



Rewarding Learning

**General Certificate of Secondary Education
2025**

Religious Studies

Paper 8

Islam

[GRE81]

FRIDAY 13 JUNE, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

Mark schemes are intended to ensure that the GCSE examinations are marked consistently and fairly. The mark schemes provide markers with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. They also set out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for Religious Studies.

Candidates must:

- AO1** demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority; and
- AO2** analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCSE examinations.

Flexibility in marking

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner.

Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected of a 16-year-old GCSE candidate.

Awarding zero marks

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

Types of mark schemes

Mark schemes for tasks or questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication.

Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

Levels of response

Tasks and questions requiring candidates to respond in extended writing are marked in terms of levels of response. In deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the 'best fit' bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award to any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners.

- **Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.
- **Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.
- **High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

AO1 (5 mark responses):

Level 1: The candidate presents something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge and understanding.

Level 2: The candidate presents a clear knowledge and understanding with some development.

Level 3: The candidate presents a detailed answer showing very good development.

AO2 (5 mark responses):

Level 1: The candidate presents opinion supported by one simple reason.

Level 2: The candidate presents opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.

Level 3: The candidate presents a well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.

Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in the extended writing questions worth 10 marks in Section B of each examination paper. These questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

Level 1: Quality of written communication is basic.

Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.

Level 3: Quality of written communication is good.

Level 4: Quality of written communication is very good.

Level 5: Quality of written communication is excellent.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance which is provided on the next page:

AO2 (10 mark responses):

Level 1 (Basic): The candidate presents some information in a simple form. **Basic arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.

Level 2 (Limited): The candidate presents one or two relevant points. **Limited arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.

Level 3 (Good): A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. **Good reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing and some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.

Level 4 (Very good): Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. **Well-formed and reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.

Level 5 (Excellent): The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. **Very well-formed and reasoned arguments** are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights, highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.

Section A

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Candidates must answer **all** questions in this section.

1 Sacred writings

(a) (i) What does the word Qur'an mean?

- Recitation or to read.
(AO1)

[1]

(ii) Give *two* reasons why the Qur'an is important to Muslims.

Answers may include:

- It is the literal word of God
 - It contains guidance on how to live.
- Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[2]

(iii) What is the Sunnah?

- The sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad.
(AO1)

[1]

(iv) What is Sharia?

- Islamic law.
(AO1)

[1]

(b) Explain the significance of the Sunnah for Muslims.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the Sunnah for Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One relevant and accurate point.	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two relevant and accurate points.• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Sunnah are accounts of the sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad and are important sources of knowledge for Muslims to follow.
- The Sunnah form a record of what the Muslims of Muhammad's time witnessed and followed and passed on to the next generation of believers.
- The Sunnah are regarded as a model of Muslim behaviour.
- The Sunnah outline important laws and rituals in Islam, e.g. how to pray Salat.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) “The teaching from the Hadith is of central importance to Muslims.”
Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Target: Evaluation of the importance of the Hadith for a Muslim.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	• The candidate presents some relevant information.	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	• Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	• Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Hadith are sacred sayings in which Muhammad quotes words from Allah which are not included in the Qur’an.
- The prophetic Hadith are wise sayings which the Prophet himself gave.
- For Muslims, Hadiths are among the sources through which they come to understand the practice of Muhammad and his Muslim community (ummah). As such, they constitute an important source, second only to the Qur’an, for law, ritual, and creed.

On the other hand:

- The Qur’an is the most important as it is the exact words of Allah and the only divine book to remain unchanged. Therefore a Muslim has confidence in it as an authentic guide.
- The Qur’an contains Allah’s message to all people, allowing people to have a personal relationship with Allah, allowing them to receive blessings and pointing the way to paradise.
- The Qur’an shows Muslims the way to live. It tells people how to act correctly in order to follow the straight path thus bringing happiness in this life and the hereafter.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels
(AO2)

[5]

15

2 Festivals

AVAILABLE
MARKS

(a) (i) At the end of what month is Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated?

- Ramadan
(AO1)

[1]

(ii) What must be seen before Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated?

