

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE **G588**

Islam

Mark Scheme for June 2010

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

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A2 Preamble and Instructions to Examiners

The purpose of a marking scheme is to ‘... enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’ [CoP 1999 25.xiv]. It must ‘allow credit to be allocated for what candidates know, understand and can do’ [xv] and be ‘clear and designed to be easily and consistently applied’ [x].

The **Religious Studies Subject Criteria** [1999] define ‘what candidates know, understand and can do’ in terms of two Assessment Objectives, weighted for the OCR Religious Studies specification as indicated:

All candidates must be required to meet the following assessment objectives.

At A level, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, and their ability to sustain a critical line of argument in greater depth and over a wider range of content than at AS level.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that candidates demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

AO1: Select and demonstrate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding through the use of evidence, examples and correct language and terminology appropriate to the course of study.

AO2: Sustain a critical line of argument and justify a point of view.

The requirement to assess candidates’ quality of written communication will be met through both assessment objectives.

In order to ensure the marking scheme can be ‘easily and consistently applied’, and to ‘enable examiners to mark in a standardised manner’, it defines Levels of Response by which candidates’ answers are assessed. This ensures that comparable standards are applied across the various units as well as within the team of examiners marking a particular unit. Levels of Response are defined according to the two Assessment Objectives. In A2, candidates answer a single question but are reminded by a rubric of the need to address both Objectives in their answers. Progression from Advanced Subsidiary to A2 is provided, in part, by assessing their ability to construct a coherent essay, and this is an important part of the Key Skill of Communication which ‘must contribute to the assessment of Religious Studies at AS and A level’.

Positive awarding: it is a fundamental principle of OCR’s assessment in Religious Studies at Advanced Subsidiary / Advanced GCE that candidates are rewarded for what they ‘know, understand and can do’ and to this end examiners are required to assess every answer by the Levels according to the extent to which it addresses a reasonable interpretation of the question. In the marking scheme each question is provided with a brief outline of the likely content and/or lines of argument of a ‘standard’ answer, but this is by no means prescriptive or exhaustive. Examiners are required to have subject knowledge to a high level and the outlines do not attempt to duplicate this.

Examiners must **not** attempt to reward answers according to the extent to which they match the structure of the outline, or mention the points it contains. The specification is designed to allow teachers to approach the content of modules in a variety of ways from any of a number of perspectives, and candidates’ answers must be assessed in the light of this flexibility of approach. It is quite possible for an excellent and valid answer to contain knowledge and arguments which do not appear in the outline; each answer must be assessed on its own merits according to the Levels of Response.

Practical application of the Marking Scheme

General administrative information and instructions are issued separately by OCR.

Apart from preliminary marking for standardisation purposes, which must be carried out in pencil, the first marking of a script should be in red ink. There should be a clear indication on every page that it has been read by the examiner, and the total mark for the question must be ringed and written in the margin at the end of the script; at A2 the two sub-marks for the AOs must be written here as well. Half-marks may not be used.

To avoid giving the impression of point-marking, ticks should not be used within an answer. Examiners should follow the separate instructions about annotation of scripts; remember that the marks awarded make the assigned Levels of Response completely explicit.

Key Skill of Communication: this is assessed at both Advanced Subsidiary and A2 as an integral part of the marking scheme. The principle of positive awarding applies here as well: candidates should be rewarded for good written communication, but marks may not be deducted for inadequate written communication; the quality of communication is integral to the quality of the answer in making its meaning clear. The Key Skill requirements in Communication at Level 3 include the following evidence requirements for documents about complex subjects, which can act as a basis for assessing the Communications skills in an examination answer:

- Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so your meaning is clear.

*

Synoptic skills and the ability to make connections: these are now assessed at A2 as specification, due to the removal of the Connections papers.

Levels of Response: the descriptions are cumulative, i.e. a description at one level builds on or improves the descriptions at lower levels. Not all the qualities listed in a level must be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall in that level (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive). There is no expectation that an answer will receive marks in the same level for the two AOs.

