



Exemplars

AS Religious Studies: Paper 4D – Islam

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Question 1

Question and Mark Scheme

1. Explore how the Qur'an is understood as the revelation of Allah.

Question number	Indicative content
1	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is seen as the final and complete revelation of Allah, which helps humanity to understand the importance of submission to Allah. • It is seen as the direct word of Allah, which was delivered to his messenger by the angel Jibril. • It was revealed to the 'seal of the prophets' Muhammad over a number of years. • It is a guide for life and a basis of Shari'ah law, which ensures that Muslims can live in accordance with the revelation of Allah. • The Qur'an brings together the messages of all of the prior prophets and confirms their messages.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

1 Explore how the Qur'an is understood as the revelation of Allah.

The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad over a period that began during the Night of Power. It is understood to be the revelation of Allah delivered to Muhammad by the Angel Jibril. It has unique status because it is believed to be the actual words of Allah giving the eternal, true, final and complete message of Allah. It is seen to confirm and follow on from Allah's original message to earlier prophets; putting right the corruption that had occurred to this original message and is showing humans the importance of submitting to Allah.

Rippin argues that the Qur'an is at the focal point of the Islamic faith, playing a major role in devotion, worship and prayer whilst providing legal and social guidance with religious laws (Shariah). In the Qur'an Allah also lays down and commands adherence to rituals such as the five pillars to provide the spiritual focus that will enable Muslims to fully submit themselves to Allah and reflect this in their daily lives.

David Waines claims that the revelation has been reflected orally in a Muslim's daily routine and this also exists to the present day. Parts of the Qur'an are included in daily prayers and recited at night during rituals that take place during Ramadan as well as during other festivals and formal events. Its importance can be noted in the fact that the bismillah is spoken at the beginning and end of life: in the ear of the new born baby and person who is dying. The Qur'an is regarded as the final revelation of Allah and hence Muhammad is known as the Seal of the Prophets. There will be no other revelatory words from Allah to further Prophets.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 3 – 8 marks.

This relates closely to the question showing full understanding,
using a wide range of specialist vocabulary and knowledge of key ideas.

AS Religious Studies exemplars: Paper 4D

1. Explore how the Qur'an is understood as the revelation of Allah.

The Qur'an is understood as the revelation of Allah because Muslims believe it contains Allah's actual words and was given by the Angel Jibril to Muhammad who could not read or write.

It is seen to be very important as a means of helping Muslims relate to Allah. Its rules/ commands are used to modify Muslim behaviour and it is used in all aspects of worship to show how to worship Allah and to prepare a Muslim for the afterlife.

Belief in Allah is spoken when a baby is first born and when someone is dying. It continues the message of the earlier prophets and will not be replaced because Muhammad is the final prophet.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 2 – 4 marks.

Specialist language and a narrow range of knowledge and key ideas.

AS Religious Studies exemplars: Paper 4D

1. Explore how the Qur'an is understood as the revelation of Allah.

Allah revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad. He often went to a quiet cave to meditate and pray. He couldn't read and so he received the Qur'an as a miracle from Allah via the angel Jibril. He was told to read but said he couldn't. He learned that Allah is the one true God and Muhammad was the final prophet.

He went back to his wife Kadijah for a time, too frightened to speak publicly. She was his first convert.

Today, Muslims respect the Quran and place it higher than any other book in the home. They recite passages in their worship.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 2 – 3 marks.

A range of knowledge and some key ideas.

Question 2

Question and Mark Scheme

2. Assess the importance in belief in Allah as one (tawhid).

Question number	Indicative content
2	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person becomes a Muslim by acknowledging the oneness of Allah. • The Qur'an teaches the unity of Allah and submission to him. • The greatest sin is shirk, which means associating anything or anyone with Allah. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unity of Allah and submission to him is a central teaching of the Qur'an. This means that the oneness of Allah becomes central to every aspect of a Muslim's life. • In suggesting that the greatest sin is shirk, which takes away from the oneness of Allah, therefore the greatest truth must be tawhid which exemplifies Allah's oneness. • It is part of the Shahadah, which marks the basis of Islamic worship and therefore is the foundation of all Muslim practice as evidenced through its recitation at birth, death and the joining of the ummah. This suggests the centrality of tawhid through every aspect of a Muslim's life. • Because the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah and his oneness is repeatedly referred to, then his unity is central to all Islamic belief and practice. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Information/issues are identified (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). • Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made, which are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). • Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question, which are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

