

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**

**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES A (WORLD RELIGIONS)**

PAPER 6 - Islam

**2306/1**

MARK SCHEME

**Specimen Paper 2003**

**(a) Describe how Muslims keep Ramadan. [8]**

Description of fasting during daylight hours for the month of Ramadan. Good candidates are likely to give some details about other aspects of abstinence or specific practices (e.g. not swallowing saliva). Candidates might mention: obedience; self-discipline; one of pillars; example of Muhammad ﷺ; sign that submit to Allah; faith is more important than food or drink; compassion for poor. Qur'an was given during Ramadan.

**(b) Explain how celebrating Id-ul-Fitr might strengthen the Muslim community. [7]**

Some credit for general remarks about the effects on any community of communal celebration (even if they have the wrong Id.) Good candidates are likely to explain with more sensitive understanding the possible value for the Muslim community of celebrating the festival; probably in terms of Ummah, solidarity in obedience, commitment, sense of identity, sense of history, continuity, shared experience of discipline and of relief and rejoicing when the fasting is over. Strengthens belief: Muslims believe they get two rewards - the first is the end of the fast, the second at the day of judgement - so there is much to celebrate.

**(c) 'Fasts are more important than festivals for true believers.'**

**Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. You must refer to Islam in your answer. [5]**

Good candidates are likely to explore the implications of 'more important' and 'true believers' and to develop arguments from earlier parts of this structured question.

**2 (a) Describe a mosque and its features. [8]**

Description of mosque: features will probably include minaret(s), prayer hall, minbar, mihrab, and washing area.

**(b) Explain the importance for Muslims of Salat-ul-Jumu'ah prayers on Fridays. [7]**

Possible description of how Friday congregational prayers are observed after noon with optional prayers then sermon (khutbah) then Imam leads two rak'ah fard compulsory prayers, then more optional prayers. Explanation why might include following the example and command of Muhammad ﷺ and the need to meet as a community, e.g. to discuss and solve problems, to develop unity, co-operation and cohesiveness. Credit references to women and children whether being accommodated in the mosque or praying at home. General responses about how and why prayer is done are not likely to reach more than level two.

**(c) 'There is no need to go to a special building; you can pray to God anywhere.'**

**Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. You must refer to Islam in your answer. [5]**

For good evaluation arguments need to be based on accurate knowledge and understanding of Muslim attitudes. Debate is likely to centre round the definition of the phrase 'no need'.

- 3 (a) Describe how Muslims prepare for Hajj. [8]

Credit practical preparations but appropriate responses are likely to deal with e.g. putting on Ihram and some of the restrictions whilst in the state of Ihram.

- (b) Explain the importance of zakah for Muslims. [7]

E.g. Compulsory welfare contribution is third pillar of Islam. An act of 'Ibadah, worship and obedience. Once a year 2 % of cash, savings, gold & silver jewellery; (livestock and agricultural produce assessed differently). Allow for candidates who will call zakah a tax or charity when in fact it is neither charity nor tax (can also make voluntary contribution: Sadaqah) but expect better understanding from good candidates. Paying zakah encourages honesty and keeps wealth from association with greed and selfishness; are trustees because wealth really belongs to Allah. Zakah is one of basic economic principles in a Muslim state for social welfare and fair distribution of wealth; economy based on interest is forbidden. Islam is a complete way of life. (A Muslim state has fixed headings like 'helping the poor' on which it has to spend the money.)

- (c) 'The Hajj unites Muslims more than any other of the Five Pillars.'

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Good candidates are likely to base their arguments on the inter-relation of the five pillars. It is permissible for candidates to interpret the focus of the quotation on 'showing' unity.

- 4 (a) Describe how the body of a Muslim is prepared for burial. [8]

Description of preparations for burial e.g. ritual washing, prayers, anointing, three sheets of white cloth (five for women), facing Makkah, burial in earth (in West often open inverted coffin).

- (b) Explain how beliefs about life after death might affect the way Muslims live. [7]

The focus of is an explanation of how these beliefs might affect behaviour in daily life e.g. to others and living constantly according to Shari'ah in submission to Allah who knows all and sees all.

- (c) 'Life is too short to spend time thinking about death.'

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. You must refer to Islam in your answer. [5]

Good responses are likely to develop points made earlier in this structured question.

**5 (a) Describe how Muhammad Δ was called to be the Prophet of Islam. [8]**

Good responses might start with description of call on Night of Power in 610 CE on Mount Hira by Jibrail to recite - with some detail - or in the context of the situation in Makkah (idolatry etc. and personal situation i.e. married to Khadijah who encouraged Muhammad Δ).

**(b) Explain how some Muslims use the Qur'an and Hadith in their daily lives. [7]**

Good responses will show understanding that after his death Muhammad's Δ sayings and doings were collected to form a body of traditions (hadith) which became a major source of Islamic Law, second only to the Qur'an in authority. Islam is a way of life. Hadith are one of the sources of guidance for identifying acts as obligatory (fard) e.g. observing the Five Pillars, commendable (sunna), allowed (halal), discouraged (makruh), forbidden (haram). The principles can be applied to modern living. Credit appropriate scenarios about behaviour to others.

**(c) 'Reading holy books is the best way to find out what God wants.'**

**Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. You must refer to Islam in your answer.**

**[5]**

Good responses are likely to discuss the extent to which tradition and 'revealed' writings can be applied to modern life and are likely to refer to earlier parts of the question. 'Other points of view' do not have to be diametrically opposed.