



# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2023**

**GCSE Religious Studies B 1RB0 1C**

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## **Introduction**

This paper contributes 50% of the overall course award. The paper includes four questions, each covers a section of the specification, and all candidates are expected to answer all four sub-questions from each section. Details of the assessment content are provided in the specification. Centres are expected to use the Edexcel specification, rather than other published resources, when planning and teaching the course content. The examination is written based on the specification content.

This paper encourages an in depth study of Islam today. 1RBO 1C focuses on two core topics, Islamic Beliefs and Living the Muslim Life with two option topics, Marriage and the Family and Matters of Life and Death.

## Question 1 (a)

The question is concerned with those things a Muslim may learn from the lives of the prophets, in this case Adam. These teachings are crystallised as beliefs.

Those candidates who struggled tended to confuse prophet Adam with one of the other prophets, most commonly Prophet Muhammad. Many candidates simply left out the question suggesting they had no idea who Adam was.

Those who achieved full marks most commonly suggested ideas such as 'He was the first man', 'He was created from dust' or 'God spoke directly to Adam.'

This is an example of a candidate who struggled to suggest three valid beliefs about Adam.

1 (a) Outline **three** Muslim beliefs about the prophet Adam.

(3)

Adam means 'A man'. He was the first prophet.



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Examiner Comments

Whilst one of the meanings of Adam may indeed be 'a man', this is a fact rather than a belief.

A mark was awarded for the idea that Adam was the first prophet.



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Examiner Tip

Consider the key word.

This is an example of a candidate who gave three simple beliefs about the prophet Adam. They are expressed as short sentences or phrases.

Credit was awarded for

1. He was the first prophet
2. He had a wife
3. He is the ancestor of every person on earth.

1 (a) Outline **three** Muslim beliefs about the prophet Adam.

(3)

Three muslim beliefs about prophet Adam are that he was the first prophet to come to Earth, he had a wife called lady Hawwa and he is the ancestor of every person on Earth.



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Examiner Comments

Outlines do not require development.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Clip as seen.

## **Question 1 (b)**

This question was focused on the Six Beliefs of Islam with specific reference to Sunni Islam. They are the fundamental beliefs of all Muslims and, as such, are of great significance.

A significant minority continue to confuse beliefs with actions and there were many references to the Five Pillars and, on occasion, the Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam. When the question is specific to beliefs credit can only be given for the importance of beliefs rather than actions.

In marking this question credit was given both to those candidates who discussed the importance of the Six Beliefs as a whole, and to those who considered the importance of an individual belief, such as the importance of the oneness of Allah or the holy books.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who gave two simple reasons, but failed to develop these to gain the additional marks.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the Six Beliefs are important for Sunni Muslims.

(4)

The six beliefs of Islam are important for sunni's as it is the principles of a ~~a~~ sunni muslims life. Another is that the six beliefs are there as a guidance for muslims as not to go astray, and to help them attain better.



The response was awarded 2 marks as 2 simple reasons.

- It is the principles of a Sunni Muslims life (1).
- They are there as a guidance for Muslims (1).

The candidate attempted to develop the second reason but this did not add anything of value that could be credited.



Develop reasons to maximise marks.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who gave two simple reasons both of which were then developed.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the Six Beliefs are important for Sunni Muslims.

(4)

A reason why the six beliefs are important to Muslims as it makes you a better person for example belief in afterlife will give you fear to do good so you go heaven not hell.

Another reason why the 6 beliefs are important for Sunni Muslims is to create unity. This is because all Sunni Muslims believe in the 6 beliefs this creates unity and strengthens the ummah.



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Examiner Comments

The response was awarded 4 marks as 2 developed reasons.

- It makes you a better person (1). For example belief in the afterlife will give you fear to do good (1).
- To create unity (1). If all Sunni Muslims believe in the Six Beliefs this strengthens the ummah (1).



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Examiner Tip

Showcase your knowledge.

## Question 1 (c)

This question was focused on the teachings about angels found in the Qur'an. Many Muslim beliefs about angels, such as the belief that angels are made of light, are firmly rooted in the Hadith rather than the Qur'an. This led to this question proving more difficult than it at first appears. Of those who did gain marks in this question the most commonly considered ideas were those of angels as messengers from Allah and angels as guardians. A significant proportion also referred to the recording angels (Qur'an 50:18), though few were able to provide a source of authority to support it.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who provided one developed teaching about angels from the Qur'an but struggled to suggest a valid second teaching. There was no attempt to include a source of authority.

(c) Explain **two** teachings about angels shown in the Qur'an.

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

(5)

One teaching about angels is that they record the good and bad deeds you do. I know this because Allah will be record your good and bad deed at every moment of life. This means that Allah will ~~has~~ <sup>easily</sup> know if someone should go to Jannah or Jhannam.

Another Muslim teaching about angels is that the angel Jibril will take your soul in the afterlife to give to someone else so it bring new people into the world. This shows me that everyone is made from one soul.



Two marks were awarded for one developed reason.

- They record the good and bad deeds you do (1). This means Allah will easily know if someone should go to Jannah or Jahannam. (1)

The second suggested reason is inaccurate and could not be credited. Jibril does not take souls to the afterlife and souls are not recycled to bring new people into the world.



Revision is key.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who achieved full marks in two concise paragraphs with a clearly recognisable source of authority. The quotation from the Qur'an is embedded seamlessly within the reason offered.

(c) Explain **two** teachings about angels shown in the Qur'an.

