

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/01

Paper 1

Key messages

Candidates should read the question carefully to avoid confusion in how they answer it.

Details, names and relevant quotations all help to take candidates up the levels, so they should try to be more specific when relating knowledge rather than just giving a list of facts/events.

In **Question 1**, if other passages are being referenced, candidates should not merely give the name/number of the passage, but say how/why it is related to the passage they have chosen to answer from the paper.

If candidates are quoting Qur'anic passages they should ensure that they are relevant to the question.

Part **(b)** answers should be thoughtful and evaluative so candidates should try to think about how this differs from their answer in part **(a)**.

General comments

Generally speaking, candidates were well prepared for this examination. Most candidates showed they managed the time allocated for the paper well, as there were very few papers that were not able to answer the four required questions. Some candidates did answer all questions, or **Questions 1, 3, 4, and 5**, missing out **Question 2**, which is a compulsory question, but these were very much a minority. Also, a small minority answered only three questions instead of the required four.

Overall Examiners noted that the performance of the candidates was average for this session in the compulsory questions, but slightly above average for the optional questions. Candidates seemed to know the topics that came up in the questions, but like previous years, a lack of detail in the answers meant that many candidates did not go up to the higher levels. Teachers, therefore, should ensure that the candidates know that although the mark scheme is written in general terms, they should be as specific and detailed as possible in their answers if they want to reach the highest level.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was answered with some themes being identified in all suras. Some candidates answered parts **(a)** and **(b)** together without differentiating them, and so did not follow the rubric. Some candidates repeated a lot of the same themes in their answer.

(a) For part **(a)** good answers would have been able to pick out key themes from two passages. For passage 1, good answers talked about God being the creator of all things on earth which are required for mankind's sustenance, and it is only He that is capable of this.

For passage 2, good answers talked about the belief in the Last Day when mankind will be judged, God's power over this, and that mankind will be shown their deeds. This was a popular choice with candidates and they tended to pick out the key themes well.

For passage 3, again good answers talked about God's power. Many candidates chose this passage, but many of them gave background information about the sura rather than picking out the key themes.

Most candidates gave general answers to the two passages they had chosen, and very few managed to bring out a variety of themes which would have put the answer into the higher levels. The theme of *tawhid* was not mentioned often by candidates.

- (b) Here, good answers would have been able to say how these themes are presented specifically in these suras. Most answers replicated what was written in part (a).

Better answers were able to take key words from the passage and expand on their meaning/relevance to the themes, e.g. the words “Lord”, “King” and “God” highlight God’s power. These answers also quoted other suras that were similar but more importantly, were able to give details of why they were similar.

Question 2

- (a) To answer this question it was important to know about the relationship between Allah and His Prophets. Some candidates answered this question very well.

Most candidates wrote about Adam, Ibrahim or Isa, with a significant number writing about Musa. A few mentioned the stories of other prophets such as Nuh and Yusuf. A small minority of candidates wrote about angels. Candidates can write about passages that are not in the current syllabus, but marks are awarded for the quality of their answer and their ability to answer the question.

Most candidates gave information about the lives of the messengers they chose to talk about rather than answering the question in a clear and concise way. The important thing was to link their stories with their relationship with God, and there was little mention of any teachings God gave them, for what purpose they were given teachings, or the fact that God helps them through difficulties.

Those candidates who answered the question well were able to say in which sura the messenger is mentioned (from the syllabus), how God gave them their important status, e.g. Isa was given the ability to cure the sick/bring the dead to life; that the messenger was trying to bring people to the path of God; that he went through difficulties but God helped him, showing that he was loved by God; and that he was forgiven/helped by God due to the close nature that prophets have with God. Passages from the syllabus were quoted as well as other relevant passages from the Qur’an that emphasised the relationship of God with that prophet.

- (b) Most candidates talked about God sending messengers for guidance. Candidates did not write about the need for prophets in human form, i.e. that humans were the best example for humans to follow and that they could be role models for mankind.

