

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/01

Paper 1

General comments

Candidates seemed well prepared for this examination. Most candidates showed 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.

Candidates should read the question paper carefully to ensure they know what is being asked of them and they should plan their answer to correspond to the question being asked, and not a general topic. We are aware that there are some people guessing questions that they think will appear in the exam and posting their predictions on the Internet. Teachers and candidates should be made aware that they cannot rely on this, as was the case this session, as the proposed questions appearing on the Internet did not appear in this paper. If teachers, and in particular candidates, rely on these predictions and therefore do not learn the whole syllabus, they are disadvantaging themselves.

Candidates seemed to know the topics that came up in the questions but a lack of detail in the answers meant that many candidates did not go up to the higher levels. Candidates need to be as specific and detailed as possible in their answers if they want to reach the highest level.

In **Question 1**, if other passages are being referenced, candidates should not merely give the name/number of the passage, but say how/why it is related to the passage they have chosen to answer from the paper.

If candidates are quoting Qur'anic passages they should ensure that they are relevant to the question.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

For part **(a)** the main themes of the passages should be brought out, e.g. God's power over all things, or His mercy and forgiveness. In part **(b)**, candidates should talk about particular ideas or words from the passage in question that bring out or represent these themes, e.g. in sura 1 God giving these miracles to Jesus shows His power.

(a) For part **(a)** good answers would have been able to pick out key themes from two passages. For passage 1, good answers talked about God's power to do everything and that He gave the prophets various miracles to help them. There were a large number of candidates who only gave a description of the miracles given to Jesus, and there was a lot of paraphrasing of the translation already given.

For passage 2, good answers talked about God being one by showing the Prophet Abraham His signs in the sun and the moon. They mentioned that Abraham was looking for His Lord and realised that the things in creation were not to be worshipped. Candidates who chose this passage tended to answer it well.

For passage 3, again good answers recognised that God helps His prophets when they are in need. They were also able to mention that God gave the Prophet Muhammad reassurance through this revelation. There were some candidates who, in part **(a)**, confused this passage with sura Kauthar and they seemed to be describing that sura instead of the one on the paper. There was also a lot of paraphrasing in many of the answers.

Most candidates gave general answers to the two passages they had chosen, and a few managed to bring out a variety of themes which gained higher marks.

- (b) Here, good answers would have been able to say how these themes are presented in these suras.

For passage 1, good answers talked about the relationship between God and how He helps prophets. In this passage Jesus is being talked about, and some candidates mentioned that the phrase “by my leave” shows that God is the one who has the power to give these miracles to the Prophets, and that the miracles given were to help Jesus in His mission. Some candidates tried to link this passage with other passages from the Qur’an, and whilst some of them gave relevant quotations and said why these other passages were relevant, there were more candidates who gave a reference number for another sura without saying what it was or giving any explanation of it.

Many candidates simply repeated what they had written in part (a).

For passage 2, good answers talked about how God showed Abraham His signs through the sun and moon, which He created. The fact that, in this sura, these created things kept setting allowed Abraham to strengthen His belief in God being one and not ascribing partners to Him. Excellent answers said that this allows Muslims to see how God is the only one to be worshipped and they gave references to other relevant suras.

For passage 3, good answers talked about God mentioning the things that He gave to the Prophet Muhammad to show how He had helped him, e.g. He made him independent by marrying him to Khadija. Excellent answers said that because of God’s help the Prophet is told to treat people well, which is something Muslims should follow in their daily lives and they will also be helped. Again the better answers referenced related suras which also showed how God had helped the Prophet.

Some candidates were able to answer this part of the question really well, with thoughtful and insightful answers. It is important not to repeat what is written in part (a), or write about other suras without showing how they are linked.

Question 2

- (a) Candidates were able to talk about the place of the Qur’an in Islamic legal thinking and that the Sunna of the Prophet expands on the basic ideas presented in the Qur’an. Good answers moved beyond the basic points about the Hadith explaining the Qur’an in context. Higher level answers also illustrated their answer with examples of the practical application of these two primary sources. There were some very good/excellent answers with clear, detailed examples which showed substantial understanding of how the process works. Some of the examples used were *salat*, *zakat* and *riba*.

Some candidates were able to make points about how the Qur’an and Hadith do not contradict each other, but rather are complementary to one another, which is why they are used together as primary sources. Also, a few candidates mentioned the place of the Sunna being important as it is the model of the final messenger.

The majority of answers gave general comments on the Qur’an being the main source and the Sunna expanding on what the Qur’an mentions in brief, e.g. the Qur’an tells Muslims to pray but the Prophet showed them how to pray. There tended to be a lot of repetition of this point.

A significant number of candidates went on to discuss the importance of *ijma* and *qiyas* in Islamic legal thinking, which was not required in this question, or they only wrote about *ijma* and *qiyas* in their answer.

- (b) This part was generally answered well, with most candidates being able to give a concrete example of how *qiyas* is used in a new situation. Examples given were of narcotics/new types of drugs, the permissibility of wearing nail varnish when making *wudu*, and the ruling on different types of transactions during Friday prayers.

It was important to give an example as to the usage of *qiyas* rather than an explanation of *qiyas*.

Question 3

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

- (a) Overall this part was answered well, with most candidates writing about the difficulties faced by the Prophet once he was given the order to preach openly. Excellent answers provided a clear and detailed narrative of the key events, the main people involved in the persecution as well as giving relevant quotations.

As well as showing that they had knowledge of the topic (mentioning a lot of the key events relating to the persecution of the Prophet, e.g. the events at Ta'if, the mocking and boycott) candidates needed to give details of what happened and mention specific names of those involved.