Band	Mark /21	AO1	Mark /14	AO2
0	0	absent/no relevant material	0	absent/no argument
1	1-5	almost completely ignores the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little relevant material • some concepts inaccurate • shows little knowledge of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>a.c.i.q</i></p>	1-3	very little argument or justification of viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little or no successful analysis • views asserted with no justification <p style="text-align: right;"><i>v lit arg</i></p>
Communication: often unclear or disorganised; can be difficult to understand; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
2	6-9	A basic attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge limited and partially accurate • limited understanding • might address the general topic rather than the question directly • selection often inappropriate • limited use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>	4-6	a basic attempt to sustain an argument and justify a viewpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some analysis, but not successful • views asserted but little justification <p style="text-align: right;"><i>b att</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
3	10-13	satisfactory attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some accurate knowledge • appropriate understanding • some successful selection of material • some accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sat att</i></p>	7-8	the argument is sustained and justified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful analysis which may be implicit • views asserted but not fully justified <p style="text-align: right;"><i>sust / just</i></p>
Communication: some clarity and organisation; easy to follow in parts; spelling, punctuation and grammar may be inadequate				
4	14-17	a good attempt to address the question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate knowledge • good understanding • good selection of material • technical terms mostly accurate <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>	9-11	a good attempt at using evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some successful and clear analysis • some effective use of evidence • views analysed and developed <p style="text-align: right;"><i>g att</i></p>
Communication: generally clear and organised; can be understood as a whole; spelling, punctuation and grammar good				
5	18-21	A very good / excellent attempt to address the question showing understanding and engagement with the material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very high level of ability to select and deploy relevant information • accurate use of technical terms <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>	12-14	A very good / excellent attempt which uses a range of evidence to sustain an argument holistically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehends the demands of the question • uses a range of evidence • shows understanding and critical analysis of different viewpoints <p style="text-align: right;"><i>vg/e att</i></p>
Communication: answer is well constructed and organised; easily understood; spelling, punctuation and grammar very good				

1 Assess the claim that Sufism distorts true Islamic teachings. [35]

AO1

Candidates might begin with a paragraph of information introducing or defining Sufism. They might explain that Sufis follow the Shari'ah, the external legal and moral code of Islam, but they also follow the path of spiritual development known as tariqah, in which they are trained by Shaykhs or Pirs to seek purity of heart.

Responses might include a brief historical perspective of the start of, and/or significant moments in, Sufism or refer to specific individuals such as Rumi, Ra bi'a, Al-Ghazzali etc.

Candidates are likely to focus on describing the aspects of Sufism which are relevant for addressing the question such as the tendency in Sufism to internalise and allegorise Islamic teachings or the use of dhikr recitations, poetry, music and dancing to achieve the mystical state.

Responses might attempt to explain issues concerning key concepts such as faith, knowledge and fana that might cause tension between interpretations of beliefs given by Sufi Shaykhs and those espoused by traditional forms of belief.

Candidates might attempt to define the phrase 'true Islamic teachings'.

AO2

Candidates might discuss how far the Sufi interpretations are an inevitable part of the mystical tradition existing since the time of Muhammad ﷺ.

Candidates might argue that the witness of Sufism counters materialism and the emphasis on spirituality not only tempers the legalism of Muslims but also preserves Islamic faith (as in eg Turkey and Russia) and spreads Islam to non-Muslims.

Responses might identify in their discussions the reservations which some Muslims have about asceticism and the pursuit of ecstatic states not only for theological reasons but because of occasional alleged malpractice by individual Shaykhs.

Most candidates are likely to try to discuss in a balanced manner whether or not distortion is an apt and fair description of Sufi teachings.

2 Assess the extent to which the principles of the first ummah continue to be important for Muslims today. [35]

AO1

Candidates might attempt some sort of definition of ummah as the worldwide Muslim community.

Most responses are likely to give an account of Muhammad ﷺ founding the ideal community in Madinah (originally Yathrib).

There was no discrimination on the basis of colour, class or descent and responses might emphasise the equality of individuals as an essential feature and might give details of the different groups that needed to be united. The last sermon says, 'O people, none is higher than the other unless he is higher in obedience to Allah etc.'

Some candidates might quote other parts of the final sermon of Muhammad ﷺ on Mount Arafat at the end of Hajj, eg '...regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust...Allah has forbidden interest...'etc.

