘non-violence’ although this also encompasses the harmony of any living thing through thought, word or deed. Hindus believe all life is sacred and therefore practice Ahimsa. In modern times,

Hindu's greatest apostle for non-violence, Mohandas Gandhi has written, "It seems to me clear as daylight that abortion would be a crime".

A number of texts in the Vedic literature make reference to abortion and it is vehemently condemned. According to the Vishnu Dharmasastra, "killing the embryo ... even of a stranger ... is tantamount to killing a Brahmin". This quote directly compares abortion to killing a Brahmin (the highest class in Hindu society), thus demonstrating its severity. The Hindu scriptures from the Vedic Age down to the Smritis (100 BCE - 100 CE) refer to abortion as Bhrybagatta (foetus murder) or farbhahatya (pregnancy destruction) and condemn it as a serious sin. The Atharva Veda remarks that the Brunaghni or foetus slayer is among the greatest of the sinners and in the Kaushitaki a parallel is drawn between abortion and 'killing one's own parents'. A hymn in the Rig Veda begs for the protection of foetuses and in the great epic Mahabharata, the Great Son of Drana, the teacher of Mahabharata was cursed by Lord Krishna when he tried to kill the foetus of Abhimanu's wife.

Good use of relevant quotes – related to the quotation

The rearing of children is considered to be an important rite of passage which all Hindu adherents are expected to engage in. It is an essential part of the Four Ashramas, or stages of life; Brahmacharya, Grahasta, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. The Vedas define a specific purpose for each stage. Hence a person at the completion of their Brahmacharya, or student life, should enter the second stage of life; Grahasta or 'life of a householder' which involves procreation. Furthermore, each Ashrama contains religious rituals from the sixteen samskaras. The first samskara is performed prior to the conception of a child. Thus traditional Hinduism and many modern Hindus view abortion as a breach in the duty to produce children in order to continue the family and produce new members of society.

Good analysis of the Hindu ethics concerning abortion and importance of family

In considering the ethics of abortion, the belief in Karma and reincarnation is a major consideration for Hindu adherents. Karma is the effect of a person's conduct through the successive phases of their existence, good or bad, regarded as determining their destiny. The performance of an abortion is believed to have implications of negative karma for the mother, the person who conducts the abortion and least of all, the aborted foetus. Karma is based on intentions and as both the mother and the person performing the abortion have intention to and knowledge that they are taking the life of the foetus, they subsequently accumulate negative karma, lessening their chances of achieving moksha (liberation, freedom from samsara and all of the suffering and limitation of worldly existence). The unborn foetus accumulates negative karma as upon the performance of abortion, its chance to work out karma is lost, thus hindering its spiritual progress by impacting upon the ability of the jiva (soul), to escape samsara and achieve moksha. Again, in the Dharmasastra. Abortion is explicitly forbidden because "the practice could prevent the rebirth of a specific human life that is in the process of becoming liberated". However, the Dharmasastra also specifies certain atonements that a person should perform in order to dispute the sin of abortion.

Good quotation interpretation and reasoning that underpins Hindu ethics

Furthermore, the mother becomes complicated by the question, at what stage of the gestation period does an embryo/foetus become a human. Most Hindus believe this occurs at conceptions as the physical foetus and jiva are joined. The concept of reincarnation states that a foetus does not develop into a person, rather is a person from the moment of conception. According to the Garbha Upanishad, a jiva remembers its past lives during the last month the foetus spends in the womb, and the Mahabharata refers to a child learning from its father while in the womb.

Also, individual consideration is given if there is potential harm to the mother or child. This is based on Hindu traditions and scriptures, throughout the history of Hinduism, no other consideration social or otherwise, was permitted to supersede this belief. However, abortion is practiced in Hindu society in India because the religious ban on abortion is sometimes overruled by the cultural preference for sons. This can lead to abortion to prevent the birth of female babies, known as “female-foetocide”.

Similarly, the concept of euthanasia voluntary assisted suicide is considered to be in opposition to Hindu philosophy however it is difficult to classify in the ground of the desire pain. With advancements in medical technology, adherents are able to artificially shorten their lives by means of physician assisted euthanasia. However to do so violates fundamental Hindu beliefs including the Hindu belief in the sanctity of life and views on Karma. According to Hindu views on Karma, many details of a person’s life are determined by past actions, even to the point where the time and circumstances of one’s death may be determined. This adherents are expected to allow their lives to run their natural course and are discouraged from hastening their own mortality. The Vedas define a desirable life span to be one hundred years over this should not be cut short by euthanasia or suicide Euthanasia also directly defies the concept of ahimsa regardless on intentions. However, there are exceptions; Prayopavesa, “where a spiritually advanced adherents fasts to death” (P Blumer) is condoned, and exceptions are made for kings and warriors. Euthanasia may also be permitted if one is suffering; Euthanasia may be done in the case a person can no longer perform the rights of bodily purification which may be the case in extreme illness or extreme old age” (K Young).

Consequently Hindu ethics are based on a range of ethical systems and beliefs all of which involve not doing harm to living beings and subsequently not accumulating negative karma so that one can successfully journey towards Moksha. Thus Hindus strive to “do those deeds that are without blame”.

Good conclusion relating ethical systems in Hinduism
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HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 4

Islam Sample Response 1

General comment

This response draws on the area of environmental ethics to explain the centrality of the Qur'an within the lived expression of Islam. Additional support is provided in reference to Hajj as a physical and spiritual expression of the beliefs of Islam.

The response illustrates how combining various areas of study can be used to successfully examine how the Qur'an directs the lives of Muslims. While reference is made throughout to the Prophet, the significance of his role was at times implied rather than explicitly stated.

