

Examiners' Report
June 2019

GCE Religious Studies 9RS0 4D

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Introduction

Candidates had to answer all questions within the paper and most responses reflected a high standard of teaching and preparation that enabled candidates to cope well with the topics relating to Islam, though responses did vary in standard. There were a number of scripts that were of an excellent standard and these candidates and their centres are to be congratulated.

Question 1

This question required candidates to explore the Muslim belief of tawhid for 8 marks and required AO1 material only. Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the key ideas of tawhid, with many explaining its meaning and how the belief influences the lives of Muslims. Most candidates also explored the relationship between tawhid and shirk.

Some candidate responses reflected a sound knowledge of the term, but were too brief for this 'explore' question.

1 Explore the Muslim belief in tawhid.

(8)

The Muslim belief in tawhid is essential as it is one of the six articles of faith. There are three types of Tawhid, the first one is Tawhid al Rububiyyah, this is the belief in the 'oneness' of God and the idea that God is the divine creator of all things. The shirk that negates this belief is Polytheism as this belief system worships more than one thing, which in the time of Jahiliyya this is seen as idols. The second type of Tawhid is Tawhid al asma wa as sifat, this is believing in the oneness of God through his attributes and characteristics, such as his 99 names which are used to describe God. An example of God's attributes is stated in Surah 1 of the anthology extract, which is the "Most gracious Most merciful". The shirk that negates this belief is anthropomorphism, which is giving God human attributes, an example of this can be the Christian belief of God being through human form as a holy spirit. The last Tawhid is Tawhid al ibada, this is believing in the oneness of God through 'practise and worship', for example practising the five pillars of Islam which is belief (shahada), Prayer (salah), fasting (sawm), charity (Zakat) and Pilgrimage (Hajj). There are two Shirks that negate this, outward shirk which is the explicit belief that God doesn't exist and ~~rather~~ hidden shirk which is the Muslims that are hypocrites and pretend to be devoted Muslims. The importance of Tawhid is shown through the fact that it is believed in by all Muslim sects including Sunni, Shia and Sufi Muslims.



This answer was clearly written, reflecting excellent knowledge and a full understanding. It demonstrated details of different types of tawhid and shirk.

1 Explore the Muslim belief in tawhid.

(8)

Tawhid is a muslim belief which asserts the 'Oneness of God' as V. Watson quotes. The Oneness of God or Tawhid in Islam is central and vital for every single muslim, because without this belief, you simply cannot be a muslim.

Tawhid is reflected in the first pillar of Islam, Gulam Sarwar mentions, which is the Shahadah. This declaration of faith tells us 'There is none worthy of worship except Allah.'

To become a muslim, if you are not already, this declaration of faith is very important, as it is the initial statement which brings you into Islam.

Muslims believe in Prophet Muhammed (Pbuh) who came to mankind, to teach us to worship "One god", according to Karen Armstrong. The whole of Prophet Muhammed's life was to promote Tawhid and deny/reject polytheism or shirk which is associating partners with Allah. Shirk is the opposite of Tawhid, and will take a muslim out of Islam without any doubt, as the Quran says 'everything is forgiven other than shirk'. Every prophet that came to this world, taught and preached the tawhid of God, from Prophet Adam all the way to Muhammed (Pbuh). As mentioned before, tawhid is a fundamental part of a muslim's life, as it reflects the whole purpose of this temporary life, which is to worship one Allah.



This answer reflected knowledge of tawhid and shirk, relating the topic to Muhammad, the Prophets and the Five Pillars whilst referring to such scholars as V. Watton, S. Sarwar and K. Armstrong.

Question 2

Most candidates answered this question competently though the standard of their answers varied.

The stronger answers demonstrated a good use of material and focused closely upon the demands of the question. Many showed a good knowledge and understanding of the historical context and provided details of the work of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs to show how they affected the spread of Islam.

Some responses were too descriptive and contained narrative that did not focus upon the wording of the question. A few candidates gave their views without supplying evidence for their comments.

