

# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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<p><b>Paper 2068/12</b> <b>Paper 1 History and Scriptures</b></p>
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## Key messages

- It is important that candidates read each question carefully before attempting it.
- It is advised that candidates familiarise themselves with the assessment objectives and the different skills needed to answer the various parts of a question.
- While there was some good knowledge of the content of the different topics for **Sections A** and **B**, some candidates' understanding of these topics could be improved.
- Many candidates were aware of the requirements for the **part (c)** questions and provided some good evaluative responses.

## General comments

Overall, candidates made a good attempt to answer the questions they selected. Most candidates were conscientious in their reading of the question and understood what was required. There were some candidates who had some knowledge of the topics but appeared to have difficulty understanding how to select and organise the correct material to answer the question.

Some candidates, particularly in **Section C**, paraphrased or repeated the teachings in the Qur'an and Hadith instead of explaining them.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Candidates could improve by adding more details about the contribution poetry made to the cultural life of the Arabs. Many answers were repetitive on the same point of poetry being used to celebrate the deeds of ancestors.
- (b) There were good responses to this question with candidates demonstrating good knowledge and understanding of the importance of both trade and pilgrimage to the economic, social and religious life of Mecca during the pre-Islamic period.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question well and with enthusiasm to demonstrate that they were aware that rich and noble people became Muslim as well as the poor and slaves. Details about the early Muslims were used effectively as evidence to support well balanced arguments.

#### **Question 2**

- (a) A fair number of candidates achieved full marks on this question about the role played by Abd al Muttalib in the life of Muhammad (pbuh). A minority of weaker answers seemed to have confused the Prophet's grandfather with his uncle Abu Talib.

- (b) Good answers to this question attempted to show how different events in the childhood and early life of the Prophet (pbuh) indicated that he was chosen by God. A few candidates gave a comprehensive account to gain level 4 marks. Weaker responses described a variety of miracles reported at his birth but omitted more significant events in his early childhood and as a youth.
- (c) Most answers offered a perceptive discussion of the contribution made by Waraqa bin Nawfal in confirming that the Prophet (pbuh) was called by God. The best answers assessed that the Christian monk's credentials made him a reliable authority.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) Some candidates gave four correct pieces of information about Fatima. The majority gained 2 marks and there were some who attempted **Question 3** but did not answer this **part (a)**.
- (b) To gain the higher level of marks on this question, candidates needed to both explain the term 'Seal of the Prophets' and show understanding of what this means for Muslims. Those who addressed both gained level 4 at 8 marks and above. Good answers at level 3 explained why Muhammad (pbuh) was described as 'Seal of the Prophets' but were less comprehensive. There were only a few weaker answers.
- (c) Generally, there were some good answers to this question and some responses were well-balanced arguments about both the advantages and disadvantages of using the internet as a source of information about Islam.

### Question 4

- (a) On the whole, this was answered well with the majority gaining full credit for a description of how Muhammad (pbuh) delivered his message at Safa.
- (b) In this question, the amount of detail and accuracy in responses discriminated between the good and satisfactory answers. Most satisfactory responses had some accurate detail but were usually brief with significant omissions. Good responses covered most of the main events of the Mi'raj but needed more accurate development to gain the higher level of marks.
- (c) Most answers evaluated the effect on the Prophet (pbuh) of what he had experienced on the Mi'raj and his wish to ensure his followers achieved paradise. Better answers also mentioned the honour bestowed on the Prophet (pbuh) by Allah in allowing Muhammad (pbuh) to make the journey as a sign of encouragement.

## Section C

### Question 5

- (a) There was a mixed response to this question. Most candidates were confident in their explanation of why the Sura was revealed, but a large number of responses paraphrased or repeated the contents of the Sura rather than explaining the teachings. Therefore, some answers were undeveloped and limited. Better answers covered both parts of the question more conscientiously and gained the higher marks in level 3.
- (b) Overall, the performance on this question was satisfactory. Candidates engaged with the issue of why people might suffer and there were some thoughtful, discursive answers that showed good understanding of the demands of the question and gained the higher marks. Some good answers were too brief to take advantage of the 8 marks available and were limited to level 2.

