



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2025

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 3
OPTION F – A STUDY OF SIKHISM
1120UF0-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

Rules for marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two-stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band (marks)	Assessment Objective AO1 – Section A questions [30 marks] <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i> - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice - approaches to the study of religion and belief.
5 (25-30 marks)	• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4 (19-24 marks)	• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3 (13-18 marks)	• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2 (7-12 marks)	• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable) • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1 (1-6 marks)	• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable) • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication. N.B. A maximum of 3 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'.
0	• No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2 - Section B questions [30 marks] <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5 (25-30 marks)	• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4 (19-24 marks)	• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3 (13-18 marks)	• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2 (7-12 marks)	• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought, appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1 (1-6 marks)	• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.
0	• No relevant analysis or evaluation.

WJEC GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

OPTION F – A STUDY OF SIKHISM

SUMMER 2025 MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

1. Examine features of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Sikh empire.

[AO1 30]

Candidates could include some or of the following, but other relevant responses will be credited.

- The Sikh Empire, now known as Punjab, was a region spanning the border into modern-day People's Republic of China and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
- The Sikh Empire was very secular since it allowed men from different religions as well, to rise to commanding positions of authority. His army even included a few Europeans.
- Sikhism was not the state religion. The broad religious outlook was reflected in giving due respect to all religions.
- The Sikh empire was pluralistic in nature.
- Sikhs were not treated as a privileged class and no disabilities were placed on non-Sikh subjects. There was no interference with the religious and cultural life of other communities. They were allowed to freely practise their religions without payment of a special tax. There were no discriminating tariffs. All subjects were given complete freedom of expression and worship.
- Ranjit Singh's employment policy reflected the basic liberal and humanitarian teaching of Sikhism. The highest posts in his Government were as open to Muslims as to the Sikhs and the Hindus.
- Ranjit Singh built his rule on religious foundations. He referred to his Government as Sarkar-i-Khalsa, which derived its legitimacy from the Khalsa. He attributed every success to the favour of God and he styled himself and the people collectively as the Khalsa or Commonwealth of Gobind. His state salutation was Wahe-i-Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Wahe-i-Guru Ji Ki Fateh (Khalsa belongs to God and its victory is the victory of God). His official seal bore the word- Akal Sahai (May God help). The term also indicated that the Khalsa did not owe its allegiance to any earthly power and acted in total devotion to Akal (The Timeless Reality)
- Brahmins were given high class jobs in his administration.
- Religious bigotry, he knew was incompatible with Sikhism. The idea of unity of God, universal brotherhood and welfare of all (Sarbat da Bhala) which summed up the basic tenets of Sikhism, enabled him to restore complete religious harmony in his kingdom.
- There was an atmosphere of religious tolerance in which Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were all appointed to high office. Artists and craftsmen, similarly, worked for patrons without regard for religious differences: the Sikh Maharaja's throne was made by a Muslim, and craftsmen of all religions worked on the building of the Golden Temple.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

2. Examine the political background to the Sikh aspiration for Khalistan.

[AO1 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant responses will be credited.

