



Syllabus

Cambridge International AS Level Islamic Studies 8053

For examination in November 2020.



Changes to the syllabus for 2020

The syllabus has been updated. The latest syllabus is version 2, published November 2017.

There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

- The front cover of this syllabus has been updated, there are no other changes to this syllabus. The new image provides a consistent visual identity to all our A Level Religious Studies subjects.

You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

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Why choose Cambridge Assessment International Education?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

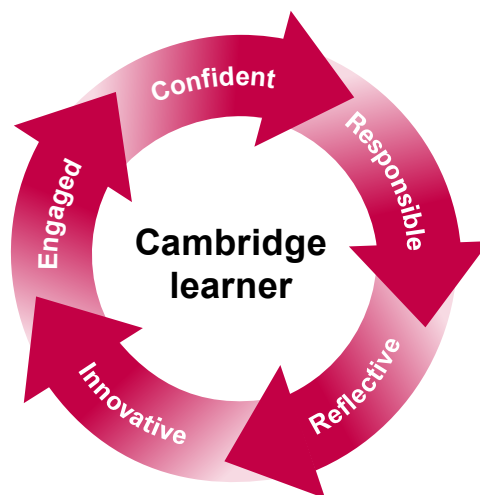
Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge learners from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with an international education from Cambridge.

Cambridge learners

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially ready to make a difference.



Learn more about the Cambridge learner attributes in Chapter 2 of our *Implementing the curriculum with Cambridge* guide at www.cambridgeinternational.org/curriculumguide

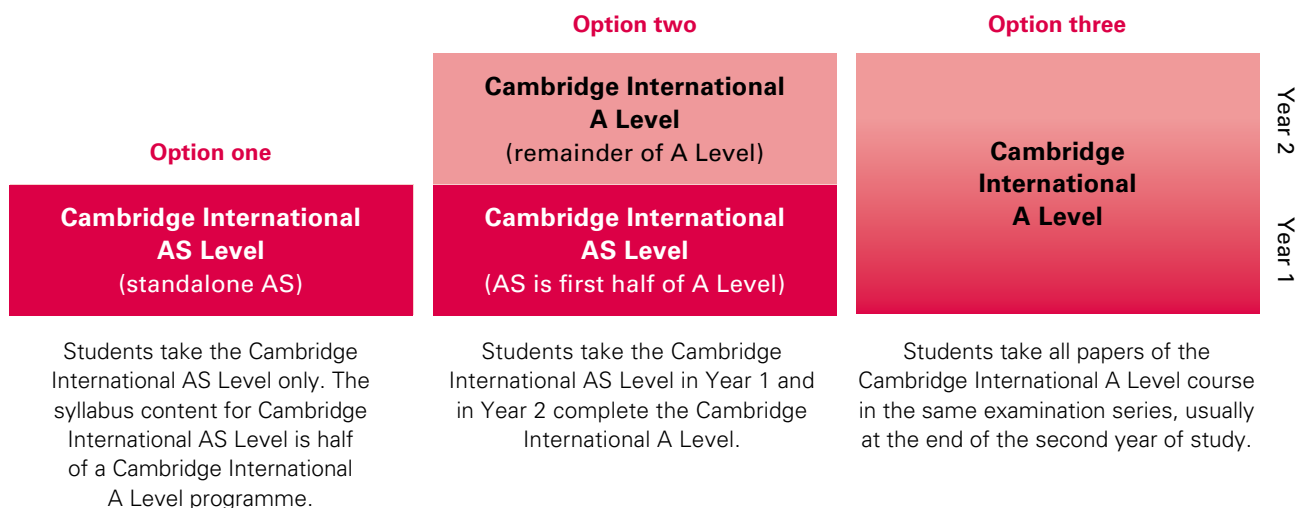
Why Cambridge International AS & A Levels?

Cambridge International AS & A Levels are international in outlook, but retain a local relevance. The syllabuses provide opportunities for contextualised learning and the content has been created to suit a wide variety of schools, avoid cultural bias and develop essential lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey. Cambridge International AS & A Levels give students building blocks for an individualised curriculum that develops their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Cambridge International AS & A Level curricula are flexible. It is possible to offer almost any combination from a wide range of subjects. Cambridge International A Level is typically a two-year course, and Cambridge International AS Level is typically one year. Some subjects can be started as a Cambridge International AS Level and extended to a Cambridge International A Level.

