



# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2023**

**GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 1C**

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# Introduction

## Religious Studies A

### Paper 1C: Area of Study 1 – Study of Islam (Paper code: 1RA0/1C)

The paper contributes to 50% of the overall award. The assessment consists of four questions and candidates must answer all questions. The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification. Centres are to use this, rather than other published resources, when planning the course content.

This area of study comprises a study in-depth of Islam as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. There are four sections: Beliefs and Teachings, Practices Sources of Wisdom and Authority, Forms of Expression and Ways of Life. Candidates studied Islam within the context of the wider British society.

Please note:

AO stands for 'Assessment Objective'

SPaG stands for 'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar'

## Question 1 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings. Bullet point 1.1 The six Beliefs of Islam: their nature, history and purpose, including Kitab al-iman 1: 4; **how they are understood and expressed in Sunni and Shi'a Muslim communities today**; the importance of these principles for Muslims.

The question asked was: 'Outline three ways the Six Beliefs are expressed in Muslim communities today.'

Candidates are asked to 'Outline' on (a) items. Therefore, lists can reach a maximum of one mark.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a list.

Outline 3 characteristics of Allah:

Allah is creator (1 mark)

Allah is creator, judge and lawgiver (1 mark for list or sentence)

Allah is creator, busy and distant (1 mark for the sentence identifying one correct piece of information)

Creator, judge, lawgiver (1 mark for list)

Creator, busy, distant (0 Marks)

Candidates should write in three separate sentences: this ensures correct responses are credited fully and avoids losing marks for writing in list format.

Marks are given for the ways the Beliefs are expressed, not for descriptions or identifying the Beliefs.

1 (a) Outline **three** ways the Six Beliefs are expressed in Muslim communities today.

(3)

One of the six beliefs - the belief of the books - is expressed through Muslims studying them (the Quran, Torah, Injil, ~~the Gospels~~ Zabur <sup>etc</sup>). Another way is through praying salah five times daily - this expresses belief in Allah and His oneness. Finally, belief in prophets are expressed through studying the prophets life and settings.   
Remas ro demelelo.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate answers giving three ways in three sentences.

Total: 3 marks

## Question 1 (b)

**Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings.**

Bullet point 1.2 The five roots of 'Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam: Tawhid (oneness of Allah); 'Adl (Divine Justice); Nubuwwah (Prophethood); Imamah (Successors to Muhammad) and Mi'ad (The Day of Judgment and the Resurrection): **the nature, history and purpose of the five roots with reference to their Qur'anic basis, including Surah 112 (the oneness of Allah)**; the importance of these principles for different Shi'a communities today, including Sevener and Twelver.

The question asked: 'Explain two purposes of the Six Beliefs of Islam.'

Development may be extra information, extra reasoning, quotes or examples. It must link to the point being made.

The candidate gives two developed teachings.

There was no expectation to refer to quotes in this question. However, relevant quotes would have been credited.

(b) Explain **two** teachings about the oneness of Allah in the Qur'an.

(4)

One teaching of the oneness of Allah in the Quran is that the Quran teaches that Allah has no family. This means that Allah created the heavens and the earth by himself. This causes Muslims to believe that he is all-powerful.

Another teaching in the Quran is that it should be Allah and only Allah that is worshipped. This can be seen through many stories in the Quran that emphasise on the worship of only Allah and no other beings such as idols.



Marks are given for:

Teaching one

- 'no family' (1)
- is developed by 'by himself' (1)

Teaching two

- 'only Allah that is worshipped' (1)
- is developed by 'such as idols' (1)

Total: 4 marks

## Question 1 (c)

### Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings.

Bullet point 1.4 Risalah: the nature and importance of prophethood for Muslims including Surah 2: 136; **what the roles of prophets teach Muslims, exemplified in the lives of Adam, Ibrahim, Isma'il, Musa, Dawud, Isa, Muhammad.**

The question asked was: 'Explain two lessons Muslims may learn from the life of Adam. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for four marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked. The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', which must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development, it does not gain a second mark for the source.