2 Assess the importance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in relation to the spread of Islam.

(12)

The first Caliph after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) was the Caliph Abu Bakr (Muhammad (S.A.W)'s closest friend) and essentially his main role was to solidify Islam as a religion, especially after Muhammad (S.A.W) death. 'Those of you who follow Islam understand that the Prophet has now passed on, however Allah (S.W.T) and the message of Islam lives on forever,' is what he preached and cemented ~~it~~ further into Islam in order to deter anyone from straying away. ~~the~~ He can be said to be very important, as in doing so, it allowed for ~~them~~ ^{people} to understand the true meaning of Islam ~~at~~ without the Prophet (S.A.W) as well as the fact that if he hadn't done so it wouldn't have been a risk to people worshipping the Prophet or going against each other which is against Islam, making him overall important. However he isn't seen as important for Shia Muslims due to them ~~having~~ holding the firm belief that Ali was meant to be the first 'rightly guided' Caliph.

~~Moreover~~ Moreover, the second Caliph was Umar ~~to~~ and he is considered as the most important by many Muslim scholars today as well

an ~~active~~ learner of Islam such as Karen Armstrong.
The Umar essentially carried out the expansion
of Islam by conquering lands which was never
thought to ever have been conquered such as
Damascus and Egypt as well as creating ties with
prominent chiefs and ~~the~~ establishing Islam as a
culture. His main ~~importance~~ importance is seen through
his strong personality & in implementing Islamic
laws such as the prohibition of gambling and drinking,
as well as the expansion of Islam into different
tribes and cultures. His importance ~~is limited~~ can be
said to be limited ~~as although~~ by Shia for the
same reason as Abu Bakr because I still hold
the belief that he was of great importance as if
Umar did not use his strict techniques, Islam
~~would not~~ could've been subject to change and
~~the~~ going against Islam, making Umar very
important.

Uthman was the next caliph after Umar and
he was of greater importance in terms of ~~the~~
making sure the Quran (the holy book/scripture
for Muslims) was ~~to~~ to be remained unchanged.
He gathered all scribes and ruled out pieces
which were unworthy which can be seen of
great importance ~~to~~ in the preservation of the
Quran as well as for Muslims today is acknowledged.

The fact that the Qur'an was 'unchanged' being purely the 'word of Allah.'

However, it can be argued that Uthman wasn't very important as in doing what he did, pieces of the Qur'an were left out which some sects believe as well as minority sects of Islam. This however ~~would~~ does not address the fact that Allah said that the Qur'an will never be altered/changed so it is not upto humans to ~~change~~ decide whether or not it has been. ~~This~~

The fact that the Qur'an is one of the six beliefs shows the significance of it to this day is Muslim everyday lines through prayer and worship. This therefore leads me to believe that Uthman was a key figure in preserving the Qur'an as at the time different versions existed, and if not eliminated would have then caused the Qur'an to not be the true word of God.

~~Overall, I would say Overall, I would agree~~

Ali came after ~~to~~ Uthman and his role was to energetically carry on what the previous Caliph did, maintaining the peace.

Overall, I believe that all three of the rightly guided Caliphs had a great impact on the spread of Islam due to all contribution affecting Islam today, however. ~~RE~~

~~I would support the view that~~

(Total for Question 2 = 12 marks)

Umar can be seen as the most important **TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 20 MARKS** due to his great advances for Islam.



This answer focuses upon the importance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs for the spread of Islam; using detailed material about the individual leaders whilst making points that are supported by evidence.

2 Assess the importance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs in relation to the spread of Islam.

(12)

There were four ~~rightly guided~~ Rightly Guided Caliphs, called the Khilafatul Rashidun. They were: Abu Bakr, who ruled from 632 - 644 CE; Umar ~~ra~~ ibn Al Khattab, who ruled from 644 - 656 CE; Uthman ibn Affan, he ruled from 644 - 656 CE; Ali ibn Abi Talib, who ruled from 656 - 661 CE. They were appointed either by Ahl al bid' wal Aqd (Abu Bakr), direct appointment (Umar) or selected from a list of options (Uthman).