The response uses correct terminology throughout, indicating that the student has a comprehensive appreciation of Islam as a dynamic religious tradition. This is reinforced through the integration of relevant references from sacred texts and practical illustrations of faith in practice.

The Qur'an is the infallible word of Allah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (the model for Muslim life). The Qur'an is considered to be the ultimate guidance as it is the direct word of God and inspired the actions of Muhammad, whose tradition (Hadith and Sunna) has also become worthy of study and a valid source of guidance.

Introduction establishes the Qur'an as the foundation of Islam. Introduces Hadith and Sunna

The role of the revelation of the Prophet Muhammad in the lives of Muslims can best be analysed through the Qur'anic application in both ethics (particularly environmental ethics) and directing adherents on how to best practise their religion (which will be explained in reference to the Hajj).

Links the revelation to the Prophet to the lived expression of Islam

The Islamic tradition has a robust ethical framework, which can be attributed both to the Qur'an and also the Hadith and Sunna (the tradition of Muhammad) which are obviously inspired by the Qur'an.

Identifies the Qur'an as the ethical framework for religiously appropriate action

Throughout history, this strong ethical framework has allowed environmental concerns to be addressed in quite a detailed way, making it easier for the Muslim to reach fiqh (a final decision) when in an ethical dilemma.

The Qur'an, for instance established that a great balance exists in the earth and the natural world as seen by Surah 36:37

The sun does not overtake the Earth,
nor does the night outpace the day,
Each in its own orbit swims.

Uses appropriate Qur'anic text to illustrate Muslim understanding of environmental ethics

Such passages of lyrical poetry call Muslims to respect the integrated, functioning nature of the environment and to abstain from misusing it and over-consuming. Furthermore, the revelation of the Qur'an also guides Muslims by pointing out how insignificant they are in comparison to the rest of creation:

Surely the creation of the Heavens and Earth is greater than the creation of man (Surah 40:57)

Hence, the Quran plays the role in pointing out the relative insignificance of humans to underscore how absurd it is to place their concerns above the quality of the environment. As previously stated, the Qur'an's revelation inspired Muhammad, which then inspired the Hadith (tradition of Muhammad). In the Hadiths it reads:

Use of the Qur'an to explain the significance of care for the environment as Allah's creation

The Earth was made to me like a mosque

AND

If a man plants a tree... and human and bird and beast feed from it, all is love on his part.

The Prophet's example through Hadith explained as a secondary source of inspiration for adherents

Thus, through Qur'anic inspiration the Hadiths illustrate Earth to be a holy entity and promotes sustainable development as an act of love. Hence the lives of Muslims are impacted as they are expected to nurture the Earth and spread love through positive actions – inaction is simply not acceptable.

Introduces the concept of Shariah and provides a relevant example

Through the Qur'an also is Shariah law which governs many aspects of Muslim life. In regard to the environment, for instance, animal welfare is promoted. Shariah law even goes as far as to provide specific guidelines for the slaughter of animals:

And excel in slaughtering, sharpen your blade, so that you may relieve your slaughtered animals" (Shaddad Ibn Aws Islamic scholar)

Support from additional source

Moreover, the revelation of the Qur'an has inspired the principles of tawhid (oneness with Allah) Khalifa (trusteeship) and Akrah (accountability), hence through Qur'anic influence, Muslims are called to be trustees of the Universe, whilst recognising the unity of creation with Allah, as they will eventually be held accountable for their action and inaction on the day of judgement, when they must answer to Allah.

Connects revelation through the Qur'an to lived practice and accountability on the Day of Judgement – key belief of Islam

As a result, it can be seen that the revelation of the Qur'an and its influence provides a coherent ethics system in the lives of Muslims, equipping them to make environmental decisions in a contemporary context. For example, in regards to water conservation Al Hidayah Islamic school in WA received the

2008 Waterwise award for their steps to conserve water. Also, many individuals now elect to have shorter showers and water their gardens with recycled water, all in an attempt to be effective Khalifa.

Relevant contemporary examples to further illustrate application of belief to practice, reinforcing the idea of Islam as a dynamic tradition within a global community

Globally, Islam has also been a strong driving force towards sustainable development. Islam has supported Earth Hour, has representatives in the World Conservation Union and released a statement at the 2002 United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development that showed their commitment towards sustainable development.

There is also the influence that the Qur'an has on the practice of Islam.

Knowledge of the context of Hajj within the Five Pillars

The Qur'an states:

Exhort all people to make pilgrimage.

Strong statement of the Qur'an directing adherents to address 'life's big questions' within the context of submission

Through the pilgrimage of the Hajj (one of the five pillars of faith), the lives of Muslims are altered in that they are given an opportunity to move away from the mundane and ordinary to focus on life's big questions and their own life as a Muslim in submitting to Allah's will.

Through the Hajj (done by the Prophet himself in 622 CE), Muslims are able to practise their faith at the ultimate level to either strengthen this or diminishing further to validate their beliefs.

Further appropriate use of terminology

During the Hajj Muslims are better able to live in the state of 'Ihram' where they live a pure life, abstaining from quarrelling, sex and alcohol /drugs. This allows them to divert their thoughts to the essentials and seriously consider whether or not they are submitting to the will of Allah to their full extent.

Hajj allows adherents to experience the beliefs of the Qur'an and connect with the history of the faith

Also through Qur'anic influences the Hajj allows adherents to re-enact key beliefs. For examples, the circumambulation around the Ka'ba commemorates the historical role of Abraham in Islam. Also the stoning of the pillars in Mina show a rejection of the devil and all that is evil. Hence, through the Hajj, adherents affirm their beliefs, bring their ancestral spirit thriving in the present and develop a stronger cultural identity and purpose in life.

