

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

0493 ISLAMIYAT

Due to a security breach we required all candidates in Pakistan who sat the Islamiyat papers to attend a re-sit examination in June 2013. Candidates outside of Pakistan sat only the original papers and were not involved in a re-sit.



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/01

Paper 1

This component was set in an increasing number of centres around the world and the standard of entry has considerably improved. Responses ranged from some exceptionally good responses, to satisfactory attempts to answer the paper. There were very few papers at a basic level. Generally speaking all candidates answered **Questions 1** and **2** and chose two other questions to answer.

There has been a general improvement in the way candidates have addressed the second assessment objective, assessed by part **(b)** questions. This was true for both 1 **(b)** and the other questions, particularly in the way candidates related the subject material to modern day issues.

Question 1

- (a)** Almost all candidates responded to the first passage and responded well. Allah's power and oneness were the main themes drawn in response. The second passage was briefer and candidates who answered it also tended to respond briefly. The best responses elaborated on the theme that Allah is creator and to be worshipped, not the creation. Most candidates who responded to the third passage wrote about the details of judgement. The best responses also drew out aspects of the circumstances of the coming of judgement and the end of time and the signs of this.
- (b)** Many answers showed that there has been an improvement in the appreciation of the second assessment objective and the relating of passages to life today. Satisfactory answers commented about focusing on Allah for the first passage, not associating Him with partners or idols. Good answers went on to explain what that meant in everyday life, trusting in the will of Allah, and supplicating to Him all the problems of everyday life. For the second passage, the very best answers picked up on the concept of service, from the last few words of the passage, and explained what this meant in everyday life. The third passage was generally very well answered, with lots of examples of what thinking about judgement meant in everyday life for a Muslim.

Question 2

- (a)** The focus of this question was the circumstances of revelation. This question proved challenging for many candidates. Most did manage to write a satisfactory answer about the general circumstances of revelation although few went on to explain these in detail. The best answers explained the full background of the context of the early revelations and the Prophet's insistence in the one-ness of God in front of the polytheistic Arabs, for Surah 112. For Surah 108 the best answers recognised that 'abtar' was a reference to the Prophet's lack of a male heir to carry forward his family line, used mockingly by his enemies at the time of revelation of this Surah.
- (b)** This question was quite well answered. Candidates explained how the Qur'an was the primary source of legal thinking as the word of Allah, backed up with examples from the Sunnah, and where details were lacking, supplemented with the consensus of scholars (ijma) and analogy (qiyas). The best answers gave one or two examples of how they might be used in practice.

Question 3

- (a)** This was a popular and well answered question. Good responses gave details about the building of the first mosque and referenced events within a time frame from first arrival to the end of the first year. Battles such as Badr came after this time period so were not relevant in this answer.
- (b)** Again, this question was well answered and candidates expanded on the theme of forming good relations with others, just as the first Muslims in Medina formed strong ties of brotherhood with their fellow inhabitants of the city.

Question 4

- (a) The events of the conquest of Makka were generally described well and in detail by candidates who attempted this question. Good answers began with the breaking of the treaty of Hdaybiyah and narrated the events through, in order, to the destroying of the idols in the Ka'ba and the pardoning of Wahshi and Hind.
- (b) Many candidates drew points about the Prophet's forgiveness of his enemies from the conquest, and how Muslims today should be patient when facing difficulties then forgive their enemies when they overcome them. Some drew parallels from zones of conflict including Muslims in the modern world.