GENERIC advice for centres to what constitutes a source of wisdom

- If the candidate stated that the source of wisdom was from the Qur'an and then paraphrased or quoted something else from Hadith, it was not credited.
- If the candidate gave the paraphrase or quote (eg from hadith) and then put an incorrect source (Qur'an 2:18) in brackets it was awarded and the bracketed reference was ignored.
- If a candidate quoted Muhammad and it was Ali or vice versa, and the quote was not accredited to them, it was not credited.
- The candidate did not have to reference a quote or quote it word for word.
- If a candidate gave the right source but the wrong chapter/verse within the correct source then the reference still gained the mark.

There are alternative interpretations of the hadith. Examiners use their judgement when searching for phrases and quotes and take into account that the Arabic can be interpreted differently by different sources. Candidates may use different Qur'an and hadith interpretations. Many candidates were not able to achieve full marks due to the lack of a source of wisdom.

The candidate gives one developed lesson and another developed lesson with reference to a source of wisdom.

(c) Explain **two** lessons Muslims may learn from the life of Adam.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One lesson we can learn from the life of Adam is that all actions you do have consequences. This lesson is taught to us when Adam and his wife/partner Hajar ate from the tree and were kicked out of Heaven for it.

Another lesson that we learn from the life of Adam is that we should never have pride, no matter who you are. This was seen in the story where Allah told everyone to bow down to <sup>Adam</sup> ~~Adam~~ and everyone did ~~except~~ <sup>except</sup> Iblis because he thought he was superior as he was made out of fire. This is seen in Surah Baqarah in a series of Ayaat where Allah talks about this event.



Marks are given for:

Lesson one

- 'actions you do have consequences' (1)
- is developed by 'ate from the tree' (1)

Lesson two

- 'never have pride' (1)
- is developed by 'bow down' (1)
- further developed by reference to a source of wisdom Qur'an (1)

The reference to a source of wisdom was found to be accurate, after using a search engine.

Total: 5 marks



References to sources of wisdom do not need to directly quote but can paraphrase.

## Question 1 (d)

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items. The candidates were assessed on AO2, Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is 'Evaluate' this statement considering the arguments for and against and reach a justified conclusion – there must be some consideration of the arguments (appraise, judge the value of, for the arguments to reach the higher levels).

Many candidates gave good answers, citing reasons for and against referring to much knowledge but not considering the value of them or analysing/evaluating them. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments, limiting candidates' progression to the higher levels.

Many centres have continued the use of writing frames to encourage appraisal, but many of the candidates did not appear to understand the demands of the skill required, resulting in many formulaic sentences added to what is often good knowledge reflecting AO1, not AO2.

Some candidates wrote 'This is a strong argument because ...' and repeated the previous point or giving another point or reason referring to the statement, not the argument itself. In other examples, candidates wrote 'This is a weak argument because...' and gave generic statements such as, 'it's not in the Qur'an'. The majority of answers did not address the reasons for the diversity within the beliefs of Islam. In some cases, candidates focussed on the strength/weakness of an argument but had not demonstrated any understanding of religion and belief.

### **Candidates were assessed on Section One: Beliefs and Teachings**

Bullet point 1.6 Malaikah: the nature and importance of angels for Muslims; how angels Jibril, Izra'il and Mika'il are shown in the Qur'an including Surah 19, 32: 11 and

2: 97 – 98, and their significance for Muslims today.

The question asked was: "Malaikah is the most important belief for Muslims today."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against. In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

In response to this question, candidates gave references to the different roles of Malaikah and their importance. There were many references to Jibril and Izra'il. Better answers referred to a comparison with other key Beliefs. Many candidates did this confidently but did not consider why Muslims did not think the same and could not explain the diversity of opinions.