Hence, as clearly illustrated, the revelations of the Qur'an, (Allah's direct word), has played a great role in the lives of Muslims. This is due to the Qur'anic influence of Muhammad's tradition, Shariah law, ethical principles and rites of worship. All of these develop Muslims into better people, global citizens and individuals that are better able to submit to Allah's will. Thus, it is apparent that the ultimate guidance for Muslims is the Qur'an given by God to Muhammad and that the Quran enables humans to see and understand the guidance God has in built in creation.

Conclusion summarises the premise of the response and re-affirms the centrality of the Qur'an as revealed by the Prophet

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 4

Islam Sample Response 2

General comment

This response provides an example of how an area of Islam (Hajj) was used to answer a generalised question. It sustained the argument throughout with references to both the stimulus used in the question and ‘the role played by revelation’ in Islam.

The inclusion of references from the Qur’an, specific aspects of the hajj and additional sources added substance to the response.

The Islamic sacred text the Qur’an is of fundamental significance to guiding the actions and behaviours of Islamic adherents. As the written revelation of the Prophet Muhammad. The Qur’an influences all aspects of a Muslim life, in order to enable them to understand the importance of Allah, his power and his creation. The significant practice of “Hajj illustrates effectively how the “the ultimate guidance is the Qur’an,” as this text details the process of Hajj greatly and emphasises its importance as a pillar of Islam. The physical and spiritual preparation undertaken prior to Hajj, experience of the pilgrimage itself and unique state a pilgrim returns in illustrates how the revelation of the Qur’an influences the lives of adherent significantly, or manifested in practices and rituals such as Hajj.

As Coward emphasises, the Qur’an forms the basis of all Islamic thought, ritual and behaviour. The Qur’an describes in detail the necessary preparation needed to be performed before the pilgrimage to Mecca. This enables Muslims to connect deeply with Allah, other adherents and the environment of creation around them whilst on Hajj. The Qur’an states “proclaim to all mankind Al Hajj” and continuously emphasises the importance of Hajj in an adherent’s life. As “a duty owed to God, all who are able must undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca”, and the preparation, described prior to their departure. The Qur’an detail, the physical and spiritual preparations such as adornment of the white garment or “Ihram” cutting of the hair, forgiveness of loved one, and repayment of financial debt. These acts enable the individual to remove their materialistic ‘nots’ or ego and evoke a deeper relationship with Allah and the world he has created. Therefore, the preparations detailed in the Qur’an for ‘Hajj’ illustrate how Muhammad’s revelation plays a highly significant role in the life of Muslims, as their words and thoughts enable adherents to further develop their love of Allah and appreciate the world he has created for them.

The unique experiences of the Hajj and important rituals the Qur’an describe reveal the underlying importance of Muhammad’s revelation and the ‘ultimate

Immediately identifies the connection between the Qur’an and lived expression of faith

Displays knowledge of Islam’s understanding of God with good link to specific quote. References a central component of Islam – the Hajj

Refers to quotation – is a practical example of the Qur’an in the life of adherents. Direct reference from the Qur’an. Terminology. A higher order explanation.

guidance' the Qur'an presents to Islamic followers. The notion of Tawaf' or the circling of the sacred Hebbah seven times is highly important in on individuals experiences of Hajj. The Qur'an states that Hebbah is the place where upon Abraham once stood and whoever enters it gains inner 'peace', or the circling notion represents the workings of the universe and "enable humans to see and understand the guidance God has inbuilt in creation". A representative from Affinity Intercultural Foundation exhibited the significant impact of the Qur'an and the Tawaf as they said "when I finally saw it (the Kebbeh) standing tall in the main courtyard. I felt fears flowing". This illustrates, how the rituals described in the Qur'an enable Muslims to deeply appreciate Allah's love, their life and the universe and reveals how the Qur'an can even evoke an emotional response, in followers. Coward's suggestion that the Qur'an is the ultimate souce of understanding and guidance is highly evident in the experiences of Hajj and the Qur'an's writings guiding pilgrims in the Tawaf.

Link to question.
Terminology and indication of impact on the life of the individual.
Reference to the quotation.
Strong specific example to support the case being made in the response

The experiences of "sa'y" and "Jamrat al Aqabah" also display the significance influences of the Qur'an upon the knowledge and spiritual of Muslims, particularly in their pilgrimage to Mecca. The Qur'an details the struggle of Hagar In her search for water for her thirsty child and her frantic flight between two hills. After studying the Qur'an, pilgrims on Hajj re-enact this desperate attempt for water during "sa'y" and one able to gain an understanding of the importance of God's creation and love, as he guides them on their exhausting physical and spiritual quest. During his encounter with Muhammad, Allah stated "remember God of the sacred place and remember him as the one who guided you". The ritual of "Sa'y" greatly enables individuals to appreciate Allah and confirm their monotheism. The ritual 'Jamrat al Aqabah' or stoning of the devil is also significant in confirming adherent's monotheism and greatly impacts upon the lives of adherents. In personal solitude, pilgrims collect tiny pebbles and throw these three times of pillars representing the temptation of Satan. Just as Muhammad and Abraham rejected evil, pilgrims should "no longer will you reduce me and confirm their commitments and love towards Allah. In this way, Muslims fulfil the ultimate revelation of Muhammad as they accept Allah as the only God and reaffirm the 'Shahada' 'Allah is One'. The virtuous state pilgrims gain after completion of the Hajj rituals detailed by Allah in the Qur'an further exhibits, the significant influence Muhammad's revelation has on the life of Muslims. The Qur'an details the importance of the Five Pillars of Islam, in particular the Hajj which is unique in its ability to incorporate all other pillars, in the ultimate expression of an individuals Islamic beliefs. As Coward stated, the Qur'an effectively enables, individuals to understand the love Allah provides and his guidance through creation. The Qur'an states that 'they will come from every distant place and deep valley to perform Hajj and then emphasise the importance of harmony, social equality and the break down of racial barriers that Hajj and the Qur'an teach adherents. Alim Kwajo confirms this teaching as he stated that Hajj 'increases the belief in harmony and equality among ethnic groups and Islamic sects 'and allows pilgrims to comprehend the importance of love, understanding and compassion. Hajj therefore presents the deep 'guidance God has inbuilt in creation' through the relationship individuals develop with other pilgrims, and their families and