The persecution inflicted upon the companions of the Prophet was not required for this question. There were a few candidates who seemed to have memorised a completely different answer, usually about the wars the Prophet took part in, and simply narrated that without checking what the actual question was asking.

- (b) Answers for this part were too general. Many candidates were able to pick out the Prophet's conduct, e.g. his forgiveness. This then needed to be linked with Muslims today. General statements such as the Prophet showed forgiveness and so Muslims today should also needed more detail. The best answers showed a mature reflection on behaviour and attitude to events today rather than just a general comment about behaviour, e.g. linking the Prophet's patience or forgiveness to the situation in Kashmir.

Question 4

- (a) This was generally well answered, and again good answers were able to give a detailed narrative about the main contributions to Islam from Abu Bakr's life.

Most candidates who attempted this question showed that they had knowledge about the life of Abu Bakr and the role he played in the development of Islam. Many candidates wrote e.g. that Abu Bakr was the Prophet's childhood friend, he was amongst the first to accept Islam, he believed the Prophet when he said he went on the night journey, and he supported the treaty of Hudaibiyah. These are all relevant points, however candidates who elaborated on these points, e.g. that he accepted Islam without hesitation giving the quote from the Prophet related to this would have gained higher marks.

- (b) This part was answered well on the whole. Good answers said that Abu Bakr's contributions and loyalty to the Prophet played an important role in keeping the Muslims together during the life of the Prophet, and that it was his closeness to the Prophet that led to him becoming Caliph and ultimately getting the title "Saviour of Islam."

There were many answers that wrote generally about Abu Bakr's contributions, but most were able to offer some evaluation of his role.

Question 5

- (a) Where chosen, this question was answered reasonably well.

Excellent answers gave some brief background information about the threat posed to the Prophet by the Quraysh, and then gave details about him leaving with Abu Bakr, their stay in the cave and what happened when the Quraysh pursued them, their stay in Quba and their reception in Madina, as well as naming the key figures involved and giving some relevant quotations.

Many candidates were able to write about these events, but with fewer details about what happened or who was involved.

There were a few candidates who wrote about the migration to Abyssinia, and some who focused their answer on what happened after the Prophet arrived in Madina.

- (b) This part of the question was well answered with many candidates being able to show some insight into why it was important for the Muslim community to migrate.

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Paper 2

General Comments

The general response in this session was much improved. On the whole the paper was well attempted by the candidates and for the first time since the levels marking has been introduced some candidates managed to get full marks for **Question 1** as their answers were accurate and well developed. From the 3 optional questions, **Question 5** was the least popular with the candidates and those who attempted it did well.

It should be emphasised to the candidates that relevant detail and development combined with accuracy are vital for good answers.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

In this compulsory question the majority of the candidates did well. Part **(a)** was answered better than part **(b)**. In part **(b)** candidates should avoid repeating the teaching given in part **(a)** rather the focus should be on what the question is asking, which is: how can Muslims put the teachings of the Hadith into action.

For Hadith **(i)** it was important to understand the analogy of the camel. Candidates gave a good response to Hadith **(ii)** especially in part **(b)** with their examples. Hadith **(iii)** was the least popular and proved challenging to respond to. Candidates could be advised to back up their explanation of the teachings by giving quotes to support their answer e.g. 'If the debtor is in difficulty, grant him time till it is easy for him to repay'. For part **(b)** of this Hadith they could give examples of Hadiths dealing with rules of trade in Islam. Hadith **(iv)** again brought out a good response from the candidates.

Question 2

The quality of answers varied. In part **(a)** some gave a good response stating how the Hadiths of the Prophet explain the teachings of the Qur'an and guide Muslims in following the pillars of Islam and went on to give Hadiths to support their answer. They went on to give further examples of Hadiths that helped Muslims in all aspects of their lives. It was important for candidates to give answers about more than one area of life and how the Sunna is used as a guide.

Candidates did well for part **(b)**. The majority of the candidates knew what made Hadith Qudsi special. The question did not require an explanation of the Hadith in the question.

Question 3

This question proved very popular with candidates. Candidates needed to include details about all the observances not just certain things, for example some gave too much detail on what happened to those who broke the fast. Candidates could include, for example when and how the fast ended, what did Muslims open their fast with. It could have been added that the Prophet broke the fast with dates (if available). Detail and development help to improve answers.

Part **(b)** was done well by the candidates. There were candidates who after discussing empathy with the poor, went on to describe the spiritual benefits of the Ramadan fast.

Question 4

This was also a very popular question and was attempted by the majority. Candidates' knowledge was good, as was their understanding of this Muslim belief. Better answers looked at belief in revealed books in general rather than writing specifically about the Qur'an. Also, better answers were able to match books with the prophets.

In part (b) most candidates wrote about Jibra'il being important because of his task of bringing revelations to Prophet Muhammad, there were answers which also listed the jobs done by other prominent angels. To improve answers reference to the other tasks that Jibra'il performed, for example escorting Prophet Muhammad to *mi'raj*, also his announcement to Hazrat Maryam could have been mentioned.

Question 5

This was a question in which the well prepared candidates showed their knowledge. Events, names of key figures, battles fought, dates, names of commanding officers, aftermath of the battles, and result were all aspects that needed to be given in good answers and some candidates wrote very good responses. It was important not to get the events of the two battles mixed up.

In part (b) candidates needed to evaluate the feelings of Mu'awiya in relation to the events to produce good answers.