2 **Assess the importance in belief in Allah as one (tawhid).**

Exposito emphasises that belief in tawhid is reflected in the first of the five pillars which is the Shahada. This is important because in accepting and reciting this creed a person becomes a Muslim, that is, a person who submits to Allah. In contrast to the varying beliefs existing in Pre-Islamic Arabia, belief in Allah as one (tawhid) is important in Islam because the Qur'an emphasises 'He is one...nothing compares to him' (Surah 112). Therefore, Muslims are commanded to believe this and act upon it. Reza Aslan explains this view, stating that tawhid...is not only the basis of all articles of faith in Islam but the sum of Islamic Theology. Allah is the sole creator and hence the power behind all things. He further states that tawhid means that Allah is entirely unique, utterly indefinable, resembling nothing else in either essence or attribute.

Since Muslims believe that Allah is one and has no equals, they believe that associating anything or person with Allah is shirk. It is considered the greatest sin because it detracts from the oneness of Allah. The Qur'an teaches that those who fail in their response of making tawhid the centre of their lives and worship, will be punished in the afterlife. Hence, Muslims' fear of such punishment keeps them mindful of the demands of tawhid and the ethical requirements of their religion. This means that whilst respecting him, Muslims do not see Muhammad as anything other than a prophet who received Allah's revelation and do not have pictures or any other presentation of him because this would be shirk. Today Muslims are forbidden to have pictures of people who are famous or of those they especially admire because this could be interpreted as placing them as objects of worship and this would be shirk.

Therefore the belief in Tawhid is of vital importance to Muslims because it reflects strict obedience to the commands of Allah in the Qur'an and the observance of the five pillars as a means of committing themselves totally to Allah.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 3 – 9 marks.

The answer closely relates to the question using a wide range of knowledge and specialist vocabulary. It makes coherent links and judgements.

2 Assess the importance in belief in Allah as one (tawhid).

Belief in Tawhid is an absolute necessity if a person is to become a Muslim. This belief is central to all the practices in Islam and the Qur'an because Allah commands Muslims to only believe in him. Many early inhabitants of Pre- Islamic Arabia had turned away from worshipping Allah and worshipped idols but Muslims believe this is wrong. Failure to believe in this, and Allah's teachings will lead to judgement and hell because it reflects disobedience to Allah and is known as shirk.

Its importance can be seen because it is in the Qur'an and the first of the five pillars. Also, no representations of Allah may be made and Muslims must not make people or things into idols because that is shirk and insults the oneness and hence importance of Allah.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 2 – 5 marks.

A range of knowledge and specialist language used appropriately.

Judgements are limited in range.

2 Assess the importance in belief in Allah as one (tawhid).

It is very important to believe that Allah is one. This is different from believing in idols. It is important to believe in Tawhid because we are told to do so by Allah. If we don't accept this command, we will go to hell.

All Muslims believe in Allah as one and during their prayers they recite that they believe in him and that Muhammad is his prophet.

If they do not believe this, they are really punished with a horrible and painful punishment after they die.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 1 – 3 marks.

A range of knowledge and simplistic judgements.

Question 3

Question and Mark Scheme

3 Assess the view that Zakah is significant for Islamic practice and identity.

Question number	Indicative content
3	<p>3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zakah is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is one of the foundations of Islamic identity. • Islam teaches people to depend on Allah and not their own wealth. • Giving and receiving zakah is a duty of all Muslims. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zakah shows the Muslim belief that all people are dependent on Allah, which is a central teaching of the Qur'an, therefore showing its significance as a feature of Muslim identity. • For those who are able to give zakah, it shows the importance of purifying oneself and one's wealth before Allah. This means that wealthier Muslims are able to show their commitment to Allah and the Muslim community and therefore demonstrate the importance of Islamic identity. • In receiving zakah a Muslim replicates their reliance on Allah for all they receive, in this way they are able to show submission to Allah in accepting the wealth he has given. • It shows the Muslim belief that all people are dependent on Allah, which is shown through the wealth that is given and received and in this way strengthens the Muslim community, the ummah, and therefore is a means of expressing Muslim identity, which is central in Islam. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>

