

ISLAMIC STUDIES

Paper 8053/11

Paper 1

General Comments

The overall standard of performance for this paper remains high. Most candidates appeared well prepared for the examination and there were a number of excellent scripts from a range of Centres. Many candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the subject. **Questions 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10** remained the most popular and were answered satisfactorily. **Questions 5, 6 and 11** were less popular and less well answered. Very few candidates attempted **Question 2** and **9**. **Question 12** did not attract many responses. It is important that candidates pay attention to examination techniques such as reading questions carefully and developing answers as required.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

Overall this question was very well answered. Part **(a)** was particularly well answered.

- (a)** This question was generally well answered, with many candidates demonstrating their familiarity with the beliefs and practices of the people of pre-Islamic Arabia. The better candidates were able to identify differences between beliefs and practices and these were well described. Weaker answers often lacked sound knowledge and tended towards generalised statements.
- (b)** Part **(b)** was generally well answered with the majority of candidates explaining main criticism of these beliefs practices. However, some candidates merely repeated the answer from part **(a)**.

Question 2

This was the least popular question this year but was generally done well by those who attempted it.

Question 3

- (a)** Strong responses acknowledged the specific requirements of this question and gave a detailed explanation of the causes of unrest among the Egyptians and also traced an out line of the events that resulted from this. Weak responses did not show enough knowledge of precise historical events and generalised on the life of caliph 'Uthman.
- (b)** The majority of candidates possessed a sound knowledge of the factors which led to the battle of Siffin. A high proportion of candidates wrote relevant, well-balanced answers, giving approximately equal attention to both 'Ali and Mu'awiyah. Weaker responses tended to be more descriptive and lacked specific details.

Section B

Question 4

- (a)** Candidates were required to give a detailed account of the steps taken to make a collection of the Qur'an under the caliph 'Uthman. The majority of the candidates possessed sound knowledge of the factors which led to the development. Some candidates' responses did not focus on the question. Such candidates based their entire response on the period of Caliph Abu Bakr. To gain high marks candidates needed an answer which was explicitly linked to 'Uthman.

- (b) This was generally well answered. However, some candidates gave brief answers and there was some repetition of points from part (a).

Question 5

This question was not popular as very few candidates attempted it.

Question 6

The relatively small number of candidates who chose this question answered it well and displayed a wide range of knowledge about the importance of the Qur'an in Islam. They provided a range of evaluation statements and most were able to link these statements to the question.

Section C

Question 7

This question was very popular and many of the candidates who attempted it did well. There were some outstanding quality responses to this question. Most candidates were able to provide a complete list of the principle rites in connection with the institution of the pilgrimage as observed by the Muslims and offered the clear explanation of the link between Prophet Abraham and *Hajj*. Some candidates did not read the question carefully and concentrated only upon the ceremony of sacrifice, more focus on the question could have resulted in higher levels.

Question 8

This question was quite popular and was done well by a large number of candidates.

- (a) Candidates were asked to identify the distinctive features of the Friday communal prayers that are not shared by prayers at other times. The majority of candidates were able to identify these unique features as well as compare them with other prayers. A number of candidates gave only a partial answer to this question by describing these features without any comparison and as a result levels were limited.
- (b) This question was generally well answered. However, some responses were either too brief or the explanation was confused.

Question 9

Very few attempted this question.

Section D

Question 10

This was the most popular question in this section and many of the candidates who attempted it did well. The majority of candidates showed a good knowledge and understanding of Islamic law.

Question 11

The main purpose of this question was to encourage candidates to give specific examples of Hadiths and explain how individual Muslims put the Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah into practice today. Most candidates outlined their knowledge and understanding of Hadith as a primary source of Islamic law and wrote at length, leading to unfocused answers. The better answers to this question displayed a very sound knowledge and understanding of the Hadith and Sunnah and were able to provide detailed examples as illustration.

Question 12

This question was not a popular choice, but several candidates who answered it were knowledgeable on Islamic law and gave detailed accounts of *qiyas*, providing examples to illustrate their answers. Some responses needed more knowledge of the topic, they were superficial, lacking supporting examples.

ISLAMIC STUDIES

Paper 8053/12

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Section B

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