- In 1799 Ranjit Singh captured Lahore and in 1801 established the Punjab as an independent state. Although a devout Sikh, he took part in religious acts with Muslims and Hindus as well.
- After Ranjit Singh died in 1839 the Sikh state crumbled, damaged by vicious internal battles for the leadership. In 1845/6 troops of the British Empire defeated the Sikh armies and took over much Sikh territory.
- The Sikhs got on well with the British partly because they came to think of themselves less as subjects of the Raj than as partners of the British. The British helped themselves get a favourable religious spin when they took control of the Sikh religious establishment by putting their own choices in control of the Gurdwaras. Good relations between Sikhs and British came to an end in 1919 with the Amritsar massacre.
- In April 1919 British troops commanded by General E. H. Dyer opened fire without warning on 10,000 people who were holding a protest meeting. The troops killed about 400 people and wounded 1,000.
- When British India gained its independence in 1947; it was divided between India and the Islamic state of Pakistan. The Sikhs felt badly treated and reluctantly chose to join India. The Sikhs were unable to demand their own state, because there were too few of them to resist Pakistan's claim to the Punjab. Only by siding with India were they able to keep part of the Punjab, although not before appalling loss of life in communal massacres. Sikhs lost many of their privileges, much of their land, and were deeply discontented.
- The Sikh ambition for a state of their own was something that India would not concede. To do so would have allowed communalism (i.e. religious groupings) an unbreakable foothold in the politics of what was supposed to be a secular state.
- However, in 1966, after years of Sikh demands, India divided the Punjab into three, recreating Punjab as a state with a Sikh majority. This was not enough to stop Sikh anger at what they saw as continuing oppression and the unfair way in which they thought India had set the boundaries of the new state.
- As Sikh discontent grew, the conflict gradually changed from a purely political conflict into a confrontation between Hindus and Sikhs; and then to real violence.
- In June 1984 Indian troops launched 'Operation Blue Star'. They attacked the Golden Temple Complex, killing many of those inside, and seriously damaging the buildings.
- This invasion of the holiest place of the Sikhs infuriated many Sikhs, even the non-militant.
- The Punjab is presently peaceful, although in the last two or three years the rise of Hindu nationalism, and renewed claims that Sikhism is nothing more than a Hindu sect, have given Sikhs cause for alarm.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

Section B

3. 'The Rahit Maryada is a very effective guide to Sikh living.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.

- One advantage of the Sikh code of conduct and which makes it a very effective guide for living today is that it does not depend on the surrounding society and its values. Sikh code of conduct is expressed and supported within the Sikh community. Sikh code of conduct provides social, cultural, religious and spiritual precepts for governance of Khalsa corporate life. Sikh faith is established on observance of the principles and rules formulated by the Sikh Gurus.
- There is a greater need to be committed to creating a unified and ethical community in the diaspora situation. The Rahit Maryada is a very effective guide in achieving this goal.
- Clear and specific guidance is needed even more today to guide young Sikhs in particular as so many conflicting ideologies and value systems prevailing both in the changing society of India and the wider world. The Rahit Maryada focuses on the Sikh way of life.
- The Rahit Maryada contains set rules and ways for the ideal life in Sikhism which determine Sikh beliefs and practices. It extends its meaning to life discipline. It meets the principles for ethical, moral and spiritual life. It is a code which tells the Sikh followers how to live and how not to.
- Secular society is built on the values of materialism, and self-advancement. This contradicts Sikh values and principles as defined in the Rahit Maryada. According to Sikhism the purpose of human life is the attainment of God. This is possible by observing the principles of truth. Rahit Maryada means living a pure, pious and spiritual inner life. It guides Sikhs on how to live such a life.
- The importance of outward signs such as turban and 5 Ks is more difficult to justify and maintain in 21st century especially in western cultures. The emphasis is on assimilation and outward signs often make this more difficult if not impossible. It could be argued therefore that the Rahit Maryada is not an effective guide to living as it makes assimilation more difficult.
- Sikh code of conduct is rooted in spiritual goals and principles which are not accepted or respected in secular society.
- In diaspora Sikhism adapts and amends lifestyle to fit in with the cultural context they are living in. The Rahit Maryada is rooted in Punjabi life and culture and many Sikhs, especially the young, feel that it is not an effective guide to living today in places such as Britain.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

4. 'Sikh responses to the challenge of secularisation are very effective.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.

