



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

RSS11 *Islam 2 The Life of the Prophet*

Mark Scheme

2009 examination - June series

This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#) which is being introduced for examinations from June 2010

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

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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

01 Explain the importance of Makkah at the time of jahiliyyah.

Makkah as centre of trade (located on the trade routes) and pilgrimage (location of Ka'ba); tradition of the holy months and the suspension of any feud within the holy area making it a regional power centre. Access to the Ka'ba, and to Makkah's water source, important in the region – giving the ruling tribe considerable influence and importance in the area, and perhaps Arabia as a whole. With Makkah having such influence the success or failure of any new development could depend on its support.

Reference may also be made to a less traditional view, which argues that Makkah was not as significant as generally believed.

(30 marks) AO1

02 'The fact that Muhammad was born in Makkah was vital for the success of Islam.'

Assess this view.

In support of the statement

e.g. His work as a merchant and his response to the social, economic and spiritual issues of Makkah equipped him for his work, and gave it impetus; could be argued that his awareness of Christianity and Judaism through trading contacts fuelled his criticisms of idol worship and immorality before his call in 610, (possibly as one of the Hanifs), it also gave his message a context. Regular pilgrimage gave him access to potential converts. Position on trade routes meant many were able to hear his message and take that message across Arabia. Suggestion that his invitation to Madinah was based as much on the trading expertise the Muslims brought from Makkah as on commitment to the ideals of Islam. Success of Islam not ensured until conquest of Makkah and assimilation of the ruling clans.

Contrary to the statement

e.g. The interest he had in Makkah and the people of Makkah had in him was one of the strongest challenges to the development of early Islam, and it could be argued that he succeeded despite Makkah not because of it. The biggest growth of Islam was when Muhammad was in Madinah.

Attention should be paid to the term 'vital' in the highest scoring answers.

(15 marks) AO2

03 Examine the main themes of the Prophet's teaching in Makkah.

e.g.

Monotheism – role of Allah, need to restore Islam to its former position, anti-idol worshipping.

Warner – personal responsibility, life after death and judgement.

Against immorality, especially drunkenness, female infanticide, lack of support for weaker / vulnerable members of society; criticisms of trading practices.

These themes may be drawn from both Qur'an and Hadith, or from Qur'an alone.

(30 marks) AO1

04 Assess the view that Muhammad's most important role in Makkah was that of a 'Warner.'

In support of the statement

e.g. 'Rise and warn' was God's command. Individual responsibility, life after death and judgement.

A major theme of the teaching – and the reason (or pretext) for his expulsion from his clan in 619. The condemnation of social evil and idolatry, identified the 'evils' for which the people would be punished as well as for following the Traditions of the Ancestors rather than the Law of God.

Contrary to the statement

e.g. Emphasis on God's controlling power, gratitude to God and the rewards this would bring. Recitation of the Qur'an so that its power was experienced by those who heard it his central role as Prophet.

(15 marks) AO2

05 Explain the nature of the Umma in Madinah.

E.g. the breakdown of traditional tribal structures – the Umma is based on commitment to God and the Prophet not birth or marriage – members willing to fight against members of their extended families.

The Ansars (helpers) and the Emigrants sharing their belongings and roles – especially at the beginning before the Emigrants could support themselves.

The hypocrites.

The Jews – the constitution of Madinah gave them rights as members of the community led by Muhammad were – but events led to their expulsion.

Concept of Umma fluid here – can be used for the community led by Muhammad (i.e.

Madinah) or only those who had personally made a commitment to Islam. As time goes on the distinction becomes blurred then irrelevant.

(30 marks) AO1

06 'The Madinan Umma of Muhammad's time still has a vital role for Muslims today.'

Assess this claim.

In support of the statement

Madinah as the model of the ideal Muslim community ruled by the Prophet on God's behalf, e.g. in Maliki school of Law.

Contrary to the statement

Conditions in Madinah are so far removed from today that the exact form of life adopted by the Umma is largely irrelevant. Revelations relevant to the time not now relevant (various examples possible including of women's dress); some scholars suggest that the Hadith are unreliable as source of information in which case knowledge of the Madinan situation not reliable as source of authority.

(15 marks) AO2

07 'After the death of Muhammad, the Umma identified a new leader.'

Outline how a new leader was identified, and explain the differing views of this process found in Sunni and Shi'a Islam.

Expect an outline account of events after Muhammad's death – the meeting of leading members of the community excluding Ali; the election of Abu Bakr, a senior member of the Emigrants, as the first Caliph. The contrasting perspectives may be approached as how the two groups view these events now. Sunni – the community identifying a representative who would enforce the community's interpretation of Qur'an / Shari'a on its members; Shi'a – the community wilfully ignoring the instructions of the Prophet about his successor and denying Ali his God-given right to rule. There may be comments on possible reasons why Ali was not elected as the first Caliph (relative immaturity; lack of experience; out of favour) and on how what emerged as Sunni Islam preserved a typically tribal form of leadership.

(30 marks) AO1

08 Assess the view that Islam has never recovered from the crisis caused by Muhammad's death.

In support of the statement

e.g. it may be argued that the Sunni / Shi'a division that persists until today has its roots in the events immediately after Muhammad's death, or its clearest expression in the differing interpretations of those events. The lack of a defined role or status for the 'successor' to the Prophet contributed to the struggles of the new community to find its identity – the successor could not be a Messenger of God so what was his authority to be?

Contrary to the statement

e.g. it may be argued that the immediate crisis was swiftly overcome in the Ridda wars, as those groups who acted as if the death of the Prophet had released them from their agreement with the Umma were re-conquered. The emergence of the Sunni / Shi'a divide may actually be much later and not immediately precipitated by the Prophet's death (there were Shi'a Calphates in early Islamic history).

(15 marks) AO2