

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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Paper 2068/12  
Paper 1 History and Scriptures

## Key messages

- It is important that candidates read the questions carefully before answering them.
- Candidates need to make themselves familiar with the rubric, so they know how many questions to answer and from which sections.
- While **Sections A** and **B** saw some good answers, some candidates could improve their knowledge and understanding of the topics. AO2 responses tended to be better.
- Many candidates were able to provide an outline of the general points of an answer, and they could improve by providing more detail and elaboration.

## General comments

Overall, candidates made a good attempt to answer the questions they selected, and very few candidates answered questions from the wrong section.

There were some candidates who seemed to have good knowledge of the topic they were answering, but did not provide enough details.

For **Section A**, candidates knew about early aspects of pre-Islamic Arabian life, but either did not provide enough key details or did not focus their answer on the aspect required in the question.

For **Section B**, candidates had the knowledge to answer their chosen question, particularly in **part (b)**, but for **part (a)** they could improve to write answers that are short, precise and relevant to what is asked.

For **Section C**, candidates tended to know the teachings of the passage or Hadith, though development of the second aspect of the question could be improved.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Most candidates were able to answer this well and wrote about agriculture in the region. Weaker responses included things that did not grow in the region at that time such as pineapples and strawberries.
- (b) This was a popular question and many candidates answered it well. Most focused their answers on the trip to Syria where they met Bahira. Fewer wrote about other aspects of the Prophet's early life such as his participation in the sacrilegious war and Hilf al-Fudul. Others wrote too much about the Prophet's birth and the death of his mother. Bringing in other elements of the Prophet's life during his time living with Abu Talib specifically would have improved candidates' responses.
- (c) Most candidates knew some of the guardians the Prophet (pbuh) had when he was growing up. Fewer were able to discuss whether having several guardians prepared him for prophethood. Good answers included how trade with Abu Talib allowed the Prophet (pbuh) a glimpse of other countries and different cultures, and how moving from one guardian to another made him understand human characters and their needs. Where it was not answered well, candidates focused on the lives of the

guardians rather than how this may have prepared the Prophet (pbuh) or they focused on angel Jibril coming to the Prophet (pbuh) and washing his heart.

## Question 2

- (a) **Question 2** was the less popular choice in **Section A**, and for **part (a)** most candidates knew about the tribal code of honour, though they did not provide many details of what it contained. Had they been able to give some key words relating to the concepts in the code such as loyalty, courage, revenge, hospitality, then they could have improved their answers.
- (b) Most candidates wrote about the social changes to pre-Islamic society rather than changes to the tribal system. The focus was on the way women and slaves were treated, the marketplaces and the way the Meccans traded.

Candidates who answered well wrote about the way the tribal system was before Islam and then ways that Islam discarded some of the practices and kept others that were not against Islamic teachings. Candidates would do well to understand the differences between the social systems in place and the tribal systems in place in Arabia at that time.

- (c) There were some good answers to this question where candidates gave detailed examples about ways to show loyalty to their community. Many focused on praying in congregation and supporting the community through the mosque, giving zakat and showing loyalty by helping those in need, and other ways that Muslims can show loyalty by practising their faith.

Weaker responses tended to discuss general aspects of Muslim communities or gave a list of things Muslims should do without linking it to the question asked.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) There were some good answers to this question, with candidates mentioning that there were two migrations and providing a few names of those who migrated. Many only gave a brief mention of the two migrations and focused on the reasons for migrating, which was not part of the question.
- (b) When chosen, this question was generally answered well with many candidates being able to identify key points in the meeting with the Quraish, the Muslims and the Negus. Responses could have improved by giving more details about what was said, and giving names of the companions involved.

Some candidates seemed to have confused this migration with a different migration or did not write with sufficient information or detail.

- (c) Most candidates said that the migration to Abyssinia is similar to migrations today and were able to give at least one example of why they are similar. Many candidates were able to achieve higher marks by giving examples of those who have had to migrate due to oppression in current times and were also able to provide some insight into why the two migrations were different. For this reason, it was generally a well answered question.