These four Caliphs ruled the ummah after the passing of Muhammad (saw). It was under their rule that many of the principles of Islam or shari'ah that are held today were established. It is through their just rule, good character and intelligence that Islam spread throughout the world, arguably.

Firstly, ~~it was an~~ Islam was spread through either *fath* (conquest) or *sulh* (treaty). The *fath* or *sulh* system itself represents Islam as a fair religion because it is seen by many as a fair system. ~~Abu~~ Many would say that the Rightly Guided Caliphs were crucial to the spread of Islam because it was under Abu Bakr that Islam spread to Iraq and Syria (conquered), it was under Umar (ra) that Islam spread to Palestine (which was *sulh*) and Syria to rest of Syria (half *sulh*, half *fath*). It was Uthman (ra) who set up the naval fleet, allowing Muslims to travel far and wide to deliver the message of Islam.

However, many people would say that they were not needed for the spread of Islam because Islam is spread through good conduct. Evidence that could be used for this is the fact that in the Abbasid Dynasty, the Caliph was overthrown and Baghdad was sacked by the Mongols. However, once all the fighting ceased and people began to live their lives again, the Muslims were able to inspire an incredibly large proportion of the Mongols to embrace Islam. They did not have a Caliph, but they maintained the good attitude, character and manners that the Prophet taught should be shown to all, enemy or not. It was their attitude that caused the spread of Islam through an entire nation, so a Rightly Guided Caliph is not that important in the spread of Islam.

Nevertheless, whilst it is true that Islam is spread through the character of the Muslims, it could also be argued that Muslims would not have maintained that character centuries centuries after the passing of the Prophet had it not been for the Caliphs. They may say that had Abu Bakr not ordered for the compilation of the Qur'an as a written copy by Zaid ibn Thabit, Muslims may not have known the word of Allah (Qur'an). Had it not been for Umar ibn Abd al Aziz, Muslims wouldn't have the hadith that taught them the importance of good character through the actions of the Prophet, Muslims may have ended up uneducated and uneducated had Umar not set up Kufa (centre of learning). ~~without the accomplishments of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, had Abu~~

Bakr not set up Bayt ul mal and Umar set up
child tax, Muslims may not have been able to survive to
spread the message of Islam.

Subsequently, the Rightly Guided Caliphs ^{were} very
important to the spread of Islam because without their
accomplishments, Muslims would not have been able to stay true to
the message of Allah or the teachings of the Prophet. So couldn't
have spread the ~~is~~ correct Islam.



In this second answer, the role of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is detailed and linked with Shariah Law. The spread of Islam is referenced as being throughout the world and very important up to the present day.

Question 3

Q03(a)

Most candidates answered this question and conveyed the meaning of the passage. Answers were variable and some were too brief, with candidates closely following the text and addressing only a narrow range of religious ideas and beliefs.

Stronger answers were more detailed and clear. These responses addressed a broad range of religious ideas and beliefs that related to the core teachings of the Qur'an concerning knowledge of Allah; his key attributes, his relationship with humanity and the 'Straight Way'.

Q03(b)

The quality of candidate responses varied. Some were narrative in style, describing Muhammad's call and what followed, rather than applying this as an indication of Divine Authority.

Other answers selected material relating to the authority of the Qur'an within Islam, the Muslim umma and Shariah Law. These candidates emphasised the fact that Islam has been, and still is, a widespread religion. Strong answers considered the question of whether or not it is the revealed word of Allah, and supported their points with coherent and reasoned judgements.

Surah 1. The Opening

99 names

1. In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
2. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds;
3. Most Gracious, Most Merciful;
4. Master of the Day of Judgment. *Akhirah*
5. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek.
6. Show us the straight way, *Islam not polytheism*
7. The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.

