

# Examiners' Report

## Summer 2010

GCE O Level

### GCE O Level Islamiyat (7568) Paper 01

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## **O Level Islamiyat (7568)**

### **Introduction**

The paper retained the structure familiar from previous years, so that students who had prepared themselves properly did not face any unforeseen difficulty. The paper invited not just knowledge but also understanding and the use of evaluative skills.

The majority of candidates dealt confidently with the translations and questions in Section One. In Section 2, questions 4-7 appeared to be equally popular where as Question 8 was not. In Section 3, probably the least popular was Question 13, yet it also produced, from the those who attempted it, some of the best answers. As usual, a handful of candidates attempted Section Four, however the results were not as encouraging.

### **Section One**

#### **Question 1(a)**

In part (iii) hardly any candidates wrote that sincerity in religion wins the admiration of non-Muslims; credit was given for an alternative reason stressing brotherhood.

#### **Question 1(b)**

Part 1(b) (i) and (ii) created some difficulties, however the mark scheme shows that answers to these questions were quite simple. Here “reputation” would have been an acceptable answer in (iii); the goal of Paradise was allowed as an alternative.

#### **Question 1(c)**

Generally answers to 1 (c) were better, although few answered that Allah’s Kingship indicates His rule.

#### **Question 2(c)**

The word which mattered in 2(c) was “prepares”, i.e., before the Hajj actually started: one of the suggestions in the Mark Scheme (rather than donning the ihram) was required.

#### **Question 2(d)**

The key to 2(d) was interpreting “qaul” in terms of actions, not words, which then naturally led on to the idea of peace in part (ii).

#### **Question 2(e)**

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

### **Question 3(a)**

The Hadith presented more difficulties than usual this year. Thus in 3(a) (ii) many candidates stated that “Muslim reputation” as the reason, when the simple answer was “the Prophet’s teaching”. Alternative answers stressing that solidarity helped Muslims to defend themselves successfully were given credit.

### **Question 3(b)**

Service, obedience, care or respect was looked for in 3(b) (ii) rather than the bland “kindness”, while “reputation” would have been a good answer to the question of trust in 3(c) (ii).

### **Question 3(d)**

Rather than giving examples of work in 3(d) (i), some candidates suggested criminal behaviour, such as “theft”.

### **Question 3(e)**

Those who attempted this question struggled: no one got the simple answer “It is given by Allah” in part (i) and only a small minority recognized the implication of sexual equality in part (ii).

## **Section Two**

### **Question 4**

Most candidates could only give an outline of the Prophet’s ancestry: the majority concentrated on Abdullah and Halimah, though a few did refer to Abd-al-Mutallib’s monotheism (sometimes in part (b)). Others, either in part (a) or in part (b), referred to the influence of Abu Talib and/or Khadijah, neither of whom featured in the Prophet’s life before the death of his mother, again another example of careless question reading. Thus a great deal of unnecessary and irrelevant material was included in some answers to this question. On many scripts part (c) was also a disappointment, in that the word “challenge” was not always addressed. Some candidates commented on the poor state of family life today, which was not the question set. Candidates were actually expected to disagree with the quotation and give reasons why family life still has importance.

### **Question 5**

The word “early” in the Question was emphasized by its bold print, but a number of candidates instead quoted some of the Prophet’s later, more detailed teaching. In doing so, they missed some important and basic points from his early teaching, viz., that all idols are false, that people should be truthful and that they should care for the poor and downtrodden. Similarly, in part (b), all the early reasons for opposition from the Prophet’s enemies related to wealth: thus they cared about the loss of their traditional worship because it would lead to a loss of trade, they were reluctant to give up their wealthy way of life and they saw support for the poor as a threat to their position and privileges. In part (c), the word “today” was important: today Tawhid matters because it is a source of Muslim unity; today honouring Allah and fulfilling one’s moral duties are important, because they promote the reputation and credit of Muslims in modern society. Unfortunately, many of the responses seen were very general and vague.

### **Question 6**

The responses to part (a) were disappointing, some not giving any description at all of the pledges. Half the marks could be obtained by stating the numbers of each delegation accurately, and the other half from stating one clear fact about each group. Many scripts lacked the necessary details indicated in the mark scheme. Most candidates managed to describe the parts played in the emigration by Ali and Abu Bakr, but did not respond to the request to comment on their behaviour. On the whole, the debate in part (c) was sensibly handled.

