

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 2058/01

Paper 1

General comments

In general, candidates were well prepared for this examination and they managed to present the basic facts required to gain good marks. Most candidates showed they managed the time allocated for the paper well, although there was a significant minority of candidates who were not able to answer the three required questions. Also, a few candidates answered all questions briefly, or **Questions 1, 3 and 4**, missing out **Question 2**, which is a compulsory question. There was also a significant number of candidates who did not answer **part (b)** of **Questions 2 and 3**.

Previous reports have tried to identify recurring mistakes in candidates' performances, e.g. failure to answer the question as set in the paper, or failure to evaluate facts that they have presented in their answers. Over the years there has been a significant improvement in the way that candidates are approaching questions, which is encouraging as it not only suggests that teachers are taking on board comments made by Examiners, but that they are adapting and reviewing their teaching methods each year.

However, there are some points to note which have been evident in this session's examination.

Candidates are trying to answer the question being asked of them; however, where the problem some years ago was that candidates wrote many pages of irrelevant information, many seem to be going in the opposite direction now, where they only make a few points in a short answer even if the question is worth a lot of marks. So, for example, in **Questions 2(a) and 4(a)**, some candidates wrote a few brief sentences or paragraphs worthy of a few marks, and either repeated them or failed to expand on them. This meant that although the candidates seemed to know about the subject, they were not presenting all the key facts they may have learnt about it. Candidates should be taught about the proportionality of marks, where a fuller answer will be required for questions carrying more marks. They would also do well to understand that a few specific details written in a number of paragraphs may not be enough to gain the 10 or 12 marks needed for part of a question.

CIE published mark schemes are intended to be used by teachers as a guide to what Examiners look for when marking examination papers. They are not intended to be replicated directly into a candidate's answer. However, Examiners have noticed in this particular examination that many candidates not only reproduced the exact wording of a mark scheme in their answers, but many of them were putting their answers in bullet points. Candidates should know that they have to write in continuous prose, as stated in the syllabus and on the front of the question paper. Furthermore, if they are reproducing the exact wording from previous mark schemes, Examiners know that they are not presenting their own work.

With the introduction of the revised syllabus from the June 2009 examination Examiners will be looking at the answer as a whole, the way in which the candidate presents his/her answer will have more of an impact and will benefit candidates who have put in the most work, effort and understanding of the subject into their answers. So an answer written in continuous prose and in the candidate's own words, as well as presenting the key facts and answering the question, will carry more weight than an answer that clearly shows that the candidate has put none of his/her own thought into it.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was generally answered well, with the best answers giving the overall theme or themes contained in the passages chosen as well as being written in continuous prose.

(a) In this part, a good answer would have referred to God's attributes of supremacy and his uniqueness, as well as stating how these attributes are difficult for humans to understand when

related to God. An important point to mention would be the meaning and significance of his throne, which represents his power over all creation.

Many candidates answered this well, though some were not able to mention the significance of the throne. The better answers were careful to avoid paraphrasing of the translation which is already given.

- (b) Here, a good answer would have talked about God himself calling the Prophet Moses to the light, and granting him his prophethood, as well as saying that because he was now a prophet of God he would be under his protection. Candidates should also mention that the miracle of the staff, or other such miracles, demonstrated God's power and ability to do whatever He wills.

Few candidates were able to answer this part well as they spent a lot of time writing about the background story of Moses, from when he killed someone to when he married and lived as a shepherd. Most candidates were not able to link the miracle of the staff as representing God's power.

- (c) For this Sura, a good answer would have mentioned that the main teaching is about the oneness of God, and that it is the main teaching of Islam and of the Qur'an. It should also mention that He is to be relied upon for everything, that He has unique attributes and that He is not like any other being, not being physically related to anyone or anything.

The majority of candidates scored well here.

Question 2

- (a) This part was either answered very well, or very poorly. Candidates had to use their own reasoning more than just relying on teachers' notes that they may have learnt.

There were many examples that candidates could choose from, but the key was to be able to support their answers to show that this was a quality of the Messenger of God, not just of any other human being. Some examples that could have been used are forgiveness, trustworthiness, honesty, justice, patience and the miracles that he was awarded. Of these, a good answer for forgiveness/mercy would be where candidates showed that this was a quality of the Messenger of God because he was able to forgive people in remarkable ways. So, at the conquest of Makka he forgave his enemies, even those that had persecuted him and his followers for years, and also when he went to Ta'if he showed one of the greatest examples of his mercy for others where he did not call for the people who hurt him to be crushed between the mountains, but for them to be saved in case even one of them would later become Muslim. Good answers would be able to mention the quality and give full explanations of how that quality was related to the Prophet specifically.