There are three possible assessment approaches for Cambridge International AS & A Level:



Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Cambridge International AS & A Levels are accepted across 195 countries. They are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), European nations, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Learners should check the university website for specific entry requirements before applying.

Did you know?

In some countries universities accept Cambridge International AS Levels in their own right as qualifications counting towards entry to courses in the same or other related subjects. Many students who take Cambridge International AS Levels also choose to progress to Cambridge International A Level.

Learn more

For more details go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Why Cambridge International AS Level Islamic Studies?

About the syllabus

By following the Cambridge International AS Level Islamic Studies syllabus, candidates will:

- develop an enquiring and critical approach to the study of fundamental questions of Islamic practices, beliefs, morality and interpretations
- gain an understanding of the religious writings, history and current affairs of Islam and be able to think and argue intelligently about the subject
- be introduced to a broad range of topics, ranging from the beginnings of Islam and the evolution, content and role of the Holy Qur'an, to the beliefs and practices of Islam and the bases of Islamic Law
- learn more about the dynasties and religious thought of early Islam, the variety in Islamic beliefs and the role played by Islam in the world today.

Guided learning hours

Guided learning hours give an indication of the amount of contact time teachers need to have with learners to deliver a particular course. Our syllabuses are designed around 180 guided learning hours for Cambridge International AS Level, and around 360 guided learning hours for Cambridge International A Level.

These figures are for guidance only. The number of hours needed to gain the qualification may vary depending on local practice and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Prior learning

Candidates beginning this course are not expected to have studied Islam or Religious Studies previously.

Progression

Cambridge International AS Level Islamic Studies constitutes the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Islamic Studies and therefore provides a suitable foundation for the study of Islam at A Level and thence for related courses in higher education. Depending on local university entrance requirements, it may permit or assist progression directly to university courses in Islam or some other subjects. It is also suitable for candidates intending to pursue careers or further study in Islam or Religious Studies, or as part of a course of general education.

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognitions database and the university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

How can I find out more?

If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at info@cambridgeinternational.org

If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn more about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school from our website at www.cambridgeinternational.org/startcambridge

Email us at info@cambridgeinternational.org to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

Cambridge AICE

Cambridge AICE Diploma is the group award of the Cambridge International AS & A Level. It gives schools the opportunity to benefit from offering a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of candidates who pass examinations from different curriculum groups.

Learn more

For more details go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice

“ Our research has shown that students who came to the university with a Cambridge AICE background performed better than anyone else that came to the university. That really wasn't surprising considering the emphasis they have on critical research and analysis, and that's what we require at university. ”

John Barnhill, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, Florida State University, USA

Teacher support

We offer a wide range of practical and innovative support to help teachers plan and deliver our programmes and qualifications confidently.

The support package for our Cambridge International AS & A Levels gives teachers access to a worldwide teaching community enabling them to connect with other teachers, swap ideas and share best practice.

Teaching and learning

- Support materials provide teachers with ideas and planning resources for their lessons.
- Endorsed textbooks, ebooks and digital resources are produced by leading publishers. We have quality checked these materials to make sure they provide a high level of support for teachers and learners.
- Resource lists to help support teaching, including textbooks and websites.

Exam preparation

- Past question papers and mark schemes so teachers can give learners the opportunity to practise answering different questions.
- Example candidate responses help teachers understand exactly what examiners are looking for.
- Principal examiner reports describing learners' overall performance on each part of the papers. The reports give insight into common misconceptions shown by learners, which teachers can address in lessons.

Cambridge
International
AS & A Level
support for
teachers

Professional development

Face-to-face training

We hold workshops around the world to support teachers in delivering Cambridge syllabuses and developing their skills.

Online training

We offer self-study and tutor-led online training courses via our virtual learning environment. A wide range of syllabus-specific courses and skills courses is available. We also offer training via video conference and webinars.

Qualifications

We offer a wide range of practice-based qualifications at Certificate and Diploma level, providing a framework for continuing professional development.

Learn more

Find out more about support for this syllabus at www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel

Visit our online resource bank and discussion forum at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

You can find useful information, as well as share your ideas and experiences with other teachers, on our social media channels and community forums.