### **Question 7**

Another “battle” question which, as usual, was a popular choice but over which many candidates stumbled, primarily because they could not give an accurate description of its progress. Some candidates spent far too much time writing about Abu Sufyan and the causes of the battle which was not required. Others emphasized the gifts from Allah in the form of rain and angels, but failed to state the basic points. Fortunately, most did know the result of the battle in terms of losses and captives. Part (b) was, on the whole, answered satisfactorily, even though there was little reference to the Prophet’s growing prestige. As for part (c), the vast majority misunderstood the quotation, which wanted some discussion about the dangers to innocent life of the use of modern weaponry in warfare. Instead, many wrote along the lines that you cannot and should not force anyone to follow your religion, which is a quite different question.

### **Question 8**

Very few candidates attempted this question: presumably the ‘Farewell Sermon’ is well enough known, but perhaps candidates were less sure about the last two years of the Prophet’s life. Part (c) gave those who care about such matters the chance to write at length on the subject of care for the underprivileged in society.

## **Section Three**

### **Question 9**

Many attempted this question and were able to give fairly detailed descriptions of the Qur’an’s teaching about the Last Day. Similarly, the teachings about Paradise and Hell, some of which were credited under part (a), were well known. The final question concerning the possibility that the teachings are out of date was more testing. Good candidates considered this question more thoughtfully.

### **Question 10**

There were moderate responses to this question, however it generally produced high marks. Some candidates spent too much time on Musa’s upbringing and less than enough on the importance of his appointment and the scriptures Allah gave him; similarly, other candidates overlooked the fact that Isa was “given the Gospel”. The point is important in that a chief reason why the Prophet is regarded as superior to other prophets is because he was given the Qur’an. There were the beginnings of useful discussions regarding the teachings of the prophets in part (c) but many of these were not developed. Points in the Mark Scheme might usefully be consulted here.

### **Question 11**

Not a popular question, even though most candidates who attempted it achieved good marks. The best scripts made sensible choices with accompanying sound comment. There were, however, some vague suggestions and others that were not specific enough. Some candidates simply reversed the chosen example: thus an example of correct behaviour might be “care for your parents in their old age”, and an example of incorrect behaviour as “neglecting your parents in their old age”. In such cases, credit was awarded only once. Perhaps most candidates supported the view that there were not too many rules nowadays, but without developing reasons for that view, such as the kind of reasons suggested in the Mark Scheme.

### **Question 12**

Not surprisingly, this was a popular question and, for the most part, well-answered. There were many cases of overlap, i.e., candidates picked up marks for points given in other sections. That said, most did make the obligatory/voluntary distinction in part (a) and successfully identified the requirements of Zakah in part (b). Parts (c) and (d) were less well done, but still earned some credit. Perhaps candidates should remember the final point for future reference: those who are sincere pass the test by showing that they are prepared to do something about the plight of the poor.

### **Question 13**

Only a minority attempted this question, but it was gratifying to find that they did so because they had spent time learning about the reign of Khalifah Umar. Several were able to give examples of his military successes and support these examples with some details. Many of his administrative reforms were also accurately recorded (although no one made reference to his care for orphans or his census), gaining good marks. Moreover, the best candidates were able to give sound reasons why these first Khalifahs are described as “rightly-guided”.

### **Question 14**

A popular question but not successfully attempted by some weaker candidates. In writing of his treatment of his wives, most noted either the Prophet’s kindness (patience and gentleness), or his equal treatment or his respect, although seldom all three and very little beyond this limit. As for treatment of children, a mark was usually given again for kindness (patience and affection); occasionally for seeing to their religious education and for “respectable marriages”. The example of standing when Fatima entered the room was also credited, although it was her betrothal to Ali that was the really important point. So generally low marks were achieved in part (a), made up for, to some extent, by answers to part (b), especially those concerning Khadijah. Nevertheless, high marks for a question which, at first sight, appeared to be relatively straightforward, were not common.

## **Section Four**

Only a few candidates attempted this section.



## General Points

1. Candidates need to remember to read the questions carefully.
2. Some points made could be developed further using knowledge and understanding to gain more marks.
3. Sometimes the same point is made repeatedly and therefore candidates cannot gain any more marks.
4. Points need to be relevant to the question set. Providing extended description of something not related to the question gains no extra marks and wastes time.

In conclusion, it is perhaps worth assuring both teachers and candidates that papers are not penalized for irrelevant or incorrect material. The examiners give credit where merited. Sometimes on this particular paper, appropriate alternative suggestions were credited and facts and figures, such as those in Question 6(a), if close enough were accepted. The aim, therefore, is to support candidates in their efforts.

## Statistics

### Overall Subject Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	67	59	51	46	39



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