- Crescent moon
(AO1)

[1]

(iii) Name *two* ways in which the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated in the home.

Two from: special food, gifts presented to family members, sumptuous dinner, house decorated, cards displayed.
Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[2]

(iv) Name another Muslim festival.

- Eid-ul-Adha
Accept valid alternatives
(AO1)

[1]

**(b) Do you think Eid-ul-Fitr is the most important festival for Muslims?
Give reasons for your answer.**

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Analysis of the importance of Eid-ul-Fitr for Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate presents some relevant information. 	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- People rejoice at the end of the fast.
- There is the joy of religious community.
- People make a new beginning.
- Money is given to the poor and to charity.
- It is a time for forgiveness and love.

On the other hand:

- Eid-ul-Adha can be considered to be an important festival for Muslims. It takes place during the 12th month of the Islamic calendar and lasts for three days. It takes place during the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).
- The festival remembers the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son when ordered to by Allah and this is important to Muslims.
- Eid ul-Adha is a public holiday in Muslim countries.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

- (c) “Religious festivals mean more to children than adults.
Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the importance of religious festivals for all Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate presents some relevant information. 	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- Colour, pageant and dressing up are things that appeal to children.
- Children are inducted into the tradition through ritual and stories, and are introduced to important faith related events.
- By celebrating religious festivals in schools, children are celebrating together with their faith community.

On the other hand:

- Families and individuals without children celebrate religious festivals.
- Festivals reinforce a sense of community for all Muslims, not just children.
- Religious practice is important for all, they enrich a person’s sense of religious identity.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

AVAILABLE
MARKS

3 Prayer and fasting

(a) Describe the Pillar of Salah (prayer) in Islam.

Target: Knowledge of the purpose and practice of Salah in Islam.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One relevant and accurate point. 	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two relevant and accurate points. Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed. A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level. 	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three relevant and accurate points with development. Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- Following the tradition of Muhammad, Muslims must pray five times each day facing in the direction of Mecca.
- Prayer brings Muslims closer to God and is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. It is a fundamental practice of Islam, after one's declaration of faith (Shahada).
- The benefits of Salah are numerous and profound. Prayer helps keep Muslims steadfast, humble and pure.
- Muslims must perform ritual washing before prayer and ensure that they are praying with the right intention (Niyat/Niyyah). The intention (within heart and mind) is essential to ensure that their devotion and prayer are purely for God.
- When praying, Muslims perform a number of set bodily movements and recitations from the Qur'an called Rak'ahs. They will recite the first surah of the Qur'an during each prayer cycle.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

(b) Explain the significance of Sawm (fasting) for Muslims.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Knowledge and understanding of the significance of fasting for Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One relevant and accurate point.	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two relevant and accurate points.• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.	4–5

Answers may include:

- Fasting teaches Muslims about the importance of self-control.
- It reinforces one's faith and piety,
- Fasting helps one become more mindful of God and His blessings,
- It is a means of seeking forgiveness of sins,
- It is a reminder of the plight of those who do not have adequate food, water, and shelter.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) "Prayer is not a waste of time."

Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the importance of prayer.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate presents some relevant information. 	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- Prayer changes our attitude to situations.
- People are healed as a result of prayer.
- Prayers are answered but we may not get the result we want.
- Examples from the experience of religious people.

On the other hand:

- If you do not believe in God, there is no point in praying.
- There are many examples of people praying and nothing happening in response.
- If prayer changes things there would be evidence.
- It is better to help people than to pray for them.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

AVAILABLE
MARKS

4 Contemporary issues

(a) Describe Muslim attitudes to money.

Target: Knowledge of Muslim attitudes to money.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One relevant and accurate point. 	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two relevant and accurate points. Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed. A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level. 	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three relevant and accurate points with development. Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- The true believer deals with their wealth as if it is merely a worldly matter because it will not follow them into the afterlife.
- Muslims are warned in the Qur'an to be on guard against greed.
- A Muslim should not save and hoard great sums of money, but should distribute it to those who are in need of it.
- Muslims must earn their money in a lawful or halal way.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE MARKS

(b) Do you think it is challenging to practise Islam in a non-Muslim country?