Question 3

Question and Mark Scheme

3 Assess the view that Zakah is significant for Islamic practice and identity.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). Information/issues are identified (AO2). Judgements are supported by generalised arguments (AO2).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simplistic chain of reasoning (AO2). Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made, which are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question, which are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

3 **Assess the view that Zakah is significant for Islamic practice and identity.**

There are various types of charity practised in Islam but Zakat is significant for Islamic practice because it is one of the five pillars commanded by Allah in the Qur'an (Surah 9:60). It is therefore a compulsory requirement for all Muslims, earning annually above the minimum level, to pay 2.5% of their income. Turner suggests that it is 'spending for Allah' and refers not just to money but emphasises the importance of giving of oneself, time and talents. Waines suggests that Zakat was originally linked with trade, and payment was often made in different forms such as land, animals and crops. Though money is more commonly used today, there is also evidence of payments of land and goods being made in some Muslim countries. Maqsood suggests that it was originally collected to help with local issues such as supporting orphans and widows as well as for buying the freedom of slaves and generally assisting the cause of Allah. It is a significant practice today because it supports the Ummah in many diverse ways such as by providing funds to help the poor, and funding and supporting such institutions as libraries, hospitals and schools.

The central belief relating to Zakat is that it demonstrates that all things come from Allah and that mankind depends upon him for all things. Exposito emphasises this by saying that the true owner of all things is Allah, not man. Therefore, it is important to share Allah's blessings with others. Maqsood suggests that this allows wealth to circulate more freely whilst others suggest that giving Zakat purifies individual wealth. It is also important for Muslim practice and identity because in giving Zakat Muslims are following the example of Muhammad and his community. For the individual, it is of significant importance because the spiritual benefit of giving and sharing outweighs the attachment to the material world and possessions. The rich therefore benefit by giving and sharing as well as the recipients because this demonstrates their commitment and obedience to Allah and concern for the Ummah. This attitude of sharing personal wealth has permeated Muslim practice since the time of Muhammad and hence, it is therefore recognised as part of the Muslim identity. It is one of the religion's distinguishing features and is vital for Muslims because it demonstrates the responsibility placed upon the Ummah and its individual members to fulfil the obligations of becoming Allah's faithful trustees upon earth.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 3 – 9 marks.

Closely relates to the question. A wide range of knowledge and coherent judgements made supported by evidence.

3 Assess the view that Zakah is significant for Islamic practice and identity.

Zakat is significant for Islamic practice and identity as it is laid down in the Qur'an that Muslims must give 2.5% of their wealth as a tax. Therefore, it is an order from Allah and he must be obeyed by Muslims if they are not to be judged in the afterlife and sentenced to hell.

Zakat is one of the five pillars referred to in the Qur'an and Muslims have been taught that it is most important. It is compulsory and carried out by all Muslims each year if their earnings are above a certain level. 2.5% is given which is used in helping the poor, libraries and hospitals and wherever it is required to support Islam. Therefore, because most Muslims give Zakat it reflects Islamic identity.

Muhammad is believed to have given Zakat and encouraged it amongst his community. It is an important practice because it demonstrates a Muslim's belief that everything humans possess has been given them by Allah and it makes them less selfish, and aware of those less well off than themselves. The sharing of wealth helps both those who are giving and those receiving. It also strengthens the Ummah and shows that members are fulfilling the obligations of being Allah's trustees on earth.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 2 – 6 marks.

Specialist language and terminology and coherent reasoning.

3 Assess the view that Zakah is significant for Islamic practice and identity.

Zakah is a tax which Muslims have to pay each year. They pay a percentage of their income and the money is used to help other Muslims. They can also give other money to charity to show they are not selfish.

Today, Muslims living in the West don't always pay Zakah. Muhammad was a kind man and thought about the poor and widows and it has been suggested that this is why he told his followers to pay it.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 1 – 2 marks.

A narrow range of knowledge and specialist terminology is shown and generalised judgements are made.