Some candidates also mentioned things like "he received revelations", which in itself would count as an action or quality specific to the Prophet, but many did not expand on it or give any details as to how the revelations happened or that they were significant because the prophet could not read or write, or that these revelations addressed specific people or events happening at the time. Also, saying that the Prophet was a "model of excellence" was too general a comment.

The better candidates did very well in this question and lots of good examples were brought out from the Seerah of the Prophet like the conversation of Heraclius with Abu Sufyan about the Prophet's trustworthiness. Candidates who did not perform as well were not able to mention four qualities, or mentioned four but two were the same, e.g. they gave truthful as one quality and honesty as another but gave similar examples for each. Also, many candidates wrote the qualities but did not give examples.

- (b) Answers in this part were average, with most candidates earning two marks. Good answers would have mentioned that this is a title given to the Prophet by Allah, that he closes the line of prophets that was sent by Allah, and that he is a Prophet for all times and places.

Question 3

- (a) Overall, this question was answered very well and was the most popular to be answered out of the two.

Candidates were able to mention many points related to **(i)** angels, e.g. that they are God's servants, they have no free will, they have different tasks, and were able to name a number of key angels. Some candidates, however, did mix up the names of angels and the tasks they perform. For **part (ii)** books, again most candidates were able to give full answers, e.g. that they were given for guidance to humans, that they were sent to various prophets, for specific people, and were able to mention the names of the books.

- (b)** Both **parts (i)** and **(ii)** were not very well answered. For **part (i)** good answers were able to talk about the community aspect of mosques, that they were where congregational prayers were held, people in the community would meet there for Eid or funerals etc., that they were educational centres and that they showed the unity of a community by being present amongst it. Not many candidates were able to give all these answers and only mentioned that people pray in a mosque which is better than praying at home. Good answers in **part (ii)** talked about the meaning of this Eid, what the community does on this day and that they do it to remember the Prophet Abraham. Few candidates mentioned that it marked the end of Hajj, and some confused it with Eid al-Fitr.

Question 4

Fewer candidates answered this question, and those that did answered it reasonably well.

- (a)** This was well answered with most candidates able to give the key points related to the *isnad* and *matn*. Many of the answers were written in the style of previous mark schemes. The best answers had been written in the candidates' own words and had given most of the relevant points in a concise manner.
- (b)** This was generally well answered. Most candidates were able to identify what the *musnad* and *musannaf* collections were, i.e. that they gathered Hadiths according to the first transmitter or the subject matter. Good answers mentioned the main *musnad* collection of Ibn Hanbal, that *musannaf* collections were good for established points of law, and that there are six main *sahih* Hadith books that make up the *musannaf* collections.

Weak answers did not know the difference between the two collections.

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Paper 2

General Comments

The overall performance of the candidates who attempted this paper was good. Some of the candidates did exceptionally well and scored almost maximum marks. It must be pointed out here again, as has been done in the previous years, that these were the candidates who read the question, understood it and went on to answer it in a manner and with the knowledge the question was testing. Credit is due here to the efforts of the teachers in imparting not only excellent subject knowledge but for also providing the candidates with the skills needed to answer the questions put to them.

Although the overall standard was good, it must be said that there were some recurring mistakes that need to be highlighted in order to avoid them in future examinations. One of the main ones being that just as careful reading and understanding of the question is of primary importance before attempting any question it is of equal importance to note the mark allocation for each question/part question in order to base the length of the answer accordingly. In **Question 2** especially the candidates showed a tendency to go off the point and write reams without addressing what the question was asking. Comments on the belief and teaching of each hadith carries 2 marks, it is important for the candidates to keep this in mind when writing their answers and base the length of their answers accordingly. By doing so, they will not only write more accurate and effective answers but will also allow themselves sufficient time to answer the other questions. Also when quotes are cited in answers they should be used to support the points being made. For example in **Question 3** the candidates were asked to describe the teachings of Islam about the position of women as wives, mothers and daughters, if a quote was given regarding the rights of wives it should have been specific to that relationship rather than giving general quotes on the rights of women in Islam. The number of quotes given should also be within reason. A full page of quotes with not much other information will not compensate for the lack of a full descriptive answer.