Writing frames helped some candidates, but not all could utilise them effectively, to appraise the arguments. Centres should refer to training materials online. Candidates require the religious understanding of the diversity within the religious tradition, before they can begin to evaluate.

The candidate gives two sides of the argument that are supported to form logical chains of reasoning.

\*(d) "Malaikah is the most important belief for Muslims today."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Muslims may agree as the Malaikah surround Muslims everyday and they do so many things. For example, Muslims have two angels <sup>who keep</sup> ~~at their~~ <sup>their records of deeds.</sup> ~~shoulders~~ and we know this because it says in the Quran. ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> there <sup>are</sup> honourable recorders that know what you do.

Some may argue that this is a weak point because there are other more important beliefs like tawhid.

Some may say that tawhid is more important as a Muslim could easily fall into shirk if they do not believe God is one.

Some Muslims may disagree that Malaikah is not the most important belief as the Malaikah do not help Muslims today with practicing religion Islam.

For example, with the other beliefs, Muslims gain a conscience and become more motivated and God-fearing so they do not forget their Lord.

Some may argue this is a weak point as there are angels that record the sins and good deeds of a Muslim. A Muslim person could

become influenced to do good things because they know that every single <sup>action</sup> they do is being recorded. In conclusion, I ~~disagree~~ disagree that the Malaikah is the most important belief for Muslims today as there are other beliefs that Muslims should believe too in order to be classed as a Muslim.



In the first view, the candidate explains the important role of Malaikah.

There is then an attempt to appraise these arguments but this is just adding a further point.

In the second view, they offer an alternative side to the arguments suggesting why other Six Beliefs are more important than Malaikah.

They then appraise this in a basic way by directly offering a rebuttal to this point. They have begun to deconstruct the religious information and issues and made attempts at appraising the arguments presented – 'this is a strong/weak argument' followed by an explanation that links directly to the point being made.

SPaG – The candidate was awarded 3 marks because:

- The candidate spells and punctuates generally with accuracy.
- The candidate uses rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall.
- The candidate uses a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Response: 7 marks

SPaG: 3 marks

Total: 10 marks

## Question 2 (a)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices.

Bullet point 2.2 Shahadah as one of the Five Pillars: the nature, role and significance of Shahadah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including reference to Surah 3: 17 – 21; **why reciting Shahadah is important for Muslims**, and its place in Muslim practice today.

The question asked was 'Outline three reasons why reciting Shahadah is important.'

This question was answered well and in sentences. Candidates answered by referring to generic reasons, as well as why Shahadah was recited at specific events.

2 (a) Outline **three** reasons why reciting Shahadah is important.

(3)

Reciting shahadah is important as it shows you believe Allah is the only God and Muhammed is his messenger; belief in the oneness of Allah.

Another reason it's important is because it is the first thing you hear in your life which makes you a Muslim.

Another reason is because it is one of the five pillars of Islam (first pillar) which means it's a compulsory thing for you to believe making it just as important to recite.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate outlines three reasons in three separate sentences.

Total: 3 marks

## Question 2 (b)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices.

Bullet point 2.1 Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam: their nature, history and purpose of the Ten Obligatory Acts; the diversity of practice and importance of Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims today; their basis in the Qur'an, including reference to Surah 9: 71 – 73; **divergent understandings of these principles within Sunni Islam, including links with the Five Pillars.**

The question asked was: 'Explain two ways the Ten Obligatory Acts are understood in Sunni Islam.'

This question was generally answered well, with many candidates referring to the similarities and differences in how Sunni Muslims understand the Acts compared to Shi'a Muslims. Some candidates, however, wrote about the Shi'a understanding. Centres must teach all aspects of each bullet point on the specification.

The candidate gives two developed ways.

(b) Explain **two** ways the Ten Obligatory Acts are understood in Sunni Islam.