Excellent link of question to principal belief.
Additional link of revelation and practice.
Identifies central aspect of Islam

Excellent use of reference from the Qur'an and the lived expression of Islam.
Good specific example.
Reference from Hadith provides additional support to the argument

‘Ummu’ or communities upon returning ‘pure and free from sins’ (Hadith). The revelation through the great prophet plays a fundamental role in the life of adherents, as the words guide Muslims in love and compassion, as illustrated through the virtuous state ‘hajjoh’ or Hajjah’ pilgrims return in.

‘The ultimate guidance is the Qur’an’, as this sacred text provides assistance to Muslims in all aspects of their lives. As illustrated through the reference, to Hajj in the Qur’an, the revelation of the prophet Muhammad plays a highly significant role in the lives of adherents, as it enables individuals to understand the true meaning of life, love and creation, as provided through submission to Allah.

Strong summation of practical implications of the Qur’an in lived expression. Submission as the ultimate goal of Islam

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 5

Judaism Sample Response 1

General comment

This is a well-written response with good use of terminology and effective use of a variety of quotations. The student was able to integrate the quotation into the various aspects of the syllabus.

This response from the opening paragraph clearly analyses the connection between ‘the laws and rules’ and the love of God as a guide in the life of adherents. Elements from the quotation were integrated into the response demonstrating a high level of analytical skill.

The response includes analysis in reference to a significant person, practice and bioethical issues incorporating significant aspects of the Jewish religion. It uses correct terminology throughout indicating that the student has a comprehensive understanding of Judaism. This is reinforced through the integration of relevant references from sacred texts and other commentaries throughout the response.

In guiding the life of adherents, the ‘laws and the rules’ and the ‘love of God’ are interdependent notions. The quotation from Deuteronomy which describes the ‘love of God’ underpins the Jewish relationship with God and the commandment to uphold covenantal fidelity. This commandment to ‘love the Lord your God...’ is what informs the ‘laws and the rules’. These laws and rules are encapsulated in the Halachah, which provides Jewish adherents with a guide in relation to the everyday living of their lives. Hence, it can be seen that the connection between these two concepts referred to in the introduction is that the ‘love of God’ is what underpins ‘the laws and the rules’. Because the ‘Halachah’ is seen as the law, then this commandment to love is put into practice by Jews in their everyday life. Aspects of life that are informed by this connection are their ethical framework, adherence to key beliefs as set out by Moses Maimonides, 13 Principles of Faith and certain aspects of key practices such as synagogue services.

In terms of the Jewish ethical framework, which underpins much of their behaviour, the Halachah is at the core of these teachings. Bioethics is a contemporary issue which calls for the application of the commandment to love set over in the Torah. Bal Tashkit is an ethical teaching which underpins these two concepts, calling for the prohibition of the destruction of God’s creation. This notion is derived from the Halachah and seeks to affirm the relationship between adherents and God in many aspects of life. For example, abortion is an issue which adherents may face in their life and the ‘love of God’ guides the response to this. Deuteronomy states that, ‘...if you obey the

Opening paragraph responds directly to the question and demonstrates a clear understanding of the covenantal relationship that underpins Judaism

Makes explicit links between laws and rules and Halachah and the everyday lives of adherents

Demonstrates an understanding of totality of religion as well as across the three aspects of the syllabus

Lord your God... the fruit of your womb will be blessed...’ Children are seen as a sign of a blessing and hence to maintain the relationship of ‘love’ the sanctity of humanity must be emphasised and be aligned with the notion of Bal Tashkit. Similarly, euthanasia is a bioethical issue which adherents my face in their life and Bal Tashkit also conforms the ‘response’ here. Ecclesiastes recognises that ‘there is a time to be born and a time to die...’ Hence the right of the individual is secondary to the right of God, and humanity should not assume to the role of God in ending a life. The foundation of this response is that a ‘love of God’ set out in the Torah as a ‘law’ means that going against the word of God would damage this connection.

Concept of love and sanctification of all of creation, supported by reference to sacred text

Furthermore, the notion of Tikkun olam, the repair and transformation of the world, is a force of guidance for adherents though it has at its core submission to God through ‘love’ of God. The bioethical issue of reproductive technologies such as IVF is an area where Jews need guidance as it is a newly emerging area of debate. As Genesis maintains, ‘...Go forth and multiply...’, the commandment of God emphasises the high status of the family. Therefore, anything which may enable Jews to have children is seen to be acceptable, providing it is in the context of a marriage. This links to Tikkum Olam as Jews are seen as obliged to make the world a better place and IVF may be seen to be rectifying an inability to conceive. In seeking out such new technologies of reproduction Jews are seen to be loving God with ‘all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might...’ by seeking out ways to fulfil the mitzvot to procreate - the law. Overall, it can be seen that the Halachah, which denotes the application of scriptures to contemporary circumstances and also constitutes the ‘spirit of the law’, which is informed by the commandment of love, is co-dependent. This link provides Jews with guidance in ethical areas of life, such as bioethics. Although differences exist difference between orthodox, conservative and reform Jews in this area, the foundation of their decision is the connection between the ‘law’ and ‘love of God’.