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

(5)

*As teaching a Muslims are taught that each individual has angels appointed to them. In the Qur'an, it says that 'each person has angels before him and behind'. This shows that these angels act as guardians to the individual and are always with them.*

*Muslims are also taught that angels have no free will in the Qur'an. This is so that they obey God no matter what.*



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 5 marks as two developed reasons with a source of authority.

- Each individual has angels appointed to them (1). The Qur'an says 'each person has angels before him and behind (Surah 13:11) (1). These angels act as guardians to the individual (1).
- Angels have no free will (1). They obey God no matter what (1).

Whilst there is some debate as to whether angels have no free will or they choose to use their free will to obey Allah, since it is a widespread belief, supported by the Qur'an (Surah 66:6) this was accepted.



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Examiner Tip

Use the source of authority wisely.

## Question 1 (d)

This question is focused on the importance of the Qur'an as a holy book and its significance as a guide to Muslim life.

This question was also assessed as of moderate difficulty. By comparison to 2019, the last time the exam ran as a complete series, it was pleasing to see a significant improvement in the quality of responses. Many more candidates attempted at least a rudimentary attempt to appraise the arguments offered though it remains true that few carry this analysis forward to justify a conclusion. This is, perhaps, one of these easiest topics for all candidates of all abilities to express an opinion on, since all are aware of the importance of the Qur'an.

This example represents a response at the lower end of Level 2. The candidate shows limited understanding of religion and belief, presenting simple arguments with very limited, very simple development. It consists of a few simple arguments in support of the idea and a few simple arguments in opposition to the statement. The conclusion reiterates these arguments and, in the absence of any attempt at judgement of the quality of the arguments throughout the body of the response, decides, without any evidence, that the stronger side is to disagree with the argument.

\*(d) "The Qur'an is the only guide a Muslim needs."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Muslims would agree with this statement since the Quran is the only holy book which hasn't been corrupted so it contains the full<sup>and correct</sup> guidance of Allah. They would also argue that because the Quran was the final holy book, it is the most up to date of Allah's messages compared to the older holy books (Torah or Gospels) which may have an older archaic message.

However, some Muslims would disagree with this statement since the Quran was written in a (very old) society which is drastically different to modern day, so they would argue that you can't simply apply the guidance as it may not be relevant. In addition to this problem that a Muslim could face nowadays is that they may not have a solution in the Quran so they may require other holy books (like the Gospels or Torah) for guidance.

In conclusion, some Muslims would agree due to the Quran being unchanged and the most up to date, while some other Muslims would disagree arguing how the time of when the Quran was written is different to now. Overall, the stronger side is disagree as most Muslims wouldn't rely on the Quran for guidance as other holy books still contain some of Allah's message.



This response was awarded Level 2: 4 marks. SPG 3 marks.

The candidate offers simple arguments such as the Qur'an remains uncorrupted and it is the last holy book and thus most up to date. In contrast they suggest that it is still very old and cannot provide guidance today, as it may not have a solution to more modern problems. The evidence of limited understanding of religion and belief elevates this response from Level 1 to Level 2. The absence of anything beyond the simplest forms of development fix it at the bottom of the range of marks available at Level 2.

There were no issues with spelling, punctuation or grammar so the script was awarded 3 marks for SPG. This would give the candidate a total of 7 marks for this question.



Always aim to develop your arguments to strengthen your case.

This response was included in the report to illustrate the work of a top Level 2 candidate. There is clear evidence of developed reasoning employing a limited number of elements from the question.

The judgement of the quality of the arguments remains weak though the candidate does suggest a potential limitation to the authority of the Hadith. The candidate develops the arguments to generate a conclusion which, though weak, does at least attempt to compare the relative strength of the body of the arguments. In the end the fact that the Hadiths function as an exemplification and commentary on the Qur'an means the candidate can conclude that most Muslims would disagree with the argument.

\* (d) "The Qur'an is the only guide a Muslim needs."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Some Muslims would agree with the statement as the Qur'an contains everything a person needs to know. Allah is described in the Qur'an as "All knowing" and this is also one of Allah's 99 names. This is significant as Allah knows everything so the Qur'an must be correct and must contain everything for Muslims to live their life correctly. Also some Muslims would say that the Qur'an is the only unchanged book which means that all Muslims need is the Qur'an.

However, some Muslims would disagree with the statement as it says in the Qur'an that "Prayer is mandatory." The Qur'an tells Muslims to pray but it does not tell them specifically how to pray and this is why ~~we~~ they use hadith to go in detail of what the Qur'an says. It is important we have hadiths as ~~it~~ <sup>they</sup> will not understand everything written in the Qur'an. So

Hadiths are there to explain in detail.

In conclusion, some Muslims would say that the Hadiths were written down after the prophet Muhammad had died so it may not be correct as there are weak Hadiths and strong Hadiths. However, some would say that without Hadiths Muslims may find it hard to understand different parts for example Salah was only commanded but the Hadiths explained in detail how you pray so the majority Muslims would disagree with this statement.



This response was awarded level 2, 6 marks. SPG 3 marks.

The candidate links the characteristic of Allah as an all-knowing God to the value of the Qur'an as a guide. As Allah is all-knowing the Qur'an must be correct and contain everything necessary for Muslim Life. This is supplemented by the belief that the Qur'an has remained unchanged since it was first recorded. The candidate then points out that the Qur'an makes prayer mandatory but it does not explain how Allah wants Muslims to pray. The Hadith adds detail to the commands of the Qur'an, enabling Muslims to better understand the Qur'an.

