GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

A LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1
OPTION B: A STUDY OF ISLAM
A120UB0-1

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- "Candidates could include some or all of the following, but other relevant points should be credited."
- "This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives."

Rules for Marking

1.   Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.

2.   No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.

3.   Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two-stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content. Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 20 marks *Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:* - *religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching* - *influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies* - *cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice* - *approaches to the study of religion and belief.*
5	**17-20 marks** • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**13-16 marks** • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**9-12 marks** • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied. • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**5-8 marks** • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied. • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-4 marks** • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. **N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'**
0	• No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions　30 marks *Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief,* *including their significance, influence and study.*
5	**25-30 marks** • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**19-24 marks** • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**13-18 marks** • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**7-12 marks** • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-6 marks** • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	• No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1 OPTION B

A STUDY OF ISLAM

SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

Either,

0 1 **(a)** **Examine Muslim views on scientific theories about the origins of the universe.** **[AO1 20]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Muslims believe that Allah was the first cause, the creator, the power that started the chain of events which led to the creation of the universe, the world and everything in it. They reject any scientific theory which denies the existence of a first cause from a single divine being.
- The Qur'an refers to the universe as having come together then split asunder. Some Muslims believe this refers to the Big Bang theory of the creation of the universe, in which mass concentrated in one point under extreme pressure and then exploded to throw out the planets as we know them today. The Qur'an 21:30 states: 'The heaven and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder.' (Translator: Yusuf Ali).
- Whilst the Big Bang is perhaps the most well-known scientific theory, there are others and Muslims often say that no one theory can be conclusively proved because we cannot go back in time or experiment to check. Therefore, belief in one creator God cannot be disproved by science.
- The Steady State theory argues that the universe constantly existed so there was no need for a first cause. Muslims therefore oppose this theory.
- The expanding/ oscillating universe theories argue that the universe goes through a series of cycles. Some Muslim thinkers such as Ibn Arabi also agreed that the universe went through cycles, but in so doing reflected the work of a creator God.
- Avicenna (Ibn Sina) was a Muslim thinker who argued that the universe had an inbuilt unity which meant it had to be created from a single power, a 'necessary existent' or God.
- Al-Biruni, another Muslim philosopher, argued against Avicenna. He considered time was relative, rather like Einstein's theory of relativity. In the creation of the universe time may have not been linear or a straight line. For believers in God, he can do anything, so these theories are not impossible, but for scientists more proof is required, so that the theories can be logically justified.
- Today some Muslims such as Imam Dr Usama Hasan argue that scientific theories of creation and evolution are not very different from the Islamic belief in the creation of the world in stages. Others, such as Harun Yayha, emphasise the differences, and particularly reject evolution.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b)   **'Islam and science are entirely compatible.'**
Evaluate this view.   **[AO2 30]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Islamic thought is based on the ideas of the revealed Qur'an and the examples of the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims accept these and look therein for guidance.
- Scientific enquiry is based on observation. Scientists observe the world for patterns to derive scientific theory. They repeat what they see in experiments to prove laws of science which they identify.
- These two approaches might seem to be contradictory. A scientist would not necessarily accept a revealed truth from the Qur'an without observation and evidence. A Muslim, on the other hand, would not even question it.
- Indeed, there are sometimes arguments between Muslims and scientists. Television debates can be seen between Muslims who believe in God and atheists such as Richard Dawkins, and they draw on different sources of authority: the Qur'an as opposed to reason.
- Many Muslims reject the theory of evolution because they believe the Qur'an states that Allah created the world and everything in it in stages. Scientific observation from fossils suggests that creatures slowly evolved from one species into another over millions of years.
- Despite these seemingly contradictory approaches, Islam has a long heritage of contribution to science. In the Middle Ages some Muslims preserved scientific texts they inherited from the ancient Greeks, providing the basis for the Reformation and the modern scientific movement to grow out of.
- Ibn al-Haytham went further. Professor Jim al-Khalili argues that he started the scientific approach of observation in the 'Golden Age of Islam'.
- The Muslim scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr writes that there are two Qur'ans: the book and the Qur'an in natural law, the laws of nature, and the two must go together. So, scientific observation should confirm and complement the natural ways the universe works which, in his opinion, was created by Allah.
- Many Muslims today are successful scientists and doctors who find no contradiction in keeping to their Islamic faith and having a successful career in science. To them personally Islamic thought can help them see meaning in the world around them; that there is a purpose for creation, whereas science explains the nuts and bolts of how things work in everyday life.
- Whether Islamic thought and scientific enquiry make a good or an uneasy combination is a matter of personal opinion, but it is possible to see how the two do not necessarily always contradict.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