Varied sources used to reinforce the response

Explicit example of everyday application through link to specific bioethical issue – IVF

Furthermore, this connection plays a role in guiding the adherent in the expression of their beliefs. The link between these areas may be viewed on a secondary scale. The ‘law’ may be viewed as the basis instructions of belief within Judaism which have been translated by Moses Maimonides into the 13 Principles of Faith. The ‘love of God’ referred to in the quotation may be seen as the belief that ‘God is One’, ‘there is one God above to be worshipped and revered’, and ‘God is creator’. These beliefs are integral to the life of adherents as they provide guidance and establish the relationship between Jews and God. Although the ‘love of God’ may only constitute the oneness of God, it forms the basis for the subsequent beliefs. These beliefs are translated into significant practices for Jews such as Synagogue services in which the recitation of the Shema ‘...Hear O Israel! The lord our God, the Lord is one’. This directly reflects the ‘love of God’ contained in Deuteronomy and is the universal credal statement of Jewish belief. Such a profound statement of belief may be seen as the ‘law’ of the synagogue service. Hence, the link between the ‘laws’ and ‘love of God’ may be seen on a smaller scale as a link

Good attempt at analysis of quote and integration into the response

Analysis of concept of ‘love’ and belief in the ‘oneness of God’

between the ‘beliefs’ and the most ‘profound’ of the beliefs as a direct statement of commitment to God.

The ‘law’ and the ‘love of God’ also had a role in guiding the life of Moses Maimonides, 13th century Jewish scholar and Jewish adherent. The connection between the concepts urged Maimonides to bring forth the connection to his text the ‘Safer Ha Maor’ or ‘Commentary on the Mishnah’ which sought to make more accessible the mitzvot by appealing to a wide cross-section of Jewish society through the employment of Arabic language. Maimonides helped make adherents more aware of this link through his 13 Principles of Faith which put the ‘love of God’ into law. This now guides adherents as it is frequently appended to the Talmud and recited during liturgy in prose and poetry form.

Link between covenant (laws and rules/beliefs) and the lives of adherents

In conclusion, this extract from the Torah, sets out the notion of covenantal of God” fidelity which Jews must adhere to, to maintain a close relationship with God, as the ‘law’. Adherents turn to the ‘law’ such as the Halachah, Torah or the 13 Principles of Faith to observe how the ‘love of God’ can be translated into their everyday lives. In particular, when questions of ethics and morals arise, guidance is sought. Ultimately, it is this connection that informs everyday behaviour, interactions with others and the relationship with God.

HSC Studies of Religion 2009 examination
Section III, Question 5

Judaism Sample Response 2

General comment

Good use of terminology throughout the response, enhancing the students understanding of Judaism. Displays a comprehensive understanding of the religious tradition and relates this to the question. Sophisticated analysis of the use of ‘laws and rules’ in the everyday lives of adherents and the mutual obligations of the covenant relationship with God

Adherents of Judaism believe in a profound Connection between the ‘laws and rules’ of the Torah, and the love of God, as a guide in their lives. The ethical teachings of Judaism reflect this belief, as the belief is a divinely inspired law and one of the central components of Judaism. The belief in a monotheistic, omnipotent God, and the covenant between God and the Jewish people, influences the lives of all adherents.

Clear link between laws and rules as a guide in the life of adherents

The principle sources of Jewish ethics are drawn from Tenakh, the Jewish scriptures, the Torah, referring both to the last five books of the Tenakh and to Jewish law in general, is of fundamental importance to the life of adherents. The Torah contains 613 Mitzvot, commandments which guide and direct the sacred and ethical life of a religious Jew. In the field of environmental ethics, for example Jewish people are guided by the laws laid down in the Torah. In Genesis 1:28 it is stipulated that human beings are the stewards of creation. This has often been taken to mean a position of domination over life, that the exploitation of natural resources is permissible, but the laws of the Torah make clear that the relationship is of caretakers for God’s creation. In Genesis 2, Adam is directly commanded to care for creation. The repentance of following these directions demonstrate the central role of God’s law in the life of Jewish people.

Good understanding of the covenant relationship between God and Jewish people

The Law of God is of central importance as a guide to Jewish life, as it is believed to be a divinely inspired law, handed down through the prophets in Jewish scripture. Included in the writings of the prophets is the Jewish concept of Tikhn Olam, or ‘repair of the world’. The fulfilment of God’s laws is believed to bring about a repair of all the evils and problems of the world. This, again, has clear implications for environmental ethics. In this area, as in all other areas of life, Jewish people are instructed to care for the Earth given to them by God. The role of the Jewish people, as ‘stewards’ of creation is a clear example of God’s love. This, however, leads to the obligations of the Jewish people in responding to this love, by following the commandments and laws of the Torah. The passage from Deuteronomy 6 clearly establishes this

Understanding of the connection between love and obligation; God – the Jewish people; the Jewish people – God

Varied sources – drawing together different elements in relation to environmental ethics

obligation, will the 'laws and the rules' of God 'to be observed is the land which you are about to cross into and occupy'. The land is given to the Jewish people out of God's love, but in return they must heed his instructions, including the care of the land they were given. The instructions in Deuteronomy 20:19-20, regarding conduct during a siege prohibits the wanton destruction of birth bearing trees. This commandment, known as Bal Taschit, is generally regarded as symbolic warning against excessive destruction or abuse of the natural environment. Numbers 35:35 contains instructions relating to sound when planning rules and regulations regarding population and land use. The example of environmental ethics demonstrates that the 'laws and rules' of Judaism serve to guide and direct adherents at all stages of life.