Question 5

- (a) Candidates responded well provided they read the question carefully and noted that this referred to events during the lifetime of the Prophet and not afterward – so events concerning the compilation of the Qur'an by 'Umar were not relevant. It was also important for candidates to refer to both 'Umar and 'Uthman, not just one of them. The best answers traced the life of 'Umar, his conversion, his donation of wealth for Tabuk, up to his initial refusal to accept the Prophet's death. For 'Uthman, the best answers mentioned his conversion through Abu Bakr, marriage to the Prophet's daughter Ruqayyah, migration to Abyssinia, ill treatment in Makka, second marriage to Kulthum, and went on to discuss his role in negotiations with the Makkans.
- (b) Candidates answered this question well, explaining that 'Umar's strength helped Muslims to pray openly and gave the new community of Muslims a boost in troubled times.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/02

Paper 2

General Comments

The overall response to this examination was good. It was found that candidates took the time to read the questions, understand them and answer them effectively. From the optional questions a large majority opted for either **Question 3** or **4** and it was found that **Question 5** was most popular amongst the candidates.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

For this question a large majority of candidates wrote good answers. It was seen that the candidates expressed the teachings given in the Hadiths quite clearly, however, at times when answering part **(b)** of the question i.e. how Muslims can put the teachings of the Hadiths into action they repeated the teachings especially when they were attempting the first Hadith. Answers for parts **(a)** and **(b)** for the fourth Hadith also tended to overlap at times with the result that the division between teachings and actions became blurred. Candidates need to structure their answers to the Hadith question of the examination in such a way that they do not write all they know about it in the first part but stick to the requirement of the question i.e. teachings being expressed in part **(a)** and actions in part **(b)**.

Question 2

This was a well attempted question. Candidates very clearly wrote in their answers why Muslims needed to know about the Prophet's Hadiths and they went on to write about how the Hadiths elaborate upon the teachings in the Qur'an, the examples given to elaborate this point were mainly about *salat* and *zakat*. Though some candidates wrote about how the annual pilgrimage, *Haji*, is performed in the light of the Prophet's Hadiths and *sunna*. Few candidates went on to write about how Hadiths have laid down the principles of law regarding inheritance, buying, selling etc. or how important the Prophet's Hadiths are in the practice of *ijma* and *qiyas* to this day. Those who did discuss these points achieved the higher levels.

The second part of this question dealt with what benefits Muslims hoped to get by following the *sunna* of the Prophet (pbuh). A balance was looked for in the answers given. Again the majority of the answers were well balanced.

In part **(b)** of this question the response was largely satisfactory. Candidates wrote about how it was feared the Hadiths might get lost or corrupted if not recorded but did not discuss points like there was no single collection of the Prophet's Hadiths that could be referred to so the need arose to compile one or that different centres arose around each companion where they lived, however candidates were not satisfied with one centre as that companion may not have known all the Hadiths. It was important not to confuse the compilation of the Hadiths with details of the compilation of the Qur'an during Abu Bakr's time.

On the whole this question was well answered by the candidates.

Question 3

Candidates identified the two major battles of Camel and Siffin and wrote with a lot of confidence about the causes, events and conclusion of these two battles. The battle of Nahrawan was also written about by some candidates. Some candidates seemed confused about who the *Kharijites* were and tended to label all who opposed 'Ali from the start of the caliphate as *Kharijites*.

In part **(b)** the candidates wrote about 'Ali being the right ruler for the time and gave some good reasons to support their points. They wrote about his closeness to the Prophet (pbuh) and his good administration despite the fact that his period as caliph was riddled with wars.

Question 4

Confident answers were given by the candidates to this question. Candidates quoted from *Sura Ikhlas* and *Ayat ul Kursi* to build their answer upon. Many went on to describe the three aspects of *tawhid*. Some named each one of them individually and then expanded their answers.

In part **(b)** again some good answers were given and evaluation was offered. In a few responses there was repetition from part **(a)**. In these answers candidates again quoted *Sura Ikhlas* and explained it. What was being looked for in the answer was evaluation and not statements, candidates could have, for example, said that *shirk* is regarded as a great sin because it is the opposite of *tawhid*.

Question 5

This was the most popular question of the paper. The question asked not for how the two pillars of *salat* and *sawm* are observed but how they bring Muslims closer to God and other Muslims. The majority of the candidates answered what was being asked; some went into the observance of *sawm* and then went on to answer what was being asked. The higher levels were given to those who specifically answered the question. It is important to keep the focus of the question in mind.