- Secularisation is the transition of a society from religious to non-religious values. In 1966, Brian Wilson defined secularisation as 'the process whereby religious thinking, practices and institutions lose their social significance.' The word 'secular' comes from the Latin 'saeculum' which means present age or this world. Secularism can vary from the state ignoring religion to the state interfering in religious matters.
- Generally it can be argued that Sikhism has responded well to secularisation and Sikhs have succeeded in integrating into British society. This is true in all areas of society – politics, business and medicine. 'Indicators of Sikhs' otherwise full integration into UK society include high levels of educational attainment, their substantial numbers in professions such as law, medicine, accountancy and their election as mayors and members of Parliament.' (British Sikh Report 2013, p.9). The diversity of British culture allows different religions to flourish, and Sikhs have succeeded in keeping their identity and Punjabi culture. The gurdwara has developed as a social centre within the community and helped preserve Sikh traditions. Over 200 gurdwaras have been established.
- In Sikhism, sacred and secular are co-mingled but purified. Guru Nanak secularised religion by divesting it of mystery, miracles, magic, divine incarnation and supernatural mediation between man and God and purified secularism by investing it with equality, mutual respect, goodwill, morality, equal opportunity, religious toleration and openness in administration. Therefore, it can be argued that Sikh response is effective.
- Sikhism has adapted to the challenges of a secular society without betraying its unique identity. This shows that its response is effective.
- It can be argued that contrary to the secularisation thesis, there are many parts of the world where religion appears to be thriving or reviving under the influence of fundamentalist ideas that advocate unwavering obedience to religious laws throughout society. This can be argued to be true in some aspects of Sikhism and therefore a valid and effective response.
- It can be argued that religion as a source of personal meaning and fulfilment survives much more widely and with greater vitality than institutional religion. The secularisation thesis is, therefore, less applicable to personal religion than to formal religion. Sikhism, it can be argued, is a personal religion as its aim is union with God, and therefore can deal with the challenges of secularisation.
- There is evidence of weakening effect of religion on marriage, family and many institutions, but it is also a fact that there is evidence of the continuing vitality of religion. The decline in formal religious practices does not necessarily indicate the secularisation process is having a major impact upon Sikhism, and that Sikh responses in adapting its religious practices can be seen as effective.
- However, there has been conflict in some areas. One area of conflict has been the Sikh dress, the wearing of the turban and the five Ks. Sikhs were not allowed to wear a kirpan in airports and there were a number of cases where Sikh children were not allowed to wear the kara, the steel bracelet, because of school uniform rules. 'Sikhs suffer most due to their visible identity and articles of faith. In fact, the Sikhs are in a worse position so far as the turban is concerned because the Sikh "dastar" is an inseparable part of Sikh faith. A country should not suppress people's basic rights in the name of secularism in this way.' (Gurmukh Singh).

- Another challenge for Sikhs is trying to practice Sikh values and principles, as defined in the Rahit Maryada, in a secular society built on the values of materialism. Another challenge is the rise in intercommunal and racial tension, and prejudice and discrimination are also on the rise. Sikhs suffer from mistaken identity with many because of a lack of knowledge surrounding the religion; some people mistake them for Muslims. This is why Sikhs have invested a lot of time and money educating people about their faith.
- In India, Sikh separatists challenged the secular state; and after the violent conquest of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Sikh bodyguards assassinated Indira Gandhi. This can be argued to be an ineffective response since it led to violence.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

5. 'The Japji of Guru Nanak is the most important aspect of Sikh worship.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.