Shows an understanding of the complexities of the tradition

Another important source of guidance in the lives of Jewish people is the Talmud. Composed of the Mishnah and Gemara of Talmud is a rabbinic commentary on the Torah. This commentary draws both the connections between the law of God and his love for the Jewish people, and serve to provide examples of how the Torah may be applied to everyday life. The Talmudic commentary is vitally important to the lives of adherents, as it is through this commentary that the legal traditions of Judaism have developed. This it is through the interpretations and discussions of learned Jewish leaders that the Jewish interpretation of such passages as Genesis 1.28 and Deuteronomy 20:19 have developed. The Rabbinic tradition emphasises God's love for humanity and for Judaism in particular as the covenant between God and the Jewish people establishes their role in creation. Their prominence is drawn from God's love but in return their lives must be guided by God's will and the laws of the Torah.

Shows a comprehensive understanding of the role played by sacred writings in Judaism

The importance of the law in Jewish life is reflected in all aspects of Jewish worship. The ceremonies of Judaism serve both to celebrate the love of God, and also to ensure the continued application of his laws to all aspects of Jewish life. The covenant is one of the principle beliefs of Judaism, and its influence on the lives of adherents cannot be underestimated. First established in the Torah between Abraham and God, with the latter promising Abraham descendant's as numerous as the stars in the skies, this covenant was re-affirmed in the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Ten Commandments, at the head of Judaism, and the 613 mitzvot that Jews are called on to obey, reflects the obligation of the Jewish people in their covenant with God. 'Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might'. The obedience of the God of Israel is expressly commanded in Deuteronomy 6, but is presented as a reflection of reciprocal love to God. In Judaism, the divinely inspired law is given to the Jewish people by God, out of his love for the Jewish people, and the laws are in then obeyed out of love for God. The covenant is in the Torah several times likened to a marriage between the nation of Israel and God. Marriage, in Judaism, is seen as an expression of the covenant, and is symbolic and the relationship between God's love and God's law.

Clear and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between God

Comprehensive understanding of the religious tradition and the relationship between the 'laws and rules' and the beliefs of Judaism

In the Jewish marriage ceremony, the guiding role of Jewish law, and the connection between Jewish law and the love of God is made evident. The giving of the ring or rings in the ceremony, known as kiddushin is symbolic of the covenant in several ways. The agreement between bride and groom, with its mutual obligations, is an expression of both love and duty, recalling the relationship between adherents of Judaism and their God. The ring itself, unadorned, represents the eternal and unbroken covenant between the Jewish people and their God. The giving of the rings takes place under the chuppah, a canopy that is usually placed outside underneath the stars. In doing so, the married couple reaffirm their faith in the covenant, and the promise of God to grant Abraham descendents as numerous as the stars in the sky.

Good analysis of 'love of God' and the reciprocal relationship that exists with the Jewish people

The marriage ceremony provides an ideal example of the extent to which adherents of the Jewish faith are guided and influenced in their lives by the love and law of God. The Torah itself contains very few directions regarding the marriage ceremony, and the traditions that guide Jewish couples are drawn entirely from Mishnaic Law. The Rabbinic commenting on the Torah delineates how the Jewish adherent is to incorporate the laws and commandments of Judaism into their lives. The instructions regarding marriage demonstrate the certainty of the law as a guide to Jewish life. Prior to the ceremony, the groom only in the use of progressive Judaism, the bride as well, will be 'called up' at the Shabbat service before the wedding. The Aliyah or blessing over the Torah is performed. Marriage is regarded as vitally important in Judaism. It is considered the ideal state for mankind, and is Genesis 1:28 it is stated that it is not good for men to be alone. Marriages therefore is strongly encouraged for all Jewish people. In fact one of the last Commandments in the Book of Genesis is the instruction to go forth and multiply'. Following the Jewish laws of family purity ensures that this can duly be obeyed through marriage, and thus marriage is almost a requirement of Judaism. The blessing of the Torah illustrates its centrality to Jewish marriage, and since marriage is considered such a fundamental aspect of Jewish life, it is shown to be of fundamental importance to living life in accordance with Jewish law.

Good cross-over and link to other aspects of the syllabus (significant practice)

The law is present and celebrated through all stages of the marriage ceremony. The ketubah or marriage contract stipulates the obligations of both bride and groom. In the Orthodox tradition, according to custom, the ketubah is written in a precise legal formula, in Aramaic. In Conservative Judaism, English translation is often added, and additions are also made to the formula. In progressive Judaism, the formula, is often discarded altogether, and the ketubah written in the language of the couple, however, the legal basis remains. The law, believed by Jewish people to be divinely inspired, forms the basis of the marriage, and thus of the Jewish home. The legal formula used in the extract reflects the legal aspects of the covenant as given to Moses, and this reaffirms the importance of the law in celebrating and reciprocating God's love.

Good interpretative comment bringing in aspects of the marriage ceremony

The marriage ceremony is the formation of the home, and the importance of the law in marriage expresses the importance of the law as a guidance in the private life of every adherent. In the Book of Ezekial, one of the important

Jewish prophets, the home is said to be a temple in miniature. The fundamental link between the home and religion is, of great importance to Judaism, and established from the moment of marriage. The formula used at the kiddushin recalls the covenant with Moses directly. “Behold, you are betrothed to me by the laws of Moses and Israel”. The reference to the law of Moses is ‘reference to the ‘laws and the rules’ expressed in Deuteronomy 6, an expression of love and obligation is the unique relationship between the Jewish people and their God. Obedience of the laws of God is held to be a sacred duty of all Jewish people, but more than that is an expression of both their love for God and God’s love for them. The connection between God’s love for his followers, and his religious laws is direct and immutable.