In part **(b)** the importance of one of the remaining three pillars was to be discussed. Good answers were put forward by the candidates. Some answers started describing the different rites of *Hajj* rather than its importance in the life of a Muslim or when writing about *zakat* started to go into details of how much *zakat* is due for different items.

Conclusion

The paper was well attempted by the candidates, they engaged well with the questions.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/41

Paper 1

In general, the performance has been very competent with some exceptionally good responses. All the questions appear to have been accessible to candidates across the ability range and there have been few rubric errors.

There has been a general improvement in the way candidates have addressed the second assessment objective, assessed by part **(b)** questions.

One general area to be stressed is the importance of addressing the question specifically. Candidates who write about the topic, but did not address the question specifically, tended to score less well than those who directed their answers towards the words in the question. This was particularly important in some questions, for example **Question 5 (a)**, where the question asked about the persecution of the early converts to Islam. Some candidates read the word persecution and then wrote about the persecution of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), rather than his converts.

Question 1

- (a)** Most candidates attempted passages 1 and 3, though the few who responded to passage 2 did equally well. More able candidates went clearly beyond paraphrasing the passage and defined theme(s), giving detailed answers with good description of God's oneness, His power and authority and immense knowledge (ayat-al Kursiy), His creation and forgiveness and His lack of any physical relationship and partner.
- (b)** The majority of candidates made a satisfactory attempt to explain the relevance of the themes in Muslim life. Better answers explained details of the practical application of the teachings.

Question 2

- (a)** The most popular prophets that candidates discussed were Adam and Ibrahim, though some mentioned Isa, Yusuf or Nuh. The accounts were reasonable with the relevant information regarding the miracles and God's protection. Good candidates gave a good narration of the stories of the prophets highlighting the relationship between them and God such as Isa's miraculous birth and rescue from crucifixion, Prophet Ibrahim's search of the true God and readiness to sacrifice his son, Prophet Adam's higher status because of his knowledge and ultimate forgiveness. Some candidates got the names of the prophets mixed up where they discuss the miracles granted to Isa but give the name of Musa. The best responses commented specifically on the prophet's relationship with God.
- (b)** There were some thoughtful and perceptive answers to this question which evaluated the importance of the prophets' responses to difficulties, particularly those experienced as they attempted to spread God's message in their communities. Most acknowledged that the challenges strengthened faith and saw the prophets as a role model for Muslims. Some of the best answers analysed the reasons why God might test humans.

Question 3

- (a)** A popular question and well answered mostly, although it was important to note that answers needed to be within the scope of the questions to be credited. Some candidates described the actual journey from Makka to Madina and the hurdles faced by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) before he reached Madina. Most candidates gave a good report of the failure at Taif and the Pledge of Aqaba with accurate dates and figures along with some of the terms of the pledge. Also the attempt to murder the Prophet (pbuh) and God's revelation was discussed by able candidates.

- (b) This question was very well answered. The vast majority listed the importance of migration for the Muslim community, such as to escape persecution, to safeguard the life of the Prophet (pbuh), in order to be able to practice their religion freely.

Question 4

- (a) It is important for candidates to distinguish between religious and tribal affiliation and the complexity between the two. Some candidates' answered on the assumption that non-Muslims meant Jewish tribes and the tribal conflict which ensued. Such answers were limited as there was so much more that could have been written.

There were some who explained well the different clauses of the "Charter of Madina" with non-Muslims and relations with the 3 Jewish tribes. The treatment of the hypocrites under the leadership of Abdullah bin Ubayy was also well explained. Only a few mentioned the relationship with the Christians of Najran and the Prophet's show of respect in day-to day life, such as standing when a funeral bier of a Jew passed by, and taking the side of the oppressed Jew. Some discussed the interaction with non-Muslims in Makka as well, detailing the different battles, and the Treaty of Hudaibiyah and conquest of Makka.