Question 4a

Question and Mark Scheme

4a. Explore the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Question number	Indicative content
4(a)	<p>8 marks AO1</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The society of Makkah was polytheistic with the Ka'bah as a centre for the worship of idols. • Society was splintered into different tribes with contentions and disputes being the norm of the time. • The centre of the trade and commercial routes was the city of Makkah. • There were manifestations of Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism in the Arabian peninsula. • Society was structured in such a way that the family/tribe provided for the poor and disadvantaged.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Provides a superficial understanding of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1).
Level 2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a narrow range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).
Level 3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). • Knowledge and understanding addresses a broad range of key religious ideas and beliefs (AO1). • Comprehensively develops key religious ideas and beliefs to show a depth of understanding (AO1).

4a Explore the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Muhammad was born in Arabia during the time known as jahiliyya, a time of ignorance. At this time life was so different from that within Islam. People lived in tribes. They were controlled by their tribal leader, sheikh and the structure and ethics of the tribes were controlled by tribal values and ethics. It was only wrong to steal and kill from your own tribe. Loyalty to the tribe and acceptance of the leader's authority was vital.

The tribes were Bedouin and whilst those in Makkah were settled, others from the desert areas were nomadic. Trade was very important and Makkah is believed to have been central to the trade routes.

Muhammad was involved in trade and worked in charge of his wife Kadijah's trading caravan. The Kaaba was a sacred place in Makkah housing various idols and people settled there during the four months of pilgrimage. It drew people to Makkah and was a peaceful place where fighting was not allowed. It was also a centre for trade with the selling of idols.

The religion in Arabia was diverse. It has been regarded as a time of jahiliyya because there was no sacred leader or book. Islam was seen by Muslims not as a new religion but one following on from that brought by Abraham and the Prophets which had been misunderstood and corrupted. Christianity existed there but was not adopted because of arguments between Christian groups who believed different things about Jesus. The Jews were not centred in Makkah, but groups existed in areas near Madinah.

Most Arabs believed in many gods and offered them gifts at the Kaaba. Some Arabs were animists, believing in spirits dwelling in natural places such as rocks and rivers. There were some Arabs who refused to be involved in any of these practices and were monotheists. These Hanifs meditated and prayed away from the masses. Muhammad seems to have been drawn towards these. They would have been against Arabia's immoral practices such as slavery and infanticide and these practices were also not supported by Muhammad.

Examiner comment:

Level 3/7 marks

A wide range of knowledge and specialist language. Addresses a range of key issues.

4a Explore the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

The political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life was very different to that following his revelation from Allah during his 'night of power'. The period is referred to as Jahiliyya, meaning time of ignorance. This refers to Arabia's pre-Islamic lack of insight into divine truth and submission to the one true God. The message of Islam had been brought by earlier prophets but had been generally ignored and corrupted. Politically, the society was divided into tribes and clans that were like extended families, and these, with their shaykhs (leaders) imposed total authority. Bedouin tribes in towns had settled lives but many were in desert regions living a nomadic lifestyle. Muhammad himself was from the Quraysh tribe in Makkah and this was the most dominant during the sixth century. It gave protection to various businesses and received a share of their profits. Also, as a means of tribal security, the Quraysh made alliances with various nomadic tribes visiting Makkah during the four months of pilgrimage at the Kaaba. Trade was very important in Arabia and Makkah was central to the trade routes. Muhammad grew up within this type of environment and eventually worked in charge of Khadijah's caravans that traded across these routes. She eventually became his wife.

Tribal rules and loyalty were paramount whether for those living a settled or nomadic life and this affected the conception of morality. It was only wrong to steal or kill your own tribal members and different tribes fought each other. Avenging the death of a person led to vendettas and these sometimes led to full tribal conflict. Individuals received their protection from within their tribe or through alliances with other clans. There was a wide gap between rich and poor and many did not receive support. This resulted in the weak being neglected and even cruelly treated as well as the existence of slavery and infanticide where girls were particularly affected. Gambling, drunkenness, prostitution and dishonesty in business were also features of this time.

Reza Aslan has suggested that the most important reason for the expansion of trade and importance of Makkah was the existence of the Kaaba. This was a sacred monument with a black stone that housed 360 idols. This is where locals and the visiting Bedouin tribes settled and worshipped during the time of annual pilgrimage. It was a sacred place and no violence was allowed within its vicinity. Here sacrifice, ritual and trade mixed and the buying and selling of idols and artefacts took place.