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/social-media

1 Assessment at a glance

Candidates studying Cambridge International AS Level Islamic Studies take one examination paper, lasting three hours. This is the same paper as Paper 1 for the A Level (syllabus code 9013).

Results in Cambridge International AS Level may **not** be carried over to the A level.

Paper 1	3 hours
There are four sections.	
Candidates answer five questions, choosing at least one from each section:	
A The Beginnings of Islam	
B The Holy Qur'an	
C Beliefs and Practices of Islam	
D The Bases of Islamic Law	
There will be a choice of at least three questions in each section.	

Availability

This syllabus is examined in the November examination series.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

Detailed timetables are available from www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

Centres in the UK that receive government funding are advised to consult the Cambridge International website www.cambridgeinternational.org for the latest information before beginning to teach this syllabus.

Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge International syllabus, except:

- Cambridge International A Level Islamic Studies (9013)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

2 Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

2.1 Syllabus aims

The aims of the syllabus are to:

- motivate candidates to develop an enquiring and critical approach to the study of fundamental questions of religious practices, beliefs, morality and interpretations
- explore these issues within the context of a religious tradition or traditions.

To achieve these aims, candidates will be required to gain some understanding of the religious writings, history and current affairs of Islam and be able to think and argue intelligently about the subject.

2.2 Assessment objectives

Candidates will be assessed on their:

AO1: Knowledge of the topics and specified texts.

AO2: Understanding of the meaning and significance of the material studied.

AO3: Ability to express themselves explicitly, logically and critically in any argument.

The assessment objectives are weighted in the following way:

Assessment objective	Weighting
AO1	60%
AO2	25%
AO3	15%

3 Syllabus content

Section A: The Beginnings of Islam

- **Pre-Islamic Arabia:** social and economic conditions, beliefs and customs
- **The life of the Prophet (pbuh):** his early years and the first period of his proclamations to 622, his challenge to the beliefs of Mecca, the successful years at Medina until his death, his sense of being chosen as God's messenger, his role as prophet and statesman
- **The Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs:** the main events of their caliphates, the challenges they faced, their achievements in maintaining and extending the rule of Islam

Section B: The Holy Qur'an

- Its mode of revelation, its compilation in the early years of Islam, its structure and major themes
- A detailed study of the following *surahs*:
 - al-Fatihah 1
 - al-Baqarah 2:1–193
 - Al 'Imran 3:35–62
 - al-Anbiya 21:50–112
 - al-Qasas 28:1–44
 - al-Duha 93
 - al-Qadr 97
 - al-Takathur 102
 - al-Kafirun 109
 - al-Ikhlās 112
- Its authority and place in Islamic beliefs, its relationship with other sources of knowledge

Section C: Beliefs and Practices of Islam

- **The Five Pillars of Islam:** Declaration of Faith (*Shahadah*), Prayer (*Salat*), Almsgiving (*Zakat*), Fasting (*Sawm*), Pilgrimage (*Hajj*); their function in bringing the individual closer to God and in binding the community together; their meaning in Islamic beliefs
- **Festivals and religious observances:** 'Id al-Fitr, 'Id al-Adha, marriages, funerals
- **The Articles of Faith:** God, his being and relationship with the created world, Angels, Books, Prophets, and particularly the significance of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as model of behaviour, Resurrection and the Day of Judgement; jihad, the nature and destiny of humanity, the command to enjoin good and prohibit wrong, God's predestination of all events

Section D: The Bases of Islamic Law

- The Holy Qur'an as source of all teachings in Islam, methods of interpreting its teachings
- The Prophet's Sunnah as a source of guidance for Muslims; its relationship to the Holy Qur'an
- The importance of the Shari'ah in the life of Muslim communities and individuals; the function of consensus (*ijma'*), analogy (*qiyas*) and individual endeavour (*ijtihad*) in legal thinking

4 Other information

Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and related assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), we have designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed. Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is found in the *Cambridge Handbook*, which can be downloaded from the website www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsOfficers

Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available in English only.

Grading and reporting

Cambridge International AS Level results are shown by one of the grades a, b, c, d or e, indicating the standard achieved, 'a' being the highest and 'e' the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade 'e'. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no result) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

'While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.'

Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

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