

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/11
Paper 1

Key messages

Candidates should take time to read the question they are attempting to answer.

Answers should contain detail and depth related to the question asked, and not just general outlines of the main points.

Candidates should ensure their handwriting is legible.

Candidates should label answers correctly and clearly, stating whether it is a Part (a) answer or Part (b) answer. They should also clearly state if they have answered a question or part question on another page, or on extra sheets.

General comments

Overall, the majority of candidates were able to answer the required questions and there were virtually no candidates omitting the compulsory questions. Other rubric errors (such as attempting all three optional questions) were not common but neither were they wholly absent. There were very few completely blank scripts.

Candidates for this paper have a tendency to write generally around the subject matter in the question rather than selecting and focussing their responses – so when asked about a specific element of the early life of the Prophet they respond with a full biography, incorporating both relevant and irrelevant material. This resulted in candidates sometimes being able to gain good marks as they happen to write enough to cover the main points, but often it can create difficulties attaining higher marks as their answer is not focussed on the question asked.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was reasonably well answered with candidates doing better in Part (a) than in Part (b).

- (a) This question is asking candidates to identify themes that are present in a passage showing how that theme is specific to that passage. Most candidates are able to pick out some themes, e.g. saying that a passage is about *tawhid* and so only God should be worshipped, He knows everything that humans cannot know; He is the Creator because He created the heavens and the earth, etc. To make the answers relevant and to gain higher marks, candidates should elaborate on these themes and say how they are presented in the passage they have chosen to write about.

For example, for sura **6.101–103**, instead of merely saying that God knows everything answers could expand on this by saying that God knows everything which is shown in this passage by the assertion that He sees everything that everyone does and knows everything that is going on in His created world. For sura **41.37**, instead of just saying that God is the only one to be worshipped, answers could expand on this by saying that God shows that He is the only one deserving of worship by saying that He is the one who created the sun and the moon and despite their greatness He is greater as He created them. For sura **114**, instead of saying that God's protection should be sought from evil, it could be said that God's protection should be sought from evil, which takes its form in various ways, this passage telling us about evil coming from jinn and men.

Candidates need to ensure they do not paraphrase, sometimes only one theme was mentioned and repeated a number of times, or in a small number of cases, only one sura was written about.

- (b) The requirement of this question is to establish how the themes presented in Part (a) can be relevant in a Muslim's everyday life. Most candidates focus on the word 'importance' and so give lists of why a particular theme is important, e.g. tawhid is the main belief of Islam, so Muslims should worship only One God, they should not commit *shirk*, God is most powerful, God has most knowledge, etc. This is fine for a general point, but to answer the question and gain the higher level marks, candidates should be looking to apply those themes to their everyday lives and show the relevancy of those themes in a Muslim's life today.

Examples of the better answers: 'Muslims should have a fear of accountability as Allah knows everything. This will benefit the community as there will be less wrong doing', and 'Muslims should follow the Prophet's habit by reciting these verses and blowing on their hands and rubbing them on their body. Muslims should also prefer saying 'Mashallah' in order to not cast the evil eye on others'.

Question 2

- (a) The majority of candidates answered this question and they made a fair attempt at answering it. This question did produce a number of different approaches in how it was answered, and some candidates seemed to struggle with the content of their answers.

The best responses were equipped with a list of appropriate and relevant suras from the syllabus, and went through each of these in turn explaining what it said, giving both sides of the relationship between God and Muslims.

Where it was less well answered, many candidates chose to write about passages describing God and His Messengers, which although may have gained them some marks for showing a relationship between God and these Muslims, it would have been a limited answer as it did not extend to the relationship between God and Muslims in general.

- (b) This part was generally well answered, with even candidates who had been confused by Part (a) producing coherent responses.

Good answers wrote about knowledge allowing humans to understand what God wants from them in terms of worshipping Him and understanding the Qur'an, that knowing about past history and events can help Muslims in knowing how to worship God, or that it gives Muslims an understanding of what is lawful or unlawful to allow them to live in a way that is most pleasing to God.

Question 3

- (a) This was the most popular of the optional questions, although very few of the candidates who attempted it appeared to understand what material the question asked them to focus on. Almost all responses were focussed on a description of events after the revelation – references to the ways Islam grew in the first couple of years were few and far between.