Reflects importance to adherents and community of the marriage

The Jewish truth is based on the relationship between the adherents of Judaism and their God. The covenant as established is the Torah, and the basis principle of Judaism, is a relationship based on love and mutual obligation. In environmental ethics, as in all other aspects of life, adherents of Judaism are guided by the love of God in granting them stewardship over creator, and their love of God in obeying their obligations towards creator. The ethical teachings of Judaism, in regard to the world and everything in it, essentially come down to the Jewish belief in right relations with God, with humanity, and with the world. These relations are inspired by the Torah, the law as handed by god to the Jewish people, and the accumulated commentary of Jewish writers and authorities. The relationship between God and the Jewish people, so seminal in its influence on their ethics and attitudes, is powerfully expressed in every aspect of Jewish worship. The marriage ceremony is only one of many Jewish rites and rituals, but is of fundamental importance to the Jewish way of life, and the continuation of Jewish customs. The ceremony at every stage therefore celebrates the link between God’s love and God’s law, and demonstrates how this law is expressed in everyday life for all adherents of Judaism. For Jewish people there is no distinction between God’s love, and his law, the one from the other.

Comprehensive understanding of the religious tradition and the role of ‘laws and rules’



Sample HSC Questions for Studies of Religion I and II

The following sample questions are examples of the types of questions that could be asked in Section II (short-answer responses) and Section III (extended responses) of the HSC examination for Studies of Religion I and II. For each sample question, marking guidelines are also provided. The sample questions and marking guidelines provide teachers and students with guidance as to the variety of questions to expect, although they are not meant to be prescriptive. That is, each year the examination could focus on different aspects of the syllabus.

The sample Section II questions illustrate how these may be structured. The examination specifications have been made more explicit to remind teachers and students that these are ‘short-answer’ question parts; therefore each part will be worth less than 10 marks.

The Section II sample short-answer responses include Example 1, a question with non-dependent parts; Example 2, a question with dependent parts; and Example 3, a question containing some dependent parts. The Section II sample questions use a specific religious tradition; however, the sample question style could be applied to each tradition. In any one year the questions asked in Section II may not be all the same style.

The Section III sample extended response questions show a variety of question styles that could be asked, using terminology and concepts from various parts of the syllabus. The sample questions should not be seen as the only styles that could be asked, and do not exclude question styles from previous years. In any one year the questions asked in Section III may not be all the same style.

The Studies of Religion Section II Sample Answer Booklet shows changes in the booklet layout where each part of the question will be answered on a separate page. Each year the number of lines allocated to the writing space may vary depending on the number of marks allocated to that part of the question

Section II – Religious Tradition Depth Study

Example 1 (15 marks) – question with non-dependent parts

- (a) Outline ONE significant practice within Christianity drawn from the following: **3**
- Baptism
 - Marriage ceremony
 - Saturday/Sunday worship
- (b) Explain how Christian ethical teachings, in ONE of the following areas, reflect Christian beliefs. **6**
- bioethics
 - environmental ethics
 - sexual ethics
- (c) Evaluate the contribution of ONE significant person OR school of thought, other than Jesus, to the development and expression of Christian beliefs. **6**

(a) Outcomes assessed: H1, H5

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Accurately indicates the main features of ONE significant Christian practice drawn from the list	3
• Indicates some features of ONE significant Christian practice drawn from the list	2
• Makes general statements about ONE significant Christian practice drawn from the list	1

(b) Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides detailed and accurate reasons for Christianity’s ethical teachings on the chosen area	5–6
• Provides some reasons for Christianity’s ethical teachings on the chosen area	3–4
• Makes general statements about Christianity and/or the chosen area	1–2

(c) Outcomes assessed: H2, H4, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Clearly makes a judgement about the contribution of ONE significant Christian person OR school of thought to the development and expression of Christian beliefs	5–6
• Attempts to make a judgement about the contribution of ONE significant Christian person OR school of thought to the development and expression of Christian beliefs	3–4
• Makes general statements about ONE significant Christian person OR school of thought	1–2

Section II

Example 2 (15 marks) – question with dependent parts

- (a) Outline ONE significant practice within Islam drawn from the following: **3**
- Friday prayer at the mosque
 - Funeral ceremony
 - Hajj
- (b) Describe the significance of the practice outlined in (a) in the life of adherents. **4**
- (c) How does the significant practice described in (b) express the underlying unity of the whole Islamic religious tradition? **8**

(a) Outcomes assessed: H1, H4

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Accurately indicates the main features of the chosen Islamic practice	3
• Indicates some features of the chosen Islamic practice	2
• Makes general statements about the chosen Islamic practice	1

(b) Outcomes assessed: H2, H4, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Accurately provides characteristics and features of the significance of the practice in the life of adherents	4
• Provides characteristics of the significance of the practice in the life of adherents	2–3
• Makes general statements about the chosen Islamic practice and/or adherents	1

(c) Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Clearly shows how the chosen practice expresses the underlying unity within the whole Islamic religious tradition	7–8
• Provides some information about how the chosen practice expresses the underlying unity within the Islamic religious tradition	5–6
• Provides some information on the chosen practice and the Islamic religious tradition	3–4
• Makes general statements about the practice and Islam	1–2

Section II

Example 3 (15 marks) – question containing some dependent parts

- (a) Outline ONE significant practice within Judaism drawn from the following: **3**
- death and mourning
 - marriage
 - Synagogue services
- (b) (i) Describe how the ethical teachings of Judaism apply in ONE of the following areas: **5**
- bioethics
 - environmental ethics
 - sexual ethics
- (ii) Explain how the ethical teachings described in (b)(i) express the diverse nature of Judaism. **7**

