

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

International GCSE

Islamiyat
(4IS0) Paper 1

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Section 1:

Question 1(a)(i)

Most candidates were able to translate this Surah correctly.

Question 1(a)(ii)

Many candidates just wrote "Time", "the Declining Day" or "Dawn". But correct answers generally gave more information such as "Time through the ages" or "late afternoon".

Question 1(a)(iii)

The majority of candidates observed that possessions have no value in the after-life – and therefore scored a mark.

Question 1(a)(iv)

Candidates gave a variety of relevant answers such as "daily prayer" and "Bismillah before every action".

Question 1(b)(i)

The majority of candidates were able to give accurate translations in this question.

Question 1(b)(ii)

Most candidates got this question correct.

Question 1(b)(iii)

Most candidates answered this question correctly, however, others just wrote "creations of Allah like humans" or "evil creatures" which could not be credited.

Question 1(b)(iv)

Only a minority of candidates made the "inward" or "outward" point. Other candidates gave a range of answers from "witches" to "blowers on knots" which could not be credited.

Question 2(a)(i)

This translation gave no problem to the majority of candidates.

Question 2(a)(ii)

Many candidates correctly gave "Adam"; many others gave "Abraham" or "Ishmael" or both.

Question 2(a)(iii)

Many candidates answered correctly by referring to the physical and financial sacrifice involved. A few candidate wrote that performing the duty "washes sins like a new-born baby", which is certainly a belief but one which could equally apply to sincere fasting.

Question 2(b)

The majority of candidates had no problems with any part of this question.

Question 2(c)

This was another question that was well-answered in all its parts, although some candidates just said in (ii) that "he granted the Jews a charter" which was a vague response and could not be credited.

Question 3(a)(i)

This was translated accurately by the majority of candidates.

Question 3(a)(ii)

This question was not well-answered. A few candidates correctly referred to "spiritual sickness" or "illness of the soul".

Question 3(a)(iii)

Nearly all candidates gained full marks on this question. However, a few candidates gave the answer "murder" or "adultery".

Question 3(b)(i)

This was translated well by the majority of candidates, and some used the shepherd and flock version.

Question 3(b)(ii)

Most candidates knew the answer to this question but a few candidates answered with "the journey to Madinah" or "when he was opposed by the Quraish".

Question 3(b)(iii)

This question was well answered by the majority of candidates.

Question 3(c)(ii)

Many candidates just mentioned "Friday" without any further time identification. Parts (i) and (iii) of this question did not give candidates any problems.

Section 2:

Question 4(a)

Answers to this question were mixed. Some candidates knew the whole story of the Battle of the Trench, including the part played by the Jews, and were able to gain full marks. However, some candidates wrote about the Jews but forgot to describe the battle while others did the reverse.

Question 4(b)

Most candidates gained a mark for nominating the occasion (Badr and Makkah were most popular) and most candidates were able to state accurately the treatment given out to prisoners, but then did not state the lesson which the Prophet intended his followers should learn. Some candidates referred to Ta'if instead of battles therefore repeating Question 5 material, while other candidates did not mention a particular occasion at all, but wrote a general paragraph on the treatment of enemies.

Question 4(c)

Good arguments were used on either side for this question and some candidates wrote on both sides of the argument. This topic had clearly been discussed at length in class and candidates were obviously well prepared on this topic for the purposes of the examination.

Question 5(a)(i)

Some candidates answered well but a good number did not actually say that idols were false. Most candidates did declare the worship of one God (monotheism), however, other candidates mentioned the sin of Shirk. The majority of candidates therefore gained at least two out of three marks for this question.

Question 5(a)(ii)

Some candidates answered this question well but many only wrote that Judgment Day would be a dreadful day, quoting the upset in nature, then stating that people would go to Heaven or Hell depending on their deeds without mentioning Allah's judgment. Some responses did not mention deeds. Only a few candidates indicated that the Prophet's teaching was calling for a reform in behavior.

Question 5(b)

Most candidates were able to say what happened at Ta'if but were less sure about the reasons for the harsh treatment of the Prophet. Many candidates simply wrote about what they knew about the motives of the Quraish, so some answers were short of accurate detail.

Question 5(c)

Only a few candidates were able to discuss this topic at any depth. The first part of the response was largely about freedom of worship and the second part about fair dealings in business. Most candidates did not include lessons for today in their responses.

Question 6(a)

Most candidates answered this question well but some candidates described all the rituals of Hajj without mentioning Makkah or Arafat.

Question 6(b)

Only a few candidates knew the details of the Sermon accurately. In (i) some candidates included prayer and some of the other pillars as well, but only a few candidates were able to refer to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and even less to "no new faith" after the Prophet. In (ii), kindness to neighbour was credited, even though the Prophet put this sentiment in other, different terms. On the other hand, some candidates knew his remarks about racial equality in (iii) perfectly.

Question 6(c)

"The Prophet's life was over, but his greatness was just beginning". The full impact of this quotation was not considered by many candidates. Most candidates simply wrote about the Prophet as a role-model. A few candidates ignored the opening of the quotation and instead wrote about the Prophet's own achievements. Better responses included the expansion of the Muslim Empire but often only expressed themselves in tentative terms. Only a few candidates mentioned the important legacy of the Qur'an and even less the Rightly-Guided Khalifah.

Section 3:

Question 7(a)

Many candidates knew this topic well and were able to give a full explanation. Other candidates wrote about the Hadith being an explanation of the Qur'an.

Question 7(b)

Quotations from the Qur'an were required here along with matching quotations from the Hadith; both were needed for full marks. In general responses included references to prayer, fasting and pilgrimage, giving the full details of ritual practice in the Hadith. However, such answers often did not include quotations and were repetitive.

Question 7(c)

Generally, this section was well-answered, either favouring the Qur'an or more often arguing the need for explanations from the Hadith and other sources of law. Few actual examples of Ijma and Qiyas were included in responses.

Question 8(a)

This was a popular question but was not always well-answered. Sometimes responses had a long introduction about the time before the fast starts and then about not eating between the first prayer and the magrib prayer. Some points that were relevant part (a) were included in the candidate responses to part (b) and (c), where they received credit. There were some very competent answers to this question.

Question 8(b)

This was a straightforward question which most candidates answered accurately. Physical health was stressed and where this answer was fully developed, two marks were awarded. Alternatively, the second mark could be gained by referring to self-restraint such as "cleansing the mind".

Question 8(c)

Most candidates wrote in favour of the quotation and made sensible points. A few candidates extended the concept of "a good Muslim" to include other activities besides those arising from fasting. A few candidates noted that to be sure of Heaven one should be a good Muslim anyway.

Question 9(a)

Most candidates knew something about the married life of Aishah, but only a few candidates knew this topic in detail.

Question 9(b)

This question gave the Qur'anic reference to the description of the behaviour of the Prophet's wives. The phrase "expected to behave" was key to a successful answer. Many candidates referred to the description "mothers of the faithful" and from there went on to say that the wives set an example to other women and that they could not remarry after the Prophet's death.

Question 9(c)

On the whole the topic of family life was sensibly discussed, but some essays lacked structure. Candidates may benefit from reserving more time for these supplementary answers.

Section Four

Only a very few candidates answered questions in this section so it is not possible to provide any detailed comments on these questions.

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