

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/01

Paper 1

General comments

Generally speaking, candidates were well prepared for this examination and despite there being no question from the topic of *The First Islamic Community*, no candidates appeared to be disadvantaged by this, and in fact many candidates did well in this paper compared with previous years. Most candidates showed that 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.

As with previous years, Examiners noticed that there was an improvement in the way in which candidates answered questions, e.g. using quotations sparingly and only where relevant. However, there was only a slight improvement in the way candidates attempted Assessment Objective 2 [or part **(b)** questions], and candidates were generally weak at evaluating and assessing the significance of events. Candidates did seem to have a good knowledge base to answer Assessment Objective 1 [part **(a)** questions], though a significant number narrated key events without giving details, e.g. in **Question 4** candidates wrote about Cave Thawr but did not give details about what happened in it.

Overall, however, candidates seemed to have performed well and most candidates attempted the questions confidently. This is a sign of good teaching and preparation.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was relatively well answered with major themes being identified in all Suras. However, as with last year, some candidates answered parts **(a)** and **(b)** together without differentiating them. Good practice would be to give a descriptive answer in part **(a)** for two Suras, and an evaluative answer in part **(b)** for two Suras. Examiners also found that many candidates did not number the part and Sura they were answering accurately (e.g. **Question 1a**, Sura ii), which made it hard for the Examiners to understand what the candidate was answering.

The better answers were careful to avoid paraphrasing of the translation which is already given.

- (a)** For part **(a)** good answers would have been able to pick out key themes from two passages. Most candidates showed a good level of knowledge about the key themes of the passages they chose to answer. They talked about the oneness of God, *tawhid* being central to Islam, God's power, He being creator and the things he creates, His knowledge of everything.

Most candidates were able to give a description of some of these points relating to two passages they had chosen, passages one and three being the most popular. However, there was often a lack of depth in the answers e.g. giving general descriptions about *tawhid* being the oneness of God. A significant number wrote very brief descriptions. Candidates should also try to show they know the meaning of "beget" and "begotten" as many Examiners felt candidates were writing about them in the wrong context.

- (b)** Here, good answers would have been able to say what these teachings mean for Muslims and how these teachings are presented specifically in these Suras.

A significant minority of candidates were able to answer this part of the question well, with thoughtful and insightful answers. Most candidates gave average answers. Examiners noted that



having answered part **(a)** on the main theme of the Sura, candidates are at a loss as to what to write for part **(b)** and many merely repeat or re-arrange the information they have used in **(a)**. There was a lot of repetition in answers.

Good answers talked about specific words or ideas from the Suras, how they brought out the key themes, and their relevance to Islam or Muslims. For example, in passage two the description of the sun and the moon showed God's power in creating things which are signs for mankind. These allow man to reflect upon their creator and the things that He has created for the benefit of mankind, which brings humans closer to Him in their everyday lives. Good candidates were also able to reference other relevant Suras from the Qur'an which had similar themes and say how they were related. However, there were a significant number of candidates who only quoted other Suras in part **(b)** without saying why that Sura was relevant to the Sura which they had chosen to write about from the Question Paper.

Question 2

(a) Most answers to this part of the question were good with accurate details.

A good number of candidates gave a detailed description of the compilation of the Qur'an under both Caliphs. The question was usually well answered with less triviality than in some of the others. There were very good answers for the compilation under Abu Bakr's period, with candidates mentioning the battle of Yamama, Abu Bakr being persuaded to make the compilation, and the way in which Zaid bin Thabit went about gathering the verses, with a lot of details being written. The relating of events in the 'Uthman era was usually more vague and less well done than the detailed descriptions of the efforts of 'Umar and Abu Bakr in compiling the Qur'an. There were some inaccuracies in answers, e.g. saying at the time of 'Uthman copies of the Qur'an with mistakes in it were circulating.

Where it was answered poorly, candidates wrote about the revelation and the scribes writing verses on bones, etc. Some candidates did not write about the compilation under 'Uthman at all.

A fair number of candidates gained full marks.

(b) There were some good answers to this question, but generally answers were vague. The best answers offered insightful reasons for the need to compile the Qur'an, e.g. that the Qur'an needed to be compiled for future generation who would not learn it by heart or would not have Arabic as their first language and the fact that the compilation allows Muslims to have access to the Qur'an in all times and places without any changes.

However, there was also a tendency amongst a fair number of candidates to repeat some description from **(a)** e.g. the loss of hafiz and merely add that Caliphs feared the Qur'an would be lost, without any explanation of the implications of the Qur'an being lost and why it was then compiled.