Pre-Islamic Arabia was home to a variety of religions. Many were polytheistic, believing in many gods whilst others were henotheistic, believing in one god who was supreme above the others (Max Miller). Reza Aslan defines the period as Pagan, being receptive to a multitude of influences and interpretations. Christianity and Judaism were monotheistic religions in Arabia but Judaism was more prominent in the area around Madinah than in Makkah. Christianity was not a completely clear or appealing religion at that time, due in part to the different beliefs held by the Nestorians, Monophysites and Gnostics. Zoroastrianism and animism were also religions found in Arabia at that time. One group of Monotheists, the Hanifs, lived quiet lives and refused to offer food to the gods and it has been strongly suggested that even before his revelation from Allah, Muhammad respected and was influenced by this group who worshipped God and lived strictly moral lives.

Examiner comment:

Level 3/8 marks

A wide range of knowledge and specialist language, reflecting understanding and addressing key religious ideas and beliefs.

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4a Explore the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Explore the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Muhammad lived in a tribal community and was governed by the rules and practices of his tribe. There was much fighting amongst the tribes and there was much immorality. People stole from other tribes and killed members. They also killed baby girls and sold slaves. They worshipped idols and made effigies which they sold for profit. Makkah was on the trade routes and Muhammad was in charge of a trading caravan. He was successful.

Arabia didn't have a religion with a leader and book. This led to much of the immorality. Some Arabs refused to give gifts of food to the idols and worshipped on their own.

The Kaaba was a black stone housing many idols and was visited by people from Makkah and others who were in nomadic tribes during the months of Pilgrimage.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 2 – 3 marks.

A range of knowledge and specialist language. Key ideas developed to an extent.

Question 4b

Question and Mark Scheme

- 4b Analyse the view that the message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Question number	Indicative content
4(b)	<p>5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2</p> <p>AO1 will be used by candidates to underpin their analysis and evaluation. Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding using specialist language and terminology when responding to the question, and in meeting AO2 descriptors described below.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polytheism in terms of its beliefs and practices were rejected. • The tribal nature of society was replaced by the ummah. • The message of Islam has some common ground with other religious traditions such as Christians and Jewish groups. • The message of Islam is not defined by its relationship to any other political, social or religious contexts. • Practices of Islam can be seen to build on existing social practices, while others could be seen to reject the existing social norms. <p>AO2 requires candidates to develop their answers showing analytical and evaluative skills to address the question. Such responses will be underpinned by their use of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the polytheism immediately evident in Muhammad's environs, this means the centrality of the message of the unity of Allah expressed in the Qur'an and throughout Muhammad's teachings is of paramount importance in the development of Islam. • Muhammad taught about the importance of unity rather than separation and therefore this shows significant rejection of the political and social context. • The Prophet is believed to be the seal of the Prophets and correcting previous misinterpretations of Allah's message, and therefore this is seen as a rejection of the religious context. • The message of Islam stands independent from all other influences and as such is not defined by its relationship to any other political, social or religious contexts. This indicates that rather than a reaction to, or development from existing practices, the message of Islam was an undiluted revelation from Allah, and demonstrates a radical rejection of the political, religious and social context • A large number of the practices of Islam can be seen to build on existing social practices, one example is the centrality and importance of Makkah, and therefore this can be seen to be embraced and confirmed within Islam rather than rejected. • A large number of the practices of Islam can be seen to build on existing social practices in the way that the care for the poor continued through the practices of sadaqah and zakah, therefore it would suggest that Islam did not reject all the social and political context of its founding. <p>Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.</p>

Question 4b

Question and Mark Scheme

- 4b Analyse the view that the message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A narrow range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected but are unlikely to be used appropriately or accurately (AO1). Information/issues may be selected (AO2). Makes basic connections between a limited range of elements in the question. Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). Judgements are made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A limited range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, some of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). Deconstructs religious information/issues (AO2). Makes connections between a limited range of elements in the question (AO2). Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made. Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are selected, most of which are used appropriately with some inaccuracies (AO1). Deconstructs religious information/issues, which lead to a simple chain of reasoning (AO2). Makes connections between many but not all of the elements in the question (AO2). Judgements of a limited range of elements in the question are made. Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of knowledge, specialist language and terminology are carefully selected and used appropriately, accurately and sustained throughout (AO1). Critically deconstructs religious information/issues leading to coherent and logical chains of reasoning (AO2). Makes connections between the full range of elements in the question (AO2). Constructs coherent and reasoned judgements of the full range of elements in the question. Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).