Surah 2: 21-22

Christianity, Hinduism

21. O ye people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, Who created you and those who came before you, that ye may have the chance to learn righteousness; *Judicia*
22. Who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy; and sent down rain from the heavens; and brought forth therewith fruits for your sustenance; then set not up rivals unto Allah when ye know (the truth).

polytheism

(Source: Extracts from 'The Holy Qur'an (Classics of World Literature)'; by Yusuf Ali, A., Wordsworth, 2000, Edexcel Anthology)

3 (a) Clarify the key beliefs about Allah illustrated in these passages.

You must refer to these passages in your response.

(10)

A verse from a the 114 Surahs
is called an aya. In aya
the phrase 'Most Gracious, Most
Merciful' is a reference to Allah's
99 names. These names are
either from the Qur'an or
derived from the belief in Allah
and the beliefs that come with

That for example Tawhid shows us Allah is all powerful. Other names are mentioned in Aya 2 'cherisher and sustainer of the world'. Aya 3 makes reference to 'the Day of Judgement' which links to the belief in Akhirah. When the day of Judgement comes, Israfil will sound the trumpet and the world will end. We will be resurrected and judged on our actions in our life whether we go to Al-Jannah (heaven) or Al-Jannam (hell). There are 7 levels to heaven which Muhammed ascended through during the night journey, with the top being the greatest heaven. Aya 5 mentions 'worship' or ibadah. This is doing the duty of completing the 5 pillars a Muslim must do to receive a after-life in heaven. Aya 7 mentions 'go not astray' referencing monotheist religions which have followed the wrong path such as Christianity or Judaism.

Surah 2 mentions 'chance to
learn righteousness'. The Qur'an has
a strong emphasis on justice for
everyone whether a friend or enemy.
Muslims are taught to always be
just. Finally the phrase 'set out
up rivals unto Allah' is another
way of saying polytheism is
rejected (the help in many parts).
Not only is it rejected, it is
also strict making it an unforgivable
sin. Muslims should avoid

so beautiful. Much illot

114

Qur'an Lev

put together
by
chief
sec.

(b) Analyse the claim that the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah.

Shah Imam after Quran is as 12 volumes

(20)

The Qur'an is the formation of the 114 surahs Muhammad received in order of length (with the exception of surah 11). The first surah was revealed to Muhammad on the night of power (Laylat al-Qadr) by the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) who instructed Muhammad to recite. They would later be written on pieces such as leather and stored in a box by Muhammad's wife. Muhammad died before he could place them in chronological order so Abu Bakr ordered them to be put together in order of length. For all Muslims the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah however some sceptics may challenge this belief. I personally am sceptical if the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah.

Muslims agree the fact that the Qur'an is written so beautifully

that it has to have been sent by Allah. To this day Muslims are taught Arabic so they can read and recite the Quran as this is when it sounds its best. It is said the writing and language are so beautiful that many converts as they just because they hear it. For Muslims this is a strong argument the Quran is the revealed word of Allah.

Muslims also agree it is not possible for the Quran to have been made up by Muhammad as he was illiterate. They would argue it is almost impossible for Muhammad to have fabricated

A skeptic might question how on why an all powerful god would have to send so many verses in order to save humanity. A muslim would say the previous books had been corrupted but a skeptic may respond arguing this all powerful god surely would have been

able to make sure humans don't
not corrupt his word.

Muslims may argue the Qur'an
has to be the revealed word
of God as otherwise we have
no knowledge of how we reach
a good afterlife. The Qur'an provides
the essential details as to how
a Muslim can lead a good life
and receive the accepted to Al-Jannah
(paradise). Without this knowledge we have
no way of knowing how to avoid
Al-Jahannam.

A sceptic might question the
motives of Muhammad. They might
argue the Qur'an justified giving
Muhammad power and this would
as seen when Muhammad was
made leader of Yathrib (later called
Medina). It is plausible Muhammad
had this ~~and~~ idea already created so
he could further his power.

A Muslim ~~not~~ would reject
this view as even before
Muhammad's prophethood he was had

titles such as al-amin (the
trustworthy one). Muhammed was
sometimes many people blamed making
him very unlikely to lie for
the sake of power.

