

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/11

Paper 1

General comments

Generally speaking, candidates were well prepared for this examination in that they were able to answer the four required questions in the time allocated. A significant minority missed out a complete question.

Overall Examiners noted that the performance of the candidates was good for this session, and again many candidates gave the main points in an outline in most of the answers but did not give enough details to achieve the highest level.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates are showing that they understand the difference between part (a) and part (b) answers, but there are a significant number who still repeat in part (b) what they have said in part (a). Part (b) should be seen as a question where candidates can interpret the themes in the everyday lives of Muslims, rather than focusing on what the sura says or its background. Candidates can reach the higher levels if they elaborate their answers rather than giving short statements such as “this is about the knowledge of Allah.”

(a) This part was generally well answered. Candidates were able to pick out themes of God’s creation, that He is in control of all things as well as His Oneness and mercy.

There were a few candidates who answered this part by paraphrasing the suras, and there were others who wrote general answers that could be applied to all suras.

(b) Good answers to this part tried to show how the themes are relevant to the Muslims themselves. For example, “Similarly if we Muslims face difficulties in life, such as during preaching of Islam by missionaries, they should retain hope in Allah and ask His mercy.” Answers needed more than just a comment such as “if we read these suras it will help us.”

Question 2

(a) This question focused on the experiences of two prophets that the candidates have studied. It was a generally well answered question, with candidates giving a lot of information about the two prophets they had chosen to write about as well as the relevant quotations and references to these stories in the Qur’an.

Candidates needed to include details, not mix up the stories of the prophets they had chosen and know the names of the prophets they were writing about.

(b) Most candidates gave answers related to being patient and having faith in God. Better answers were able to relate the prophet’s experience to the experiences of Muslims, e.g. “Similarly a true believer is never left by God...best example is Muslim missionaries who retain hope when rejected.”

Question 3

- (a) This question about the night journey and ascension was averagely answered, with candidates knowing that the Prophet was taken from Makka to the heavens to meet God. However, many of the significant details were missing from their answers, and so answers could not reach higher levels. The best answers gave details of Jibra'il coming to the Prophet, washing his heart, taking him to Jerusalem on Buraq to lead the prophet's in prayer, the things that he saw and the conversations that he had when he ascended the heavens, his dialogue with God and the reaction of the Quraysh when he returned. Average answers mentioned only a few of these things, without many details.
- (b) This was satisfactorily answered, with most candidates saying that it consoled the Prophet after the death of his wife.

Better answers went on to say that this event was to console him and show God's love and protection for him, as well as showing his status amongst all the prophets. It showed his closeness to God which allowed him to gain confidence in his preaching again.

Question 4

- (a) This was averagely answered with most candidates giving only a general outline of the migration to Abyssinia and the security given by the King. Many candidates did not give details of the number who migrated, and did not give details of the dialogue that took place between the King, the Quraysh and the Muslim migrants. Generally it was said that the Muslims recited verses from sura Maryam and the King said that this and the bible were lights of the same candle. The better candidates gave details of the speech of Ja'far, the verses he quoted and the subsequent response of the King and the Quraysh.
- (b) Candidates wrote about the Muslims escaping persecution and finding safety, but many of the answers were general and did not achieve the higher level.

Question 5

- (a) This question on the brotherhood between the migrants and helpers was averagely answered as many answers lacked details of the actual support given by each side. Many answers focused on the migration to Madina and left little time to write about the brotherhood that developed.
- (b) There was not much evaluation in this question with most answers saying that Muslims should help each other and share their belongings with each other. Better answers said that Muslims should help feed and clothe those who are escaping persecution in neighboring countries and ensure that they are looked after and not living in poverty.