- (b) This was a relatively well answered question with candidates saying that Muslims have to be patient, tolerant and protect the rights of non-Muslims in their daily lives, treating them as equals and showing respect to them.

Question 5

- (a) This question was attempted by most of the candidates and the level was mostly good. Most of them wrote in depth about the persecutions faced by early converts along with the details of different types of physical tortures inflicted on them. Able candidates mentioned the names of prominent figures, such as Walib ibn Mugheerah, Utba, Abu Jahl, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, for the persecutors as well as those persecuted, such as Bilal. It was important to respond to the question for converts, not the Prophet (pbuh) himself.

In part (b) the best candidates drew parallels between the situation then and the situation now. Some mentioned Palestine, Burma and Kashmir. Most stressed on the need to be steadfast in religion.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/42

Paper 2

General Comments

The overall performance of the candidates this year was similar to that in the previous years. However, it must be noted that each year the candidates seem to get better at answering the part **(b)** questions on the paper, which require an evaluative approach. Most candidates attempted the two compulsory questions in which some gave a more general answer to **Question 2** rather than focussing on what the question was specifically asking. Candidates need to be aware that the questions on question papers may have a different focus or a slight twist in the wordings to ones they have used during the course and so in the examination they will need to adjust their answers to the requirement of the question and not simply write down a well prepared answer no matter what the question. From the 3 optional questions the last one was attempted by only a handful of the candidates and those who did attempt it did either very well or gave very general views which could be true for any battle.

Question 1

Both parts of this question were well attempted by the candidates. It is important to remember that when answering the first question, about the Hadith, not to paraphrase the wordings of the Hadith in part **(a)**, for example, for the first Hadith candidates should have written about social responsibility being one of the teachings of the Hadith and that showing concern for others also constitutes a good deed in Islam, carrying the reward of charity. The second and fourth Hadiths were also very popular whereas for the third Hadith the teachings were not so well expressed. Answers to part **(b)** were much better than in previous years and the candidates gave good examples in their answers.

Question 2

In part **(a)** of this question the candidates needed to refer to the Hadiths studied in the syllabus and based on that knowledge develop their answer about how those teachings affected the conduct of the individual in the community. The good answers were able to clearly show how the Prophet's teachings were able to give Muslims knowledge of how to deal with others, these answers cited the Hadiths, went on to explain them and then linked them to the question by saying what benefits society would gain by the practice of those Hadiths. Some answers simply cited the Hadiths and explained their teaching. To get to the top levels or even to go up within a level it is important to link the response to what is being asked in the question. This can be done even in a sentence as once the connection is made the development of the answers increases and so does the level. This question was not about *isnad* and *matn*.

Part **(b)** also had some good answers saying how, by following the Prophet's Hadiths, society could be improved. Here it was not necessary to quote Hadiths and explain them individually. A more general response would have sufficed.

Question 3

This was a very popular question and well answered. It was important to know the correct dates and places.

Part **(b)** was excellently answered by many candidates and all valid responses brought out the sense of equality promoted by *Hajj*.

Question 4

In part **(a)** of this question candidates needed to focus on both the how and the why. In a lot of answers the 'why' part was well described but not much was given in the way of answer for the 'how' part besides the Eid prayers. In this answer candidates had the opportunity to write about how the two Eid's are celebrated in families and in different countries.

As in the other part **(b)** responses candidates wrote evaluative responses on how the two Eid's bring the Muslim community together. A few candidates mentioned how the world wide community of Muslims are brought closer together.

Question 5

This question was attempted by a few candidates, some of who wrote high level answers. In a question of this type dates, places, key features about the specific battle, names of the commanders etc. are important to give.

In part **(b)** many candidates gave good responses. Candidates needed to give their opinion and back it up with reasons. In some cases answers said that he was an equally good military leader and administrator and backed up the answer with reasons.