Some sceptics may suggest
Muhammed was just hallucinating
or was epileptic and had visions
simply due to something such as
dehydration. Muslims would criticise this
point by arguing for no Muhammed
to consistently have these vivid
images is unlikely, especially as
the end product was something
as beautiful as the Qur'an.

Shia's hold the viewpoint that
Imams can add to the Qur'an
and believe mention of the 12
imams is needed. They also believe
the Qur'an can only be interpreted
by Imams but they still believe
the Qur'an to be the word
of Allah.

In conclusion I believe am
sceptical of the view that

the Qur'an is the revealed
word of Allah is there is
little empirical evidence to prove
the angel Jibril did pass it
on. However I do respect Muslims
who follow the Qur'an as it
contains good beautiful teachings which
aid the community in a positive
way.



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Examiner Comments

Q03(a)

This level 3 answer reflects knowledge of Allah's attributes and core teaching relating to Allah and Akirah. The candidate demonstrates a pleasing knowledge and understanding of the passage.

Q03(b)

This level 5 example uses material well and attempts a balanced answer within the analysis of the claim that the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah. The answer deals with the Night of Power and how the Qur'an was written down. Every point made by a Muslim relating to the Qur'an as the revealed word of Allah is explored by the candidate through the view point of a sceptic. The answer refers to the Qur'an's lack of chronicled order by Muhammad before his death, the beauty of the language, Muhammad's illiteracy, its importance for knowledge of the afterlife, and how to live a good life, and refers to Muhammad's character even before Prophethood. Reference is also made to the differences of the Shi'a and Sunni approach to the Qur'an. The whole essay reflects great respect for the topic and an even handed, clear approach.

Surah 1. The Opening

1. In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. → Judgement by Allah
2. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds; → creator of all
3. Most Gracious, Most Merciful; → caring
4. Master of the Day of Judgment. → after-life - decider of hell or heaven
5. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek.
6. Show us the straight way, → Singular = oneness → the straight path of Islam - Shariah
7. The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray. → followers receive grace + love

Surah 2: 21-22

21. O ye people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, Who created you and those who came before you, that ye may have the chance to learn righteousness; → free will
22. Who has made the earth your couch, and the heavens your canopy; and sent down rain from the heavens; and brought forth therewith fruits for your sustenance; then set not up rivals unto Allah when ye know (the truth). → Allah is the truth down stray from belief

(Source: Extracts from 'The Holy Qur'an (Classics of World Literature)', by Yusuf Ali, A., Wordsworth, 2000, Edexcel Anthology)

3 (a) Clarify the key beliefs about Allah illustrated in these passages.

You must refer to these passages in your response.

(10)

Surah 1 and #2 shown are outlining the many names of Allah, illustrating how we should follow his example and live as Allah wills it. It overall clarifies many of the 6 beliefs and ~~and~~ therefore serves the foundation of Islam itself.

Surah 1 starts with naming ~~that~~ Allah as 'Most Gracious, Most Merciful' showing his divinity,

he is more than us as he is the 'most' gracious
It also hints to the idea of his power of
Judgement which is also later mentioned. Part
3 repeats these opening phrases again setting
'most gracious, most merciful' reinforcing the importance
of these qualities and Allah's overall power.
'cherisher and sustainer' shows the omnibenevolence
of his qualities and he sustains our lives. It
continues to say 'of the worlds' suggesting Allah
as the creator of all. The 4th part then goes to
reinforce the idea of Allah as the voice of
justice, stating 'master of the Day of Judgment'
That he is in charge of the ~~the~~ akhirah (afterlife)
and whether we reach 'Jannah' (Heaven) or
Jahannam (hell). The use of singular words such
as 'Thee' and 'Thine' present ~~awe~~
- Allah's ~~oneness~~ oneness and that we seek his
aid through prayer and so forth. Shariah is
also presented through the mention of the
'straight way' as Islam is believed to be the
straight path we must not stray from and
Shariah law aims to enforce this. Lastly 7 mentions
how those who seek Allah, who follow his
command, are the ones to receive his grace and
love.