Question 3

- (a) This part was answered well, with most candidates being able to write about some of the key events of this journey. Many answers narrated different aspects of the story. More detail was needed for the higher levels. Excellent answers provided a clear and detailed narrative of the key events, from the Prophet being awoken in Makka by Jibra’il, being taken to Jerusalem, his journey to the heavens, his meeting with God, giving details of what happened at the different stages, as well as including relevant quotations.

Some responses focused too much on what happened at each level of the skies at the expense of e.g. mentioning the stop at Masjid al-Aqsa and the gift of prayers, and there were a few confused scripts where the events were totally out of sequence or major and important parts missed or not well covered.

- (b) It was important to write about the significance of this journey in answering this question not just to give a general answer.

Good answers showed how this event was important to the Prophet e.g. it was to boost his morale especially after the loss of his wife and uncle, he found support amongst his companions such as Abu Bakr, or in fact that it was a vindication for the prophet’s claim that he was a messenger of god.

Question 4

- (a) This was the most popular of the optional questions for the candidates and was generally well answered.

Most candidates who attempted this question showed that they had knowledge about the lives of these three figures and many answers gave lots of detailed information about them.

As well as giving information about these figures it was important to have depth and/or clarity in the presentation to reach the higher levels. So, for example, instead of simply writing "He was always with the Prophet, he fought in many battles," a better response would have been, "He was a constant companion of the Prophet, and was also with him when he migrated from Makka to Madina. He fought in all the major battles such as the battle of Badr and Uhud."

- (b) Most candidates chose to write about Abu Bakr for this question, and whilst there were some insightful and detailed answers, most gave general answers about Abu Bakr's role as Caliph. Candidates should remember that this paper tests the role of the Prophet's companions during his life and so they should keep this in mind when writing their answers.

Answers that chose to talk about Hamza or Ali were generally better, as they gave more details and were more evaluative.

Question 5

- (a) Where chosen, this question was answered reasonably well, and again where candidates did not gain the highest level marks it was due to a lack of detail in their answers.

Most candidates wrote about the persecution of various companions, giving their names and the way in which they were tortured. Some included mention of the boycott and the migration to Abyssinia. The better answers wrote about all this, giving names and clear details about these events.

There were a significant number of candidates who concentrated on the persecutions upon the Prophet, some starting with the companions then concentrating on the Prophet and others only talking about the treatment of the Prophet. Candidates should always keep the focus of the question in mind when preparing answers, and perhaps a minute spent planning their answer would aid this.

- (b) This part of the question was not so well answered with most candidates repeating the fact that the followers of the Prophet were steadfast, and that Muslims today also need to be steadfast. There was not much attempt at evaluation.

Better candidates gave real life examples whether personal, national or global.

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Paper 2

General Comments

This year, as in previous years, the overall response was good. Both parts of **Question 1** were confidently answered, with candidates keeping in mind the different requirements that both parts demand. A number of candidates attempted **Question 4**, although some struggled to attain the top levels. **Questions 3** and **5** were popular questions, though some answers to **Question 3** gave detailed accounts of the battles fought by Umar and the expansion made during his reign rather than his administrative reforms. Such answers, even though they were good, thorough and developed, could not be given the top levels as they were not answering the question as set. It is vital that candidates read the question carefully and answer what is being asked.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

In this question candidates had to choose two Hadiths and describe in part **(a)** their teachings about what Muslims believe, and explain in part **(b)** how the teachings given in these Hadiths could be put into action.