### Question 6

- (a) Candidates who conscientiously addressed both parts of the question and explained the teaching in the Hadith and gave two developed examples were able to gain the higher levels. The majority of answers were limited and undeveloped with examples that were mere statements.

- (b) In answer to this question most candidates gave reasons why making the right decisions in life might be difficult and argued that the best way to overcome the difficulty was to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah. The majority did this well and engaged with the issue and considered alternative viewpoints. There were a few brief, weaker answers.



# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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<p><b>Paper 2068/13</b> <b>Paper 1 History and Scriptures</b></p>
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## Key messages

- It is advised that candidates familiarise themselves with the assessment objectives and the different skills needed to answer the various parts of a question.
- Candidates could improve their in-depth knowledge of some of the topics.
- To improve attainment on **part (b)** questions, candidates are encouraged to read through their answers to check that they have included all the relevant details and development.
- Many candidates were aware of the requirements for the **part (c)** questions and provided some good evaluative responses.

## General comments

Overall, the performance this year was good. Weaker responses were a result of candidates appearing to not fully understand the demands of the question, or they were brief because of lack of knowledge or understanding of a chosen topic.

In **Sections A** and **B**, **part (a)** questions gave most candidates an accessible entry to the question and to scoring marks, and in **parts (b)** and **(c)** a significant number of candidates gained the higher levels.

Overall, in **Section C**, the responses to **part (a)** questions showed good understanding of what was required, but in order to achieve full marks, answers needed a full explanation of the teaching and some developed examples of how the teaching might be applied. Some of the weaker answers were brief or were overlong paraphrases of the text without any explanation of the teaching. Generally, **part (b)** questions in this section were well answered.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Many very good answers gained full marks.
- (b) The majority of the responses kept to the focus of the question and outlined the important role played by Shayks in the Arab tribal system. There were only few weaker answers.
- (c) The best answers gave a balance of a number of different views as to why Islam might appeal to the Arab character and also assessed why some might have been opposed to it. In weaker answers there was evidence that candidates had not properly understood the question and addressed which aspects of Arab religions were retained in Islam.

## Question 2

- (a) This was well answered. Many responses had details that went beyond the scope of the question, which was not necessary for this 4-mark question.
- (b) A common error in the reading of this question was that candidates seemed to have missed the fact that the question asked for **two** examples. Many responses contained three or four examples briefly described and so the opportunity to give full details of **two** was missed. Most answers gained lower level 3 marks.
- (c) Most answers showed good awareness of the difficulties experienced by Muhammad (pbuh) because he was made an orphan by the early death of his parents and how this translated into his teaching and care for orphans in his later life. Some also evaluated how this might be interpreted as teachings for Muslims today. Overall, responses were perceptive and thoughtful.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) There were some good, full mark answers, showing appreciation of how Khadijah supported Muhammad (pbuh).
- (b) Generally, answers were good. Few had an accurate enough range and depth to gain level 4. A common mistake was to include in the answer a lot of details of the persecutions by the people of Taif and to omit more pertinent information about the persecutions carried out by the Quraish in Mecca up to and including the time of the boycott.
- (c) This was well answered.

### Question 4

- (a) Responses about what happened in Medina when the Prophet (pbuh) became ill and died were often erroneously about other events in the last year of the Prophet's life such as the Hajj and the Last Sermon. Only a few candidates showed knowledge of what happened when the Prophet (pbuh) returned to Mecca from the Hajj and became ill and died.
- (b) Most candidates were knowledgeable about the Prophet's teachings in the Farewell Sermon and addressed this question confidently. The amount of detail and accuracy included in the accounts discriminated between those who gained levels 3 and 4. There were also some satisfactory accounts which did not gain above level 2 because they were less detailed and inaccurate in that they included teachings that were not mentioned in the Sermon.
- (c) This was a question about equality which a large number of candidates felt strongly about, and some responses were perceptive and fair in their evaluation that the spirit of the Prophet's teaching about equality was not always practised. There were very few weaker answers to this question.