Some candidates gave detailed accounts of the first revelation, some of the first public preaching and some gave descriptions of both of these and almost nothing else. Many candidates wrote about the persecutions after the first public preaching, some went as far as the migrations and subsequent wars and a few gave the entire history between the first preaching and the conquest of Makka. The few candidates who did attempt to focus on the early growth of Islam found it difficult to give detail beyond a list of names of the first Muslims.

- (b) Most responses to this part were descriptive often repeating the description of the persecutions faced by the early Muslims with a passing reference to Muslims being patient or steadfast added to the end.

Some good answers said that Muslims should never give up when facing hardships such as in Burma, Kashmir or Palestine, and other Muslims should give them hope and support.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates who chose this question answered it well. Most knew a lot of information about Abu Bakr and wrote lots of relevant information about his life during the Prophet's lifetime.

What generally prevented candidates from reaching the highest level was the tendency to write a list of events without giving the details of those events, for example saying that Abu Bakr went with the Prophet on the *hijra* without giving many details about the journey and the stay in the cave of Thawr.

- (b) This was fairly well answered with candidates being able to give some examples of ways in which they could be loyal to their friends and colleagues. Some examples are that friends should not lose their temper with one another, that they should aid them when they are in difficulty, or that they should offer to share their belongings with their friends especially if they are not able to afford to buy things for themselves.

Question 5

- (a) This question was fairly well answered where candidates were able to provide some information about both Halima and Abu Talib.

There was a marked tendency to write a biography of the Prophet rather than the two personalities mentioned in the question, which meant that the relevant material had to be extracted from the irrelevant material. Most candidates had more to say about Abu Talib than about Halima, but very most candidates were able to write about both of them.

- (b) Most answers to this question wrote general comments about being good to family members because they look after you or because they are there when you need them.

There were some good answers that were able to reflect on the fact that despite Halima and Abu Talib not being the Prophet's biological parents, they still deserved the same respect and attention that all parents should be afforded. A few candidates were also able to say that family should be protected in times of need whether they are blood related or not and should be supported even when they are not Muslim.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/12
Paper 1

Key Messages

Candidates should label answers correctly and clearly, stating whether it is a Part **(a)** answer or Part **(b)** answer. They should also clearly state if they have answered a question or part question on another page, or on extra sheets.

Candidates should be taught to read and understand questions so they are able to answer the question being asked.

Rote learnt answers will not give candidates an advantage and should be adapted to ensure that they answer the specific question being asked in the current session rather than a general answer on the topic.

General Comments

Overall, the majority of candidates were able to answer the required questions and understood what was being asked of them. Rubric errors (such as attempting all three optional questions, or not attempting a compulsory one) were not common. There were only a few completely blank scripts.

The standard of the answers was good this year and candidates wrote detailed and extensive essays to most of the questions. Past Principal Examiner Reports have commented on how the candidates often write around the question, giving some of the main points but without a lot of the detail. This has improved significantly this year with candidates writing about the main events *and* giving the details of those events.

Candidates are encouraged to clearly read the question asked: they need to focus exactly on the specific question and not just the topic in general. Some of the best answers wrote short introductory paragraphs defining the terms of the question. Well structured, coherent and confident responses wrote clear, short paragraphs, leaving a line space between each paragraph. Each contained a sentence linking it clearly to the question with details and elaboration, such as quotation or facts, to back up points being made.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

Question 1 was generally well answered, with answers for Part **(a)** being slightly better than Part **(b)**. There is sometimes repetition between answers in Parts **(a)** and **(b)** and occasionally candidates do not reference which passage they are answering.

- (a)** This question is asking candidates to identify themes that are present in a passage showing how that theme is specific to that passage. Most candidates were able to pick out some themes, e.g. saying that a passage is about *tawhid* and so only God should be worshipped, He knows everything that humans cannot know; He is the Creator because He created the heavens and the earth, etc. Many of these themes and statements are relevant to a variety of passages from the syllabus and so the better answers are those that elaborate on the themes and how they are presented in the passage they have chosen to write about.

