



GCSE

Religious Studies A

8062/15 Paper 1: Islam

Report on the examination

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General Comments

Students generally performed well on the lower tariff questions. It was encouraging to see more development of ideas in the 4 and 5 mark questions and the influence question was answered well overall this year. As in previous years some students continue to struggle with making accurate use of a source of authority in the 5-mark question. This was clear in the 1.4 question on predestination question and to some extent on the wudu question in the practices section. Centres are reminded that students must be taught sources of authority for each of the points contained within the specification. It was evident that this was an area of weakness again for many students, who were consequently capped at 4 marks.

Many students struggled with the 1.5 evaluation question on the Five Roots. Centres are reminded to ensure students are familiar with technical terms and are able to evaluate aspects of key beliefs whether this is from the Sunni or Shi'a traditions. The evaluation question on the Five Pillars was better attempted and there were some excellent answers overall. Overall, students seemed well prepared and were able to complete the paper in the allocated time.

1.1

This question was generally answered very well with more 87% of students identifying the correct answer.

1.2

Most students engaged well with this question. Many correctly identified Adam as the first human and a prophet, with frequent references to Eve (Hawwa) and the disobedience in eating from the forbidden tree. However, a number of students confused Christian and Islamic beliefs, particularly around Adam being made in the image of God and the concept of original sin, which are not part of Islamic theology. Teachers should ensure that students are confident in distinguishing between the beliefs of different religions.

1.3

This question was generally well answered. Some students confused the Prophet Muhammad with Ibrahim, and there were a few cases where events such as the destruction of idols were misattributed. A small number of students also misunderstood the term "impact", either providing only beliefs or struggling to identify any consequences. Teachers may wish to focus more explicitly on command words to ensure that students understand what is being asked.

1.4

This question, which focused on predestination (Al-Qadr), proved challenging for many students. The majority did not refer to predestination or the Six Articles of Faith and instead confused the topic with Akhirah or the Day of Judgement. Some students attempted to apply broader teachings to the concept, for example referencing the 99 names of Allah, but these were often vague or lacked relevance. Many responses were brief, repetitive, or left blank altogether. Greater clarity in teaching would support improved understanding of this concept.

1.5

Responses to this 12-mark question indicated that the Five Roots are not widely understood. Many students confused them with the Five Pillars or the Six Articles of Faith. Some incorrectly stated that Tawhid only appears in the Five Roots, without recognising its role in the Shahadah. Attempts to compare Sunni and Shi'a beliefs often lacked coherence or depth. A number of answers simply listed ideas without evaluation or meaningful reference to what "pleases" Allah. Where students understood the content, responses were much stronger, and included appropriate teachings and structured reasoning. However, in many cases, it seemed that students had rehearsed answers that did not fully fit the question. While there is no fixed structure for 12-mark responses, it would be helpful for students to explicitly link their arguments back to the statement. Generic or memorised responses were less successful. Teachers might consider encouraging students to think more independently when evaluating.

2.1

Over 84% of students identified the correct answer, some students confused Id Ul Fitr with Id Ul Adha and so did not pick up the mark.

2.2

A number of students confused the Night of Power with Ashura, and some mistakenly stated that Muslims fast on the Night of Power. Others described practices related to Ramadan more generally, rather than focusing on this particular event. It would be beneficial for students to be able to identify and explain the significance of specific religious events and practices accurately. Over 23% of students were unable to achieve full marks on this question.

2.3

This question on almsgiving was answered confidently by many students. There was clear understanding of Zakah, Sadaqah, and Khums, and a good level of detail was often provided. A small number of students misunderstood the instruction to give "contrasting" views and instead gave arguments for and against giving alms. Teaching the meaning of exam command words continues to be an important area for focus.

2.4

There were a number of partial responses to this question. While many students referred to the Five Pillars and Salah, few were able to explain the link between Wudu and Salah clearly. Some students mentioned Ghusl alongside Wudu, but did not make the distinctions clear. The use of teachings was often vague or missing entirely. It should be emphasised that identifying something as a Hadith or noting that a practice is Sunnah is sufficient for the teaching mark. There were also a number of repeated or undeveloped points.

2.5

This question was generally better answered than Question 1.5. Many students demonstrated a sound knowledge of the Five Pillars and included relevant teachings. Some responses thoughtfully compared the Pillars to other religious duties. However, a number of students struggled to identify a valid comparison, often confusing beliefs with duties. For example,

comparing Zakah to Tawhid or Akhirah, while common, was not always appropriate unless linked carefully to practice.

Stronger responses explored the value of different practices or argued that actions only have value when rooted in belief. Evaluation was often limited and repetitive, and arguments lacked development. To support future students, it may be helpful to focus on building evaluative skills and ensuring students can construct well-reasoned arguments with reference to the question statement.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.