## Section C

### Question 5

- (a) Generally, the performance on this question was good. Candidates took full advantage of the number of verses that required explanation and addressed them all with varying degrees of accuracy and understanding. A minority of responses concentrated on the circumstances of the revelation rather than the meaning of the verses and this limited their ability to gain marks.
- (b) In answer to this question, most responses explored how Muslims might use their abilities to improve the way they followed their religion and its teachings. The best answers reasoned that Muslims needed to use their abilities not only to understand the teachings of Islam but also how to put them into practice. Again, this was a question where candidates' understanding of the question

and the assessment objective helped them to improve their performance on the question as a whole.

### Question 6

- (a) Explanations of the teachings in the Hadith were often good, but some candidates stated examples without developing them. Both aspects of the question needed to be addressed in detail to gain the higher levels of marks. Generally, the performance on this question was good or satisfactory.
- (b) There was a mixed response to this question. Most candidates had definite views that being kind to others was a good way to help them. A number of perceptive responses assessed that being kind could result in a practical act and gave examples of this, demonstrating a good understanding of the question.



# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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**Paper 2068/22**

**Paper 2 Development, Sources, Beliefs and Observances**

## Key messages

- Responses were in line with the standard shown in previous years.
- For **part (a)** questions, the most successful answers were short and to the point.
- Successful AO1 responses were detailed and often included short and relevant quotations, especially for **Section B**.
- AO2 responses were most successful where clearly different points of view were explained, even if they were two different perspectives from the same side of an argument.
- For the 12-mark **part (a)** questions, longer answers are appropriate. Candidates are reminded to write their responses in prose paragraphs, not bullet points.
- Knowledge was strong in nearly all areas. Areas which can be improved include the expansion and maintenance of the state by the different Caliphs (**Section A**) and the details of Eid prayers (**Section C**).

## General comments

A full range of answers was observed from excellent to weak, which was also seen within individual questions. All candidates were able to access the questions and provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding, as well as some evidence of their points of view for AO2 discussion and evaluation. Candidates' answers were equally balanced between all sections of the paper.

In general, it is important that 4-mark **part (a)** questions in **Sections A** and **B** are answered concisely, and that candidates adjust their time accordingly. Some candidates gave lengthy and detailed answers, but since no more than 4 marks can be given, they could not gain extra marks and had less time for other questions as a result. 10 and 12-mark knowledge and understanding questions were generally well answered. To improve responses, short quotations could be added and a little more detail given by some candidates. Furthermore, it is necessary that candidates answer the specific question rather than writing about the topic in general. Answers should be given in full sentences and paragraphs, not bullet points.

Almost all candidates followed the rubric in terms of choice of questions and most balanced their time well between the different questions, enabling them to gain the most marks that they could in the papers overall.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Most candidates were able to name regions, and any modern equivalent, such as the name of a country, was accepted. Some candidates appeared confused between different time periods and the expansion of the Muslim Caliphate. During Abu Bakr's time, the Caliphate covered much of modern-day Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain and up to the borders of Egypt. Abu Bakr kept the Byzantines/Romans and Persians at bay but did not take those areas. Regions within the areas he took were credited.
- (b) This question was asking about how Abu Bakr ruled, which refers to his time as ruler when he was a Caliph, after the death of Muhammad (pbuh). Therefore, references to the Sunnah of Muhammad (pbuh) were relevant to show how Abu Bakr followed Muhammad's actions. References to Abu Bakr's actions during the lifetime of Muhammad (pbuh) were not relevant. Good responses

mentioned that Muhammad (pbuh) was careful to consult and listen to the views of his companions, and so was Abu Bakr, particularly at the time when he was unsure about taking over as Caliph at the start of his reign. Many candidates mentioned Abu Bakr's personal characteristics, his simplicity and humility, as well as his piety in prayer, and made the point that these were in keeping with the examples left by Muhammad (pbuh). To link these characteristics specifically to the focus of this question, which was about Abu Bakr's rule, the best responses explicitly explained that these provided a good example and were backed by religious facilities, such as building mosques, to enable the people to follow Abu Bakr's examples. Few candidates mentioned that Abu Bakr dealt with those who claimed false beliefs, specifically the false prophets.