Key messages

- Candidates should try to give as many details as they can for part (a) questions, rather than a general outline. It seems in many answers that the candidates know the topic but their failure to give specific details results in average marks.
- Candidates should make it clear if they have answered a part of the question on another sheet within the booklet. Some candidates wrote part of their answer at the end of the blank sheets but did not indicate they had done so.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/12

Paper 1

General comments

Generally speaking, candidates were well prepared for this examination in that they were able to answer the four required questions in the time allocated. Only a small number did not finish their answers or missed out a complete question.

Overall Examiners noted that the performance of the candidates was good for this session, and again many candidates gave the main points in an outline in most of the answers but did not give enough details to achieve the highest level.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates are showing that they understand the difference between part **(a)** and part **(b)** answers, but there are a significant number who still repeat in part **(b)** what they have said in part **(a)**. Part **(b)** should be seen as a question where candidates can interpret the themes in the everyday lives of Muslims, rather than focusing on what the sura says or its background. Candidates can reach the higher levels if they elaborate their answers rather than giving short statements such as “this is about the knowledge of Allah.”

(a) This part was generally well answered. Candidates were able to pick out themes of God’s knowledge, His forgiveness, His power over all creation, that He is the Creator of all things and that he looks after those under His guidance. Few candidates elaborated on these themes e.g. “He taught Adam the knowledge which shows his love for Adam...also the knowledge given to Adam led him to the straight path.” Details such as this for the various themes allow the candidates to achieve the highest levels.

There were a few candidates who answered this part by paraphrasing the suras, and there were others who wrote general answers that could be applied to all suras.

(b) Good answers to this part tried to show how the themes are relevant to Muslims themselves. For example, “Sura Kausar encourages the oppressed Muslims of today to bear the persecution they face. They must have self control and faith in Allah when faced with a hardship. They should not neglect the obligations and faraiz of Islam in order to maintain the pleasure of Allah.”

Question 2

(a) This question focused on the teachings about God in the Qur’an. This proved to be a challenging question as candidates did not always focus their answer about God in the Qur’an, but wrote about the prophets and creation. Many wrote general answers about God being the Lord of mankind, that sura Ikhlas says He is one and has no partners, or that he has knowledge over all things.

Better answers were able to write about three or four passages, reference the sura, give a lot of detail about what it said about God (“His originality and ability to create is matchless. He is free of all defects, diseases and weaknesses like sleep and fatigue), give quotations as well as cross reference them to other relevant suras.

(b) This answer was generally satisfactory with many candidates saying that Muslims might start to fear God or start living a life more devoted to Islam. Better answers said things like, “when faced with people from other religions Muslims can be confident in their knowledge of God, that He is the Creator and the One”, or, that by understanding that God can end their life at any time and He is

the final judge, "Muslims will try to boost their religious education and acquire skills that will help them be successful in the Hereafter as well as this world."

Question 3

- (a) This question was about the Battle of Badr and was the most popular choice of the optional questions.

This part was generally well answered, though many answers lacked significant detail to gain the highest levels, e.g. they may have quoted the verse that God sent angels to help the Prophet but they did not explain that this was to help the Muslims and did not give numbers.

The better answers gave details about numbers, the names of the main people involved, the numbers on both sides that were killed, etc.

One of the main misconceptions in this answer was that the Quraysh reached the water wells first and so the Muslims did not have any water, whereas it was the Muslims who reached there first and so controlled the water supply.

- (b) This was satisfactorily answered, with most candidates saying that it teaches military leaders to have more faith in God. Better answers gave details about the Prophet's strategy, putting their trust in God, and treating the prisoners of war well, which they related to current situations around the world.

Question 4

- (a) This was averagely answered with candidates either focussing on the final sermon or the Prophet's time in Madina after that.

Most candidates were able to write about a couple of the lessons from the Final Sermon, mainly the treatment of wives or slaves. The more able candidates managed to quote most of the sermon and also went on to describe the Prophet's illness and final days in Madina.

A significant number wrote about the Conquest of Makka, or some of the other battles in the later years of the Prophet's life.