Surah 2 then reinforces the previous ~~the~~ passages mentioning in 21 ~~the~~ 'Guardian-lord, who created' again presenting his role of creator and carer for the world he created. It then states 'have the chance to learn righteousness' presenting the idea of free will which is given by Allah allowing us both to choose to stay on the 'straight way' or reject and stray. Surah 2-22 then clarifies that we should recognise all that is created and given to us as Allah's doing and should therefore 'set ^{not} up rivals unto Allah when ye know (the truth)' Allah is the truth so hold belief in him and do not challenge his existence.

Overall these passages serve as the grand work for ~~religious~~ Islamic belief, how as a Muslim you must know the qualities of Allah. It reinforces the idea of Tawhid one of the most important beliefs in Islam ~~and~~ as well as suggesting Akhira and Shariah law. These surahs are the religious foundations of what / who Allah is.



Q03(a) - This level 3 answer demonstrates a very good understanding of the passage, with a clear knowledge of the names of Allah as well as key beliefs which they have explained well.

Question 4

This question required candidates to consider the different ways that men and women are viewed in the Muslim community.

Less successful answers tended to be subjective rather than analytical. Stronger answers considered the topic carefully, often focusing on the attitude of Muhammad and the teachings of the Qur'an, Shariah Law, modern day issues in western cultures (eg relating to clothing), as well as considering the treatment of women in such places as Saudi Arabia. Many discussed the difference between culture and Islamic teaching.

Links were made with ethics, philosophy and New Testament studies, with candidates raising issues relating to equality and mentioning people such as Martin Luther King Jr. Some raised the fact that the Caliphs and disciples of Jesus were all male. The answers often mentioned changes taking place in the modern day; though honour killings and forced marriages were also raised.

4 Evaluate the ways in which men and women are viewed in the Muslim community.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Islam have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- New Testament Studies.

(30)

Islam and Gender is a huge topic as the women you have researched like Ayaan Ali and Nasr who are for Islam and women's rights then you have people like Sam Harris who will claim that Gender in Islam is unequal and cruel to women.

The first thing people will do when claiming that women and men are unequal in Islam is point to countries that have Sharia law and say that women are oppressed. This must be taken seriously as Saudi Arabia is a country where women have only (in 2015) been allowed to drive. It is a country where they can be married off to 60 year old men when they

are very young. It is also
a country where men are ~~clearly~~
at the top over women. They
run the country, women always
always must be accompanied by
either her father, brother or husband.

Many people will point at these
countries and immediately claim that
the issue of Islam is racist. I
disagree countries like Saudi Arabia
practice Wahabism an extremist Sunni
form of Islam. If we look at
Indonesia which is over 90%

Muslims. Women are ~~are~~ treated
fairly they have complete equal
rights to men and again they
will ~~be~~ ^{we} the Queen, Hadiah
and the Sunu to push women
Gender equality up. It is the same
is in Turkey again a majority
Muslim country that has complete
equal rights. This goes to show that
different countries have different cultures
and just because some Islamic countries
have less equal rights does not
mean Islam as a whole does not

promote equal rights for women and men.

Another claim people will make to show unequal rights towards women in Islam are verses from the Koran. ~~to~~ In the Koran it does say that you may beat your wife (as well as in the Hadith) to say that a woman's testimony is half a man's. and this would go to claim that Islam was sexist and unequal and is not gender equal.

However this again is not valid. The Bible also has some awful phrases promoting things like slavery. But we don't point at that it has been reformed. Islam is going through that reform now. People like Wary into claim that women and men are not equal in Islam they are different, but equal. It is clear that when sexist comments in the Koran are contextualised they are not sexist because Islam has women they are sexist because of the historic context and culture.