### Question 4

- (a) Answers to this question tended to be vague or focused on the migration and establishing a Muslim community, rather than being focused on the details about the brotherhood that was created between the Ansar and Muhajireen.
- (b) This was a popular question, and most candidates were able to answer it well. Candidates knew most information about the battle, the archers on the hill, the attack by Khalid bin Walid and the Prophet (pbuh) being hurt. Where it was well answered, candidates gave details including names of all the main events. Where it was not answered well, candidates tended to leave out details such as the hypocrites' desertion, the Prophet's injury, Hamza's martyrdom and the names of the companions involved.

- (c) Most answered this question by saying that the main lesson was to not disobey the Prophet (pbuh). Those who scored higher marks were able to elaborate on why the Prophet (pbuh) should be obeyed, consequences of not obeying him, and how this is relevant to the way that Muslims should obey the Prophet (pbuh) in current times. The depth to these answers was what allowed them to score well.

### Section C

#### Question 5

- (a) Candidates who answered this question were able to state the teachings of the passage, usually by taking one line at a time and explaining the meaning. This works well when answering this type of question as it means the answer can be quite focused on the teachings rather than giving an overall, general summary.

Many candidates stopped their answers after explaining the main teachings of *tawhid*, God's power and authority, his having no family or children, and his being unique. Fewer candidates went on to explain why it was a response to the unbelievers of Mecca, which is the second aspect of this question. It is important that candidates answer all parts of a question.

- (b) Many candidates started this answer by saying that it was important to recite the Qur'an with accuracy, then went on to give answers about the general importance of understanding the Qur'an or the virtues of reading the Qur'an.

Very few candidates could link reading with accuracy with applying *tajweed* rules and explaining that these rules are important to prevent mistakes when reciting Qur'an.

#### Question 6

- (a) Candidates seemed to understand this Hadith well and were able to write about the teachings of the Hadith, with many writing about accountability and *taqwa*, following bad deeds with good ones to erase the bad ones, and behaving well with other people. Many candidates were able to write about teachings in this way, with some also giving details and descriptions of bad deeds that could be wiped. Fewer candidates gave examples of how to behave well with others, and those that did scored well.

- (b) Answers for this question varied quite significantly as some candidates knew other Hadith and were able to explain them well, whereas other candidates did not know other Hadith so wrote very little or used the same Hadith from **part (a)** in their answers.

Candidates mostly chose Hadith on doubt and tolerance. Some candidates chose the Hadith on love, but did not know the Hadith itself and wrote about loving people generally.

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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**Paper 2068/13**  
**Paper 1 History and Scriptures**

## Key messages

- It is important that candidates read the questions carefully before answering them.
- Candidates need to make themselves familiar with the rubric, so they know how many questions to answer and from which sections.
- A full range of responses was seen across AO1 and AO2. Most responses fell somewhere in the middle.
- For AO1, many candidates were able to provide an outline of the general points of an answer. Responses can be improved by providing more detail and elaboration upon the points.
- AO2 answers were generally better, with candidates showing that they understood the questions and that they needed to provide some analysis or evaluation to gain marks.

## General comments

Overall, candidates made a good attempt to answer the questions they selected and very few candidates answered questions from the wrong section.

There were some candidates who seemed to have good knowledge of the topic they were answering but did not provide enough details.

For **Section A**, candidates knew about early aspects of pre-Islamic Arabian life, particularly tribal systems. It would be useful to focus teaching on distinguishing differences between tribal, social and religious life at that time.

For **Section B**, candidates had good knowledge about the protection and danger the Prophet (pbuh) faced by the tribes.

For **Section C**, candidates tended to know the teachings of the passage or Hadith, though development of the second aspect of the question could be improved.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) This was the more popular question to answer. Most candidates provided information about the lifestyle of the Arabs at that time, mainly that they roamed the land, they raided caravans and offered services to people from the city. Weaker responses included social vices such as drinking and the bad treatment of women.
- (b) Most answers outlined some aspects of the city dwellers' lives, such as the Meccans making money from pilgrims, trading and selling idols, lending money, poetry and storytelling and poor treatment of women and slaves. What tended to be missing was the details of these points, e.g. the kind of charges levied on pilgrims, the places where traders came from and goods that were traded. There were a few answers that focused on the poor treatment of women and social vices or repeated points from **part (a)** in **part (b)**, and those were not successful.

- (c) This was generally well answered with candidates being able to give very good answers on both advantages and disadvantages, mainly about the ways in which things were shared and the loyalty the tribe had as well as the constant warfare and tribal feuds that would occur.

