

**General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level
from 2010**

**Specification
SANSKRIT**

**ADVANCED LEVEL
GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION
EXAMINATION**

MODE 3 SYLLABUS FOR SANSKRIT

proposed by St James Independent Schools

Earsby Street
London W14 8SH

from Summer 2010

Introduction

There has been a long-standing tradition in the United Kingdom of offering an Advanced Level examination in Sanskrit. This is hardly surprising, since this unique language combines within its compass many remarkable properties. It has the utility of the Classics in providing an opportunity to study an ancient language and culture and yet in many respects it has the virtue of a modern language, being still current today. It is spoken in its pure form by scholars and some sections of the Indian community and has spawned many derivative languages, in much the same way as Latin has in the West.

Through the medium of Sanskrit one of the most intelligent and ancient cultures in the world may be studied. The world-picture embodied in Sanskrit literature underlies several world religions and forms the basis of most traditions of the Indian sub-continent. It is therefore of very direct relevance to many Asian communities in the United Kingdom and elsewhere at the present time. Furthermore, Sanskrit is related to Greek, Latin and the Germanic languages and its literature has much to show us of the original values, ideals and social mores of the ancient world and those underlying our modern western culture.

The Sanskrit language has been deliberately preserved in a state close to its original. Still today news bulletins are transmitted in Sanskrit twice daily over the whole of India. So scientific is the structure of this language, and so systematic in its organisation, that it has even been put forward as being the most suitable language for use in computers (c.f. *Knowledge Representation in Sanskrit and Artificial Intelligence*, The A.I. Magazine, Spring 1985). Sanskrit therefore offers a useful structural model with which to compare our own language and its related languages, as they have developed from their Classical and Germanic roots.

Incorporated in the following Advanced Level syllabus is an opportunity to study the ancient system of the grammarian Panini which is so highly regarded by modern linguistic scientists. Panini's system identifies the basic constituents of words and compounds, as well as their endings, and the way these words come together in *sandhi* and in the syntax of the sentence.

Aims

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all students. The purpose of a course in Sanskrit is to provide a working knowledge of a language with one of the richest literatures in the world, and to give students some familiarity with that literature, as well as the ideas and world picture portrayed in Sanskrit. Thereby the aim is to broaden the outlook of students by introducing them to a culture very different from our Christian civilization and indeed its offshoot, the European culture of today.

It is the intention to fire interest and to widen and deepen experience by considering a range of issues, social, linguistic, ethical and spiritual.

A Sanskrit course should be a fulfilling experience in itself and a firm basis for further study. Its aims will be to encourage students to:

1. develop, at an appropriate level, a competence in the Sanskrit language;
2. read, understand, appreciate and make a response to some of the literature in the original Sanskrit;
3. acquire some understanding of the civilization within which this literature was produced;
4. develop a sensitive and reasoned approach to language by seeing English in relation to a language of very different structure and by observing the influence of Sanskrit on English;
5. observe, abstract and analyse information, paying due regard to evidence and to develop a sympathetic awareness of the motives and attitudes of people of a different time and culture.

These aims are not arranged in order of importance, nor are they all necessarily to be translated into Assessment Objectives.

Assessment Objectives

Candidates should be able to do the following:

(A) Linguistic Knowledge with Understanding

1. show by translation an understanding of unprepared passages of Sanskrit, thereby displaying their grasp of Sanskrit vocabulary, accidence and syntax;
2. demonstrate a full understanding of an unprepared passage of Sanskrit by answering in English (or, where appropriate, by quoting from the Sanskrit) questions set on the passage; also by showing a grasp of Sanskrit vocabulary, accidence and syntax;
3. translate into accurate and preferably stylish Sanskrit a piece of English prose;

(B) Literary Knowledge with Understanding

1. (a) describe the content of character, thought, action, context;
(b) select information from the text;
(c) explain meanings and references;
(d) explain, where appropriate, matters relating to the social, cultural, philosophical or historical context;
(e) analyse and evaluate literary techniques, e.g. style, arrangement and selection of material, tone, metre (where appropriate);
(f) make a reasoned personal response;
2. translate a portion of the text; and
3. with regard to all the Sanskrit literature encountered, whether in the original or in translation, to:

- (a) write short essays showing both a broad understanding of the prescribed texts and showing a wider reading and understanding of Sanskrit texts in translation as recommended;
- (b) make some reasoned personal response in Assessment Objective 3 (a) where appropriate;

(C) **Optional Assessment Objectives** (one of the two to be chosen)

1. analyse, translate, explain and apply aphorisms and technical terms from the traditional system expounded by Panini and show a general understanding of the grammatical system;
2. or, translate extracts of English prose into accurate and preferably stylish Sanskrit, the English style being more sophisticated than in Assessment Objective A3.

Scheme of Assessment

There will be three papers with a total of 200 marks as follows:

Paper	Name	Duration	Marks
1	Prescribed Texts	2 hr. 30 min.	80
2	Unprepared Translation, Unprepared Comprehension and Prose Composition	2 hr. 30 min.	50
3	(A) Short essays on the prescribed texts and based on recommended reading material (B) either (i) Paninian grammar (ii) Higher level Prose Composition	1 hr. 30 min. 1 hr. 1 hr.	36 34 34

Question Papers

Paper 1 – Prescribed Texts

The Paper will have one question for each of the first three set texts. A fourth question will have one passage from each of set texts D and E.

Comprehension and appreciation of the texts will be tested.

Each question will consist of two passages. On each passage one or more sub-questions will be asked. At least one of these sub-questions will require translation.

Where appropriate, questions involving the appreciation and scansion of the śloka and upajati metres may be set.

Paper 2 – Unprepared Translation, Unprepared Comprehension and Prose Composition

The Paper will consist of two passages of Sanskrit, one of which must be translated into English, and one of which should not be translated but about which questions will be asked in English, requiring answers in English.

There will also be one passage of English prose to be translated into Sanskrit.

The two Sanskrit passages will carry 15 marks each, the prose composition 20 marks.

Candidates may be asked to scan lines of verse.

Each passage set will have a full title and the first few lines will have an English translation provided, in order to help candidates gain the 'feel' of the passage. Some words may be glossed. The English prose may be adapted and also have some words glossed.

Paper 3 – Short Essays and either Paninian Grammar or Higher Level Prose Composition

Section A will contain a choice of eight essay titles of which candidates must answer three. These will relate to the prescribed texts and a wider reading of primary sources (e.g. *Mahabharata*). A list of recommended reading is given below.

Section B (i) Paninian Grammar: This part of the paper will contain a choice of about 10 questions, three of which will require short essay answers; the others will be technical questions. Candidates will be required to answer one essay question and four of the technical questions. The essay question carries ten marks and the technical questions will carry six marks each.

Section B (ii) Higher Level Prose Composition: This part of the paper will require candidates to translate more sophisticated English into Sanskrit. The passage may be glossed and adapted.

SPECIFICATION CONTENT

Prescribed Texts for 2010 and onwards

PAPER 1

A) From the Buddhacarita of Asvaghosa:

Bk.3, vv. 25 - 47, 54 - 62; Bk.12, vv. 95 - 107; Bk.14, vv. 1-10.

Edition: *Asvaghosha's Buddhacarita, E.H.Johnson, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, New enlarged edition reprinted 2004*

B) From the Laws of Manu:

Bk.1, vv. 1-9, 87-91; Bk.2, vv. 88-99; Bk.3, vv. 68-70; Bk.4, vv. 137-138, 238-242; Bk.5, vv. 107-109; Bk.7, vv. 14-16, 18-20; Bk.12, vv. 118-125.

Edition: *Manusmṛti, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi First Edition 1983*

C) From the Upaniṣads:

Iṣaṅ vv. 1-8; Katha, vv. 1/2/18-20, 2/2/9-15; Muṇḍaka, vv. 1/1/3-7; Brhadāraṇyaka, vv. 4/3/1-7; 4/3/14 (only first & last sentences); 4/3/32-33; 4/4/19, 20, 25.