For example, in Ayat al-Kursi, good answers would not just say that God is unlike anyone else but would elaborate by saying that He is unlike anyone else and this passage shows this by saying He does not get fatigued nor does He sleep like humans. In sura **42.4–5** good answers would not just

say God is forgiving so we should ask Him for forgiveness, but would say that God is so forgiving and merciful that He even asks the angels to pray for humankind. In sura **112** good answers would not just say that God is One so we should not commit shirk, but would say that this passage encompasses key concepts about God, not just His Oneness but His uniqueness in that He is unlike anyone in creation, that He does not begin nor end, and that He is not born to anyone nor is anyone born to Him.

This part was generally answered well, with most candidates being able to present some of the themes in each passage they chose
Candidates need to ensure they do not paraphrase, sometimes only one theme was mentioned and repeated a number of times, or in a small number of cases, only one sura was written about.

- (b) The requirement of this question is to establish how the themes presented in Part (a) can be relevant in a Muslim's everyday life. Most candidates focus on the word 'importance' and so give lists of why a particular theme is important, e.g. tawhid is the main belief of Islam, so Muslims should worship only One God, they should not commit *shirk*, God is most powerful, God has most knowledge, etc. This is fine for a general point, but to answer the question and gain the higher level marks, candidates should be looking to apply those themes to their everyday lives and show the relevancy of those themes in a Muslim's life today.

There were some instances where the question was answered well. Some examples are, "Surah As-shura' creates an awareness of fear and repentance for bad deeds which leads to good conduct in this life," "Ayat al-Kursi makes us aware of God's power so we worship Him more by praying and reciting this after each *fard* prayer," and "This sura [*Ikhlas*] is considered one third of the Qur'an so reciting it three times gives us the reward for reciting the whole Qur'an. Muslims recite it before sleep."

Where it was less well answered, candidates would repeat the themes of Part (a) or offer the same evaluation for both passages of Part (b).

Question 2

- (a) The vast majority of candidates answered both parts of this question very well. The details of the event of the first revelation were well known and there were some imaginative and perceptive descriptions of what the Prophet's reaction would have been. Candidates wrote ample detail about the events in the cave and immediately afterwards and it was unusual to see a script where the candidate had not quoted Sura al-Alaq, described the encounter with Jibril outside the cave and offered at least some detail of the conversations with Khadija and Waraqa.

Where it was less well answered candidates missed out the conversation between Khadija and the Prophet after he ran home from the Cave of Hira. A small number wrote about the manner in which revelation came to the Prophet after the first revelation, but even these candidates picked up some of the available marks because they usually included reference to the angel coming to the Prophet in the cave.

A small minority thought it was about the reactions of the Quraysh to the Prophet's message and carried on their narration from that night to the plot to kill the Prophet.

- (b) This was generally well answered with most candidates understanding what the question was asking from them. Most answers said that the revelations were spaced out to relieve the burden on the Prophet, the need for gradual change, or in response to the different needs of situations. The better answers were able to elaborate on these points and give examples, e.g. being specific about the circumstances of a revelation (e.g. Sura al-Alaq).

Some of the best answers said it would have been no use if the Qur'an was revealed whole and Muslims were obligated to perform Salah without knowing the reason behind it, or it was in parts to ensure the faith of the new Muslims was strong before imposing new religious obligations.

Question 3

- (a) This was generally a well answered question. The events of Khaybar were fairly well known although some answers lacked detail and confused the forts or did not know about the roles of companions.

Good answers covered both expeditions in equal detail and were able to correctly identify each. A few confused which battle or campaign they were talking about, and a significant number wrote more about one battle than the other.

- (b) This question was generally satisfactorily answered as candidates did not focus on the main point, namely the importance of peace over war. Most candidates focused on general comments about generosity, determination, steadfastness and patience rather than the importance of peace.

Candidates who understood the question properly offered answers on how bloodshed should be avoided and peace always favoured. Stronger answers applied this to examples of today, encouraging fighting only in defence and negotiations of peace treaties, e.g., innocent citizens should not be punished when there is war and states should aim to establish friendly relationships with neighbouring countries, e.g., Pakistan and India.