- (c) Many candidates described Abu Bakr's rule as good and identified two or three examples or ways in which it was good. Better responses explained how these examples were relevant for Muslims today, making points explicitly. Discussions which developed further considered the meaning of 'good model', since model and examples might or might not be considered the same thing. One line of argument taken was that Abu Bakr provided good examples, but the model he followed was not his own, it came from Muhammad (pbuh). Candidates who understand, discuss and develop reasoned opinions about the key words in the question, in this case 'good model', achieved higher levels of responses for their answers.

## Question 2

- (a) This was exceptionally well answered, and most candidates achieved full marks. Note that for **part (a)** questions, where only 4 marks are available, concise answers are necessary and lengthy descriptions are not needed. Adjectives such as 'intelligent', 'pious', 'loyal' and 'brave' were sufficient.
- (b) Information about how 'Ali organised governors and collected taxes was relevant because it shows how he maintained his state. 'Ali sent a letter to his governor of Egypt in which he outlined his policies – this was mentioned by a small number of candidates who understood it well and wrote good responses. Most candidates focused on the divisions which arose and the negotiations, which were seen within the content of 'Ali's efforts to maintain his state and avoid division. Although he faced problems, it was his efforts at maintenance which were relevant in response to this question.
- (c) This question was well answered. Some candidates wrote that as a Rashidun Caliph, 'Ali was equally relevant through setting a rightly guided example which was relevant to the development of Sunni Muslim thinking. Some took a Shi'i perspective and wrote about the importance of 'Ali's leadership for the development of Shi'i thought. Whichever perspectives were given was acceptable, but the question required two reasons. These could be two from similar standpoints but should nevertheless be distinguished. Good responses did this by writing two short paragraphs, one for each reason.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) 'Revelation' here refers to the Qur'an rather than the Hadith. It refers to the Qur'an Surah 5, verse 3, which is generally considered the last revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammad (pbuh).
- (b) This question was very well answered. Good answers mentioned that the Qur'an is considered the directly revealed word of God and first source of Shari'ah, Islamic law. The Qur'an tells Muslims to believe in the oneness of God and to pray. Good examples illustrated the basis of the Qur'an in Muslims' thoughts and actions. Some candidates went on to give quotations and show how this basis is further developed by the Hadith, but quotations from the Hadith were not needed for this answer. Candidates who gave one or two short quotations, particularly for this section of the paper about the Qur'an showed good, detailed knowledge, which helped them to achieve a higher level of response.
- (c) Very good responses were made referring to general Qur'anic commands such as to pray, fast or help others with Zakat, and practical ways in which Muslims could find out how to apply these teachings using the Sunnah of Muhammad (pbuh) from the Hadith. The best answers gave more than one reason and gave details, which were specific to this question. Again, one or two quotations, this time from the Hadith, made for excellent responses.



#### Question 4

- (a) Most candidates were able to achieve full marks for this question. Four names were all that was required; descriptions were not asked for in this **part (a)** question.
- (b) Good responses were detailed and sometimes supported by one or two short quotations from the Qur'anic story. They explained that it was part of God's plan and Adam (AS) was forgiven but sent to Earth to start a human family and realise the problems of weather, growing old, and the struggles of temptation. Earthly life is a test to realise God's forgiveness and return to Paradise in the afterlife. Other responses gave more vague and general accounts.
- (c) Good answers developed their responses by specifically referring to Muslims today. For example, some stated that one lesson learned was not to be arrogant or disregard or forget God's command, and then gave examples from Muslims' lives in which they might focus on money and materialism, and forget God's command to pray. According to some good responses, true Muslims remembered the story of Adam (AS) to develop humility and fear arrogance in their daily lives. Weaker answers repeated some of the story of Adam (AS), which was not the focus of this question.