(4)

sunni islam believe in most of the ten obligatory acts but not all ~~becay~~ because it ~~is~~ includes the 4 pillars of ~~ism~~ islam and discourage ~~bad~~ meaning sunnic can follow some of the ten obligatory acts. ~~But~~ sunni don't follow Khums because it ~~is~~ was old tradition of giving 20% of you wealth to the imam or leader.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Way one

- 'believe in most' (1)
- is developed by 'includes 4 pillars' (1)

Way two

- 'don't follow Khums' (1)
- is developed by 'an old tradition' (1)

Total: 4 marks

## Question 2 (c)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Practices.

Bullet point 2.3 Salah as one of the Five Pillars including reference to Surah 15: 98 – 99 and 29: 45: the nature, history, significance and purpose of Salah for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, including different ways of understanding them; **how Salah is performed including ablution, times, directions, movements and recitations, in the home and mosque and Jummah prayer.**

The question asked was: 'Explain two ways Jummah prayer is performed. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed for four marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked. The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom' which must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development, it does not gain a second mark for the source.

Most candidates responded well to this question, but many candidates did not supply a source of wisdom. Centres are encouraged to use the specification and previous mark schemes, for examples of relevant sources of wisdom.

The candidate gives one developed way with reference to a source of wisdom, and another developed way.

(c) Explain **two** ways Jummah prayer is performed.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One way Jummah prayer is performed is in congregation with one another. Although salah can be done in private, congregative prayer increases reward and unites the ummah. Another way Jummah is prayed is the men and women are separate and is in the mosque. Walking to prayer to the mosque increases 7000 rewards with 'every step towards' the mosque which shows the importance of Jummah prayer being held there.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Way one

- 'in congregation' (1)
- further developed by 'increases reward' (1)

Way two

- 'men and women are separate' (1)
- this is developed by 'in the mosque' (1)
- further developed by reference to a source of wisdom, hadith (1)

Total: 5 marks

## Question 2 (d)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Two. Practices.

Bullet point 2.5 Zakah as one of the Five Pillars and Khums: the nature, role, significance and purpose of Zakah and khums including Surah 9: 58 – 60 and 8: 36 – 42; **why Zakah is important for Sunni Muslims**; why khums is important for Shi'a Muslims; the benefits of receiving Zakah or khums.

The question asked was: "Zakah is the most important Muslim practice." Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to different Muslim points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

Most candidates were able to engage with this question and displayed a good depth of knowledge and understanding, but were not able to evaluate why Muslims held different views on this issue. Many candidates did not gain more than Level 2, because they did not consider the value of the arguments given in answering the question.

The candidate gives two sides of the argument and refers to different Muslim views.

(d) "Zakah is the most important Muslim practice."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

Some Muslims may agree with this statement as Zakah is mentioned across both Shia and Sunni Islam emphasising its importance. Also, Zakah purifies one's wealth, removes greed and stinginess and helps improve the quality of life for the less fortunate ones. Zakah is also a pillar of Islam, furthermore dignifying its importance as the 5 pillars are the fundamentals to one's faith. These are all strong arguments, as improving one's life is a good thing as "the upper hand is superior to the lower hand" demonstrating that giving Zakah makes you a good and superior person. In addition, Zakah encourages gratitude and appreciation for Allah and reminds them that everything belongs to Allah. The prophet (SAW) also gave Zakah and we should strive to be ~~like~~ like the prophet as it is Sunnah and he said "He who loves me follows my Sunnah and he <sup>who</sup> loves my Sunnah will be with me in Jannah" emphasising that all Muslims should try to give Zakah, especially as it is only annually. However,

In contrast, some muslims may argue that zakaah isn't and shouldn't be that important as the people who can't afford to pay it may make them feel as if they aren't participating in the actions of Islam and would thus feel left out. Also, some people may just show off to pay zakaah and may also make it a competition amongst each other to see who can pay the most, yet this is a weak argument because it was actually encouraged as the sahabah (companions) of the prophet would compete to see who could give the most and we have also been taught that "our love for this world shouldn't be greater than our love for Allah", which is a strong argument as we should be prepared to give up everything for the sake of Allah. Some muslims may also argue that even though zakaah is good, it shouldn't be labelled as "the most important" because there are other equally, if not, more important acts like being punctual in prayer or fasting. To conclude, I agree with the statement as the stronger arguments are that it purifies wealth, develops good habits such as sharing as well as kindness and practicing to be grateful to Allah as if you're grateful, Allah will give you more.