4b Analyse the view that the message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Islam's message of absolute monotheism rejects ideas and practices relating to the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life because this is in direct contradiction to those relating to polytheism and henotheism. He therefore rejected the notion of tribal and clan identity and morality as well as the immoral practices and idolatry that was linked with trade and profit. This was particularly reflected in the practices linked with pilgrimage activities at the ka'aba. The actual message of Islam is not based upon influences from pre-Islamic Arabia and nor is it seen simply as a reaction to it. It is rather seen as the result of Allah's revelation to Muhammad which is divine, eternal and independent of all other influences.

The message of Islam is not new but follows that given to the earlier prophets which over time, through the lack of devotion to Allah, has led to the immorality, pursuit of wealth and idolatry reflected in Arabia at the time of Muhammad. Jews and Christians will not accept Muhammad as the final prophet and therefore, as Seal of the Prophets, he must reject their beliefs. With Christianity, Muhammad rejects the notion of Jesus as the Son of God and the doctrine of the Trinity because he follows Islam's message that Jesus is a prophet. Cole comments that the social injustice demonstrated at that time, suggests that the society was wholly corrupt whereas the message of Islam demands total faithfulness and devotion to Allah because this will be shown in all a Muslim says or does. Therefore, Muslim ethics, its caring and religious practices depend upon strict adherence to Allah's commands and replace tribal and clan authority and obligations. The Ummah (community) is the brotherhood that gives support and care to all Muslims who live in a theocracy and hence are ruled by Allah. They will be judged by Allah and rewarded or punished by him according to whether or not they obey his commands.

The message of Islam caused alienation from the leadership and tribes in Makkah because in teaching the importance of individual judgement, resurrection and the importance of living responsibly to face accountability before Allah on the final day, it was not only rejecting the authority of the tribal system but the values and practices of Makkah. The notion of individual judgement and afterlife would possibly have disturbed them because it implied criticism of their ancestors. The belief in being members of a theocracy affected the attitude of Muslims to Makkah and the ka'aba. The ka'aba was a sacred place but the message of Islam could not accept that idols should have any place there. Hence Muhammad was motivated through his continuing revelations to eventually overcome Makkah and replaced its structure with Islam. He destroyed all the idols at the Ka'aba and it became a sacred place used as a place of pilgrimage where Muslims would worship Allah.

The religious beliefs and practices of pre-Islamic Arabia were ritually rather than theologically based. The gods of Arabia therefore had no close connection or power over the people and hence, this was rejected by Islam. Allah is involved in all aspects of a Muslim's life and to enable them to submit their lives totally to him, he has provided his word in the Qur'an that contains teachings about himself and instructions of obligatory practices that help individuals focus upon him. The five pillars form the basis of Muslim practices and attitudes. The Shahadah established that unlike Makkah's polytheistic and other religious beliefs and practices, Muslims must believe only in Allah and that Muhammad is his prophet. Allah is supreme and will supply all needs, but unlike the worship of pre-Islamic Arabia, no representation or equals are allowed. Details of Salah (prayer) are laid down in the Quran which allow Muslims to show submission and devotion in contrast to the practices at the ka'aba relating to the idols and money making ventures linked to these. Turner suggests that Muhammad led his followers in performing daily prayers as a focus of their faith thereby reviving the institution of formal prayer of the earlier prophets. The other pillars are also a means of enabling Muslims to have a relationship with Allah of obedience and devotion.