## Question 2

- (a) **Question 2** was the less popular choice in **Section A. Part (a)** was well answered with candidates being able to recount the story of Hajar and her son Ismail trying to find water in the desert with detail and accuracy.
- (b) Candidates seemed to have a good understanding of this question and were able to provide information on a number of aspects of religious life that were kept or adapted. Most of the information was brief and responses would have benefitted from more detail. Where the question was not well answered, the candidates focused on social vices of drinking and poor treatment of women and wrote about how this changed completely, rather than focusing on things that were kept and adapted.
- (c) This question was generally not well answered with candidates focusing on describing the rites of Hajj rather than offering evaluation on the extent to which the story of Ibrahim is the focus of the pilgrimage. Where it was answered well, candidates were able to say that the rites of Ibrahim are important for Hajj as they account for a number of key rites that need to be performed, but essentially Ibrahim is not the focus for Hajj as it is performed to fulfil the obligation of one of the pillars of Islam and to show submission to God.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) This was the more popular choice of question in **Section B** and there were some good answers to **part (a)**, with many candidates being able to briefly recount the story of the Prophet's speech on Mount Safa and the reaction of the people. There were a few answers that focused on the Prophet's persecution in general, rather than giving specific details of what happened at Safa.
- (b) Most candidates understood this question and discussed both aspects. However, very few candidates mentioned one of the main reasons the Prophet (pbuh) encountered opposition from the clans was because of his monotheistic preaching. Also, some did not mention how the message of Islam would negatively impact the tribal clan system.
- Many candidates started the answer well by writing ways that the clan system was a source of protection, but then went on to describe the persecutions rather than stating ways that the clan system was a source of danger for the Prophet (pbuh).
- (c) This question was well answered. Most candidates were able to mention several relevant lessons a Muslim could learn from Prophet's reaction to his preaching been rejected such as being patient and not retaliating, forgiving those who hurt you, and relying on God.

### Question 4

- (a) This was not a popular question and very few candidates mentioned the words used by the Prophet (pbuh) at the Farewell Sermon regarding the rights of women. There were a lot of general answers about treating women well, and some answers about how the Prophet (pbuh) changed the status of women from what it was like in pre-Islamic society.
- (b) Answers to this question tended to be very brief. Those that answered well knew these wives and wrote a couple of relevant points for each of them, and those points tended to be short and without elaboration. There were some candidates who mixed up the wives and wrote information about Khadija or other wives instead of Aisha or Hafsa. An area of improvement for this question would be to present more detailed information about the wives in question rather than brief points about them being wives of the Prophet (pbuh) that were kind and pious.
- (c) Most answered this question with general points about the status of women in Islam rather than focusing their answer on giving examples of what the Prophet (pbuh) taught about women and his own treatment of women. Examples could have been more specific, e.g. by detailing Qur'anic

verses that enjoin believing men and women to worship God, and therefore the Prophet (pbuh) ensuring he gave time to women to ask him questions about Islam, or the way the Prophet (pbuh) helped his wives in the home to be able to spend more time with them.

### Section C

#### Question 5

- (a) Candidates who answered this question were able to state the teachings of the passage, usually by taking one line at a time and explaining the meaning. This works well when answering this type of question as it means the answer can be quite focused on the teachings rather than giving an overall, general summary.

Stronger responses were able to explain the teachings and the context of Sura Kauthar. Only a few candidates wrote the second element of the question and mentioned the message of encouragement for the Prophet (pbuh) or Muslims in general. Had they given details about this, their answers would have improved.

Weaker responses mentioned the death of Abu Talib and Khadija, or the incident of Taif as being the reason the sura was revealed. Many were also unable to discuss what Kauthar represented or its meaning.

- (b) Most candidates understood the question and started off saying that the Qur'an can offer encouragement as it contains information to help Muslims. However, they tended not to be able to offer more detailed information about what the Qur'an says that would be encouraging for Muslims and so often the answers were quite general. Some candidates did not focus on the Qur'an and instead discussed other methods which can offer encouragement to Muslims.

#### Question 6

- (a) Candidates seemed to understand this Hadith well and were able to write about the teachings of the Hadith, with many focusing their answer on good character and making the right choices. The second aspect of the question, helping Muslims to make the right decisions, was not written about often. Where it was answered, candidates gave good responses about how a person's instincts can guide them to what is good for them and that knowing God sees what a person does will help them make the right choices.

