



GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

8062/15: Paper 1 Islam
Report on the Examination

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General comments

It was pleasing to see that students attempted the vast majority of the questions in the time allocated. The paper covered a wide range of topics from the specification and allowed students to show their understanding of the different beliefs and practices both within Sunni and Shi'a Islam. Question 1.1 and 1.4 presented the biggest challenge for students and suggests that the teaching of the Shi'a content, although improving, requires more focus. Centres are reminded that content, from the specification should be covered equally so that students are not unduly disadvantaged.

Islam: Beliefs**Question 1.1**

This was poorly answered and it seems students confused the Five Roots of Usul ad-Din with the Ten Obligatory acts.

Question 1.2

This question was well answered with the vast majority of students gaining two marks. Students are not required to explain their points here and two simple points were sufficient. Students referred to heaven and paradise, the day of judgement, descriptions of heaven, that Muslims will be able to see God and that those with faith will live there eternally.

Question 1.3

The focus of the question was on 'influence' and clearly many missed this point when attempting to explain two ways in which belief in God's justice (Adalat) influenced Muslims. To achieve full marks students needed to develop each of the two ways they chose, showing how the belief in justice influenced Muslims today. There were some excellent answers. Students were able to refer to the concept of Adalat in Shi'a Islam or justice more broadly within Islam and both approaches were creditworthy.

Question 1.4

Where students knew what Imamate was, this question was answered very well. Students referred to the twelve imams and the need for these to be descendants of the prophet Muhammad. Some student confused imamate in Shi'a Islam with imams more generally. Sources of authority on beliefs about the Imamate ranged from the Shahadah to the several Hadith.

Question 1.5

There were some excellent answers to this question. The better responses referred to the angels being a key belief in Islam and a key part of the six articles. Others mentioned the roles of the angels in the modern world including Mikail etc. Others argued that there was no need for some angels like Jibrail as there will be no further prophets and so the need for revelation was eliminated. Secular responses about the lack of scientific evidence were also creditworthy.

Islam: Practices

Question 2.1

Students performed very well on this question, with well over four fifths of students selecting the correct response -Wudu.

Question 2.2

Again, a very well answered question with the vast majority of students achieving full marks. Students had good knowledge of practices during Ramadan.

Question 2.3

Where students understood the term Ashura they were able to access the question and score well. Contrasting views included practices within the Shi'a tradition. The more able students contrasted the ways in which it was celebrated. Donating blood and self-flagellation were common answers. Other students referred to the fasting on the day of Ashura as a Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad and this was credit worthy as a contrast. Centres are reminded that contrasting practices can be within the same denomination as long as the response highlights the contrast or difference.

Question 2.4

This was a very well answered question with students referring to the pilgrimage to Makkah and the significance of Hajj. Hajj as one of the five pillars was often also used as the source of authority and gained the additional mark. Many students mentioned the birth place of the prophet Muhammad and the role of Ibrahim in building the Kaba, these were equally creditworthy.

Question 2.5

This evaluation question was very well answered with students scoring highly. On the whole, this presented very few issues and students were able to talk in detail about the importance of Shahadah for Muslims. The vast majority of students countered this with the other pillars and this was done very well. Centres are reminded that an introduction is not required and many students spent time repeating information that was then not creditworthy. It was pleasing to note that the final question on the paper was attempted by the vast majority of students which may suggest that centres are getting better at training students to spend time in appropriate proportion throughout the paper.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.