The explanations of the argument are developed and their understanding of Islamic beliefs about Zakah is good.

They consider both sides of the argument and attempt appraisal of their disagreeing point in a basic way, by suggesting why this point may be weak by offering a direct critique of this.

To gain a higher mark the candidate would have needed to:

- include more depth in explanations linked to the statement
- appraise the arguments made in a more sophisticated way, by developing why some arguments have value and others may not

Total: 7 marks

### Question 3 (a)

#### Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Bullet point 3.5: The development and structure of the Hadith as a record of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad: the structure and compilation of the Hadith, including isnad and matn; divergent understandings of their authority and significance within Sunni and Shi'a Islam today, **including reference to Sahih Al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, and the Four Books.**

The question asked was: 'Outline three Hadith collections.'

This question was not answered well because many candidates could not name any, or only name one or two, hadith collections.

Some candidates identified three collections in the form of a list and could not be credited full marks for such responses. Candidates must write in full sentences, thereby not losing marks on questions to which they know the answer.

**3 (a) Outline three Hadith collections.**

**(3)**

One hadith collection is bukhari sharif, which is filled with strong, sahih hadiths from the lives of the prophet.

Another hadith collection is the Ibn Maja, which also contains the hadiths of the prophet.

Another is ~~another~~ Mishneet which includes important hadiths from the times of our prophet.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate outlines three collections in sentence form.

Total: 3 marks

## Question 3 (b)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Bullet point 3.2 **The Prophet Muhammad: events in the life of the Prophet including teaching and authority, including his call, work in Makkah and Madinah**, the hijrah; the significance of these events and the Prophet Muhammad for Muslims today including Surah 48: 26 – 29.

The question asked was: 'Explain two significant events of Muhammad's life in Madinah.'

Many candidates achieved no marks on this question, either because they did not know any or confused events in Muhammad's life from Makkah and Madinah.

Centres are encouraged to teach all elements of the specification bullet points.

The candidate gives two developed events.

(b) Explain **two** significant events of Muhammad's life in Madinah.

(4)  
One significant event in Madinah was the Battle of Badr when the people of Mecca tried to attack the Muslims. This is significant as it was the first battle of Islamic history and commenced during Ramadan and a victory given by Allah to Muhammad.

Another significant event in Muhammad's life in Madinah was ~~saving~~ pairing the Sahaba from Mecca to the Ansar and people of Madinah. This created brotherly bonds and helped all Muslims feel at home.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Event one

- 'Battle of Badr' (1)
- developed by 'attack the Muslims' (1)

Event two

- 'pairing the Sahaba' (1)
- developed by 'brotherly bonds' (1)

Total: 4 marks

### Question 3 (c)

#### Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Bullet point 3.3: The Seal of the Prophets, Surah 33: 36 – 47: Muhammad's role as 'seal of the Prophets'; the final prophet; fulfilling the teachings of all other prophets, **and as a role model to Muslims today**; the significance of Muhammad as seal of the prophets and a role model today.

The question asked was: 'Explain two reasons why Muhammad is a role model for Muslims today. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority'.

The candidate gives one developed reason, with reference to a source of wisdom and another developed reason.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why Muhammad is a role model for Muslims today.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One reason is because the Quran calls him 'Seal of the prophet' which shows he is the final messenger and so holds the most authority over the other prophets and is therefore a role model.