Question 3

This question was a popular choice with candidates out of the three optional questions and was well answered.

(a) Where candidates answered this very well, they gave detailed and chronological descriptions of the main events of the Prophet's life from infancy to prophethood.

The best candidates wrote at length on the life of the Prophet but there was often little discrimination between major, significant events and trivial detail. Some candidates wrote two pages on details of rearing the infant Muhammad and then moved directly to his marriage to Khadija. There was a lot of confused chronology, which made the answers appear confused. However, it was good to see that the more perceptive answers attempted to demonstrate how the events of his early life showed the formation of his character and his predestination as a prophet.

A few answers wrote about the Prophet's revelation showing they did not read the question properly.

- (b) This was the best answered of the part (b) questions. Khadija's support and assistance to the Prophet and the importance of this to the development of his mission was analysed fairly well, although some candidates only managed to explain the nature of her support and not its importance.

Most answers talked about her wealth and the implications for the Prophet of not having financial worries. There were a lot of answers that wrote about her wealth but offered no evaluation about its significance.

Question 4

This question was also popular with candidates to answer.

- (a) This was generally a well answered question, with candidates being able to give details about the two caves, Hira and Thawr, and the main events that happened. Hira was usually described better than Thawr. The descriptions of what happened at Thawr were sometimes vague and incomplete with candidates failing to refer to key Qur'anic teachings when describing the events in this cave.

Some candidates mixed up the names of the caves. Also, some candidates, instead of describing events that happened inside the caves, wrote about what happened outside the caves before and after the actual events in the caves. For example, candidates gave a brief description of the revelation inside the cave of Hira, but had written a lot about the social situation of the Makkans at that time before revelation, or, they wrote about the plot to kill the Prophet rather than giving details of what happened when the Prophet and Abu Bakr entered the cave.

However, most candidates scored highly in this question.

- (b) There were some good answers to this part of the question. There were some perceptive answers particularly on the significance of the events at Thawr and the importance of the migration to Madina for the development of Islam. The most common mistakes were to write vaguely that Islam began with the revelation in cave Hira or that it spread widely after that event.

However a number of candidates mistakenly attempted to write about both experiences instead of just one, as the question asks.

Question 5

This question was the least popular with candidates to answer.

- (a) Where chosen, this question was answered reasonably well with candidates giving relevant and detailed facts about the position of women in Islam. Good answers mentioned their position in the various roles as wives, mothers and daughters, gave examples from the life of the Prophet and his relationship with his wives, his mother and his daughters. They also gave relevant quotations.

However, Examiners noticed that in some cases information was an account of cultural attitudes to women or stories about the Prophet. They felt the question in many cases was answered superficially, where candidates wrote about things that were common knowledge rather than referring to specific teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Those who made a good attempt offered some solid information on the importance of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet about wives and mothers but were less strong on daughters (other than they should not be buried alive!).

- (b) This part of the question was not very well answered. The majority of those who answered this question just repeated information from (a). Perhaps the question had not been properly understood. Some wrote about modest behaviour in relations between the sexes giving a satisfactory answer. A few did write about present day relationships but they were very much in the minority.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/02

Paper 2

General Comments

The paper in the May/June 2010 session was on the whole well attempted by the candidates. The confusion of the previous years with regards to **Question 1** seems to have been clarified. With the exception of very few candidates who simply wrote one answer for both parts of **Question 1** most were quite clear and either did both Part **(a)**s of the two Hadiths together and then went on to do the Part **(b)**s or answered one Hadith at a time. In both cases they were awarded the mark they deserved as both approaches are correct. In cases where the candidate did not indicate **(a)** or **(b)** but it was clear to the Examiner that the two parts were given, the mark was given according to the level attained. Very few candidates wrote a general answer for **Question 1** where it was impossible to distinguish between parts **(a)** and **(b)** and here the Examiner had to consider the answer as any one part and could not give beyond the maximum of 4 marks. Candidates would benefit if teachers could continue to explain to them the need to distinguish between both Part **(a)** and **(b)** of **Question 1** specifically. Between **Questions 2** to **5** **Question 3** seemed to be the more challenging one. In **Question 5** many candidates focused mostly on *wudu* in their answer and quite a few wrote exclusively and in great detail on this one requirement ignoring the rest of the conditions of prayer.

It must be noted that to get to the top end of the marks the answer has to be detailed, thoughtful and well developed. Having said that, **all** teachers should point out to the candidates that basing the length of the answer on mark allocation can stand the candidates in good stead as it will allow them to develop the Part **(a)** answers of **Question 2** to **5** more. Also writing pages when answering **Question 1** will not get them beyond 8 marks even for the perfect answer, hence each part of this Question does not need to be more than a good paragraph.