Surah 4 is a set text. Candidates might refer to the principles laid down in Surah 4 that have permanently governed Muslim Law and social practice since Madinah and candidates might itemise the concern shown for orphans and the needy etc.

AO2

Candidates might select aspects of the Five Pillars, that have always been visible signs of the Islamic way of life and the unity of ummah, to assert the importance of the worldwide community eg Zakah is likely to feature with examples of distribution etc. The obligation to lesser Jihad might be included.

Many responses are likely to reflect some accurate knowledge and sensitive understanding of the relationship of the individual and the community in Islam.

In the Qur'an (eg 3:104 &110) ummah is described as 'a band of people Inviting to all that is good, Enjoining what is right, And forbidding what is wrong.' The sovereignty of Allah and the Khilafah (Khalifate) of humankind are basic principles in Islam.

Some candidates might concentrate on the importance of ummah for Muslims in non-Muslim countries. Other candidates might take into consideration the fact that Islam is a complete system of life and politics are part of it and might attempt a balanced discussion involving Islamic states but this is not essential.

3 To what extent is all Muslim life and teaching a preparation for the last day? [35]

AO1

Candidates might begin by outlining the basic beliefs of Islam including some explanation of 'the last day'.

The specification itemises the following articles of belief: Allah, angels, scriptures, messengers, the last day, the divine decree (al Qadr). These articles are also listed in Surah 4:135 which is a set text. Candidates might use Al-Fatihah, Surah 1 which they studied at A/S level.

Some candidates are likely to explain that the articles of belief can be grouped into three topics: Tawhid, Risalah and Akhirah. They might explain that Muslims believe life on earth is temporary whilst Akhirah is never ending and that all must be judged by Allah on Yawmuddin.

Candidates might give a variety of equally acceptable examples of how both the way of life which is Islam and the teaching reflect the importance for Muslims of preparation for the Day of Judgement.

AO2

Discussions might reflect some understanding that belief in Allah is the central concept in Islam but Judge is only one aspect of the Attributes or characteristics or Names of Allah.

Responses are likely to concentrate on trying to assess the extent to which all Muslim life and teaching is a preparation for Judgement. Candidates might try to balance the importance of Akhirah with Tawhid and Risalah or insist that the unity of the articles needs to be upheld.

Some candidates are likely to consider the fact that, though Muslims are encouraged from the start of the Qur'an to follow the straight path to avoid 'wrath' at the Last Day, Islam is meant also to be a positive life-enhancing faith.

4 'Jihad is the most misunderstood concept in Islam.' Discuss. [35]**AO1**

Candidates might define Jihad as 'striving' or 'trying one's utmost' to defend the faith against enemies of Islam and to gain Allah's favour.

Candidates might explain that Jihad may involve physical battles. This is 'Lesser Jihad' and it must meet certain criteria, for before, during and after the conflict, which candidates are likely to itemise.

'Greater Jihad' covers more spiritual endeavours such as struggling against evil in oneself. Some candidates might use further subdivisions and this is acceptable. Candidates might make reference to Jihad at the time of Muhammad ﷺ and to events in later Islamic history that led to the distinction being made.

Some responses might demonstrate understanding of Jihad as part of the larger theological concept of living in submission and spiritually striving to preserve the Muslim way of life to establish peace, justice, the rule of Allah and the will of Allah for creation.

AO2

Candidates may focus on misunderstandings from within Islam and/or those held by non-Muslims.

Some candidates might build on the distinction between different kinds of Jihad to further the discussion about misunderstandings. They might make it clear that establishing peace is important to Muslims and 'Islam' etymologically derives from 'peace' but Muhammad ﷺ was not a pacifist.

Candidates might choose another contender for the role of 'most misunderstood concept' and address the question from that angle though some consideration of Jihad is likely to be included in balanced discussions.

Some arguments might reflect the understanding that Jihad is the end result of the Five Pillars. It is part of the ethics of a lifestyle following Muhammad ﷺ in good conduct and the struggle against evil and that commitment, for some Muslims, might entail fighting and martyrdom to defend the faith.

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