In the conclusion the candidate suggests that there are 'strong' and 'weak' Hadiths suggesting there are limits to the reliability of the Hadith. Nevertheless, without the Hadith it would be harder to understand the Qur'an so the Qur'an is not the only guide a Muslim needs.

The limited attempt to criticise the value of the arguments limits this response to Level 2. However it fulfils the mark scheme requirements for the award of Level 2 and thus was awarded 6 marks.

There were no issues with spelling, punctuation or grammar so 3 marks were awarded for SPG, giving a total of 9 marks for this question.



A response requires judgement of the quality of the arguments.

## Question 2 (a)

This question is concerned with gender equality in action in Islam. It requires concrete examples of gender equality.

Those candidates who struggled to achieve marks tended to focus on the different roles for men and women outlines in the Qur'an. The focus on the differences between man and women made it difficult for such candidates to gain marks.

Those who achieved full marks gave examples such as men and women will be judged equally by Allah, men and women should support each other and the idea that both are responsible for raising Muslim children.

This response represents the work of a candidate who achieved full marks.

2 (a) Outline **three** examples of gender equality in Islam.

(3)

One example of gender equality is working as the husband and wife can both work. Another example is creation as God created them with both equally. Another example is deeds as both will be given equal opportunity to earn good deeds.



The response was awarded 3 marks for 3 valid examples.

- Both can work (1).
- God created them both equally (1).
- Both will be given equal opportunities to earn good deeds (1).



Answer Outline questions in short sentences.

This response was included as an example of a response that failed to gain full marks. It shows the importance of giving three distinctly different examples.

2 (a) Outline **three** examples of gender equality in Islam.

(3)

one example is the husband and wife need to look after each other.  
another example is woman can work.  
another example is women should not be forced to stay at home to cook and clean for her husband.



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Examiner Comments

This response gained 2 marks as 2 valid outlines.

- The husband and wife need to look after each other (1).
- Women can work (1).

The idea that women should not be forced to stay at home repeats the idea that they can work. This was regarded as repetition.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Avoid repetition.

## Question 2 (b)

This question focuses on the use of contraception in the Muslim community.

Since it specifically refers to those who accept the use of contraceptives responses that gave reasons why contraceptives should not be used were not credited.

This was also rated as easy with half of candidates achieving full marks and making 4/4 the most common mark.

Many candidates continue to suggest that Muhammad himself used coitus interruptus as a form of contraception. This was not credited. Candidates should be aware that the Hadith suggests that though Muhammad did not favour its use he did not ban it. This is a very different perspective on the use of contraceptives.

This is included as an example of the work of a candidate who gave 2 simple reasons, gaining 0 marks for development of either reason.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why some Muslims accept the use of contraception.

(4)

one reason why some muslims accept the use of  
contraception is if the ~~health~~ ~~of the woman~~ ~~is~~  
woman's <sup>life</sup> health is at risk if she were to give  
birth to a child.

a second reason is it ~~allows muslims~~ helps muslims  
with family planning when they ~~do~~ ~~want~~ want to have  
children.



This response was awarded 2 marks for 2 simple reasons.

- If the woman's life is at risk if she were to give birth to a child (1).
- It helps muslims with family planning (1).

Both responses could be easily developed if the candidate explained why these two exceptions are permissible.



Development can mean further explanation.

This response was included as an example of a candidate who achieved full marks.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why some Muslims accept the use of contraception.

(4)

• Firstly, some Muslims may use it to preserve the Mother's life, as there are certain cases where the mother's life can be put in danger. Hence, ~~the~~ the sanctity of life would allow contractions in such case.

• Secondly, some Muslims argue that Muhammad did not forbid contraception, he has just discouraged it. As a result muslims should be allowed to use it.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The response was awarded 4 marks as 2 developed reasons.

- Muslims may use it to preserve the mother's life (1). The sanctity of life would allow contraception (1).
- Some Muslims argue that Muhammad did not forbid contraception (1), he just discouraged it (1).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Teachings also act as development.

## Question 2 (c)

This question concerned Muslim attitudes to non-religious attitudes to contraception. This was judged to be of moderate difficulty with almost 10% of the candidate gaining 0 marks. This is in common with almost every question on the paper. Nevertheless the most common mark was 5/5 suggesting that candidates either knew the answer and scored well or struggled with the question and did not attempt an answer. The problem, particularly for weaker candidates, was due to the two-stage nature of the question. Firstly, candidates had to recall the non-religious attitudes to marriage. They were not awarded marks for this. Secondly, they had to suggest ways in which Muslims might respond to these attitudes. Some candidates found this challenging.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who gave 1 simple reason. The first paragraph focuses on Muslim attitudes to sex before marriage rather than Muslim attitudes to what non-religious people think about marriage. The second paragraph was credited as a simple response to any non-religious view of marriage, namely that you have to follow God's rules.

(c) Explain **two** Muslim responses to non-religious attitudes to marriage.

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

(5)

One Muslim responses to non religious  
attitudes to marriage is that  
you cant have sex before marriage  
you not allowed to have sex  
first, first you need to marry  
someone and after that you allowed  
to have sex

Another muslim responses is that you  
have to follow God's rules  
and be a good person.



This response was awarded 1 mark for 1 simple reason.

- You have to follow God's rules (1).



Answer the question asked.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who achieved full marks.

The first paragraph is an example of reverse development with the response to non-religious attitudes offered after the development.