- Sikhs recite the Japji everyday but not necessarily in the morning – it can be done anytime. The recitation can be done in the language of the country or in Gurmukhi, and both are beneficial. However, many believe that reciting in Gurmukhi allows better access to the power of the mantra as it creates the original sound. Meditation allows a Sikh to become more God centred (Gurmukh) and resist the five evils.
- The further importance of the Japji can be seen in the fact that it is chanted at the initiation ceremony and during the cremation ceremony. It was composed by Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, it is the most important prayer of the Sikhs.
- Others would argue that the Mul Mantra is a more important aspect. The importance of the Mul Mantra can be seen clearly in its role as a mantra, as it allows Sikhs to recite God's name in 'sat nam', to purify the mind and come close to God. The recitation of the Mul Mantra is a central part of daily prayers and so brings Sikhs into relationship with God every day.
- Sikhs believe in the power of reciting the Mul Mantra; it allows contemplation of a person's soul (atma). It can change a person's destiny and help a person not only to find their spiritual identity, but also to identify the ways and means to live according to that identity. It brings the devotee closer to God and gives a profound sense of peace and tranquillity.
- However, many would argue that it is impossible to differentiate between the Mul Mantra and Japji in terms of importance. They are repeated each day during early morning prayer. They were composed by Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, who told his followers to Jap, which means to recite and meditate. He told them to use the words to refine their minds and to help them focus on their inner self and their own true identity as part of God, created by God, sustained by God and, ultimately, one with God.
- According to Guru Hargobind, those who sincerely meditate on the Mul Mantra and Japji and understand their meaning will achieve liberation (Mukti).
- The Mul Mantra has fundamental importance as a statement of faith. It reminds Sikhs of some of the key beliefs of their religion. Others could argue that the Japji is itself an elaboration of the Mul Mantra which is the kernel of Sikh spirituality. As such, they are both as important as each other and are the main pillars of Sikh worship.
- Sikhs practice private worship every day and as a preparation for public worship in the gurdwara. They rise early and shower or bathe before coming into God's presence. The worship consists of reciting the Mul Mantra and Japji and practising Nam Simran which is calling God to mind. This helps Sikhs to become more God-centred and less selfish.
- The Mul Mantra and Japji also have an important role in the Amrit Sanskar.
- The Mul Mantra and Japji are also important parts of Sikh funeral services. They show that the mourners are resigned to God's will, rather than focusing on their pain and grief.
- It can be argued that singing Kirtan and listening to sermons and lectures explaining the words are more important aspects of Sikh worship.
- Towards the end of a service in the gurdwara, the Ardas prayer is said. This can be argued to be as or more important as the Ardas remembers God and the Ten Gurus and asks God to bless the Sikhs and all humanity, and to help them be faithful to the scriptures.

- There are other elements of Sikh worship which can be argued to be more important such as prayers said for specific individuals, for example, sick people in the community, and then Karah Parshad is shared.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

6. 'Sikhism is an exclusivist tradition.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.

- Exclusivism is the belief that only one religion has the truth, and therefore all other religions are believed to be false. There is one truth and one way to that truth. Exclusivists will claim that their religion is the only true religion, and if anyone wants to reach the truth, they must convert to their religion.
- Some would argue that Sikhism is an exclusivist tradition. The apparent exclusivism of the Khalsa might be used to support this argument – both within the religion itself and in relation to other religions.
- Others might argue that although Sikh teaching seems to reject all forms of exclusivism the practice might suggest differently. It could be argued that some Sikhs still base family life on caste which is exclusivist in nature.
- Another argument could be the rise in Sikh fundamentalism and the conflict especially in the Punjab region with elements within Hinduism and Islam.
- Others would argue that Sikhism is clearly an inclusivist tradition as Sikhs as a rule, do not pursue people to convert them to the Sikh faith. Inclusivism has a tolerant attitude towards other religions but believes that one religion, although not superior to others, is the true religion.
- Sikhs do not pursue people to convert them to Sikhism but do give information about Sikhism to anyone who asks for it. If someone is inspired, and wants to become a Sikh, they are welcome to become a part of Sikhism.
- The Guru Granth Sahib shows everyone a straight path to attain salvation regardless of their background or religion. Sikhism discredits no religion. According to Sikhism, all religions originated with good intentions and are like different roads leading to the same destination. This is clearly inclusivism. The Guru Granth Sahib also teaches that everyone is the same in the eyes of God: 'One God created all men; All men are made of the same clay.'
- Guru Gobind Singh declared: 'He is in the temple as in the mosque. In the Hindu worship as in the Muslim prayer.' The Sikh attitude towards other religions and their followers flows from this basic belief. He also declared: 'Hindus and Muslims are one! The same Lord is the creator and nourisher of all. Recognise no distinctions between them. The temple and the mosque are the same, so are puja and namaz. People are all one.' This clearly shows that Sikhism is an inclusivist tradition.
- Sikhism believes that every individual has the right to choose their religion and the freedom to practice it. Sikhs believe that there is more than one path to reach God and many paths to seek truth.
- Sikhs also believe that every person is equal regardless of their race, caste, gender or wealth and that they should be treated with respect and dignity. Sikhs regard men and women as equal in all spheres of life.
- However many Sikhs would reject the notion of inclusivism and exclusivism and maintain that Sikhism is a pluralistic tradition. Pluralism being the acceptance of diverse religious belief systems co-existing in society.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.