- (b) Answers to this part varied quite a lot. Where it was understood and answered well, candidates discussed beliefs that Muslims share and those that differ. Generally, most thought that the beliefs that were shared were stronger and more important than the differences between Muslims. Similarities mentioned related to belief in one God, following the Prophet (pbuh) and observing the Five Pillars. Some of the differences mentioned related to gender, race and status, cultural differences or the differences between Sunni and Shi'a. Where it was not as well answered, candidates wrote very general responses about what Muslims believe or about Muslims being united.

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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**Paper 2068/22**  
**Paper 2 Development, Sources, Beliefs  
and Observances**

## Key messages

- The full range of responses was seen, from stronger to weaker answers.
- Overall, candidates appeared to use less detail in their AO1 knowledge responses. By contrast, AO2 responses were better than previously, showing good handling of analysis and evaluation.
- Candidates could improve their longer AO1 responses with more detail, and the occasional relevant quotation from the Qur'an or Hadith.
- It is important to check the wording of questions exactly and respond to them, rather than write about the topic in general, which risks not addressing the question.

## General comments

For **Section A**, candidates had some knowledge of Abu Bakr's consultation and the significance of 'Umar, but generally, knowledge in these areas needs to be more detailed.

For **Section B**, knowledge was strong, but candidates are reminded to focus on the specific demands of the question. This particularly applies to Musa (AS), where the question asked for his escape, not the whole story of his life.

For **Section C**, a little more depth could be given to **part (b)** questions (AO2). These have additional marks (8 marks) and therefore, more is expected than for the 6-mark questions in **Sections A** and **B**. Candidates could improve their knowledge of the functions or purposes of prophets, such as warners, messengers, examples, leaders and so on, learning examples of each point.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) This was a fairly popular and well answered question. Almost all candidates were able to name the false prophets, including: Aswad al-Ansi, Tulayha, Musaylima, Sajjah and Ibn al-Sayyad. Also accepted were Musaylima's wife and the veiled prophet. A very small number of candidates mistook the question and wrote about four prophets, not false prophets. This emphasises the importance of reading the question carefully.
- (b) Candidates wrote about Abu Bakr's actions against the false prophets and those who refused to pay Zakat, thereby protecting the Muslim community from false teachings and ensuring they had the freedom to practice Islam. This also provided security to those who were poor and in need of receiving Zakat, giving them freedom to lead their lives. A few candidates mentioned Abu Bakr's military achievements, providing security by extending control in Syria and surrounding areas. Protection of minorities, such as priests and those of other faiths, was also mentioned. Most candidates combined the two areas and wrote how Abu Bakr helped both, but some very strong responses included two clear paragraphs: one on security and a second on freedom. This was a clear and successful way of demonstrating detailed knowledge for this question.



- (c) Most candidates knew that Abu Bakr used consultation and could refer to the Majlis Shura, which he increased in number. Fewer related the importance of this to today, and those who did stressed the importance of listening to the needs of the people and allowing people freedom of speech. Comments were made about parts of the world where many Muslims feel they do not enjoy the freedom to speak their mind and that Abu Bakr's use of consultation would be a good example for today's leaders to follow.

### Question 2

- (a) Most candidates responded well, although a few seemed to confuse this with the start of 'Umar's Caliphate, after Abu Bakr died, which was not relevant. Good responses mentioned that 'Umar refused the role for himself; that he told others of Abu Bakr's importance in the cave; he convinced others; he raised Abu Bakr's hand and he gave an oath of allegiance.
- (b) Most candidates wrote about what 'Umar did in his reign, but the best responses specifically addressed the word 'reforms' by explaining how the things 'Umar did which made the working of the Caliphate and the lives of people better. Good points made were the reform of introducing the Hijri calendar; reforms to infrastructure such as roads which helped pilgrims; expansion of religious facilities and so on. This was a popular and well-answered question, though responses could be improved by adding a little more depth, giving specific examples of things 'Umar changed or introduced.
- (c) Most candidates wrote about why 'Umar was a good Caliph, which was partly relevant but not as specific as it could be. The best responses analysed 'Umar's contribution within the history of Islam. To say that 'Umar was a strong, religious figure shows his greatness but not why he was important for Islam in its history overall. Better answers added comments about how this inspired Muslims who followed to carry on the traditions of humility; helped people to adhere to the traditions of prayer and tarawih, and 'Umar's use of the Dhimmī contract secured relations with Christians and Jews for the coming years. All of these additional comments helped to show evidence of analysis of his contribution.