(c) Explain **two** Muslim responses to non-religious attitudes to marriage.

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

(5)

Muslims believe that sex before marriage is a sin. This means that Muslims should avoid dating or cohabitation to resist the temptation of having sex outside of marriage and get married instead.

Muslims also believe that we have soulmates. This means that Muslims should get married in order to solidify the bond between them and their soulmate. The main source of this belief is from the Quran, which states "we created you in pairs".



This response was awarded 5 marks as two developed responses and a source of authority.

- Sex before marriage is a sin (1). Muslims would avoid dating and cohabitation and get married instead (1)
- Muslims believe we have soulmates (1). Muslims should marry to solidify the bond between you and your soulmate (1). The Qur'an states 'We created you in pairs' (Surah 78:8) (1).



Stick to the point.

## Question 2 (d)

This question considers the relative value of different types of family unit. It was ranked as of moderate difficulty though it was, perhaps the most poorly answered question on the paper. The mean mark was approximately 4. The most common mark was 5/12 with around 20% of candidates reaching this mark. Almost all the marks fell within a range between 3 and 6 marks with very few candidates achieving higher scores. There were a number of issues influencing this, primarily the fact that a number of candidates confused by 'extended families'. As a result responses did not answer the question. In addition a number struggled to give a valid alternative view. Some students gave reasons why extended families are the best type of family cleverly contrasted with why no particular family type can be considered 'best', pointing out that there are examples of strong, healthy families in every family type.

This response was included as an example of a very weak response with the candidate offering a single isolated element of understanding of religion and belief. It does gain a mark and, as such, gives evidence of the importance of trying to answer every question. There are no SPG marks awarded in 2d and 4d however had a response of this quality been awarded in 1d or 3d it would also have gained SPG marks, boosting the total marks the candidate achieved across the paper.

(d) "Extended families are the best type of family."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

In the Quran it says extended families are the best type of family some muslims will agree because <sup>having a Big family</sup> they want to strengthen the <sup>Ummah</sup> (muslim community).

in the Quran it says extended families are the best type of family, some muslims may disagree because ~~now~~ family in general is the best



This response was awarded Level 1, 1 mark as an isolated example of understanding of religion and belief. The example in question is the idea that big families strengthen the ummah.

The Qur'an does not promote any particular family type and the idea that 'family in general is the best' was not providing an alternative view.



Answer every question.

This response was included as a much stronger example of a candidate's approach to this question. It should be considered as a borderline example of a mark 7 since it would have benefitted from consideration of more elements of the question, rather than focussing on a single idea for each side of the debate. However it is strengthened by the judgement of the quality of the arguments throughout and the attempt to use these to generate an evaluative conclusion.

(d) "Extended families are the best type of family."

"The best of you are those who..."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

This essay will assess whether ~~although~~ extended families are the best type of family.

Some muslims will agree with this statement ~~as~~ that extended families are the best as you should love all family no matter how distant. For example in ~~the Quran~~ a hadith it states "The best of you ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> those who behave best towards their families". This means to love all your family and care for them, as it is what makes you a good muslim.

~~This is a strong~~

This is a strong argument as the hadiths are from the prophet Muhammed and if he is saying this then all muslims should listen as he is the perfect role model.

Other muslims may disagree with this statement and say nuclear families are better as there is more priority for others. For example

in a larger family you would need to prioritise everyone and cannot focus mainly on your children and partner. This means a smaller family will allow everyone to receive more care, love and attention.

This is a strong argument as caring for your families stability is very important.

In conclusion the strongest side to the argument is that extended families are the best as the prophet Muhammad had an extended family and all Muslims should strive to be like him.



This was awarded Level 3, 7 marks.

The candidate suggests that extended families are the best type of family because Muhammad, in the Hadith, said that the best among Muslims are those who look after their family. The candidate suggests that this means caring for all your family. This is contrasted with the benefits of a smaller family unit where each individual can receive more attention, love and care. The candidate declares both arguments to be strong and avoids the trap of suggesting that a mention of the Hadith on one side automatically makes the argument stronger. On that basis it fulfils the requirements for Level 2 and the attempted appraisal of the arguments to give a partially justified conclusion elevates it to Level 3.



Evaluate as you go!

### Question 3 (a)

This question is focussed on the purpose of Khums payments. The uses Khums can be put to are clearly enunciated in the Qur'an (Surah 8:41). 'Know that whatever spoils you take, one fifth is for Allah and the messenger, his close relatives, the poor and needy travellers.' Today many Muslims pay Khums through the imam. In Sunni Islam this is generally restricted to the spoils of war whilst in Shi'a Islam more forms of gain are subject to Khums including business profits.

This response was included as an example of a candidate who did not gain full marks.

3 (a) Outline **three** purposes of giving Khums.

Firstly, it is one of the <sup>10</sup> obligatory acts. (3)  
Secondly, it is one of the 6 beliefs.  
Thirdly, it ~~is~~ helps the community.



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Examiner Comments

The response was awarded 2 marks for two simple purposes.

- It is one of the obligatory acts (1).
- It helps the community (1).

The first of these was credited, it would be preferable to state that the payment of Khums fulfils one of the Ten Obligatory Acts.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Beliefs are not actions.

This response was included as an example of a response that gained full marks.

3 (a) Outline **three** purposes of giving Khums.

(3)

Khums help Shia Muslims to live a better Muslim life and support the community.  
Khums relieve Shias of greed which helps them stay on the right path.  
Giving Khums helps Shias to please Allah as it is a selfless act.