Again people will point the finger at the life of Muhammed and claim that Islam is sexist. For example his wife Aishah who was six when he married her. Or the fact that he had ~~to~~ 13 wives which was more than he said you were allowed and why can't ^{women} ~~we~~ have more than one husband ~~strongly~~ that is not gender equal.

However to again you must contextualise this. Muhammed had many wives because many men died in battle and in those times when a woman was widowed it was very tough so many will claim that Muhammed took them under his 'maj' so look after them and care for them. This may go to show that Muhammed deeply cared for women and ~~took~~ ~~them~~ ~~as~~ ^{completely} ~~as~~ ~~equal~~.

When it comes to gender equality this is a bubble all round the world many famous philosophers have been very sexist it like Kant who believed that women were not

rational beings. It is not just religion
(ie Islam) which is racist. However people
like Richard Dawkins will claim that
Islam and Religion in general is
the 'Root of all Evil' ^{Source Dawkins}. However I would
disagree I would claim that it
is culture and that as culture has
developed so have gender equality.
The last point I will make is
the ~~fact~~ ^{fact} that Muslim women wear
hijabs it is the Purdah Nikah or
Hijab. Many critics will claim
that it is a sign of oppression
and that it is clearly morally
wrong and Islam is racist.

However the veil is not universal
in the ~~so~~ ^{so} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~veil~~ ^{veil} ~~is~~ ^{is} cultural not
Islamic. And surely L. Ahmed claims
that the ~~veil~~ ^{veil} ~~is~~ ^{is} a symbol
to protest towards the western
oppression of modern feminism and
that women chose to wear it,
because they want to show
against show gender ~~restoration~~ ^{restoration} equality.

In conclusion it is clear that there are serious problems in some Islamic countries that need to be addressed. However, I would claim that it is cultural not religious and that it will remain. I would also claim that Islam is not sexist and promotes the idea that women and men are different but equal.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

In this answer, the candidate set out a balanced and fair argument relating to how males and females are viewed in Islam.

The answer focused closely upon the question. It was detailed and wide ranging with reasoned judgements and conclusions that were fully supported by a comprehensive appraisal of evidence. Reference was made to scholars Ahmed and Nasr.

The response was borderline between level 4 and level 5.

4 Evaluate the ways in which men and women are viewed in the Muslim community.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Islam have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- New Testament Studies.

(30)

Women are mostly unrecognised and marginalised in the Muslim community due to the mix of culture and social attitudes. However the Quran indicates that if Islam were to take preference of gender, it would be female. This is due to the following verses in Quran. "Your mother, your mother, your mother, then your father". Here is the evidence for the status that mothers hold over fathers, whereby mothers must be looked after and respected. Although Ayeshah Shirazi quotes very different views to women altogether, these being; "There are 3 types of animals: the animals for transport such as camels and donkeys, Animals for food and women whom may be used by men in any way they please be it sexually, physically. Allah has ^{shaped} ~~created~~ women into human form so men do not get

scared of them." This view suggests that women are completely a different species to men and should have little rights, whereby many Islamic writers hold. Yet the idea that men and women are both created by Allah and are HUMAN, goes against this completely. The view of women being a different species lacks evidence and is of little importance yet is had by some.

Radical feminism is the idea that gender is a social construct of society or has been created by society, yet all genders and everyone are the same regardless. Soft feminism is the belief that men and women should be equal but there are somewhat key differences between genders that needs to be grounded. Islam The Quran and Islam as a whole strongly disagrees with Radical feminism as the Quran states "The man is different from a woman". This highlights key differences between men and women whereby one obvious being that only women can carry children and experience pregnancy.

Aristotle holds misogynistic and patriarchal views. This being evident through "women are inferior

to men and should not vote." Aristotle's views ~~of~~ were read by many Islamic scholars as Greek theologians had great impact whereby their views were also circulated and agreed.

This brings about the idea of equality. Under equal opportunity, defined by the UN suggests that "everyone has an ~~right~~ ^{right} to participate in society. (*equal opportunity)" The news of women being ~~species~~ ^{a different} species goes against contemporary and government views as well as western values in addition to Quranic teachings.