#### Section C

#### Question 5

- (a) This was a popular choice of question and well answered. Many candidates were able to refer to technical words such as tawhid, the Islamic belief in the oneness of God with no partners or physical features. Many mentioned the 99 different names or attributes such as God the All-Powerful, Creator, Judge and All-Merciful. Good responses expanded on this to explain what these meant. For example, God the Creator, meaning that Muslims believe God made the universe and everything in it, so it follows that Islamic monotheism teaches that there is unity in the universe.

Most candidates mentioned the connection between the belief, tawhid, and the statement of faith, the Shahadah. Some candidates linked practices to beliefs and mentioned God as judge, on the Day of Judgement, and that this was a motivational factor encouraging Muslims to pray and fast with good intention in order to gain God's favour. Some excellent responses set the context of the pagan belief in idols and contrasted this with the Muslim view of God.

- (b) Many candidates wrote very good discussions in response to this question. Some argued 'yes' because of the dramatic way in which Muhammad (pbuh) challenged and converted the pagan Arab idol worshippers to the completely different monotheistic belief in one God. Others argued 'no', some people did not listen and others already had a concept of the oneness of God, such as Christians and Jews, so Muhammad (pbuh) did not completely change everyone's views, but he did change many. The best responses focused their answers on reasons to show evidence of Assessment Objective 2, evaluation. Different viewpoints do not need to be opposite; they can be two viewpoints both agreeing with the statement (or two disagree viewpoints).

#### Question 6

- (a) Responses varied between a few who gave very detailed answers and most who gave a general overview but needed more detail, especially about Eid prayers. Eid prayer is said in the morning without the call to prayer. Two units of rakat are said including several additional Takbirs which are praises to the greatness of Allah, a means of thanking God for the festival. Some Muslims organise Eid prayers outdoors, following a tradition of Muhammad (pbuh) and many walk a longer route to join a large congregation. A khutbah/sermon follows the prayer and personal prayers and duas for those in need. Finally, people greet each other by hugging and offering words of praise: Eid Mubarak! Other aspects of the festival, particularly family meals sharing biryani rice, were covered well by candidates.
- (b) This question was well answered. Most candidates were able to distinguish different points of view and explain them. For example, to some Muslims having completed Ramadan, Eid day is an exciting time of celebration and a time to meet other members of the family with great joy. In a social sense it might be regarded as the most important day of the year for Muslims. However, it could be argued that there is no revelation stating that Eid is the most important and every day has

a reason to it as part of God's plan for Muslims. Good responses sometimes made personal opinions about the day, in their experience, which was also acceptable and made for good answers. The question required more than one point of view, which again did not need to be agree and disagree; there could be two or more views on one side of the argument, provided they were from different perspectives and were well explained.



# ISLAMIC STUDIES

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Paper 2068/23

Paper 2 Development, Sources, Beliefs and Observances

## Key messages

- Responses were in line with the standard shown in previous years.
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- Successful AO1 responses were detailed and often included short and relevant quotations, especially for **Section B**.
- AO2 responses were most successful where clearly different points of view were explained, even if they were two different perspectives from the same side of an argument.
- For the 12-mark **part (a)** questions, longer answers are appropriate. Candidates are reminded to write their responses in prose paragraphs, not bullet points.
- Knowledge was strong in nearly all areas. Areas which can be improved include the expansion and maintenance of the state by the different Caliphs (**Section A**) and the details of Eid prayers (**Section C**).

## General comments

A full range of answers was observed from excellent to weak, which was also seen within individual questions. All candidates were able to access the questions and provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding, as well as some evidence of their points of view for AO2 discussion and evaluation. Candidates' answers were equally balanced between all sections of the paper.