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 3 marks as three simple outlines.

- They support the community (1).
- Khums relieve Shi'as of greed (1).
- It helps to please Allah as a selfless act (1).



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Examiner Tip

Be clear and concise.

### Question 3 (b)

This question considers the celebration of Id-ul-Adha. It was considered an easy question with a mean mark of 3 and nearly half of candidates achieving full marks. This was offset to some extent by around 10% of candidates who scored 0 marks.

This response is included as a further example of a candidate who failed to develop simple ways. Id-ul-Adha is not specifically referenced anywhere in the response, with both reasons representing generic aspects of celebration.

(b) Explain **two** ways Muslims celebrate Id-ul-Adha.

(4)

Two ways that Muslims celebrate Id-ul-Adha is by having family and community ~~meals~~ meals and through prayer and thanks. They also celebrate by partaking in community events.



This response was awarded 2 marks as 2 simple ways.

- Having family and community meals (1).
- Through prayer and thanks (1).

A third simple reason was suggested 'partaking in community events'. This could not be credited since maximum marks for simple reasons had been achieved and none of the simple ideas developed each other. This could have been simply developed by consideration of what the festival commemorates either with reference to the feast or indeed to the thanksgiving.



Only two simple reasons count.

This response was included as an example of a response that achieved full marks. The candidate was clearly familiar with the activities undertaken and their meaning and significance. Some candidates demonstrated a vague awareness of the story and some of these seemed to believe that Ibrahim had actually made the sacrifice.

(b) Explain **two** ways Muslims celebrate Id-ul-Adha.

(4)

Islam teaches that Id ul Adha is celebrated by, sacrificing an animal, to represent the sacrifice of prophet Ibrahim ~~was~~ <sup>who was</sup> ~~willing~~ to willing to ~~do~~ ~~for~~ ~~Allah~~ ~~sult~~ sacrifice his son for Allah sult, so ~~to~~ one third is given to family and relatives, one third is kept and one third is given the poor. Islam also teaches that Id ul Adha is also celebrated by giving gifts and cards to family members and people, in order to celebrate the faithfulness of prophet Ibrahim to Allah sult.



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 4 marks for 2 developed ways.

Id-ul-Adha is celebrated by sacrificing an animal (1), to represent the sacrifice of prophet Ibrahim who was willing to sacrifice his son for Allah (1).

It is also celebrated by giving gifts and cards to family members (1), in order to celebrate the faithfulness of prophet Ibrahim (1).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Learn detailed stories.

### Question 3 (c)

This question considers the significance of the Shahadah in Muslim life.

For candidates who were familiar with the Shahadah this proved very straightforward. Many candidates also struggled to offer a source of authority, this may be because the two parts of the creed are stated in multiple verses of the Qur'an but both parts are not related in any single verse. As a result credit for use of a source of authority additional mark was awarded to those candidates who included the content of the Shahadah in their response. The most commonly suggested reasons why the Shahadah is important included ideas such as it affirms a Muslim's faith, it reminds Muslims of Allah throughout the day, it is used at important milestones in life such as at birth and at a Muslim's deathbed.

This response is included as an example of a candidate who gained 4 marks but did not provide a source of authority.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why it is important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah.

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

(5)

One reason its important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah is that it helps them feel connected with Allah. This means that they can be a strengthen their relationship with him and reassure him of their faith.

Another reason its important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah is that it helps them to feel connected with their <sup>community</sup> ~~with~~. This is because it is an act they know other in the community ~~may~~ have done - making them feel closer to others who share their experience.



This response was awarded 4 marks for 2 developed reasons.

- It helps them feel connected to Allah (1), they can strengthen their relationship with him (1).
- It helps them feel connected with their community (1), because it is an act they know others in the community may have done (1).



Include relevant creeds.

This response is included to represent the work of a candidate who achieved full marks.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why it is important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah.

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

(5)

One reason it is important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah is because it lets them understand their core beliefs and know who their God is. The Shahadah is 'There is no God but God and Prophet Muhammad is his messenger'. This shows it is important to recite it as it shows Muslims that they must worship God and listen to Muhammad's words and actions. Another reason it is important for Muslims to recite the Shahadah is because it is the thing you have to say if you want to convert to Islam. This shows it is important as it is the declaration of faith and shows that you either want to be Muslim or are proud to be Muslim and it lets Allah know that you respect him and everything that has been done.



This response was awarded 5 marks as two developed reasons with a source of authority.

- It lets them understand their core beliefs (1) and know who their God is (1). The Shahadah is 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger.' (1)
- It is the thing you have to say if you want to convert to Islam(1). It lets Allah know you respect him and everything he has done (1).



Consider exactly what you plan to say.

### Question 3 (d)

This question was focussed on whether Lesser Jihad is fundamental to Muslim life. This was deemed to be of moderate difficulty with a mean mark of 5/15 and the most common mark for around 20% of candidates being 0.

There was confusion between Lesser and Greater Jihad, with a significant proportion of candidates defending the need to enhance personal spiritual belief, clearly thinking this was Lesser Jihad. Many candidates did not attempt the question, in fact fewer attempted to answer and gained marks than in some of the other (d) questions. Some candidates were clearly reluctant to associate Lesser Jihad with physical struggle for Islam. There was also difficulty in providing an alternative view. Demonstrating that Greater Jihad is essential in the life of a Muslim is not a counter argument to the fact that Lesser Jihad is essential. More able candidates pointed out that Jihad was not prescribed in the Five Pillars therefore it could not be essential. Others pointed out that there are many aspects of Islam all of which need to be carried out by a practicing Muslim, none can be regarded as more or less essential.