6

Or,

0 2 (a) **Explain the concept of a state governed according to Islamic principles.**
[AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Muhammad moved to Madinah and set up the first Islamic community, as well as leading the city for all its people. As leader, he produced the Charter or Constitution of Madinah which is seen as a model of government for all Muslims since. Muhammad was the perfect model of a Muslim so his example can be applied today in every field, including government.
- Muhammad followed Allah's revelations in all he did and set up the government of Madinah in the light of these revelations. He began by promising protection for everyone regardless of tribe or faith. From this it is a principle that Muslims should not harm others and should protect their right to freedom of religion.
- Muhammad was the leader and was later followed by Caliphs. Some argue this means a state should have a single person who is pious as its head. Others point out that shura, consultation, was a feature of their rule and Islamic principles include care and compassion for people, who should be treated fairly and looked after by their state.
- The mosque was at the centre of the state and religion was important in the life of Madinah. So today a state governed by Islamic principles might prioritise facilities for Muslims to pray and refer to the Qur'an and Sunnah when deciding laws. No law could be passed which directly contradicted the Qur'an, so the terms of reference of government are limited by revealed belief.
- Examples from states governed according to Islamic principles today or historical examples of states governed according to Islamic principles may be explored.
- Some Muslims are socially conservative and believe in modesty of dress and, to a greater or lesser degree, separation of the sexes. A state governed by Islamic principles might follow this model of society and encourage, or set laws, to direct people to dress modestly. Some interpret Islamic principles to mean that family law should be governed by shari'a, so religious authorities would deal with marriage and divorce, amongst other matters.
- Criminal matters might also be defined by the Islamic Law schools. In some cases this has meant harsh punishments, taken literally from the Qur'an. In others Islamic principles are reinterpreted for the age that Muslims live in.
- Madinah was not a state in the modern sense. If general principles were set, some Muslims argue they do not dictate everything a state must do today. They say that principles of human rights and freedom should be upheld and the customs and habits of 1400 years ago do not need to be copied exactly.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) **'The ideal form of government for Muslims is a democracy.'**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Democracy is a form of government based on voting. People are able to vote who they would like to be governed by, according to their policies. Democracy was said to have developed in ancient Greece and has spread to most areas of the modern world.
- Many Muslims argue that no form of government has been specifically recommended by the Prophet. He left his example of how he led the city of Madinah, which gives Muslims some principles of how to govern. However, he did not say that Muslims should follow democracy, monarchy, theocracy, or any other particular form.
- Muhammad was careful to listen to his companions and take advice. The Caliphs often consulted community leaders on matters, and at the time a new Caliph was elected. Although they were not elected by popular vote in the modern sense, there were some forms of consultation. Therefore, it could be argued there is precedent in Islam for democracy.
- However, Muhammad ruled according to what Allah revealed, not according to the votes of people. Some Muslims argue that democracy can lead to laws which go against Islam, if people vote for them out of free choice. So they argue that democracy should be limited within Islamic traditions.
- In the modern world, there are elections for governments in many countries which have majority Muslim populations. Indonesia is one of the largest democracies in the world. Bangladesh, Pakistan and Turkey also have large populations and usually vote in elections to decide their leaders.
- In other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and most of the Middle East, countries are led by Kings who decide policies for their populations. Some believe this allows the Saudi Royal Family to guard the Kaaba and holy sites and preserve the purity of Islam according to their. Others believe that there may also be many human rights abuses which go against Islam due to the nature of this type of government.
- Iran is led by a theocracy: that is, a government which has elections for candidates who are vetted by the Supreme Leader and his representatives. The supreme leader, a Shia Ayatollah, is thought to know best and is tasked with protecting the religious regime. Government may only pass laws which are in accordance with conservative interpretations of Islam.
- It could be argued democracy, or any other form of government is ideal, or none are ideal, but are the best that is possible for the most people.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Section B