### Question 3

- (a) This was very well answered with most candidates mentioning Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali. Zayd bin Thabit was also acceptable. It was sufficient just to write the names on one line to be awarded four marks. A small number of candidates appeared to have misunderstood scribes and wrote chapter names from the Qur'an, which did not gain any marks.
- (b) Few candidates chose **Question 3**, but those who did generally performed well. Various ways were identified, ranging from use in worship in the five daily prayers, to learning about the prophets and teachings of Islam, to gaining key guidance for Islamic law, Shariah, on matters like food being halal and not drinking alcohol. Strong responses included a range of different ways and were illustrated with the occasion quotation, particularly appropriate when considering the Qur'an. Few candidates used quotations in this or other questions, and could do more to learn and include a few short ones as supporting detail for these **part (b)** questions.
- (c) This question was well answered. Candidates identified ways such as reciting the Qur'an with a beautiful voice and decorating the walls of mosques with calligraphy. The strongest responses gave reasons why the chosen ways helped to bring out the beauty of the Qur'an. Weaker responses did not identify two ways and wrote about ways in general; or just wrote about why the Qur'an was good without focusing on the beauty of the Qur'an.

### Question 4

- (a) This was very well answered, with many candidates gaining three or four marks. Candidates mentioned that Musa (AS) was put in a basket; in the Nile; that Musa's mother sent her daughter to follow, and his mother became wet nurse at the palace. As only four marks are available, it was not necessary to give lengthy accounts.



- (b) This was a very popular question and well answered by many. Note that the question has a clear time frame: Musa (AS) and the leadership of his people to escape from Egypt. Many candidates wrote about the background to Musa's life and other stories about his life in the palace, but these were not relevant here. This is a reminder for candidates to check the wording of the question carefully and answer it specifically. The best responses focused on this and gave details, adding a quote or supporting detail.
- (c) This was very well answered by most candidates, who showed evidence of analytical reasoning ideal for addressing AO2. Candidates identified points of similarity: both received messages from God; both were persecuted; both preached the message of one God and rejected idols. Despite trials and difficulties, both remained steadfast and never gave up. Some insightful comments were made about both facing most of their childhoods without their mothers, and both showing compassion to those in need. Some candidates chose two points to explain in detail and others identified more points and mentioned them briefly; both were ways of successfully answering this question.

#### Question 5

- (a) Few candidates answered this question, and it was not a popular choice. Of those who did, the full range of marks was given. A few achieved well and mentioned that prophets were warners, warning people against idolatry; messengers, delivering holy books; examples of good character, giving models to follow; preachers, political leaders and freedom fighters. The strongest answers gave specific examples, often from the life of Musa (AS) and Muhammad (pbuh). Some candidates did not seem to know the meaning of function and thought it meant a social event, which was not relevant to this question.
- (b) The point of this was to specifically address Muslims today, and given reasons, to satisfy the assessment objective for AO2. Many candidates gave further knowledge about the prophets and did not add any comments about Muslims today. Furthermore, the question asked candidates to choose two functions; it was therefore essential that two were clearly chosen and stated in answers in order to achieve a good response. Few candidates did that and most wrote in general about prophets. This highlights the importance of reading the question carefully and responding specifically to what is asked.

#### Question 6

- (a) This was the most popular question on the paper and very well answered. Some candidates achieved full marks, showing evidence of outstanding, detailed answers. The best responses mentioned a broad range of practices, including the rules for fasting, iftar meals, tarawih prayers, Night of Power and its significance with night du'a prayers; Itikaaf retreat for some; the test of faith against temptation and helping the needy. Those who named practices (such as iftar and tarawih) specifically showed evidence of detailed knowledge; some even gave quotations such as the du'a for opening a fast and the intention for beginning to fast, showing excellent handling of this topic.
- (b) This was quite well answered with most agreeing with the statement. There were some insightful comments, with some saying that it was a particularly hard temptation when living in modern, multifaith communities with others eating around, yet greater reward could come from demonstrating the beauty of Islam to others around in these circumstances. Another perspective was that Muslims do not choose their circumstances and only God allocates the reward, which cannot be known yet. Some candidates gave short answers and should be reminded that there are additional marks for this AO2 question compared to **Sections A** and **B** – here there are 8 marks and a more extended answer is expected, not another of the same length.