10 and 12-mark knowledge and understanding questions were generally well answered. To improve responses, short quotations could be added, and a little more detail given by some. Candidates could also improve by paying more attention to the specific question asked. Some wrote about the topic in general, which meant that only parts of their answers were relevant. Candidates are advised to focus on the key words in each question and select the relevant information from their knowledge in order to respond to it.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) This was a popular question and very well answered. The best responses listed four adjectives to describe Abu Bakr. Longer answers were not necessary since a maximum of 4 marks was available. Good answers described Abu Bakr as intelligent, compassionate, steadfast and truthful.
- (b) The best responses linked the events of Abu Bakr's reign to the ways in which they helped people to follow Islam. Weaker responses wrote simply about the events. This shows the importance of addressing responses directly to the exact question which is being asked and selecting information accordingly. Abu Bakr helped people follow Islam by demanding that the rights of people were respected, such as not to force people to convert. He also built mosques and facilities for Muslims to learn about their faith. Abu Bakr's enforcement of Zakat helped the poor and showed that the Five Pillars were compulsory under his leadership, helping people to follow Islam. Just as Muhammad (pbuh) challenged those with idol worshipping beliefs, Abu Bakr challenged those who followed false prophets, which helped people to follow what he regarded as the right beliefs of Islam. Beginning the compilation of the written Qur'an was another way in which Abu Bakr preserved Islam for the future, enabling Muslims to learn about its key teachings.

- (c) This was well answered. Some excellent responses argued that Abu Bakr was not tolerant because he challenged the false prophets and this was a good thing, because it ensured the survival of the true beliefs of Islam. Others argued that Abu Bakr was very tolerant because he did not force anyone to convert and preserved the churches and religious buildings of others, as well as guaranteeing their safety. Good responses were able to discuss key words from the statement, including 'tolerance' and 'promoted', and assess how far Abu Bakr fitted that description. Weaker answers repeated facts about the rule of Abu Bakr without specifically making a discussion in response to this statement.

## Question 2

- (a) Most candidates were able to get three or four marks for this question. Events included the arbitration at Siffin; the Battle of Siffin; the Battle of Camel (Jamal); the replacement of governors amongst others. These were the most popular 4 events mentioned. Further elaboration was not necessary in this question.
- (b) Many candidates wrote about the events of 'Ali's rule and mentioned little about their significance for today. The best responses still included events from 'Ali's rule, but after each event, wrote a sentence to link it to Muslims today, thereby explaining the significance. Good answers wrote about 'Ali's rightly guided leadership, and how that inspires Muslims today with interpretations. They wrote about 'Ali's attempts to negotiate difficult situations and his help to bring a degree of unity, which influences the Muslim community today. More details and different interpretations about this were made by some candidates and these were credited, too.
- (c) Some candidates mentioned that 'Ali's character as a rightly-guided Caliph, together with his three predecessors, was significant as a model for Muslims today. Weaker answers tended to repeat factual information from **part (b)**. Generally, this question appeared to be difficult for candidates, so it is recommended to increase focus on this section of the syllabus.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) This question was very well answered, and most candidates were able to accumulate full marks within three or four sentences. Lengthy answers were not necessary: candidates are reminded to balance their time according to the number of marks available for the question and what is required.
- (b) This was extremely well answered. Most candidates knew the categories and the words used to classify them: sahih (very sound); hassan (good); daif (weak) and mauzu (suspect/false). These classifications are based on analysis of the reliability of the Hadith undertaken by the Hadith collectors such as Bukhari and Muslim. Candidates were also good at explaining the reliability according to the chain of narrators (isnad) and the subject matter of the Hadith (matn). Knowledge exhibited appeared stronger than when this topic has been examined in previous papers, which is a good improvement.
- (c) Candidates took different angles in response to this question. Some argued that the Hadith were hard to apply because circumstances had changed and it was hard to follow Islam. Others said that it was hard to understand them, especially if they did not know Arabic, so they needed help from Islamic scholars. Some said that circumstances were different nowadays and they did not always find answers to their questions from the Hadith. The best responses gave two or more reasons and explained them well. They did not need to cover agree and disagree points although many did and found it a successful way of answering. Some candidates covered two or more points in agreement (or disagreement), ensuring that each point showed a different perspective on the answer, which was an equally good way of answering.