This response was included as an example of a candidate who answered in the form of a simple 'for and against' lacking developed reasoning. This fulfilled the requirements for Level 1 by identifying some relevant information underpinned by isolated elements of religion and belief. There was no attempt to judge the quality of the arguments offered and the conclusion was a personal opinion. The candidate lacked a clear understanding of the meaning of Lesser Jihad in muslim life and society and its purpose in the world today.

SPG was awarded 3 marks, giving a total of 6 for the question.

\*d) "Lesser Jihad is essential in the life of a Muslim."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)  
Personally, I could disagree with this statement as violence and being a worse muslim isn't an essential quality at all. As in the Quran you are taught that peace and care is most important not hate and war. Unless it is shown first. As jihad could be killing someone. But in the Qur'an it states "Allah creates life and only he can take it".

On the other hand some may disagree as maybe later on in life you change your life and become a better muslim or during less jihad you help other muslims and it could benefit your understanding of

The response.

③

Overall, I think the statement is wrong because why would violence be an essential factor in someone's life.



This response was awarded level 1, 3 marks. SPG 3 marks.

The candidate disagreed with the statement suggesting that the Qur'an teaches that peace and care are most important. It leaps to the idea that Jihad could involve killing someone and Allah is opposed to that, unless they attack first. The initial argument is therefore somewhat confused and lacks a clear understanding of the role of Lesser Jihad. The argument in support of the argument is that you may help other Muslims. It rather muddies the waters by suggesting that in later life you might become a better Muslim implying that a 'good' Muslim wouldn't be involved in Lesser Jihad. The conclusion merely reiterates the idea that violence is never essential.



Express yourself clearly.

This response is included as an example of a more developed response to the statement. It also illustrates the importance of reading the entire response even if it looks as though it is complete at the end of the first page.

\*(d) "Lesser Jihad is essential in the life of a Muslim."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Muslim teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Lesser Jihad is essential in the life of a Muslim because when Islam is being oppressed you are meant to take up arms and fight. This means that Muslims should defend Islam and we should because the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) went fought and fought for Islam and we should follow his example. Therefore lesser Jihad is essential in the life of a Muslim.

Some Muslims may disagree with this statement because not everything has to be solved using violence. This means that you have peace by talking and having deals and violence only causes pain and suffering for both sides and therefore greater jihad helps you to become a better Muslim so how can you use violence and become a better Muslim. Therefore lesser jihad is not essential in the life of a Muslim.

I conclude that lesser jihad is ~~not~~ essential because not everything can be resolved with non-violence and sometimes you have to defend your religion and your people. This means that Lesser Jihad is important because if you are being oppressed you have to go and fight like the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Therefore lesser jihad is essential in the life of a muslim.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded Level 2, 5 marks.

The candidate offers simply developed reasoning on both sides of the argument. On one side is the idea that if Islam is being oppressed you are meant to take up arms and fight as Prophet Muhammad did. On the other hand not everything has to be resolved with violence. you can make peace by talking and making deals. If Greater Jihad helps you become a better Muslim how can you use violence and become a better Muslim? The conclusion suggests that not everything can be resolved non-violently, if you are oppressed you have to fight.

In order to progress to the top of Level 2 there should be some evidence of judgment of the quality of the arguments. In this case that is not even present in the conclusion. The body of the response contains more evidence against the idea that Lesser Jihad is essential yet the conclusion suggests it is essential.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Make sure the conclusion matches the evidence.

## Question 4 (a)

This question concerns Muslim teachings about the origins of the universe. The question was rated as of moderate difficulty but it was the least well answered of the 'a' questions. The mean mark was around 2 the lowest of all the 'a' questions. This was largely due to the fact that candidates continue to confuse the origin of the universe with the origins of human life. The two are distinctly different parts of the specification and should not be seen as a whole.

The work of this candidate was included to demonstrate the impact of conflating the origin of the universe with the origin of human life.

4 (a) Outline **three** Muslim teachings about the origins of the universe.

(3)

One belief is that Allah cause the big bond as they also accept science in their modern beliefs  
Another belief is that he created all humans equally.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark as 1 valid teaching.

- Allah caused the big bond (bang) (1).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Don't conflate topics.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate who achieved full marks.

4 (a) Outline **three** Muslim teachings about the origins of the universe.

(3)

Firstly it was created in 6 days.

Secondly Allah created it by saying 'be'.

Thirdly it was caused by one big bang that Allah made happen.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 3 marks as 3 valid teachings.

It was created in 6 days (1).

Allah created it by saying 'be' (1).

It was caused by the the big bang that Allah made happen (1).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Clear and concise.

## Question 4 (b)

This question focuses on Muslim attitudes to euthanasia and why it is wrong.

Many candidates had very clear ideas of the reasons a Muslim might use to demonstrate that euthanasia is wrong. Many revolved around the sanctity of life, the belief that only Allah should give and take life and the evidence from the Qur'an banning both murder and suicide. A few weaker candidates continue to confuse euthanasia with abortion though this is increasingly rare. This is reflected in the low number of candidates who failed to score. The mean mark was approximately 3, the majority of candidates gained 4 marks.

This response is included as an example of a candidate who gives a series of simple reasons followed by a developed reason. Since only a maximum of 2 reasons can be credited the mark available is limited to 3.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why most Muslims believe euthanasia is wrong.