Question 1

This is a compulsory question and the majority of the candidates wrote satisfactory answers. Part **(a)** as in previous years was answered better than Part **(b)**. In Part **(b)** candidates tend to repeat the answer given in Part **(a)** rather than focus on what the question is asking, which is: how can Muslims put the teachings of the Hadith they are writing about into action. One common example which was given for Part **(b)** of Hadith **(i)** and sometimes for **(iv)** was that: we should give our slaves the food/clothes we ourselves eat/wear. That example is rather out of context as there are no slaves in the 21st century. Candidates can give examples of treating their domestic servants with kindness or wanting good things to happen to their fellow human beings, one example could be the candidate wanting their class fellows to do as well as themselves in the examinations. The essence of Hadith **(i)** Part **(b)** is not wanting the exact same thing for ones fellow human beings as many answers stressed but having care and concern for others and that is what the examples should reflect.

Question 2

A well attempted question by most, though very few went on to give examples of compilers going about their work collecting Hadiths. Development of the points given when discussing *isnad* and *matn* is what took the mark to the top end of Level 3. Some candidates however completely missed writing about the importance of *isnad* and *matn* and explaining what they are and how they helped in distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable Hadiths and wrote about the different types of Hadiths e.g. *Zaeef*, *Maudoo* and *Hassan* etc. which was not what was being asked. It is important to read the question and understand its requirement before attempting to answer it and perhaps candidates could be advised by teachers to spend a few minutes on the question itself and maybe make a mind map for themselves to follow to ensure that they cover all the points they need to write about.

Part (b) answers for this question were mostly satisfactory. Good answers putting forward a relevant teaching of the Qur'an in relation to a Hadith and explaining how the Hadith/s have helped legal experts to formulate rules in the *shari'a* were few and far between. Many answers, as an example, simply said 'Qur'an



says to pay zakat and the Prophets Hadiths tell us how to'. A more detailed answer was required e.g. 'The Qur'an enjoins Muslims to pay Zakat but does not explain the rate of Zakat or how many times in a year it should be paid', followed by 'this is done by the Prophet who said, "No zakat is payable on property until a year has passed away on it"'. Part **(b)** answers need evaluation and though there has been an improvement in the quality of answers being written more practise in classrooms would benefit the candidates.

Question 3

Not a very popular question. From the ones who did attempt this question there was a wide spectrum of answers from average to good ones. Average answers dealt with 'Uthmans compilation of the Qur'an and appointment of relatives as governors without too much detail but the better answers not only dealt with the two aforementioned points but also dealt with the expansion of Muslim territories that took place during his time giving names of territories added sometimes even with dates, they wrote of rebellions that arose in Azerbaijan and Armenia and how they were crushed. The revolt of the Romans was mentioned by some and good answers also went on to write about how the first Muslim naval fleet was started in the caliphate of 'Uthman. Once again it was detail and development which earned the candidates higher marks.

Part **(b)** answer to this question saw a lot of repetition from Part **(a)**. Evaluation of some of the points made in Part **(a)** was needed. Also candidates needed to write about 'Uthman's assassination.

Question 4

This was the most popular of the non-compulsory questions, attempted by the majority and one in which most who attempted it did well. One or two interesting points which were not given in the mark scheme were made by the candidates which were relevant and showed good teaching. One of them was that it is a Muslim belief that angels strengthen the hearts of Muslims as they did at the battle of Badr. One of the advantages of levels marking is that the Examiner is not bound by the point system and if facts are given in answers which give it more substance then the candidate is credited for it.

In this Part **(b)** answer the candidate needed to answer the all important WHY. The belief in resurrection is important as it makes Muslims obedient to Allah for they know that they will be accountable to Him in the Hereafter and will get reward or punishment on the basis of their deeds. The points being made should have been supported with evaluation as given above by way of a simple example. As with all Part **(b)** answers more practise is needed in classrooms. Some candidates however had no idea about what resurrection meant.

Question 5

Some candidates wrote in great detail about *wudu* and ignored practically all the other conditions of prayer whilst some better prepared candidates wrote excellent answers. Some candidates used quotes from the Quran and Hadiths in support of their answers.

In Part **(b)** a lot of answers did not go beyond satisfactory. Quite a few wrote about how mosques were important in the Prophet's time and were used for administration and military purposes but did not answer the question which was asking about the importance of mosques in Muslim communities. Some did go on to mention the fact that they foster equality but not much more was given. As in all questions some answered the question well.

On the whole candidates taking this examination do well. The teachers are to be congratulated for their efforts.