A second reason is Allah says in the Quran to 'obey Allah and His messenger' so automatically Muslims look to Prophet Muhammad as a role model and a guide on how they should live their lives.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Reason one

- Reference to a source of wisdom Quran 'seal of the prophets' (1)
- is developed by 'final messenger' (1)
- further developed by 'most authority' (1)

Reason two

- 'obey Allah and his messenger' (1)
- is developed by 'a guide' (1)

Total: 5 marks



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

More than one reference to a source of wisdom can be credited.

## Question 3 (d)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Three: Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Bullet point 3.4 The divergent understandings of the significance of the family of the Prophet Muhammad: including Caliph/Imam Ali (Ahl-ul-Bayt) in Sunni and Shi'a Islam and interpretations of Surah 33: 32-34, the family of the Prophet in Ismaili Islam; **and the implications for questions of authority and the origins of the split between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.**

The question asked was "Authority belongs to the family of Muhammad." Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to different Muslim points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

Some candidates displayed a very good level of knowledge and understanding on issues surrounding the importance of Muhammad's family, divergent understandings about who is considered 'family' amongst Sunni and Shi'a Muslims and the Sunni/Shi'a split.

If the question bullet refers to different Muslim points of view, as in this case, the implication is that different traditions within Islam have a different view on this topic. These should be explored. There is no expectation that different sects are named but to gain higher than Level 2, candidates must show awareness of the existence of different views, and why, within Islam.

The candidate gives two sides of the argument that are supported, to form logical chains of reasoning.

\*d) "Authority belongs to the family of Muhammad."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to different Muslim points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Shia Muslims may agree with the statement by proclaiming they are acting upon the Hadith 'Be the supporter of whoever supports Ali. Ali was the ~~son~~ nephew of the prophet and some Shias argue that this Hadith automatically shows that Ali (who is the family) of the prophet holds authority as it is believed by Shia Muslims that here, Muhammad appointed Ali as his successor. Therefore authority belongs to the family of Muhammad.

Furthermore, a Shia may also argue by saying the prophet Muhammad clearly stated 'I left behind 2 most precious things: the Quran and my family'. Again Shias argue from this Hadith that authority is automatically placed on the family of Muhammad as they are the living ~~own~~ relatives of Muhammad himself and so authority belongs to them. This argument is quite strong as it is mentioned numerous times in the Hadith about the ~~all~~ importance of the 'Ahlul Bayt' and the Hadith is inerrant and infallible so is a reliable source of authority.

On the other hand, some Sunni Muslims may counter the argument by saying that Caliphah wasn't given to Ali first but rather the ~~four~~<sup>3</sup> Sahabas then Ali. The order of the Caliphs can be argued by Sunnis that it shows the order of authority and importance which shows authority doesn't belong to the family of Muhammad, rather the Sahabas who were like the family but a spiritual family.

In addition, ~~some~~ both Shias and Sunnis can argue that authority belongs to no one but Allah and his Messenger as Allah is the omnipotent and omniscient one and in the Quran it says to 'Obey Allah and Obey His Messenger'. Therefore authority belongs to first and foremost Allah and then Prophet Muhammad.

In conclusion, after assessing both sides, I disagree with the statement as the Quran, which is infallible and without error commands to 'Obey Allah and His messenger' and ~~was~~ thus implies that authority only belongs to Allah.



In the first paragraph, the candidate explains the important role of Ali as successor and therefore inherits authority.

In the second paragraph they offer an alternative view, suggesting that authority belongs to the Rightly Guided Caliphs and so Ali is fourth in that list in terms of authority.

They have begun to deconstruct the religious information and issues and made a simple attempt at appraising arguments directly - 'this is a strong argument' followed by an explanation that links directly to the point being made and is not an additional point.

The appraisal makes judgements about the evidence used to support the point.