#### Question 4

- (a) This question was well answered. Candidates mentioned that Yusuf (AS) was good looking and regarded as a favourite by his father, so given extra attention. Some mentioned that Yusuf (AS) came from a different mother, and that his father was very protective. As a **part (a)** 4-mark question, a couple of sentences containing this or other relevant detail was sufficient to achieve full marks and many candidates did so.
- (b) Although this question was generally well answered, many candidates gave a lengthy pre-amble about the whole life of Yusuf (AS), whereas in fact this was not necessary as the question focuses on the last part of the story. Candidates are advised to practice carefully responding to the specific question asked and selecting relevant information from their knowledge to address that question. A relevant starting place for this question would be the years of drought in Egypt, when Yusuf (AS) held a high position there, and his father sent his brothers to go there to find food. Yusuf (AS) recognised them and helped translate and buy provisions, although they did not recognise him. He asked for another of his brother's, Benjamin, to come and meet him. Their father reluctantly agreed and they were reunited. Yusuf (AS) forgave them. He could not leave his post in Egypt so he sent his shirt as proof to his father and requested that the whole family return to Egypt to be reunited. Few candidates quoted from the Qur'an and a few excellent responses added a brief quotation from the story.
- (c) Candidates were able to extract principles from the story of Yusuf (AS) and apply them to situations today. Some argued that the story of Yusuf (AS) may help Muslim families today work through problems when they face rivalry, jealousy and difficulties between siblings. The best responses gave several examples and worked through in what ways they considered them relevant in the modern world, in different situations which Muslims face. For this part of the question, any aspect of the life of Yusuf (AS) might be chosen; it was not restricted to the reunion with his brothers covered by **part (b)**.

#### Section C

#### Question 5

- (a) Fewer candidates chose this question, but those who did made reasonable responses. Answers outlined God's role in pre-determining all actions and events in the world, including human actions, which God has full knowledge of in advance. Some candidates mentioned that God has written these on the heavenly Tablet, which existed with God before the origins of the universe. Candidates also mentioned that life is a test from God and humans are being tested on their choice of actions, although God already knows what the outcomes will be. This complex belief was well explained by some and could do with further clarification in the responses of others. Different perspectives on this belief were credited where relevant, such as those who explained that some believe that the All-powerful God has it within His power to change destiny and others who give a different perspective on the middle position between predestination and free will. All relevant answers were credited.
- (b) Weaker responses repeated part of their answer to **part (a)**, but better ones focused on the statement and made the focus of their responses a discussion of it. Strong responses made an excellent argument by dividing the statement into two parts: agreeing with the second part, that the fate of Muslims is already decided as part of God's predestination but disagreeing with the first part. They argued that it does matter what Muslims do because life is a test from God and the recording angels are watching.

#### Question 6

- (a) This was a popular and very well answered question. Many candidates were able to describe in detail the main stages of Hajj, giving correct terminology for the names of places and the activities taking place at each. Some candidates missed out making intention to perform Hajj, the Niyah. All mentioned the Tawaf, although some were uncertain of how many times around and in which direction. Many candidates missed mentioning Sai'y, running seven times between the hills Safa and Marwa, commemorating the time when Hagar desperately searched for water here and was rewarded with the Zamzam spring. Almost all candidates mentioned camping at Mina, stoning the Jamrat pillars representing the devil, and standing at Arafat.

- (b) This question was well answered. Some candidates argued that to make a fresh start in faith was best done after standing at Arafat, part of the Hajj pilgrimage, as Muslims believe they may gain forgiveness for their past sins at that point. Others argued that it was not possible for some to afford to go on Hajj, and in any case, there were advantages in making a fresh start to faith in the setting where a person lives their everyday life. The best responses gave good reasons, well explained, to support a viewpoint and gave more than one reason to show they had thought carefully and could justify the position taken.