(4)

One belief is that Muslims believe in the sanctity of life meaning the preservation of ~~all~~ a human life. Euthanasia is also known as a 'legal suicide' which is completely forbidden in Islam.

Another reason is because euthanasia is typically used when a person is in so much pain they can't ~~handle~~ <sup>handle</sup> it, ~~but~~ Muslims say 'Allah does not burden a soul more than it can ~~handle~~ <sup>bear</sup>' giving hopes to anything when there is pain.



This response was awarded 3 marks for a simple and 1 developed reason.

- Muslims believe in the sanctity of life (1).
- Euthanasia is typically carried out when a person is in so much pain they cannot handle it (1). Muslims say 'Allah does not burden a soul with more than it can bear'.

The idea that suicide is known as legal suicide did not act as a development of the sanctity of life so it could not be credited.



Developments must link to the initial reason given.

This response was included as an example of the work of a candidate achieving full marks in two concise paragraphs. It demonstrates effective use of a philosophical argument to gain marks.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why most Muslims believe euthanasia is wrong.

(4)

One reason why Muslims believe euthanasia is wrong is because it goes against God's plan. This is because God decides when to give or take life, therefore Muslims should not interfere.

Another reason why some Muslims believe Euthanasia is wrong is because it goes against situation ethics. This is because killing someone and speeding up their death is not a loving thing to do.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 4 marks as 2 developed reasons.

- It goes against Allah's plan (1). God decides when to give or take life (1).
- It goes against situation ethics (1). Killing someone or speeding up their death is not a loving thing to do (1).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Philosophical arguments can be used in many situations.

## Question 4 (c)

This question focuses on how Muslims may respond to the threat posed by global warming. Some candidates decided to take a philosophical approach to the question, explaining how a loving God could allow global warming. Others focused on more practical responses, such as driving less.

This question was judged to be of moderate difficulty. The mean mark was around 3/5 and the most common mark was 5. As with many questions in this series around 10% of the candidates did not attempt to answer the question or scored no marks.

This response is included as an example of a candidate who gained full marks for this question.

It should be noted that putting speech marks round 'Khalifahs' (or indeed any other Arabic word) does not constitute a source of authority. This response contains a lot of extraneous material such as the amount of plastic in the ocean. Candidates should be encouraged to plan their response to maintain focus on the question.

(c) Explain **two** ways Muslims may respond to the threat of global warming.

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

(5)

In the Quran, humans are described as "khalifahs" of the earth, which means guardians. This shows a way a Muslim may respond to the threat of global warming as a Muslim would want to protect the earth as it ~~is~~ is our duty to.

In the Quran it says "Allah made the sea of benefit for you", which means Allah made the seas to help humans so they can eat". This shows a way a Muslim may respond to the threat of global warming as if too much plastic gets in the oceans and sea levels rise from global warming, destroying ice caps, it can mean that the sea can't benefit <sup>muslims</sup> humans and so global warming is threatening Allah's creation - Muslims would campaign to stop e.g. littering and help prevent global warming.



This response was awarded 5 marks for 2 developed reasons with a valid source of authority.

Humans are described as Khalifahs of the earth (1). A Muslim would want to protect the earth as it is our duty to do so (1).

The Qur'an says 'Allah made the sea of benefit to you' (Surah 16:14) (1).  
If the sea levels rise global warming is threatening Allah's creation (1).  
Muslims should campaign to stop it and prevent global warming (1).



Stick to the point.

This response was included as an example of a candidate who gives 1 developed reason with a source of authority.

The second paragraph owes more to beliefs about the origins of the universe and addresses the idea of whether Allah is in control rather than a Muslim response to global warming.

(c) Explain **two** ways Muslims may respond to the threat of global warming.

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

(5)

Some muslims news believe that global warming is a part of Allahs doing. This is because muslims believe that Allah 'regulates all things' meaning that whatever happens is for a reason.

On the other hand, some muslims believe in the scientific explanation on the universe and may ~~not~~ deny Allahs teachings on the world and instead agree with science. This may be because they recognise that global warming is a huge threat to society.



This response was awarded 3 marks for 1 developed reason with a source of authority.

- Some muslims may believe global warming is part of Allah's doing (1). Muslims believe 'Allah regulates all things' (Surah 3:29) (1), meaning everything happens for a reason (1).

The second paragraph was not linked to global warming and was not credited.



Don't argue with your own argument in (b) and (c) questions.

## Question 4 (d)

This response focused on belief in life after death. It was judged to be a moderately difficult question with a mean of around 4.

Many candidates approached the question from the basis of the significance of faith in believing in life after death, using a lack of faith and the required non-religious views to justify this position. The lack of empirical evidence was often cited as the main issue. This was contrasted with Muslim beliefs based firmly in the Qur'an and Hadith.

The work of this candidate is included to represent the quality of work required to fulfil Level 2. The candidate wisely chooses to give non-religious views in order to support the statement and Muslim views to oppose it.

(d) "It is difficult to believe in life after death."

"It is not the right to believe in life after death."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

no proof  
meaning of Islam is putting all your trust in Allah

(12)

I intend to argue against this statement.

Some non-Muslims may agree with this statement because they would say that there is no proof of life-after death. This is because no-one knows where and what happens to a person after they die, and without proof, it makes it difficult for someone to believe in it. This is a weak argument because Muslims believe the meaning of Islam is to put all of your trust in Allah, whether you lose, gain or win, regardless of anything. The Quran warned the humanity that "they will say there is no proof but they know nothing". This is important in showing how ~~amazing~~ ~~regardless~~ Allah knew people weren't going to believe, and be skeptical of ~~it~~ ~~Qur'an~~, but it is the true believers who do believe and trust Allah.