SPaG – The candidate was awarded 3 marks because:

- The candidate spells and punctuates generally with accuracy.
- The candidate uses rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall.
- The candidate uses a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

To gain a higher mark the candidate would have needed to provide more:

- information about judgements
- appraisal of the evidence that is more thorough

Response: 7 marks

SPaG: 3 marks

Total: 10 marks

## Question 4 (a)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Bullet point: 4.4 Shi'a obligatory actions: **understandings and implications of encouraging others to do good (Amr bil Maruf)** including Surah 42: 23 – 26; discouraging others from doing bad (Nahy Anil Munkar), Tawallah and Tabarra; Love for the Prophet Muhammad and his family and disdain for their enemies; divergent understandings of their importance for Muslims in different traditions of Islam today.

The question asked was: 'Outline three ways Shi'a Muslims encourage good acts.'

The majority of candidates performed well on this question. On occasion, some candidates repeated themselves by stating that Shi'a Muslims encourage good acts by encouraging good acts (Amr bil Maruf); this was not credited because they needed to outline three ways this was done.

4 (a) Outline **three** ways Shi'a Muslims encourage good acts.

(3)

One way Shi'a Muslims encourage good acts is by setting up charity organisations encouraging others to give to the poor. Another way is by spreading smiling so that others to smile which is a good action. A final way is by ~~raising their~~ <sup>giving</sup> sermons to the general public or how beneficial encouraging good acts is so that they do this.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate answers giving three correct ways in three separate sentences.

Total: 3 marks

## Question 4 (b)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Bullet point 4.7 The divergent understandings of use, significance, **meaning and purpose of dance, music and poetry within Islam with specific reference to Sufism: the way these are used to express belief**, as a devotional act, and how they may be used in other settings; divergent interpretations of the use of dance and music in Islam, including their rejection by some and interpretations of Sahih al-Bukhari 15: 70 and 69: 494.

The question asked was: 'Explain two ways poetry expresses Sufi beliefs.'

The majority of candidates were able to show how poetry expresses Sufism and links it to its teachings.

The candidate gives two developed ways.

(b) Explain **two** ways poetry expresses Sufi beliefs.

(4)

One way poetry expresses sufi beliefs is through the words describing the nature of Allah. This is ~~important as~~ <sup>because through</sup> this Sufis feel more closer to Allah. Another way poetry expresses beliefs is the poetic flow. This helps Sufis concentrate on Allah purely with no distractions.



Marks are given for:

Way one

- 'describing the nature of Allah' (1)
- is developed by 'closer to Allah' (1)

Way two

- 'poetic flow' (1)
- this is developed by 'concentrate on Allah' (1)

Total: 4 marks

## Question 4 (c)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Four : Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Bullet point 4.6 The role and significance of a Sheikh/teacher in Sufism: the divergent understandings of the importance of a relationship with a teacher, the purpose of the teacher; **the history, teachings and contributions of teachers: al-Ghazālī, such as in his work *Revival of Religious Sciences*, outlining the Qur'anic basis of Sufism, ibn al-'Arabi and Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya.**

The question asked was: 'Explain two teachings of the Sufi teacher Ibn al-Arabi. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

The majority of candidates responded poorly to this question. Many either confused his teachings with Rumi's or did not write anything at all.

A minority of candidates referred to his works and teachings and recognised his contribution to Sufism.

The candidate gives one developed teaching and another developed teaching with reference to a source of wisdom.

(c) Explain **two** teachings of the Sufi teacher Ibn al-Arabi.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

You can only reach Allah through the mind and spiritual love. Meaning that it's not just the body needed to love Allah but the mind and soul must want him equally.

Another teaching is that a human being nothing is essential to being you or being able to understand and love Allah. In a source of wisdom it states 'man is the pupil through which God sees'. This clearly conveys the message that in comparison to God's mighty power we are indeed nothing, in fact we are in need of him and through humbling ourselves can we do that.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Marks are given for:

Teaching one

- 'spiritual love' (1)
- this is developed by 'want this equally' (1)

Teaching two

- 'we are indeed nothing' (1)
- this is developed by 'in need of him' (1)
- reverse developed by reference to a source of wisdom, Ibn Arabi (1)

The reference to a source of wisdom was found to be paraphrased after using a search engine.