Give reasons for your answer.

Target: Analysis of the challenges faced by Muslims in a non-Muslim country.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate presents some relevant information. 	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- References to dietary requirements.
- Standards of dress and behaviour.
- Women not encouraged to work outside the home.
- Negative attitudes shown to Muslims, e.g. Islamaphobia.

On the other hand:

- As long as there is a Mosque there is an opportunity for communal worship.
- The local Muslim community offers support.
- The family or extended family can give guidance.
- Many schools teach world religions so there is a better understanding of the Islamic faith in non-Muslim countries.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

(c) “Society is becoming less religious and soon religion will be a thing of the past.”

Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

Target: Evaluation of the role of religion in contemporary society.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Unsupported opinion or no relevant evaluation.		0
Level 1	Opinion supported by one simple reason.	The candidate presents some relevant information.	1
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons or one developed reason.	Reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	2–3
Level 3	A well-argued response with evidence of informed insights.	Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses.	4–5

Answers may include:

- Society has become less religious and fewer people are attending public worship. As society becomes increasingly secular, religion may become a thing of the past for future generations.
- More people are looking to science for answers. For example, for many people in society today, scientific views on the Big Bang and evolution have replaced religious views on creation. As older generations are lost, religion may become a thing of the past.
- As society becomes less religious there is less tolerance or respect for some religious practices which are seen by many to be a thing of the past, e.g. unequal treatment of women, food laws and dress codes.

On the other hand:

- Even though some societies are becoming less religious, religion is still growing possibly due to high birth rates. Islam continues to be the fastest growing religion in the world, so in many societies, religion is not a thing of the past.
- Religion will continue to have relevance to many people, despite recent trends. Religion gives a meaning and purpose to life for many people in society and provides people with important moral values.
- Religion provides society with an important sense of community, e.g. religious festivals. This may ensure that religion never becomes a thing of the past.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[5]

15

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Section B

Candidates must answer **two** questions from this section.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

5 The formative history of Islam

(a) Describe the life and career of Muhammad.

Target: Knowledge of the life and career of Muhammad.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One relevant and accurate point. 	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two relevant and accurate points. Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed. A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level. 	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three relevant and accurate points with development. Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- Muhammad was born in 570 CE and was raised by his grandfather and then his uncle.
- He worked with his uncle and gained a reputation for being honest and sincere.
- He married Khadijah and had many children.
- Muhammad was called when he was 40 years old, when he was praying alone on Mount Hira.
- He was visited by the angel Gabriel on the 'Night of Power'.
- Following the 'Night of Power', Muhammad preached in Mecca but had to leave because the leaders of Mecca were angry with him.
- He died in 632 CE.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(b) Explain the role of prophets in Islam.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Knowledge and understanding of the role of prophets in Islam.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One relevant and accurate point.	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two relevant and accurate points.• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Qur'an mentions twenty-five prophets. Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses are examples of some of the prophets in Islam.
- The prophets preached about the oneness of God.
- God spoke through the prophets and they were his messengers. God could reveal his will about various issues through the prophets and help guide Muslims.
- God spoke to comfort and strengthen his followers through the prophets.
- Muhammad brought the final revelation of God. He received the actual word of God and was a mouthpiece for God.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

- (c) “The world would be a better place if more people followed the teaching of the prophets.”
Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer showing that you have considered different points of view. You should refer to Islam in your answer.

Target: Analysis and evaluation of the relevance of the message of the prophets.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- The message of God is always relevant and is timeless so the world would be a better place if more people followed the teaching of the prophets. Moral principles can be derived from revelation and applied to modern issues.
- The world would be a much better place if people followed teaching given through the prophets, e.g. Moses (Musa) was given the Ten Commandments by God as guidance, these prohibit immoral behaviour such as disrespect for parents, murder, theft and adultery.
- The Prophet Muhammad taught that prayer was an important part of a Muslim's life. He prayed five times a day and travelled to various places to be alone to pray before making important decisions. The world would be a much better place if more people followed this teaching of praying or meditating daily.