Leila Ahmed suggests that the "veil is an emblem of the rejection of the West". This is simply ~~untrue~~ incorrect as the veil has been around for thousands of years, present in the time of the prophet and before the West was even established. It said that, instead, the West is a rejection of the veil. The veil being the Niqab, that had been worn by the Prophet's wives and daughters, the description of Aisha (as) wearing "a green veil" as she taught the teachings of the Quran, as she was a renowned scholar and ~~the~~ Islam's ~~te~~

All time prominent scholars.

The inferiority of women is strongly contrasted and disagreed evident through a female warriors at the time of the prophet, one being labelled as "The shield of the prophet." In addition, Rabia Al Adawiya, a well recognised ~~and sufi studied~~ sufi who is prominent in the sufi belief system played a massive role in ~~the~~ advocating the true ideas of sufism through her globally studied Ishq-e-Haqiq or "The Love of the Real", her writing included such identity; advocating the sufi ideas of love, and the truth (being Allah) ~~and~~ (Haqiqah); Evident through her infamous writing "If I worship you in the fear of the hellfire, burn me in hell, If I worship you for the desire of Paradise, deny me Paradise but if I worship you for who you are then do not deny me your eternal beauty."

"Accept her with beautiful acceptance" is the Prophet's response to girls being born, directly the birth of Maryam. This presents ideas of birth of girls being important as accepting them beautifully is what the prophet

had asked of us.

Equality and equal opportunity is also evident in the Last message of the Prophet (pbuh), included "Arabs are not better than non-Arabs, non-Arabs are not better than Arabs, black is not better than white, white is not better than black..." The Prophet (pbuh) highlights inequalities of race and gender are simply Haram or forbidden as well as disliked Makruh.

The importance of women over men in the Muslim community is evident through family court matters, whereby the mother's or woman's testimony is seen as more credible in the Islamic court than the testimony of a man. The belief that a man's testimony is more than a woman's is simply incorrect and so is the idea that a woman's testimony is ~~half~~ a half of a man's. In addition to the idea that women get less inheritance than men.

Men's superiority is interpreted through the Quranic verse "prostrate to your husband."

This is seen to suggest that wives should pray to their husbands, kneeling before them. This is simply wrong and incorrect. Scholars suggest the meaning should not be *hajran* literally and suggest that it means to pray with "your husband" as well as "pray for your husband".

The belief that women are being punished for the actions of Eve taking the apple is simply disagreed in Islamic teachings. According to Christianity, women endure periods, labour, pregnancy as punishment for Eve's doing. Yet Islamically Adam and Hawa acted together in disobedience whereby all of humankind will be disobedient as we are from "the loins of Adam"... and surely go astray", providing Quranic evidence for the fault of both the male and female.

Feminism is strongly hated by those of Islamists stance such as Maulana, whom like Bolke-Harum who suggest "Death to the West" strictly want Islamic traditions of *medina* and *mecca* to be

brought back into the today's society,
removing men's ~~sup~~ apparent superior
stance.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer suggests that what is seen as the inequality of women in Islam is due to cultural and social attitudes and takes extreme attitudes to make the point. The essay was wide ranging, making reference to Radical and Soft Feminism which is regarded as contrary to the teaching of the Qur'an. Other material relates the teaching of the Qur'an in relation to equality and also the way in which women should be treated, for example, the U.N. statement of equality, female warriors in early Islam, Sufi Rabiya's book 'Love of the Real Self' and comments from other scholars.

The response was borderline between level 4 and level 5.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Candidates should continue to be familiar with all topics within the specification and should attempt all questions on the paper.
- Candidates should plan their time carefully, spending longer on Q03(b) and Q04 where there is the possibility of attaining a higher number of marks.
- Candidates should read questions carefully and direct their responses to the question being asked, rather than simply writing all they know about a topic. Hence material should fully focus on the question.
- Some answers were accurate but brief, and therefore, only partially answered the question. Questions requiring AO2 material required comment and explanation.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