Total: 5 marks



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Sources of wisdom can be paraphrased and do not need to be referenced.

## Question 4 (d)

### Candidates were assessed on Section Four: Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Bullet point 4.5: The significance of Sufi ways of life: the origins of Sufism, orders, saints, and practice today. Sufi practices of fasting, and dhikr (remembrance) with reference to Surah 13: 28: the nature, **history, importance and purpose of fasting and dhikr and divergent understandings of their importance for Muslims today.**

The question asked was: "All Muslims should regularly practise dhikr." Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to different Muslim points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

Candidates were able to recognise Sufi and non-Sufi views on the importance of dhikr and also compared it effectively to other forms of worship.

The candidate has given two sides of the argument that are supported, to form logical chains of reasoning.

(d) "All Muslims should regularly practise dhikr."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- refer to different Muslim points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

Some Muslims may ~~share~~ agree with the statement as dhikr is a form of worship, and Allah deserves to be always worshipped. When God made Adam, He said His purpose was to "worship Me". Showing how worshipping Allah is a big practice of Islam.

This is a strong argument, as God deserves to be worshipped. It also confirms the believers' faith of a Muslim in their hearts, so strong that they can become closer to God.

Some Muslims may disagree with the statement, saying that it has not been especially mentioned it is difficult for one to do so when they are leading such busy lives.

Furthermore it is not a command of Allah, unlike the ~~command~~ other commands, like: "pray salah + give zakah." So it can't be deemed as important or necessary.

This is a weak argument as even if it is not compulsory, it increases one's chances of entering Paradise, as God said that "whoever recited all 99 of my names will enter Paradise." Reciting the 99 names of Allah is a form of dhikr and so dhikr helps one to enter Paradise.

Furthermore, dhikr is not hard to practice, and can be prayed even whilst doing other activities, showing that if someone tried to argue they do not have the chance to do dhikr, they were not trying hard enough.

In conclusion, I agree with the statement, as dhikr is easy to do and increases the chances of one entering Paradise. It also makes one be <sup>closer</sup> closer to God and the prophet (pbuh) used to practice dhikr, so we Muslims should try to follow his example in order to be the best Muslim they can be.



In the first paragraph the candidate explains the importance of constant worship of Allah and dhikr as a way of doing this.

In the second paragraph they offer alternative arguments, suggesting it is not possible to do dhikr all the time and that other forms of worship are commands, unlike dhikr.

They have begun to deconstruct the religious information and issues. They make a simple attempt at appraising arguments directly – 'this is a weak argument' followed by a rebuttal that links directly to the point being made and is not an additional argument.

To gain a higher mark the candidate would have needed to:

- include more depth in the explanations linked to the statement
- contain more justification in the conclusion for the final decision on the statement

The appraisal needs to focus more on the value of the arguments presented and why they may or may not be justified.

Total: 7 marks

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance this year, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Centres must teach to the specification and not overlook any elements, making sure candidates are prepared for all parts of the bullet points in preparation for the questions
- Candidates should write three sentences in 'outline' (a) questions. Each sentence should contain one piece of information. There is no need for development. Incorrect words or sentences should be crossed out
- The 'explain' questions (b) and (c) require two developed points. For (c) items an additional mark is given for a reference to a source of wisdom, which does not need to be referenced and can be paraphrased
- The (d) items need an understanding of religion and belief, as well as the ability to evaluate the validity of arguments in order to reach a conclusion. They should appraise the reasons given for and against the statement. Centres may wish to consider the differentiation of teaching to enable some candidates of different abilities to concentrate on learning the information needed before embarking on the evaluation
- Candidates should be directed to read the bullet points in the (d) questions and understand that they guide them to which viewpoints they should be providing, to ensure that they are meeting all the demands of the question. Centres may wish to consider identifying on the specification the different traditions/viewpoints within Islam identified that could be used to answer these questions
- Candidates should consider that the validity of the evidence is one way to appraise arguments

## **Grade boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