On the other hand:

- The world is completely different from the time of revelation. People today face different issues, which the teaching of the prophets do not adequately address, e.g. challenges such as women's rights and gender equality.
- Some of the religious teaching from the prophets may be considered outdated by some people within Muslim communities, e.g. not all Muslims follow Shariah law, strict food laws, dress codes, etc.

- Society has become more secular with many people no longer believing in God and others being more cynical about religious teaching. They may argue that society is better off without the teaching of the prophets or the teaching of world religions In general.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

20

6 Rites of passage

(a) Describe the funeral and mourning rites of Muslims.

Target: Knowledge of the funeral and mourning rites of Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One relevant and accurate point. 	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two relevant and accurate points. Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed. A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level. 	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three relevant and accurate points with development. Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- Collective bathing of the dead body, except in extraordinary circumstances.
- Enshrouding the dead body in a white cotton or linen cloth.
- Funeral prayer.
- Burial of the dead body in a grave.
- Positioning the deceased so that the head is faced towards Mecca.
- Islamic mourning is observed by increased devotion, receiving visitors and condolences, and avoiding decorative clothing and jewellery in accordance with the Qur'an.
- Widows observe an extended mourning period (iddah, "period of waiting"), four months and 10 days long.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

(b) Explain Muslim teaching about life after death.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Knowledge and understanding of Muslim teaching on life after death.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One relevant and accurate point.	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two relevant and accurate points.• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.	4–5

Answers may include:

- Islam teaches that there is life after death. This is known as Akhirah.
- In Islam, it is Allah who decides when a person dies. Most Muslims believe that when they die, they will stay in their graves until Yawm al-din (the Day of Judgement). On that day, they will be raised from their graves and brought before Allah and judged on how they lived their earthly lives. This belief is known as the resurrection of the body.
- Those who have performed more good deeds than bad will enter Jannah (Paradise). Jannah is a place described as a “garden of everlasting bliss” and a “home of peace”. In Jannah there will be no sickness, pain or sadness.
- Those who have performed more bad deeds than good will enter Jahannam (Hell). This is a place of physical and spiritual suffering.
- However, there are some sins that many Muslims believe to be unforgivable. These include the sin of shirk (the sin of regarding anything as an equal to or a partner of Allah).

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) **“Belief in the resurrection gives hope to Muslims.”**

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer. You should refer to Islam in your answer.

Target: Analysis and evaluation of Muslim teaching on the resurrection.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- Akhirah is the word Muslims use to refer to life after death. Belief in an afterlife encourages Muslims to take responsibility for their actions. They know God will hold them accountable and reward or punish them accordingly.
- Akhirah explains humans' existence on Earth, saying that life is a test from Allah. Importantly, though, Muslims believe that Allah will not test them beyond their limits and this gives Muslims hope.
- After death, most Muslims believe that the soul will enter Barzakh, a state of waiting, until the Day of Judgement. This can give hope to Muslims.
- Muslims believe that Allah is forgiving, merciful and compassionate, so not all bad actions will be punished. Allah will forgive those who have repented for their sins and those who have done some good in their lives, for example showing kindness to others.

On the other hand:

- When a person dies, their soul is taken by Azra'il, the Angel of Death, so Muslims may fear life after death.
- God sends two angels to question the waiting soul. If the questions are not answered correctly, the soul is tormented by angels, known as punishment of the grave. This would not necessarily give hope to Muslims.

- Muslim beliefs about Hell may cause fear. Hell is described as a place of fire and torment, e.g. Jahannam has scorching fire pits and boiling water, a place of physical and spiritual suffering for eternity.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

20

7 Beliefs and practices

(a) Describe the work of an Imam.

Target: Knowledge of the work of an Imam.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One relevant and accurate point. 	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two relevant and accurate points. Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed. A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level. 	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two or three relevant and accurate points with development. Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development. 	4–5

Answers may include:

- The Imam is responsible for planning, organising and administering all Islamic programmes, functions and services for the community including:
- The Imam leads daily prayers at the Islamic centre or mosque.
- The Imam leads the Friday (Jum'ah) prayers and delivers the khutbas (sermon).
- The Imam teaches about the Qur'an and the prophet Muhammad.
- They officiate at weddings or funerals.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

(b) Explain the meaning and purpose of public worship for Muslims.