- (b) Candidates wrote about treating wives and slaves/servants well, but many of the answers were general.

Question 5

- (a) This question on the Prophet's daughters was generally well answered, although most candidates tended to focus on Fatima more than the other three daughters.

In the weaker answers, general points were given about the daughters being righteous and supportive of their father, and many mixed up the names of the daughters, especially Zainab, Ruqayya and Umm Kulthum. Some candidates did not know the names or biographies of all the daughters. Where answered well, candidates gave a lot of detail about each daughter.

- (b) There was not much evaluation in this question with most answers saying that because the Prophet loved Fatima then Muslims should do the same. Many gave descriptions of how she removed filth from her father's back that had been placed on it while he was praying.

Better answers said that Muslims now should not differentiate between how they treat their sons and daughters and should give their daughters a lot of respect like the Prophet did, and that Muslims should not feel ashamed when a daughter is born to them as the Prophet had four daughters, treated them well and showed his love and affection for them.

Key messages

- Candidates should try to give as many details as they can for part (a) questions, rather than a general outline. It seems in many answers that the candidates know the topic but did not give specific details.

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ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/13

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Candidates needed to include details, not mix up the stories of the prophets they had chosen and know the names of the prophets they were writing about.

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ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/21

Paper 2

General Comments

The overall response to this examination was good. The candidates appeared to read the questions and in the majority of the cases understood the requirement of the question and answered well. However some candidates when answering **Question 3** went on to give the events that happened during the caliphates of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs which was not what the question was asking them to do and in **5(b)** some thought that greater jihad was fighting an armed war.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

In both **parts (a) and (b)** the vast majority achieved a satisfactory level whilst those who did not only focus on the words in the given Hadith but went on to discuss the broader teachings of the Hadiths they were attempting to answer achieved the higher levels. In **part (b)** candidates still continued to explain the Hadith whereas this is the evaluative part of the answer in which the focus needs to be primarily on showing how the teachings of the Hadith can be put into action in present times. Those who did this achieved the higher levels.

Question 2

This question was asking the candidates to write about the structure of the Hadiths and the main methods used by the compilers of Hadiths to establish their genuineness. In the majority of the answers candidates wrote about the *isnad* and *matn* and the levels increased on account of the detail and development which was given in the answer. Some however appeared not to understand the question and wrote all they knew on this topic; namely the different categories of Hadiths and about Hadith *Nabwi* and Hadith *Qudsi*, *musannaf* and *musnad* Hadiths and so did not achieve the higher levels. Some well-developed answers wrote about *sahih* and *daeef* Hadiths as development of how compilers went about establishing the genuineness of Hadiths. It is important for candidates to read the questions carefully and link their answers to what is being asked.

In **part (b)** it was found that in the majority of cases the response was satisfactory with a few very well evaluated answers.

Question 3

Some candidates wrote about the events only in the caliphates of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and did not answer the question of how they ruled according to Islamic values. Candidates needed to say how the caliphs considered the caliphate as a trust given to them by God and administered justly and with kindness, how they ruled with consensus, did not treat the treasury as their personal asset and then needed to give examples of the caliphs in action to develop their answer. Where this was done good levels were attained, where only events were given but an attempt was made to link in the answer with the question the candidates achieved a satisfactory level.

Part (b) was generally well attempted.

Question 4

This was a very popular question with the majority of the candidates. Candidates clearly understood the requirement of the question and gave competent answers.

Very good **part (b)** answers were seen with thoughtful evaluation on why they thought the giver of *zakat* benefited the most and this is what the majority felt. However those who said both benefited equally and backed up their statement got equally good levels as in **part (b)** the question asked them to give their view and reasons for why they thought in that way.

Question 5

Again, this question was well answered. There were a few candidates who were confused about what greater *jihad* was. In **part (a)** the majority of the candidates discussed the different kinds of *jihad*. There were some excellent answers.

