

General Certificate of Education (International)
Advanced Subsidiary Level

HINDUISM 8058

For examination in November 2011

Syllabus
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HINDUISM

GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Syllabus 8058

Available in the October/November session only

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Exclusions

This syllabus must not be offered in the same session with the following syllabus:

9014 Hinduism

AIMS

The aims of this syllabus are to motivate candidates to develop an enquiring and critical approach to the study of fundamental questions of religious practices, beliefs, morality and interpretations and to explore such issues within the context of a religious tradition or traditions.

To realise the above, candidates will be required to gain some understanding of the religious writings, history and current affairs of Hinduism and be able to think and argue intelligently about the subject.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The examination will test the candidate's:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) knowledge of the topics and specified texts | [60%] |
| (b) understanding of the meaning and significance of the material studied | [25%] |
| (c) ability to express himself/herself explicitly, logically and critically in any argument. | [15%] |

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

The examination will consist of **one** paper of three hours' duration.

The paper will consist of four sections **A, B, C** and **D**; candidates will be required to answer **five** questions, choosing at least **one** from each section. At least three questions will be set in each section.

The Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level Paper is the same as Paper 1 of the Advanced Level (9014). Results in the AS Level may **not** be carried over to the A Level.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

Paper 1

Section A – *The Vedic Age*

The nature of the Vedas as sacred texts, their four major divisions, and their significance within Hinduism.

- (a) The characteristics, nature and significance of the following Vedic gods: Indra, Varuna, Agni
- (b) The nature of the Samhitas, with special and detailed reference to the religious ideas of:
 - (i) Purusha Sukta (Rig Veda 10.90)
 - (ii) Nasadiya Sukta (Rig Veda 10.129)
 - (iii) Brahmacarya Sukta (Atharva Veda 11.05)
- (c) The nature and purpose of the Brahmanas, with special reference to Yajna
- (d) The nature of the Upanishads, with special reference to:
 - (i) Isa Upanishad
 - (ii) Katha Upanishad.

Specified text: *The Principal Upanishads* by S Radhakrishnan (Allen & Unwin).

Section B – *The Epic Age*

The origins of the epics, their nature, the reasons for their popularity. A comparison of some of the themes of the epics: the nature of dharma, the concept of the avatar, the concept of karma, ethical ideals for men and women.

These themes will be discussed with special reference to:

- (a) in the Mahabharata
 - (i) Krishna
 - (ii) Duryodhana
 - (iii) Draupadi
 - (iv) Yudhistira.

Specified text: *The Bhagavad Gita*, chapters 2, 3 and 9 by S Radhakrishnan (Allen & Unwin).

- (b) in the Ramayana
 - (i) Rama
 - (ii) Sita
 - (iii) Lakshmana
 - (iv) Bharata
 - (v) Dasaratha Viyoga – Book 3
 - (vi) Rama – Bharata Samvada – Book 4.

Specified text: *The Ramayana, Condensed into English Verse* by Romesh C Dutt (Jaico Publishing House, M Gandhi Road, Bombay). This edition is also available online at www.sacred-texts.com/hin/dutt/

Section C – *Medieval Age*

The origins of bhakti movements, with special reference to the Alvars of South India; the importance of bhakti and its relation to other paths to enlightenment.

A study of the main achievements, religious and philosophical beliefs of:

- (a) Surdasa
- (b) Tulsidasa.

Section D – Modern Age

Study of the religious, social and political background of the nineteenth and twentieth century reformers of Hinduism.

A special study of the main aims, religious and social ideas, and achievements of the following characters:

- (a) Rammohan Roy
- (b) Ramakrishna Paramahansa
- (c) Swami Dayananda
- (d) M K Gandhi.

Recommended Reading:

S Radhakrishnan	<i>Indian Philosophy Vol. I</i>
S Radhakrishnan	<i>The Principal Upanishads</i>
Romesh C Dutt	<i>The Ramayana - Condensed into English Verse</i> Jaico Publishing House and available online at www.sacred-texts.com/hin/dutt/
S Radhakrishnan	<i>The Bhagavad Gita</i>
Dr Nagendra (ed)	<i>Tulsidas - His Mind and Art</i> National Publishing House or any other suitable edition
Dr Nagendra (ed)	<i>Surdas - A Revaluation</i> National Publishing, Darya Ganj, New Delhi
K K Lalkarna	<i>Mahatma Gandhi - Contribution to Hinduism</i> Classical Publishing Co., New Delhi
R N Dandekar	<i>Insights into Hinduism</i> Bhandarkar Oriental Research Inst., Poona
David Frawley	<i>Wisdom of the Ancient Seers - Mantras of the Rig Veda</i> Motilall Banarasidas, Delhi
D S Sharma	<i>Hinduism Through the Ages</i> Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Publications
Raja Gopalachari	<i>The Ramayana and the Mahabharata</i> Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Publications
M Ramnohur	<i>Hinduism For All</i> Neeta Prakashan, New Delhi
V K Subramanian	<i>Sacred Songs of India</i> Abhinav Publications
Krishna P Bahadur	<i>The Poems of Surdasa</i> Abhinav Publications
John Brockington	<i>The Sacred Thread</i> Edinburgh University Press
Julius Lipner	<i>Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices</i> Routledge
Rajaram and Frawley	<i>Vedic Aryans and Origins of Civilization</i> Voice of India