



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Religious Studies (8RS0)

PAPER 4: Study of Religion
Option 4D: Islam

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Question number	Indicative Content Explore key ideas about the Day of Judgment found in Islam.	Mark
1	8 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following. • The belief in the Day of Judgment is regarded as one of the six beliefs for Sunni Muslims and one of the five roots of faith for Shi'a Muslims. • Muslims believe that all people will be resurrected and judged according to how they lived their lives. • Muslims believe that those people who lived pleasing to God will be admitted to Paradise and there will be those that will be sent to hell. • There are various events that take place on the Day of Judgment such as crossing the bridge (Sirat), the weighing of the scales (Al Mizan) and the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad (Shafa'at). • Muslims believe the Day of Judgment will begin with the blowing of the trumpet by angel Israfil.	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• 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	• 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	• 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).

Question number	Indicative Content Assess the significance of the use of the Qur'an in the establishment of Shari'ah law.	Mark
2	3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2 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 the AO2 descriptors described below. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • Shari'ah law is regarded as the social, moral, economic and legal system that Muslims must follow. • The Qur'an outlines the foundations of Shari'ah law including the ideas that some things are haram and some things are halal. • The Prophet Muhammad taught his followers the importance of following Shari'ah. 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. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • Whilst the Qur'an is the foundation for Shari'ah, there are other sources such as Hadith, Qiyas and Ijma. Therefore, these sources are considered hugely significant for some Muslims. • The Qur'an is considered significant for establishing Shari'ah law. However, in the contemporary world there are people who believe aspects of Shari'ah law are outdated and because of this, it is no longer significant. • While Muslims consider the Qur'an to be important, some people may argue that a more significant aspect of Shari'ah is the interpretation of the Qur'an and therefore place a greater emphasis on the role of scholars. • Some Muslims may argue that to understand the practical implications of Shari'ah law, it is far more significant to study the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Given this, they may place greater significance on the lived tradition of the Sunnah. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.	(9)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• 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	• 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 (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	• 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 (AO2)

Question number	Indicative content Assess the role and purpose of the ummah in contemporary society.	Mark
3	3 marks AO1, 6 marks AO2 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. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • The ummah was traditionally understood as an interconnected brotherhood and sisterhood of all Muslims, often translated as community or nation. • The ummah replaced the pre-Islamic tribal system that existed in Arabia and established shared values between a community. • The Prophet Muhammad taught that the Ummah is one body and when one limb is hurting, the whole body reacts with a fever which symbolised that individual Muslims are there to support one another. 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. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • There are various practices outlined in the Qur'an, such as Zakat, which highlight the significance of Muslims supporting each other financially. Therefore, it was traditionally understood that the role and purpose of the ummah was one of support and co-operation between Muslims. • In the contemporary world, Muslims live in diverse places in the world. Because of this, it may be argued that the role of the ummah is not as significant as it used to be as the ummah was once only clustered in Arabia. • There are some people who have interpreted the idea of ummah with purely political dimensions. Therefore, for these people, the role of the ummah is utilised for political purposes such as advocating political change. • Whilst the traditional understanding of ummah was a shared community, there is now greater sectarianism found in the contemporary Islamic world. Consequently, the purpose of ummah has been weakened, as different groups will not consider different people to be included in the ummah. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1.	(9)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• 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	• 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 (AO2).
Level 3	7–9	• 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 (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content Explore key features of the life of Muhammad in Madinah.	Mark
4(a)	8 marks AO1 AO1 will be used by candidates to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and specialist language and terminology when responding to the question. Candidates may refer to the following. • The life of the Prophet Muhammad in Madinah began after the Hijrah from Makkah to Yathrib which was then renamed as Madinah tun-Nabi. • The first mosque was built in Madinah and the Qibla direction was changed to Makkah. • Key events in Madinah included the first battles in Islam such as Badr and Uhud and marked a turning point in the power structure of Arabia away from the Quraysh. • The Muslims entered treaties with the Quraysh which ended the years of warfare and gave rise to the conquest of Makkah by the Muslims due to the Quraysh breaking the treaty terms. • The Prophet Muhammad became the leader of Madinah and then implemented justice and equality which was found in the Qur'an.	(8)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–2	• 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	• 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	• 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).

Question number	Indicative content Analyse the significance of the Hijrah and the growth of theocracy	Mark
4(b)	5 marks AO1, 15 marks AO2 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. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO1. • The Hijrah took place in the year 622 CE and is the turning point in the development of Islam in Arabia. • The Prophet Muhammad established a pluralistic society in Madinah and laid down the principles found in the constitution of Madinah. • The nature of revelation in Madinah was also different to the messages of the Qur'an revealed in Makkah as they had a greater focus of developing society. 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. Candidates may refer to the following in relation to AO2. • Muslims were no longer persecuted in Madinah as they were in Makkah and as a result, Madinah became the first city that was ruled as an Islamic theocracy. Therefore, the Hijrah was significant in the growth of theocracy. • Whilst the Hijrah laid the foundations for what became the Islamic state, it is in the Rashidun Caliphate that the Muslim world expanded rapidly. Due to this, the role of the Caliphate could be considered far more significant in the establishment of theocracy. • The development and crystallisation of Shari'ah took place under the Umayyid and Abbasid dynasties where bureaucracy was introduced. Therefore, it can be argued that these developments were more significant in the development of theocracy. • There are Muslims who consider that the teachings of Madinah did not demonstrate a theocracy at all and instead the teachings of Islam do not place power in individuals or governments. Rather, they provide guidelines for communal living. For these Muslims, the Hijrah was not significant in the growth of theocracy as these ideas were practised in the Makkan period too. • After the Hijrah the Prophet Muhammad delivered his Last Sermon. This sermon contained the ethical principles that Muslims should adhere to and therefore has become more significant than the growth of theocracy. • After the battles that took place in early Islam, the ummah grew rapidly. As a consequence, it can be argued that these events were of greater significance than the development of theocracy. Candidates who show achievement only against AO1 will not be able to gain marks beyond the top of Level 1. Candidates who only refer to either the Hijrah or the growth of theocracy cannot go beyond Level 2.	(20)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–5	• 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 (AO2). • Judgements are supported by generic arguments (AO2). • Judgements made with no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 2	6–10	• 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 (AO2). • Judgements made with little or no attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 3	11–15	• 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 (AO2). • Judgements are supported by an attempt to appraise evidence (AO2).
Level 4	16–20	• 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 (AO2). • Reasoned judgements are fully supported by the comprehensive appraisal of evidence (AO2).