



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

**General Certificate of Education**

**Religious Studies 1061**

**RSS11      Islam 2 *The Life of the Prophet***

**Mark Scheme**

*2009 examination - January series*

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## Examination Levels of Response

### Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

**RSS11: Islam 2 *The Life of the Prophet*****1 (a) Examine the social situation in Arabia at the time of Muhammad.**

The tribal structure, the clans within the tribe and the relative importance of specific clans and tribes – the tradition of the ancestors. There should be awareness of the differing lifestyles of Bedouin nomads and city dwellers, e.g. in Makkah, and of the importance of trade.

The low status of women and slaves may be evidenced by reference to female infanticide and slave-murder. Evidence from the Qur'an also suggests some degree of breakdown of the social order in Makkah, e.g. mistreatment of orphans, lack of charity to the poor, and general immorality, especially drunkenness, orgies and gambling.

N.B. the question asks candidates to consider Arabia in general but candidates should not be penalised if they do not mention places outside Makkah.

At the time of Muhammad can be interpreted as **during** his career as well. Credit must be given if this approach is taken.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) To what extent was the message of Muhammad simply a reaction to the existing social situation?**

This can be developed in a variety of ways, e.g. it can be argued that Muhammad was responding to his call, not to the social situation, or that, from the evidence of his message, his concern was more religious than social. For example:

**In support of the statement**

The early message included clear injunctions against the immorality of the time, e.g. status of slaves and women were condemned, specific preaching against drunkenness and greed.

**Contrary to the statement**

The message was primarily a religious one, with declarations about One God and against idol-worshipping. The ingratitude of the people toward the creator is condemned and the message of individual responsibility and judgement stressed.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**2 (a) Explain how Muhammad was called to Prophethood and how he reacted to that call.**

The 'call' may be taken as the events on the Night of Power, but it may also be taken to refer to the first few revelations in which Muhammad was given his role – 'recite' and 'rise and warn'. Candidates should be aware of the traditional outline of that event, and may consider ways in which it is interpreted.

'Reaction' – may be taken in various ways, e.g. his fear, and his concern that he may have been possessed by a Jinn; his need for comfort and reassurance, and how a Christian relative of his wife identified the experience as coming from God, which he accepted. Reference may be made to the subsequent gap in the revelations (traditions give different lengths to that gap – but it is often claimed that it was about 2 years) before a second experience sent him out to preach publicly. His response in preaching first to his family and then to wider society may also be seen as his 'reaction' to the call.

Wholly narrative answers maximum Level 4.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) 'Muhammad's claim to be a Prophet was rejected by the people of Makkah.'**

**To what extent is this true?**

**In support of the statement**

During the time in Makkah, Muhammad made few converts. He was declared mad by the authorities in Makkah and, in the end, refused permission to preach within the city's boundaries. Ongoing ridicule and persecution came from many of Makkah's citizens. Most early converts were connected to Muhammad's family in some way.

**Contrary to the statement**

People in Makkah did convert and become Muslims even in the face of persistent persecution. His reputation was such that people came to Makkah especially to hear him preach. There were converts not from his family, including people who started out by being very anti-Muslim (e.g. Umar). Once Makkah was conquered, most Makkans became Muslims.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**3 (a) Examine the role of the Prophet in Madinah.**

Candidates should consider the multi-faceted nature of Muhammad’s role, including social, religious, political and military.

**Social**

e.g. social leader, definer of social status and rules, provider of aid to the poor or travellers, arbiter in status disputes, role model.

**Religious**

e.g. leader in terms of preacher, still receiving revelations, public prayer meetings.

**Political**

e.g. political leader, refusal to be king, political arbiter, personal control over border tribes.

**Military**

leader in battles, including battles against Makkah.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) ‘Muhammad’s most important role in Madinah was as a military leader.’**

**Assess this view.**

**In support of the statement**

Military leadership allowed Muslims to support themselves through raiding, and encouraged others to ally themselves to the Ummah in order to share the benefits; victory at Badr seen as sign of God’s favour on them; led to victory against Makkah and, through conquest, the spread of the influence of Islam and power of the Ummah.

**Contrary to the statement**

Many other aspects to his role, particularly as Prophet. All worked together, e.g. set-back at Badr understood through revelation as a ‘lesson’ to the Muslims about the need for obedience to the Prophet; authority of Prophet based on the message, function as arbitrator between differing factions of the community essential.

Candidates may develop the thesis that all the roles are intertwined and none more important than the others.

**(15 marks) AO2**

**4 (a) Examine the nature of the Umma at the time of Muhammad's death.**

The Umma was spread across significant parts of Arabia, centred on the two cities of Makkah and Madinah. It included border tribes whose loyalty was to Muhammad personally, rather than Islam or the Umma – as evidenced by their refusal to recognise the authority of the Umma after Muhammad's death. The broader community may be seen as a political community united by a common acceptance of authority, rather than a religious community united by faith in God.

In Madinah, the Umma comprised the Emigrants and the Ansar, and within the emigrants were Muhammad's blood relatives. Among the more recent converts were the traditional ruling clans of Makkah including those who had fought against him for most of his career – in particular, the Umayyads. Each of these groups is seminal to the events that followed Muhammad's death.

**(30 marks) AO1**

**(b) 'After Muhammad's death, the Umma became a purely spiritual community.'**

**Assess this claim.**

A long-term or reasonably short-term view may be taken, e.g. some may want to relate the answer to today – this is not required but can be credited. Some may argue that since Islam is a complete way of life, the division between 'spiritual' and 'political' is irrelevant, it must be both.

**In support of the statement**

Community of Islam based on faith and commitment to the Shahadah. The faction represented by Ali seen as concerned with the spiritual legacy of the Prophet. There was emphasis on the continuation and preservation of the Sunnah and recording of the Qur'an. Idea of a theocracy – a society ruled on God's behalf according to the divine law.

**Contrary to the statement**

Massive expansion of Islam due to military activity. Caliphs taking advantage of the disintegration of the Byzantine empire. Political infighting led to battle of Karbala, and there are both political and spiritual differences between Sunni and Shi'a. Groups continued to have social and political power as well as religious influence, e.g. the Umayyads.

Attention may be paid to the motivation of the most recent 'converts' to Islam – may be difficult to accept that the whole population of Makkah, or individuals like Khaled, who had opposed Muhammad and the Muslims throughout were suddenly fully committed to the spiritual ideals of Islam.

**(15 marks) AO2**