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

Target: Knowledge and understanding of the importance of public worship for Muslims.

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit.		0
Level 1	Something relevant or worthy of credit; elementary knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One relevant and accurate point.	1
Level 2	A clear knowledge and understanding with some development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two relevant and accurate points.• Two or more relevant and accurate points with one developed.• A single point that is exceptionally well-developed may reach this level.	2–3
Level 3	A detailed answer showing very good development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or three relevant and accurate points with development.• Level 3 answers will be well-structured with good development.	4–5

Answers may include:

- Muslims are clear that worship is a complete way of life which is reflected in the obligation to follow the five pillars of Islam.
- Public worship takes place in the mosque and is a way for Muslims to grow closer to God.
- At Friday prayers, also called Jumu'ah, the Imam preaches a sermon using words from the Qur'an. The Friday prayers are obligatory for men.
- Before worship, Muslims must perform a ritual washing (wudu) to prepare for prayer.
- Upon entering the mosque, Muslims remove their shoes and sit on the floor facing the qiblah (prayer wall) which allows them to face *Mecca* during worship.
- Public acts of worship foster a strong sense of community among Muslims.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO1)

[5]

(c) “Religious leaders do not always set a good example for believers to follow.”

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer showing that you have considered different points of view. You should refer to Islam in your answer.

Target: Analysis and evaluation of the example set by religious leaders in Islam.

AVAILABLE
MARKS

Levels	Criteria	Comments	Marks
0	Nothing relevant or worthy of credit		0
Level 1	Opinion supported which may be by one or two simple reasons.	The candidate presents some information in a simple form. Basic arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Inaccurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; inappropriate style of writing with no coherent structure. Basic use of specialist vocabulary.	1–2
Level 2	Opinion supported by two simple reasons with one developed.	The candidate presents one or two relevant points. Limited arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Some accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; style of writing just appropriate with limited coherent structure. Limited use of specialist vocabulary.	3–4
Level 3	Opinion supported by two developed reasons with reference to religion.	A Level 3 response could be one-sided. One developed reason and one with slight development would reach this level. There must be relevance to religion, but this could be slight/general. Good reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Mainly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a reasonably mature style of writing with some coherent structure evident. Good use of specialist vocabulary.	5–6

Level 4	Evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and knowledge and understanding of religion.	Different points of view must be considered, but the consideration does not need to be balanced, i.e. one view could be much briefer than the other. Well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a mature style of writing with a mainly coherent structure. Very good use of specialist vocabulary.	7–8
Level 5	A well-argued response, with evidence of reasoned consideration of different points of view, showing informed insights and ability to apply knowledge and understanding of religion effectively.	The difference between Level 4 and Level 5 is the quality of the argument and the coherence of the response. There needs to be more than a passing reference to religion. However, the points of view may not be completely balanced, and a non-religious counter-argument is still acceptable. Very well-formed and reasoned arguments are given to analyse and evaluate personal responses and informed insights. Highly accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar; a sophisticated style of writing set within a coherent structure. Excellent use of specialist vocabulary.	9–10

AVAILABLE MARKS

Answers may include:

- The Imam sets a good example for others to follow. They lead prayers, serve as community leaders and provide religious guidance.
- The Prophet Muhammad set a good example for his followers. He was obedient to God in all respects and was faithful to his calling. He made peace with the inhabitants of Mecca and forgave his enemies.
- Religious leaders from the past or prophets may not have been perfect but were good role models through their actions. For example, Adam disobeyed God when he was deceived by the devil. However, God taught Adam about repentance and by extension, taught Muslims how to repent after they fall into sin.

On the other hand:

- Muhammad was a military leader and some people may argue that his military actions did not set a good example for others to follow.
- All religious leaders are human and are fallible. Some individuals have exploited their positions of power for their own personal benefit.
- Muslims should not focus on following religious leaders but only follow the word of God contained in the Qur'an. The Qur'an contains all they need to know about their religious faith.

Accept valid alternatives

Mark in levels

(AO2)

[10]

20