Eight Upaniṣads, Vol I & II, transl. Swami Gambhirānanda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, transl. Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta

D) From the Bhagavad Gītā

Ch.6, vv. 33-35; Ch.7, vv. 4-12; Ch.13, vv. 27-33; Ch.14, vv. 5-9; Ch.16, vv. 1-5; Ch.18, vv. 42-44.

Edition: *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā (The Bhagavad Gītā), transl. Swami Chidbhavananda, publ. Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam : Tirupparaithurai, 2002*

E) From Śāṅkara Commentary to the Bhagavad Gītā

Ch.2, vv.11, 12; Ch.6, vv. 34, 35; Ch.14, v. 5.

Edition: *Śāṅkaraācārya on Bhagavad Gītā, Motilal Banarsidass, Volume 2 of Works of Śāṅkaraācārya*

PAPER 2

The Sanskrit passages for translation and comprehension will be from the *Mahābhārata* or the *Rāmāyana*, or from both.

PAPER 3

- (A) Prescribed reading in English:
(For items 1 and 2 any good translation will suffice.)

1. *The Geeta*, translated by Shri Purohit Swami, Faber and Faber, London, Reprinted 1981 and subsequently – 80 pages
2. *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, translated by Shri Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats, Faber and Faber, London, Reprinted 1981 and subsequently – 144 pages
3. *The Mahabharata*: C. Rajagopalachari, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1987 and subsequently, selections: Chapters, 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 24, 25, 29, 41, 49, 54, 55, 62, 64, 65, 73, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106 - 90 pages
4. *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp.1-56

Bibliography:

1. *Ramayana*: C. Rajagopalachari, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan – 477 pages
2. *Buddhacarita*, Trans. E.H. Johnston, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi 1984, Part Two, English Translation – 124 pages
3. *Once the Buddha Was a Monkey*, Arya Sura's *Jatakamakar* University of Chicago Press, 1989 – 247 pages
4. *Hitopadesu of Natyanan*, trans. A.N.D. Haksar, Penguin Classics, 1998 – 230 pages

(B) Candidates will be required to know the following (the numbers of sutras are according to Vasu's edition of the *Ashtadhya* published by Motilal Banarsidass):

1. Mahesvarani Sutrani

2. Paribhasa

1/1/66
1/1/49
1/1/50
1/1/67
1/1/70
1/1/52
1/1/54
8/2/1
1/1/46
1/1/62

3. Sañjāna

1/1/2
1/1/1
1/2/45
1/2/46
1/4/13
1/1/27
1/2/41
1/4/10
1/4/11
1/4/12

1/1/53
1/1/56 (12)

1/4/14
1/3/1 (12)

4. Itsutrani

1/3/2 – 1/3/9 inclusive (8)

5. Acsandhi

6/1/77
6/1/78
1/1/51
6/1/88
6/1/101
6/1/109
1/1/11
1/1/14
1/1/15
8/3/19 (10)

6. Halsandhi

8/2/39
8/4/40
8/4/41
8/4/45
8/4/60
8/4/55
8/4/62
8/4/63
8/3/23
8/4/58
8/4/59
8/3/32 (12)

7. Visargasandhi

8/2/66
8/3/15
8/3/34
8/3/36
8/3/37
6/1/113
6/1/114
8/3/17
8/3/14
8/3/111
6/1/132
8/3/7
8/3/2
8/3/4 (14)

8. Ramarupani

4/1/1 7/3/102
4/1/2 7/1/9
3/1/1 7/1/13
3/1/2 7/3/103
1/4/103 8/4/56
1/2/64 7/3/104
6/1/102 7/1/54
6/1/104 6/4/3
2/3/47 8/3/59
6/1/69 7/1/17
6/1/107 7/1/14
6/1/103 7/1/15
8/4/1 7/1/52
8/4/37 7/1/12 (28)

END