Question 4

- (a) This was one of the popular optional questions and answers were generally satisfactory. The need for a comparative approach for this question was not always clear to candidates, and so most candidates focussed on the Quraysh's treatment of the Prophet after the revelation, the majority of answers giving lots of details about the persecution the Prophet faced. This allowed candidates to gain marks, but without commenting on how the Quraysh treated the Prophet before revelation a full answer on the differences in treatment could not be given.

The best answers explained how the Prophet was trusted with the possessions of his fellow traders beforehand, that he was regarded as honest and trustworthy and he was given a key role in placing the Black Stone, leading onto to say that after revelation he personally was abused together with members of his immediate family. Only a small number of candidates rightly wrote that despite all the hostility they still carried on leaving their belongings with him, so despite their persecution they carried on trusting him.

- (b) Most candidates answered this question with general statements of how the Prophet had good character. Candidates mainly wrote about the steadfastness and forgiving nature of the Prophet in front of adversity. Therefore, their conclusion was usually that Muslims should forgive those who hurt them.

Many answers focused on what Muslims ought or ought not to do, with only a small number focusing on not changing one's attitude under adverse circumstances, and supporting it with present day examples.

There were a few good answers about how Muslims should not change their nature if others do not like them or to please others, for example to not renounce Islam to please non-Muslim friends; or Muslims should not be influenced by peer pressure, for example if everybody around them is sinning, they do not need to fall into the same sin as well.

Question 5

- (a) This was the most popular of the optional questions and was generally well answered. Many candidates wrote a good narrative of events, though sometimes there were inaccuracies in the details of the speech given by Ja'far, the numbers of migrants, or the main companions involved.

Very good candidates could quote the discourse of Ja'far regarding the revolutionising nature of the Prophet's message and they sometimes also quoted the verse from Sura Maryam.

Where it was less well answered candidates focussed on the speech given by Ja'far over other details; did not mention the key roles played by the companions; wrote extensively about the background to the migration leaving less space and time to focus on the question; or, in a small number of cases, wrote about the migration to Madina instead.

- (b) This question was generally well answered with most candidates recognising that comparison could be made between Abyssinia and, for example, recent migrations from Syria and Myamar.

Better answers compared various types of modern day migrations with the Muslims in Abyssinia and explained the reasons for the similarities and differences, some answers saying that the migration is similar in that many countries welcome the migrants and some saying the migration is different because often countries do not welcome the migrants. Both arguments were credited when backed by sound reasoning.

Other good answers included the difficulties of refugees nowadays to get entry into other countries because of political reasons or racism against Muslims, or because of the fear of terrorism many refugees have to stay in refugee camps and are not allowed their basic human rights.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/21
Paper 2

Key messages

Candidates need to be aware that for part (a) answers time needed to be spent on them. To get higher levels all part (a) answers needed to show sound knowledge of the area of study they were writing about and develop their answer with details.

Candidates needed to be aware that for part (b) answers evaluation and reasoning was being looked for and when given earned the candidate the higher levels.

General comments

On the whole candidates did well on this Paper. Those candidates who did not rush part (a) and took time to answer this part of the question tended to achieve higher marks overall. In part (a) answers candidates who achieved the higher marks were able to distinguish between what the question was specifically asking and simply giving all they know on that topic.

Part (b) answers have become stronger showing evaluation and reasoning which was very positive as in past years there was usually repetition of what was given in part (a).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Hadiths two and three were the ones that were attempted by the majority of the candidates and were most popular. Good understanding of the teachings was shown for part (a) and for part (b) candidates were showing a fair attempt in presenting examples of how the teachings could be acted upon. For Hadith four striving hard in the way of Allah was seen by many as fighting *jihad* which is an aspect of the teaching but not the only teaching. The broader meaning of the teaching was not brought out in many answers and for part (b) actions other than fighting *Jihad* could have been discussed when attempting this Hadith. On the whole this question was well answered.

Question 2

This was a straightforward question asking the candidate to outline the relationship between the Qur'an and the Hadith. A good understanding of how the two work together was needed and the answer needed to be backed up with examples of how the two complimented each other and made Islamic law and helped in the practice of Islam. Candidates who backed their answer with strong examples covering different aspects were able to get the higher levels. The popular examples referred to were about Qur'an giving the instruction to perform *salat* and the Hadith showing the method. Again areas like inheritance, theft, adultery, performance of *wudu* and so many others could have been given and were given by the well prepared candidates. Candidates did well in this question.