In **part (b)** candidates who knew what greater *jihad* was and gave good evaluative responses as to why it is considered more important achieved the higher levels.

Conclusion

On the whole the questions were well answered, with some excellent responses. Candidates need to read the questions carefully and answer what is being asked of them.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/22

Paper 2

General Comments

Candidates who took the examination this session were well prepared. Candidates need to read the questions properly before answering; for **Question 3** many candidates wrote about the causes and events that led to 'Uthman's assassination instead of focussing and writing about the **consequences** of his martyrdom. **Questions 4** and **5** were very popular with the candidates.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

This question on the whole was well answered and many candidates achieved Level 3 or above. Those who achieved the satisfactory level were mainly those who used specific words in the Hadiths and wrote their answers around them rather than writing about the teachings with understanding e.g. with reference to Hadith 10 it was said looking after orphans and widows is a noble thing to do which is liked by Allah...However to get to higher levels answers had to give the broader meaning of the Hadith by saying something like care for the vulnerable in society is compared to *ibadah* and that there is a clear instruction to Muslims to look after the needs of the vulnerable in society...For Hadith 13 it would be useful to understand the term 'tethered camels' because then effective comparisons with understanding could be made. Sometimes the explanations / teachings given are quite literal and it would be better for the candidates to understand the concepts and then put the teachings into their own words. For example as said before widows and orphans have been specifically mentioned in Hadith 10 but the teaching is to care for all the vulnerable people in society.

In **part (b)** where there was understanding and preparation the evaluation was good.

Question 2

The majority of the candidates answered this question well, some, with the use of very good examples and development of those examples, achieved the top end of Level 3 and Level 4. A small minority went on to distinguish between Hadith *Qudsi* and Hadith *Nabwi*; *isnad/matn* and even categories of Hadiths but the question did not ask for this. There was another category of candidates who understood the question and wrote a general brief answer about how Hadiths are used in establishing law by saying, for example, Hadiths are used in establishing law regarding inheritance, marriage or usury without any further development. These answers, depending on the overall content of the answer, achieved a satisfactory level but to get to good levels development is essential.

For **part (b)** there was a mixed response. Some candidates simply described *ijma* which was not what was being asked, whereas others went on to simply yet effectively say that this Hadith shows the Prophet's approval of the practice of *ijma*. Some candidates briefly said what *ijma* was, gave their opinion on how the Prophet's Hadith encourages its use and gives its practice the Prophet's approval and gave a few examples to develop their answers. These answers achieved the higher levels.

Question 3

Those who understood the question gave competent responses, others misunderstood and wrote good answers that covered the events that led to 'Uthman's martyrdom but this was not what was required.

In **part (b)** the responses were mixed.

Question 4

This question was very popular with the candidates, with many getting the higher levels. Almost everyone who attempted this question picked up on the two parts i.e. an account of the belief in prophets and the message they preached.

There were good responses to **part (b)** overall with candidates making a good attempt at evaluation.

Question 5

This was another very popular question. Here the candidates needed to write about the benefits of *zakat* to the individual and the community and though almost everyone did that some focused unduly on the rate of *zakat* etc. and at times wrote a page on it and very little on the benefits. So though a long answer on *zakat* was given not all of it was relevant to what was being asked and could not be credited as such. Reading the question carefully, understanding its requirement is crucial to writing a relevant answer.

In **part (b)** the answers focused on how *sadaqa-tul Fitr* promotes brotherhood and enables the less fortunate to celebrate this festival. Some answers included excellent evaluation and were extremely thoughtful and went on to say how this *sadaqa* was a means to make up for errors during the month of Ramadan. Very few candidates confused *sadaqa-tul Fitr* with *zakat*.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/23

Paper 2

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Again, this question was well answered. There were a few candidates who were confused about what greater *jihad* was. In **part (a)** the majority of the candidates discussed the different kinds of *jihad*. There were some excellent answers.

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Conclusion

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