Whilst accepting that Muhammad's revelation brought about the development of Islam, it is also important to see that not all aspects of belief and practice from his life in Mecca are totally rejected. This is understandable because Islam was not a new religion but the revelation to Muhammad was a final communication from Allah. Cole suggests that the acceptance of the previous prophets and acknowledgement of Jesus showed that the Islamic message has returned to the old monotheistic tradition. Furthermore, the importance of the ka'aba as a sacred place and centre of pilgrimage reflects the significance of the Abrahamic heritage, which believes that Abraham first introduced the rites of pilgrimage, and where Hagar and Ishmael are believed to be buried. The name of Allah is used but is associated with Islam's monotheism rather than his place as chief god within henotheism. The ummah is created as the Muslim religious community but some might argue that the ideas and social values of the Ummah reflect traditional Arab ideas, though Arabian blood ties were replaced with more universal ties of religious affinity and identity. The Islamic message also emphasised all that was good and honourable from the tribal codes, particularly ideas of loyalty and protection. Furthermore, the importance given by the Muslim community to justice and equality reflects moral codes from the monotheistic elements in pre-Islamic Arabia such as Hanifs, Jews and Christians.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 4 – 20 marks.

A wide range of knowledge and specialist language with reasoned judgements that are supported.

AS Religious Studies exemplars: Paper 4D

4b Analyse the view that the message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the political, social and religious context of Muhammad's life.

Muhammad's message following his revelation from Allah during the night of power, was bound to cause anger from the leaders of the tribes in Makkah because it rejected polytheism with its idols and profitable trade, the authority and ethics of the clans, to whom loyalty was paramount and the immoral acts such as slavery and infanticide.

He was not bringing an entirely new message as he was bringing Allah's message of absolute monotheism which had originally been given to the prophets but had been corrupted over time. The message clearly stated that Allah is the authority under which people shall live and he is not the same as the inanimate idols of the Kaaba created and shaped by man. He is the creator who has created man and the whole world.

The message of Islam rejects the tribal authority and loyalties and these are replaced in Islam with the brotherhood of the Ummah that is ruled by God. Therefore, individuals are not ruled by tribal leaders with their rules and customs. Muslims will be part of a Theocracy led by Allah who has revealed himself in the miracle of the Qur'an and given his people knowledge of the eternal law, and guidance so that they may live in submission to him. The message is vital because the Qur'an enables Muslims to learn about Allah, who is aware of everything we do, and gives instructions of how we may please him. It also teaches about judgement with punishment and reward, so that Muslims might avoid doing things that will lead to hell.

The monotheistic message was shared by Christians and Jews but these did not regard Muhammad as the seal of the prophets, the final prophet whose revelation would not be repeated. Christianity is rejected by Islam even though Christians are respected as 'people of the book'. It is rejected because whilst the message of Islam regards Jesus as a prophet, Christians believe him to be the son of God and equal to God. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is considered to be wrong and 'shirk' that directly opposes Tawhid.

Whilst the rejection of most aspects of life in Pre-Islamic Arabia are clear to see, some good influences of the time can be noted such as the notions of loyalty and kindness within the tribes. This is reflected in the caring practices within Islam such as Zakat and within the Ummah. The monotheism and spiritual practices of the Hanifs affected Muhammad before he received his first revelation from Allah and continued to play a part within Muslim worship. Whilst idolatry the Kaaba was not accepted by Muhammad, the sacredness of the Kaaba was so important that Muslims faced Makkah when praying and Muhammad finally overcame the idolatry and immorality of the Kaaba and Makkah as a whole, and removed the idols and eventually replaced their worship and beliefs with those of Islam.

The message of Islam was independent of any other influence however, because it was from Allah and hence Islam developed from his revelation, through Jibril to Muhammad.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 3 – 15 marks.

A good range of knowledge and understanding and makes judgements that are supported.

4b Analyse the view that the message of Islam can be seen as a rejection of the political, social

Islam is a strict religion and it rejected practices in Makkah. The people there were immoral but Muslims weren't. Many of the rulers in Makkah did not like Muhammad criticising them and threatened him and his family. As a result, he escaped with his friends to Madinah. After many adventures, he reached Madinah and became leader.

He had always been a serious and good man. He taught his followers to worship Allah and live good lives. This is different from the tribes in Makkah. He treated all people as equals and looked after his followers. They could trust him and rely upon him.

Examiner comment:

The candidate gains level 1 – 2 marks.

A brief and narrow range of knowledge with little attempt to appraise the evidence.