The second Hadith given in the question paper was the least popular one. Some candidates are still rewording the Hadith rather than explaining their teaching which prevented them from getting to higher levels. As an example for the first Hadith given in the question paper, candidates needed to write about how Islam is a very simple religion and that by following the basic principles of Islam, paradise can be attained. Some answers reworded it to say that someone asked the Prophet whether they would get to paradise if they fasted and prayed their salat and treated things as lawful and unlawful as Islam instructed. The teaching, however, is that Allah has laid down clear rules for Muslims to follow in order to attain paradise. He has also clearly told Muslims to be obedient to him and that, by following the principles prescribed by Islam, Muslims can achieve paradise. It is important that candidates realise that their answer can be simple but it must be effective and it must bring out the teaching. The main issues here are not language or the use of sophisticated vocabulary but knowledge and understanding.

One very important point is that when referring to other faiths, candidates should be taught and encouraged to show due respect. In the part **(b)** answers to the fourth Hadith, many of the candidates who attempted it wrote of 'unbelievers committing adultery, gambling and fornication'. They went on to say that they are allowed these activities by their faith. All faiths condemn wrongdoings and immoral actions, for example, the Ten Commandments. Credit was given for all relevant points made by candidates.

Question 2

In this question a few candidates wrote about how Hadiths were compiled, and went on to discuss *isnad* and *matn* at great length, but gained no marks as the question was asking about the part Hadiths play in Islamic legal thinking. On the other hand, several candidates understood the question and went on to say that Hadiths explain the teachings of the Qur'an and gave the example of how the Qur'an tells us to give *zakat* but the Hadiths tell us how to and stopped there. Had they gone on to give the words of the Hadiths and developed the answer they would have attained higher levels. Some gave very relevant answers and in their examples wrote about the punishment for thieving explained by the Hadiths in relation to the Qur'anic command of chopping off the criminal's hand. They said how, during a famine, someone who stole food could be forgiven in accordance with the teaching of the Hadiths.

Very few answers wrote about how the immediate successors used knowledge of Hadiths to formulate law. There were a few answers that talked about how Abu Bakr referred to the Qur'an whenever a legal case came before him. If he found no applicable judgment in it, he referred to Hadiths and if he failed there would

ask the other companions and if they informed him of any decision of the Prophet, he settled the matter according to it. Candidates could have written about the Prophet being the first legislator of Islam and how his Hadiths serve as a judicial science.

In part **(b)** of this question many of the answers described *ijma* and gave an example to explain it. This is not what the question asked. To get the higher levels candidates had to write about the importance of *ijma* as the question asked. Examples of *ijma* which have stopped divisions from happening in the Muslim community could have been given. Answers needed to say that *ijma* unifies the *ummah*, and makes the bonds of brotherhood stronger amongst Muslims.

Question 3

Two approaches could have been taken in answering this question. Candidates could have briefly discussed many of Umar's administrative reforms or listed the reforms and discussed the more important ones. As in all part **(a)** answers, it is detail and development that achieve the high levels. Most candidates who attempted this question answered it well. Some, however, went on to write about all the battles fought during Umar's reign and the expansion made. Such answers were given no credit as they did not relate to the question. Candidates should be encouraged to answer the question that is being asked.

In part **(b)** there were some good responses. Here candidates who mentioned Umar's expansion were credited as well as those who wrote of the prosperity during his reign and the internal consolidation.

Question 4

This question was attempted by a number of candidates. For some it proved to be a challenge; some, on the other hand, gave very thoughtful answers. The question required candidates to discuss or write about human responsibility. Generally speaking, part **(b)** of this question was more successfully attempted by candidates. To attain the higher levels, it was important to write about how this belief affects Muslims by making them humble and obedient to Allah, and how it helps them to accept their fate. The importance of praying to Allah could also have been touched upon in answering this question for, as the Prophet said, a humble invocation can alter destinies.

Question 5

This question was a very popular one and the majority of candidates who attempted it answered it well. There were some excellent answers for both parts **(a)** and **(b)** which displayed both knowledge and understanding.

In answering part **(a)**, candidates needed to refer to both beliefs and practices. Some candidates wrote either about belief or practice and hence did not achieve the highest levels. A few wrote about the rituals of *hajj* which was not answering the question. However, this applied only to a small minority; overall candidates did very well in **Question 5**.