~~Some~~ <sup>All</sup> Muslims may disagree with the statement because they believe that ~~regardless of~~ ~~no~~ they should trust Allah & the Quran when it says that there is life after death. This is in the Quran it says that "it is ~~not~~ ~~the~~ "no good no reward of someone with good deeds will go to waste". This is important in teaching Muslims that they will be judged on the Day of Judgement, and that they "ll

be rewarded with either Jannah or Jahannam. This is a strong argument because ~~it shows~~ it shows how Muslims put all their trust in Allah and in what the Quran teaches. It helps strengthen their faith as it warns them that "it's not the eyes that are blind but the hearts". Therefore showing that although it may not have physical proof, the Quran and connection with Allah is ~~all~~ the proof they need.

Overall, I disagree with the statement because I believe that if someone wanted to believe in something, they would. This is because I don't think that there needs to be physical proof of life after death, and the belief without proof in life after death is all a test. Therefore it is ~~not~~ only difficult to believe in life after death if you want it to be difficult.



This response was awarded level 2, 6 marks.

The candidate suggests that non-religious people would agree because there is no proof. This is a simple argument with little evidence of development of this basic idea. The candidate then attempts to judge the quality of the argument by asserting that it is a weak argument. It certainly is a weak argument as it is, but not because Muslims disagree with it. There are many arguments that can be offered to support the idea that there is no proof. The idea that Allah knew people would disbelieve does support the dangers of an absence of proof.

This is contrasted with the Muslim view of the importance of faith in Judgement day and the reward of paradise or punishment of hell.

The conclusion is weak though the idea that life is a test, though not well employed in this context does add to the argument for belief.

On balance there is evidence of understanding of religion and belief, though this cannot be described as accurate. Judgements of a limited range of elements of the question were made though this was only applied to one basic idea and not sustained. This led to the award of a Level 2 mark, rather than Level 3.



Focus on judgement and appraisal.

The work of this candidate is included as an example of a Level 3 candidate who manages to critically deconstruct the agree arguments without the use of the 'strong argument/weak argument'.

(d) "It is difficult to believe in life after death."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

(12)

From a Muslim point ~~view~~ non-religious point of view it can be considered to be irrational to believe in the ~~the~~ life after death due to their being no proof. The lack of people who have been to the afterlife and then back to Earth is ~~0~~, perhaps making the conceptualised idea of the afterlife extremely difficult to comprehend. However from a Muslim point of view, it could be argued that the Quran holds all the proof for the Akhirah. Jannat (al-Jannah) is described as having 'lasting gardens of bliss' whilst Jannat (Jahannam) contains fire that will scorch the faces of disbelievers. Hence, the description of heaven and hell could be argued provides abundant evidence for the existence of the after life making the primary argument illogical and inconsistent with the teachings of Islam.

Furthermore, non-religious arguments may believe that when our body is decayed into the ground it is impossible to be transported to the afterlife.

Whilst this is a logical and fair question it is

counter argued by Islamic teachings which say the soul of the body will be taken to the had.

Evidence to support this is 'the Angel of death will take your soul ~~at~~ which he has been entrusted to do and return it to your had'. This quote implies that the ~~physical~~ physical body is not taken but the soul is the what Allah judges. To further ~~may point~~ This is therefore a concise argument, whilst non-religious arguments have reason within them, they simply do not comply with the evidence and teachings of the after life in the Quran. Therefore this is a logical argument since it takes into account the beliefs and teachings of the most Holy Book.

To therefore conclude, whilst non-religious arguments maybe useful to an extent and reasonable.

in Islam it is considered illogical to believe the possibility of life after death is hard to believe due to the surplus of teachings,

descriptions and events that will occur on

Yaum-ad-Din. Hence this statement is illogical and irrational as it does not comply with Islam.



The response was awarded Level 3, 8 marks.

The candidate chooses to refute the arguments in support of the statement by using Qur'anic evidence as a counterpoint. For example, the argument that there is no proof is denied by the evidence in the Qur'an which holds all the proof a person needs. Similarly the idea that it is physically impossible to transport a body for judgement is refuted by Islamic teaching on the significance of the soul.

Throughout the candidate demonstrates Level 3 understanding of religion and belief as the counter arguments are logically deconstructed.



Not everything has to be weak or strong.

## Paper Summary

By comparison to 2019 the Paper was more difficult. More candidates appeared to have gaps in their knowledge, with more questions not attempted and evidence of lower understanding of specifically Islamic words, for example Lesser Jihad. This is likely to be due to external factors, principally the missed learning during the Covid disruption, when these candidates would have been preparing for this examination. In addition, the more accessible parts of the course have already been the subject of questions, leaving areas like Muslim responses to non-religious views about marriage, this proved more challenging, particularly for weaker candidates.

The paper appeared to have a similar balance in terms of the ability of candidates to previous years with some very strong candidates and some very weak ones, though it remains true that more questions were not attempted at all by comparison to 2019. This led to a drop in the facility score for the paper.

It was pleasing to see, particularly in 1d, that a number of candidates had begun to make an effort to make judgements of the quality of the arguments offered. Sadly, this was rarely continued into an evaluative conclusion with many candidates reverting to a personal opinion rather than considering the weight of the evidence.

## **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>