(a) Outcomes assessed: H1, H5

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Accurately indicates the main features of ONE significant practice within Judaism drawn from the list	3
• Indicates some features of ONE significant practice within Judaism drawn from the list	2
• Makes general statements about ONE significant practice within Judaism drawn from the list	1

(b)(i) Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Provides characteristics and features for the ethical teachings of Judaism in the chosen area	5
• Provides some characteristics for the ethical teachings of Judaism in the chosen area	3–4
• Makes general statements about Judaism and/or the chosen area	1–2

(ii) Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H8

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
• Clearly provides detailed and accurate reasons for how the ethical teachings in (b)(i) express the diverse nature of Judaism	5–7
• Provides some reasons for how the ethical teachings in (b)(i) express the nature of Judaism	3–4
• Makes general statements about Judaism and/or the chosen area	1–2

Section III – Religious Tradition Depth Study

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding relevant to the question
 - incorporate significant aspects of religion to illustrate your answer
 - communicate using language and terminology appropriate to the study of religion
 - present ideas clearly in a cohesive response
-

Example 1 (20 marks)

How do the ethical teachings of [Religious Tradition] contribute to an understanding of the religious tradition as a whole?

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H4, H5, H8, H9

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Clearly demonstrates how the ethical teachings of [Religious Tradition] contribute to an understanding of the religious tradition as a whole • Clearly incorporates significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Presents ideas clearly in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology relevant to the ethical teachings 	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Demonstrates how the ethical teachings of [Religious Tradition] contribute to an understanding of the religious tradition as a whole • Makes reference to significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Presents ideas in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology of the ethical teachings 	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes some ethical teachings of [Religious Tradition] • May make reference to aspects of the religion • Presents a response using some terminology 	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some general information about ethical teachings in [Religious Tradition] 	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes general statements about ethical teachings 	1–4

Section III

Example 2 (20 marks)

‘An understanding of religion provides a perspective for the human view of reality and deals with daily living ...’

Discuss this statement in relation to [Religious Tradition].

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H4, H5, H8, H9

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Clearly provides detailed points for or against the relationship between the quotation and [Religious Tradition] • Clearly incorporates significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Makes reference to the quotation • Presents ideas clearly in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology 	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Attempts to provide detailed points for or against the relationship between the quotation and [Religious Tradition] • Makes reference to significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • May make reference to the quotation • Presents ideas in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology 	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes some issues of [Religious Tradition] • May make reference to aspects of the religion • May refer to the quotation • Presents a response using some terminology 	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some general information about issues in [Religious Tradition] • May refer to the quotation 	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes general statements about [Religious Tradition] 	1–4

Section III

Example 3 (20 marks)

‘Mind precedes all mental states ... If with a pure mind a person speaks or acts happiness follows him like his never-departing shadow.’

Yamakavagga: Pairs (Dhk I)

translated from the Pali by Acharya Buddharakkhita – Tripitaka

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Discuss the relevance of a pure mind to Buddhist ethics and/or practices.

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H4, H5, H6, H8, H9

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of relevant beliefs and ethics and/or practices of Buddhism • Clearly incorporates significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Provides detailed points for or against the relevance of the quotation to ethics or practices of Buddhism • Presents a cohesive response integrating accurate and relevant terminology 	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of relevant beliefs and ethics and/or practices of Buddhism • Makes reference to significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Provides some points for and/or against the relevance of the quotation to ethics and/or practices of Buddhism • Presents a cohesive response using relevant terminology 	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the beliefs and/or ethics/or practices of Buddhism • May link the quotation to ethics and/or practices of Buddhism • May make reference to aspects of the religion • Presents a response using some relevant terminology 	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides general information about relevant beliefs and/or ethics and/or practices of Buddhism • May refer to the quotation 	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes in general terms about Buddhism 	1–4

Section III

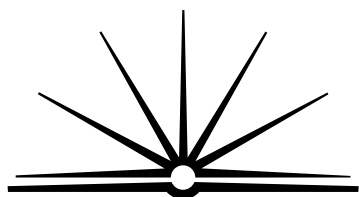
Example 4 (20 marks)

To what extent is [Religious Tradition] a living religious system that links directly with the life of adherents?

Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H4, H5, H8, H9

MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Clearly makes a judgement about the extent to which [Religious Tradition] is a living religious system that links directly with the life of adherents • Clearly incorporates significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Presents ideas clearly in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology 	17–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of [Religious Tradition] • Attempts to make a judgement about the extent to which [Religious Tradition] is a living religious system that links directly with the life of adherents • Makes reference to significant aspects of the religion using relevant examples • Presents ideas in a cohesive response integrating specific terminology 	13–16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May relate to [Religious Tradition] as a living religious system and/or link • directly with the life of adherents • May make reference to aspects of the religion • Presents a response using some terminology 	9–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some general information about [Religious Tradition] 	5–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes general statements about [Religious Tradition] 	1–4



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NEW SOUTH WALES

2010

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
SAMPLE ANSWER BOOKLET**

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Centre Number

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Student Number

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Question Number

Studies of Religion

Section II Answer Booklet

Instructions

- Answer ONE question from Questions 1–5 in this answer booklet
- Write your Centre Number and Student Number at the top of this page
- Write the question number in the space provided on this page
- Write the question part in the space provided at the top of each page
- The spaces provide guidance for the expected length of response



Write the question part
in this space, eg (a)(i)

Question Part

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Write the question part
in this space, eg (a)(ii)

Question Part

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer.



Write the question part
in this space, eg (b)

Question Part

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing the answer.