Either,

0 3 **(a)** **Explain the roles of Malaikah (angels) with reference to Akhirah (the Day of Final Judgement).** **[AO1 20]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- **Angels are God's messengers.** They are said to be created from light and given commands by God which they cannot question, because they are unlike humans and have no role of their own, other than to serve God. One of their most important roles is to deliver revelations, such as the Qur'an to Muhammad, which was brought down by angel Jibril. These messages told people to believe in the afterlife and that they would be judged by God.
- **Angels Izrail, Munkar and Nadir have special roles.** Angel Izrail, known as the angel of death, has a particular role in announcing the events of the Day of Final Judgement. Izrail claims the souls of those who have died and keeps them in a state of waiting, known as barzakh, until they are resurrected. In the grave, they are questioned by two other angels called Munkar and Nakir. This is to test their faith.
- **The events concerning the Day of Final Judgement begin with Angel Israfil blowing a trumpet.** This announces the time when people will rise from their graves in a physical resurrection of the body, ready for judgement.
- **The two recording angels, Raqib and Atid, read back a person's deeds,** good from the right side and bad from the left side, and these are weighed so that God's final judgement can take place. The records have been collected throughout a Muslims life during which even tiny actions are counted, and they form a person's book of deeds from which the good and bad actions are read out. The Qur'an refers to this in Sura 50:17: 'Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and noted them), one sitting on the right and one on the left.'
- **Angels themselves have no power to change the course of events or alter a person's judgement.** These matters are entirely the preserve of God. Angels are the messengers and servants of God and act only as reporters of events and heralders of what God has already decided or predetermined.
- **There are various angels mentioned in the Qur'an, Hadith and different Muslim traditions,** not all of which are agreed upon. The protector angels keep people in their current lives on earth until it is their decreed time to die. Naziat takes souls with pain and Nashitat with peace, to assist Izrail, according to Qur'anic tradition. There are angels in hell to punish the wicked, governed by Maalik. According to hadith, Ridwan is the keeper of paradise. The Cherubim ask God to forgive sinners. There are also fallen angels according to some traditions.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) 'It is not essential to believe in the concept of Malaikah (angels) in Islam.'
Evaluate this view. **[AO2 30]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- **There are several beliefs in Islam including belief in the oneness of God and the final prophethood of Muhammad.** The Qur'an refers to these repeatedly in the context of judgement and the afterlife. These three beliefs: Tawhid, Risalah, Akhirah – formed the backbone of Muhammad's core preaching in Makkah, and are central in the Qur'an. It could be argued that these are the most important concepts in Islam and it is not necessary to believe in angels to understand them.
- Indeed, **Muhammad was active in preaching on his own and with his companions, not alongside angels.** It was Muhammad who patiently endured suffering whilst trying to convince people of Islamic beliefs. Muslims today can read about Muhammad's teachings from his sayings, the Hadith, and it could be said that these can be read in isolation without the concept of angels.
- **However, Muhammad received his instructions from angel Jibril.** It was the miraculous revelations which helped convince people of the authenticity of the message. If people didn't believe in angels, how could they become convinced that the rest of Islamic beliefs really came from God? Therefore, the concept of angels can be seen as a necessary bridge between the unseen God and human beings, without which the divinity of the message could be called into question.
- **Traditionally, Muslims consider belief in angels to be one of the core beliefs in Islam.** They have roles connected not just to bringing the message but also to recording people's actions and reporting at judgement. To understand Islamic beliefs requires a sense of realisation in the life of a Muslim. Without belief in angels watching over a person's actions in their everyday life, the belief in judgement may seem far away and slip out of the minds of Muslims. Therefore, it could be argued that angels are an important belief for Muslims which helps them realise the others.
- **Angels may be associated with the supernatural, a concept far from the minds of many in the modern, rational world.** Many Muslims in the past and today prefer to logically derive beliefs to understand them: to use reasoning, signs and evidence from texts. It could be argued that to them, belief in angels is unconvincing and does not assist in their understanding of Islam.
- **However, to other, belief in angels may help them develop their spiritual understanding** and faith in the heart, feeling that angels are watching over them bringing a sense of the caring and compassionate nature of the one God and reinforcing their understanding of God's oneness and compassion in their lives.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Or,