For part (b) of this question the focus was on why Muslims give so much importance to Prophetic Hadiths. Answers needed to focus on how Islam cannot be practiced without Hadiths accurately, that the Prophet was sent as a role model for Muslims to follow hence his Hadiths are important to Muslims. This was not a question asking about Hadith compilation as was understood by a few who wrote about *isnad* etc. On the whole candidates have become much better at answering evaluative part (b) answers.

Question 3

A detailed account of the list of achievements by Abu Bakr as caliph was being asked for. His time as the Companion of the Prophet was not part of this paper and if accounts of that period of his time spent with the Prophet was given marks were not credited.

Some candidates focused on just one or two of his achievements and wrote in great detail about them e.g. defeating the false prophets was an achievement worthy of credit but a detailed account of how each false prophet was defeated was not needed. Having said that if a candidate gave his other achievements and a very detailed account of his encounters with false prophets due marks were given but if they only wrote about false prophets they could not get beyond a Satisfactory mark. It is important to understand the requirement of the question and then launch into an answer. Those who wrote about his administrative and military accomplishments and gave an overview of the *ridda* wars went on to get the desired marks.

In part (b) as always an evaluative response was looked for. Candidates needed to say by way of development what could have happened if he had not taken action against the apostate tribes. A fair attempt was made by the majority in responding to this part answer. Though it must be said some exceptional response were also seen.

Question 4

For part (a) of this answer candidates needed to list the six Articles of Faith. Some candidates however, confused the Articles of Faith with the five Pillars of Islam whilst others did not recall all the Articles. The second part of the question required the candidates to write about the teachings of any two Articles that they were confident about writing. Detail, development and accuracy of content were looked at as the question itself gave the candidate the choice to select any two out of the six Articles. Candidates despite the advantage of making their own choice did not in the majority of cases exceed a middle Level 3 mark.

In part (b) a competent attempt was made. With some answers reaching the top level.

Question 5

Here candidates were asked to write about the moral, social and economic benefits of fasting for a Muslim. The instruction was clear yet many candidates did not write about all three areas they were asked to cover so could not get the marks they aspired for. In order to get the higher marks they needed to write about the moral, social and economic benefits of fasting in more or less equal measure. A few candidates wrote a lot about the social benefits and touched upon the economic benefits of fasting. Other wrote about the moral benefits and briefly wrote about the social benefits. Not many were confident writing about the economic benefits of fasting.

In part (b) they had to choose the greatest reward of fasting in their opinion and the question clearly asked them to give reasons for their choice. It was not enough to say that fasting will secure an individual paradise. This would at best be a Level 1 response. If paradise, in the candidate's opinion, was the greatest reward they needed to back their view by saying e.g. by fasting one is fulfilling a Pillar of Islam, showing obedience to God etc. and as a reward can aspire to gain paradise.

Conclusion

On the whole it could be said that performance was good on this Paper. The well prepared candidates were able to achieve their potential and the rest did reasonably well.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/22
Paper 2

Key messages

All Part **(a)** answers are knowledge based and it is the detail and development in the answer that takes the Levels higher.

Part **(b)** answers are evaluative and it is the strength of the reasoning which will secure higher levels. Candidates, again this year, needed to read the question carefully before attempting to answer it.

General comments

The requirements of **Question 1** were quite clearly understood by the majority of the candidates. A critical error that candidates made with regards to other questions was that they did not read the question carefully and therefore did not answer the question properly. Candidates who did not address the question correctly launched into long answers that were not relevant to what is asked of them. An example of this was found in the answers of **Question 2**. This was a straight forward question asking the candidates to say why it became important to compile the Hadiths **after** the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. A range of responses were seen which had nothing to do with what was being asked and even if the answer indirectly linked up to the question no links were shown in responses. From the remaining three optional questions **Question 3** was the least popular ones.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Hadiths **(i)** **(ii)** and **(iv)** were the popular ones. Those who attempted Hadith **(iii)** struggled with bringing out the teaching given in the Hadith. For Hadith **(iii)** responses were paraphrased and it was evident that the candidates had not grasped the essence of the teaching. In Hadith **(ii)** also it was important to bring out the broader teaching rather than focusing on the examples already given in the Hadith. Candidates e.g. could have said that by doing charity awareness of God and His bounties is increased and also that everyday acts of kindness form part of *ibadah* when performed with the intention of pleasing Allah.