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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**Paper 2068/23**  
**Paper 2 Development, Sources, Beliefs  
and Observances**

## Key messages

- Responses were very strong this series and many candidates provided excellent answers.
- The level of evaluation (AO2) was generally very strong and to the point, specifically addressing the demands of the question and responding to each word or the key important words in the questions, showing confident handling of discussion.
- All questions were chosen, showing balanced coverage of the syllabus overall. A little more attention might be paid to angels and categories of prophet.
- Candidates should be reminded that they need to extend their answers in a little more depth in **Section C**, as is it reflected by the marks for this section.

## General comments

Candidates are reminded that **Section C** has a different structure and that the available marks reflect this. For example, **Questions 5 (b)** and **6 (b)** have 8 marks for AO2, instead of 6 marks in the previous sections for the AO2 questions. It is therefore expected that candidates develop their evaluation further and write a bit more for these questions – many could improve on this.

For knowledge and understanding (AO1) questions, the best responses were the most detailed. Many candidates could improve their responses by adding more specific details, and possibly add the occasional quote from the Qur'an or Hadith, which would help provide evidence of detailed knowledge. The two categories of prophet and examples of each, as well as specific names and duties of angels could be studied more in depth by candidates.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) This was reasonably well answered by most candidates, who were able to articulate that Abu Bakr calmed the people, convinced them Muhammad (pbuh) was dead, discussed what to do with the Ansar and companions and accepted the position of Caliph despite initial reluctance. Other relevant points were accepted. The time frame for this question was specifically when the Prophet (pbuh) had died, so lengthy preambles were not credited. Also, details about Abu Bakr's Caliphate itself were not relevant; some candidates gave them unnecessarily.
- (b) The strongest answers mentioned specific details about other states, such as areas where Abu Bakr send commander Usamah to conquer. For example, in 633CE/11AH he sent raiding forces to capture towns in Iraq and Palestine. Many answers mentioned Abu Bakr's approach in general: his efforts to expand Islam by sending information; his treatment of non-Muslims from other states well by giving them rights and protecting women and children in battle. Candidates made fair attempts at this question, but some could improve by giving more specific detail.
- (c) Satisfactory answers tended to write that it was a good period and that the Caliphs were good. Good answers went further and brought out the importance of the word model: that the Caliphs knew Muhammad (pbuh) and his Sunnah better than anyone else since and followed his ways, hence providing a model for later Muslims. Some mentioned the Hijri calendar and Tarawih Ramadan prayers as specific examples of the model set during this period. Each word in the

question is there for a reason, so the word 'model' was an important one which candidates needed to respond to in order to achieve a good mark for this question.

### Question 2

- (a) This was very well answered. Candidates knew the circumstances which were in the mosque in Medina; they usually cited the name of the assassin, Abu Lulu'ah, and that 'Umar was leading Fajr prayers at the time. That gave three clear points, clearly three marks without any need to elaborate further. Any fourth point could be added and most wrote that it was a few days before 'Umar finally died.
- (b) Note that the question has moved on from 'Umar's death in **part (a)**, to 'Uthman's caliphate. A few candidates wrote about 'Umar's caliphate, which was not relevant. Most candidates mentioned 'Uthman's efforts to produce a standardised Qur'an, addressing the problem of different recitations. The strongest answers mentioned this and other factors, such as 'Uthman's initial problems in keeping the empire together and addressing rebellions. He solved these partly by setting up a navy, which enabled him to further expand Islam into North Africa.
- (c) Many answers mentioned one factor and gave some reasons why that was important. Weaker responses did not differentiate one and gave several. The strongest responses identified a factor and suggested reasons why that factor was most significant, i.e., 'Uthman's 'greatest achievement'. The word 'greatest' stimulated candidates to make comparative comments in order to achieve the highest level of response for AO2.

