

MAH AAC CET Design & Composition

Sample Paper – 6 | 2026

Duration: 90 Minutes | Maximum Marks: 50

Instructions

- This paper contains **1 practical question** modelled on the MAH AAC CET Design & Composition pattern.
- Total marks: **50**. There is **no negative marking**.
- Render the design in **POSTER COLOUR** or **WATERCOLOUR** on a drawing sheet of approximately **14" × 19"** (or A4 portrait).
- Use a pencil for the initial layout; **pencil lines must not be visible** in the final submission.
- All lettering must be done **freehand**. Stencils and printed/rub-on lettering are **strictly not permitted**.
- Write your **seat number and name** clearly on the front of the sheet before beginning work.
- **Mobile phones, calculators, and all electronic gadgets** are strictly prohibited in the examination hall.

Design & Composition Question



Question (50 Marks):

Design a **DEEPAWALI GREETING CARD** (A4 portrait, or 14" × 19" portrait sheet) celebrating the Festival of Lights. Your card must include all four of the following elements:

- (i) A **greeting message** — either ‘*Subh Deepawali*’ or ‘*Happy Deepawali*’ — rendered in a decorative, festive hand-lettered style that occupies the top quarter of the card and is immediately readable from a distance;
- (ii) A **central illustrative motif** comprising a cluster or arranged row of at least **three diyas** (traditional Indian oil lamps) with clearly visible flames — the diyas may be identical in form or varied in size, but must be the dominant visual element of the card;
- (iii) A **rangoli-inspired decorative border or frame** around the card edge, using traditional geometric or floral motifs (dots, petals, diamonds, chevrons) in a repeating or symmetrical pattern;
- (iv) **Radiant glow effects** around the diya flames achieved through concentric halos of warm colour (yellow → orange → deep red/violet) to suggest the warm glow of light against a dark background.

Use a **dark background** (deep indigo, navy, or black) with warm foreground colours (golden yellow, saffron orange, deep red) so the diyas appear to glow luminously against the night sky. Lettering should be in gold, white, or a contrasting warm tone.

Work on A4 (approx. 8.5" × 12") in portrait orientation. Poster colours or watercolours are equally acceptable.

Suggested Composition Layout (Thumbnail)

The thumbnail below suggests one possible arrangement. Candidates are encouraged to develop their own original composition.





Thumbnail: Deepawali Greeting Card — Diyas, Rangoli Border, Glow Effects

Evaluation Rubric (50 Marks)



Marking Rubric

Criterion	Descriptors	Marks
Decorative Lettering	Greeting rendered in a festive, expressive freehand style; letters are consistent, legible from a distance, and reinforce the celebratory mood	12
Diya Motif & Central Illustration	Diya forms are well-executed and recognisable; flames are convincing; at least three diyas arranged to create a strong central focal point	12
Glow and Luminosity Effect	Concentric warm halos around flames effectively suggest radiant light; dark background enhances contrast; overall card conveys a glowing, festive night-time mood	10
Rangoli Border	Border motifs are correctly patterned and evenly executed; design is symmetrical or rhythmically repeating; corner treatments are resolved	8
Colour Harmony & Technical Finish	Warm/cool colour contrast is purposeful; edges are clean; sheet is correctly labelled; no visible pencil lines in the finished card	8
Total		50

Preparation Guidance

- **Dark background technique:** begin by covering the entire sheet in a flat deep-indigo or black wash and allow it to dry fully before adding the warm foreground colours. Working light-on-dark is very different from the usual approach — practise this technique beforehand.
- **Diya form:** the diya has a shallow, wide, boat-shaped body (like a flattened half-ellipse) and a small pointed spout. Practise drawing the body as a single continuous curve, adding the oil level as a small ellipse inside, and the flame as a smooth teardrop. Keep all three diyas slightly different in size to create hierarchy.



- **Glow effect:** build the glow by applying the lightest/most-intense yellow closest to the flame, then orange, then deep red-violet as the halo fades outward. Wet-on-wet blending (watercolour) or dry-brush softening (poster colour) both work — choose one technique and apply it consistently across all three diyas.
- **Rangoli border:** sketch the repeating unit (a single petal or diamond motif) on rough paper, confirm its dimensions fit the border evenly (lightly mark regular intervals along each edge), then execute the border before filling in the interior. Corner solutions — a larger diamond or star motif — deserve a dedicated sketch.
- **Lettering:** for the greeting, sketch the letter outlines lightly in pencil, then fill with gold or bright yellow. A double-stroke outline (thin black or dark-red outer edge) makes white or yellow lettering pop against a dark background.
- **Time management:** approximately 10 min for thumbnails and layout, 15 min for background wash and rangoli border, 40 min for diyas, lettering, and glow effects, 25 min for finishing and detail work.