Part **(b)** answers were meant to show how the Hadiths selected in Part **(a)** by candidates could be put into action. For the first one examples of not selling substandard products, not keeping unfair profit margins could have been given amongst others. For Hadith **(ii)** adopting an orphan, visiting the sick, resolving an argument between two individuals are some examples of what could have been written about. Candidates have gotten better at distinguishing Part **(a)** answers from Part **(b)** and on the whole this question was well attempted by candidates.

Question 2

Unfortunately quite a large number of candidates did not grasp the requirement of this question. The word **after** the time of the Rightly Guided caliphs was critical in getting the response geared to the question. Some wrote about compilation in the time of the Prophet. Many candidates wrote about the components of Hadiths and the *musnad* and *musannaf* collections. Others wrote what they remembered of Hadith compilation. A small minority did grasp the question and wrote about why Hadith compilation became all the more important after the time of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs. Answers should have focused on: to preserve Hadiths for future generations, to clarify issues and resolve disputes, to have only authentic Hadiths in circulation, to develop Islamic jurisprudence, to eliminate genuine errors in Hadiths on account of faulty memory etc.

In Part **(b)** the candidates needed to say if in their opinion Islam could be practiced without the Hadiths. Here candidates needed to give a yes or no answer and back it up with examples. Many did by saying how salat could not be performed without the teaching of the Prophet and other examples. Many candidates had given answers that belonged to Part **(b)** in Part **(a)** and repeated them again. For those who reached a Weak or Satisfactory Level in Part **(a)** did reasonably well in Part **(b)**.

Question 3

Any two battles fought in the caliphate of 'Umar could have been written about by the candidates. Candidates were required to give accuracy, detail, sequence of events, dates, names of commanders, outcomes to achieve a higher level mark. get right. If a candidate got the enemy wrong e.g. they said that a battle was fought with the Persians instead of the Romans or vice versa they could not get top levels even if the content of the answer was otherwise good. Battle questions are a part of Islamic history and you can not afford to get battle names or enemies mixed up. On the whole this was not a very popular question. Those that did attempt it did reasonably well in it.

In Part **(b)** the importance of the battles written about in Part **(a)** needed to be given. Some very good evaluative responses were seen for this Part of the question.

Question 4

Belief of a Muslim in Life after Death and the Day of Judgment needed to be written about comprehensively. Some good responses were seen. Some candidates wrote about Life after Death as part of the broader answer that you are assigned to heaven or hell after Day of Judgment and missed writing about the mini judgment in the grave and *barzakh* etc. Each answer was read on its own merit and awarded the Level it deserved. However, to get to the top level the time in the grave starting from burial needed to be written about.

Part **(b)** was very well answered by most of the candidates. Good reasoning was given and it must be said that the candidates had a clear idea about how belief in Life after Death affects the life of a Muslim.

Question 5

The question was quite simply about the significance of the *Shahada* to a Muslim. Both parts of the *Shahada* needed to be written about. Answers needed to say that the *Shahada* is the first Pillar of Islam; declaration of this pledge makes a person enter the fold of Islam; it starts with the belief in the Oneness of God and affirms God's supremacy which makes Muslims follow the path set by him by following the example of the Prophet. It affirms the belief in god and the message brought by the Prophet. It unifies Muslims into an *umma* and by acknowledging Muhammad as the messenger of God, they acknowledge his right to be respected and obeyed. Those that did not write about the second part of the *Shahada* could not get higher than the start of a L3 mark. Some candidates it must be said mixed up *Shahada* with the first Article of Faith i.e. belief in the Oneness of Allah. Links could and were made between the two but there was many a times confusion in answers.

Part **(b)** was a straight forward question answered well by most.

Conclusion

As said in previous reports it is critical to understand the question and write about what the question is asking rather than writing pages of irrelevant material. Part **(b)** responses have improved a lot and the candidates are able to present their reasons effectively in support of the answer they write. Part **(a)** is knowledge based so there is no hiding if a candidate is not well prepared.