### Question 3

- (a) This was well answered. Candidates mentioned wood or tree trunks or bark, any of which was credited with one mark. Parchments, stones, bones and leathers were also accepted. Some wrote that the Qur'an was written on mosque walls as decoration, but this refers to later periods when it was used for calligraphy, and not during the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh).
- (b) This was a popular and well answered question. The strongest responses gave details including the two main phases of work, first when Abu Bakr asked Zayd to start the collection and secondly under 'Uthman. Under Abu Bakr, Zayd verified the memories of companions and stood with 'Umar at the mosque door in search of witnesses. To give a detailed response, candidates needed to explain this precisely, giving examples where possible.
- (c) Marks here were given for how well candidates could justify their answers; it did not matter which stage they chose provided they could justify that. Most gave good responses, commenting that if the verses were not verified in the stage under Abu Bakr, then there might have been a question mark in future. Others commented that 'Uthman's stage was most important because it ensured unity by everyone reading the same Qur'an to this day.

### Question 4

- (a) One mark was given for the category of messenger or prophet who received a book, usually called a rasul. A second mark was given for an example: Muhammad (pbuh), Isa (AS), Musa (AS) Ibrahim (AS) or Dawud (AS). One mark was given for a prophet bringing guidance, usually called a nabiyy, and a second mark for an example, which could be any other prophet, such as Adam (AS), Yusuf (AS), Idris (AS), Nuh/Noah (AS), Lut (Lot) or Ismail (AS). Only these established categories were awarded marks; however, if a candidate did not identify the categories correctly but did give a correct example for each, they were awarded two marks.
- (b) Popular choices included Musa (AS) and Muhammad (pbuh). The point of the question was to focus on the warnings, which the strongest answers did. Weaker responses wrote about the teachings and lives of the chosen two prophets in general. Musa (AS) warned the Egyptians, led by Pharaoh, of their immorality with his preaching and encounter with the magicians. Muhammad (pbuh) warned the idol worshippers of Mecca to turn away from false statues and worship the one, unseen God. He warned them that failure to do so could result in eternal life in hell after judgement.
- (c) The best answers were specific about how these lessons might be applied today. Good examples included turning away from idolising fast cars or expensive fashion brands, which could easily take over the attention of a Muslim more than their prayers. The lesson was to focus on a daily routine

of worship by heeding the prophet's many messages of judgement, and to turn away from such false hopes.

#### Question 5

- (a) Not many candidates chose **Question 5**. Some gave general answers; others developed these further by elaborating on this and giving details of the names and duties of some angels. Many mentioned that angels were made of light and had no free will of their own; they mentioned they were huge and had wings but also could appear in human form. The strongest responses named several angels, perhaps three or more, and gave details of their duties. Most referred to Jibril who delivered the Qur'an; Israfil who blows the trumpet (or horn) to announce the coming of Judgment Day and Mikail who spreads mercy to people in the world, delivering rain to make the crops grow. Responses able to name angels and give the occasional quotation, such as what Jibril said on the Night of Power to Muhammad (pbuh), provided more evidence of knowledge of the nature and duties of angels and so were able to access a higher level of response.
- (b) Most candidates referred to the recording angels who record a person's good and bad deeds to report on them to God at Judgment. When thinking of what to do in daily life, Muslims may think that these angels are looking on from over their shoulders. This reminder helps guide behaviour. Thoughts about Jibril and revelation also apply in Ramadan when reading the Qur'an. Any relevant comments such as these were credited, provided they were specifically applied to the lives of Muslims today, rather than general comments.

#### Question 6

- (a) This was the most popular question in **Section C**. All candidates knew what these were and were able to describe them. Some wrote a paragraph on each, providing a satisfactory response. However, the question asked candidates to describe the links between the two, so for a good or very good response, these needed to be brought out. Tawhid is the first article of faith, the belief in one God without partners. The Shahada is the first Pillar of Islam, to witness that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad (pbuh) is the Messenger of Allah, on conversion to Islam or when welcoming a birth, before death and daily during prayers. Taken together, the Shahadah helps to strengthen a remind a Muslim of their core beliefs and develop a sense of God-consciousness (taqwah) throughout the day.
- (b) This was fairly well answered, with candidates mentioning that the declaration was an act of proving inner belief to witnesses. It also helped to welcome a new Muslim to a community and therefore gain support. The question was about the significance of the declaration and was not asking for a description of the act of saying the Shahadah. That would be AO1 knowledge, whereas this part is marked according to AO2 evaluation. Some candidates were running out of time at this point so wrote short answers, which could have been extended to gain a higher mark.