Question 4 seemed to be the least popular question this year. **Parts (b) and (c)** of this question in particular appeared to be challenging to the candidates.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

In this question the meaning and importance of underlined words or phrases was being looked for from the Qur'an passages set for special study. To gain the best result candidates had to focus on both aspects of this question. The majority however either focused on the meaning or the importance. For example, the meaning of the words in Sura 1(5) 'The straight way' (**part (a)**) is that this is the righteous path, based on the Qur'an that all Muslims should follow. The importance of following this path is that it was the one followed by Abraham and earlier prophets as well as the earlier believers in one God. Quite a few candidates managed to make the point about it being the righteous path but failed to go further and demonstrate the importance of following this path.

In **part (b)** of the question, Sura 8.44-5 (7) 'and made you appear as contemptible in their eyes', a significant number of candidates misread or misunderstood the line. They attempted to answer from the point of view that the army of the pagans appeared insignificant to the Muslims whereas the meaning of this line was that the Muslim force at Badr was made to appear as insignificant to the pagans. The importance of reading what is being asked cannot be stressed enough. Again in **part (c)**, Sura 114 (9) 'I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind' very few managed to discuss the importance part of this phrase which is that since Allah is the Lord of all he can help those who turn to him.

Question 2

As in previous years the majority of the candidates did not gain the 2 marks given for each Hadith. It is important to understand that answers need to deal with both belief and action and those candidates who can identify and write about these two aspects gain high marks. Rewording the Hadith or answering with another Hadith is not the right way to approach this question.

In Hadith **(b)** answers appeared to be confused in a lot of papers, very few made references to trust, reliance and loyalty. In Hadith **(j)** many went on to write that we should buy for our brothers what we buy for ourselves. The belief aspect of this Hadith deals with showing care and concern for the welfare of others as an important aspect of faith. Acting with care for others is a sign of sincere belief. An example of brotherhood established at Medina by the Prophet could have been given here to show understanding of how Muslims should act rather than stating literally from the Hadith that we should desire/buy for our brothers/neighbours what we desire/buy for ourselves. In Hadith **(e)** some wrote about the importance of being a hafiz which is not what was being asked. This question asks for a precise answer about the teachings of each Hadith concerning Muslim belief and action and candidates should refrain from writing general moral comments that are not specific to the Hadiths in the question.

Question 3

The question in **part (a)** asked the candidates to describe the teachings of Islam about the position of women as **(i)** wives, **(ii)** mothers, and **(iii)** daughters. This part of the question was answered well. However, the candidates should be advised that they do not need to go into details of how women in the roles of wives, mothers and daughters were treated in pre-Islamic times and that it would be sufficient to discuss the teachings of Islam on the position of women. A few in **part (i)** went on to discuss the role of men/husbands towards their wives. Also, as mentioned earlier in the general comments, it is important to give quotes that are supporting the points being made. A full page of quotes will not earn more marks.

Part (b) of the question was not attempted by many candidates and a significant number of those who attempted it did not understand the question and focused mainly on relations between husbands and wives. This part of the question was more to do with Islamic teachings on the relationship between men and women which needed to include behaving respectfully in each others presence, modesty for both men and women and not mixing freely with people of the opposite sex unless related etc. Candidates who took a few minutes to read the question and absorb what it asked managed to secure a good mark.

Question 4

This question was not attempted by many candidates. Those who did attempt it managed to do relatively well in **part (a)**. A few candidates did reasonably well in **part (b)** as well, though there was confusion between the battles of Camel and Siffin and very few went on to state that 'Ali's supporters deserted him because they were against the arbitration he had with Muawiya.

Part (c) was further sub-divided; the first part required an explanation of why the close companions of the Prophet opposed 'Ali and the second part required the candidates to explain why 'Ali's supporters deserted him towards the end of his life. The answers to **part (c)** were on the whole very weak. Here some candidates just stated that 'Ali's close companions opposed him as he failed to take action against Uthmans assassins. They however needed to further expand their answer by saying that the companions felt their demand was a just one and that 'Ali was wrong in not taking swift action against the assassins. The second section of this part required an answer highlighting that 'Ali's supporters at Siffin thought he was the leader and those who opposed him were wrong and that they felt 'Ali was wrong to arbitrate with sinners.

Question 5

This question was a very popular one and the majority of the candidates who attempted it went on to answer it well. There were some excellent answers for **part (a)** in which candidates referred to how the Prophet was brought up by Abu Talib with great care and concern, how he was taught the art of trading by him and the protection that Abu Talib gave him as the head of the clan when he was opposed by the people of Makka. However having said that it must be pointed out that in answering **(c)** not a single candidate stated that the conversion of Abu Sufyan was indicative of the fact that Islam had finally triumphed over the people of Makka. The **(d)** part of this question was perhaps the weakest in terms of the answers given. Again in this part very few mentioned the fact that it was the help of the Ansars that enabled Islam to become established in the community of Medina.