0 4 **(a)**   **Compare the views of Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi and James Rachels about the death penalty.** **[AO1 20]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- **Some traditionalist Islamic scholars, such as Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi**, feel there is a role for the death penalty. They feel that crimes against God and God's laws are more important than human life itself and the degree of severity of the crime is reflected in the punishment.
- His argument is that where the **Qur'an and example of the Prophet used the death penalty, this is a perfect model** for Muslims throughout the generations to follow. Although allowance should be made for modern circumstances, the death penalty should still be available as a punishment in some circumstances.
- **Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi argues that whilst Islam encourages peace and forgiveness,** it also categorised certain crimes and suggested punishments in retribution. The right of compensation and retribution is seen as a way of closing an issue and a way of satisfying the demands of a victim or their family, and putting a limit on what they can do, so as not to perpetuate family and tribal hostilities which were common in the days of Muhammad. Therefore, the death penalty protects society from further violence, revenge and taking the law into people's own hands.
- **There are three main categories of punishment**: qisas, a form of retribution, such as death the death penalty for murder; hudud, for crimes against God's revealed laws, such as by adultery or intoxication, often punished by corporal punishment or forgiveness; and tazir, for lesser offences, decided by a judge. Ash-Sharabasi argues that the death penalty can only be applied within this framework.
- **Non-Islamic scholars, such as James Rachels**, looked at different theories of punishment: did they work for the good of society? He found that the death penalty should not be placed in simplistic retributive reasoning alone.
- James Rachels also reviewed different opinions on the death penalty, including the argument that **both murderer and those committing the death penalty of the murderer, are in effect doing the same thing**. This led many to reject the death penalty as an ethical form of punishment.
- **Many reformist Muslims believe that the death penalty has no place in the modern world** and that a true interpretation of Islamic ethical principles would be to focus on forgiveness, peace-making and reconciliation.
- **Despite his reservations, overall James Rachels arrived at the conclusion that there is a case for the death penalty and that can be justified on Utilitarian grounds only as a way of protecting society.**

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) **'Islamic ethical teachings are very effective as a guide for Muslims.'**
Evaluate this view. **[AO2 30]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- **Some see Islamic ethical teachings as timeless, as relevant today as in previous generations**. If Islamic teachings are truly based on the Qur'an, then according to those who take a literal view of its meaning, it cannot be changed. Past civilisations received messages from prophets which over time became corrupted. The corruption made them less effective. The message received by Muhammad was supposed to be the last, and was not to be changed. Therefore, by sticking to this timeless message, Islamic ethical teachings are very effective for today.
- **Literalist interpretations of Islamic ethics are seen as effective in some states**. Strict punishments for corruption, drug taking, theft and so on, including corporal and capital punishments, are upheld by some as effective ways to achieve law and order in society.
- Some argue that **Islamic ethical teachings can be applied flexibly and with reinterpretation**, so can be made very effective for today's world. The principles of equality are applied fairly and in line with modern situations. This process may be called ijtihad or intellectual endeavour and is encouraged by some Muslims as a way of making Islamic ethical teachings effective for today.
- **However, some argue that Islamic ethical teachings are ineffective for today.** Shari'a law is sometimes associated with the taking of a life for a life, in a way which might be expected hundreds of years ago, but no longer accepted in modern democratic societies. The effectiveness of putting into practice human rights, emphasised as increasingly important in today's world, is open to question.
- **Besides punishment, ethical values in Islam have been based on the family** and a view of the family which is not shared by many in the modern world. The idea of marriage between a man and woman as the basis for a family is nowadays seen as not only outdated but discriminatory against those of alternative sexualities.
- **Ethics of the treatment of women have been questioned.** Muslims allow women careers, but they have not achieved equality with men in the same way as is expected by many in western societies, although some would argue this is for cultural reasons. There are issues regarding pressure to marry and restrictions on divorce which ethically have been managed through shari'a courts, who might be run by men, and not always grant justice to a woman's needs.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

12

Or,

| 0 | 5 | (a) **Examine how Muslims today might follow the five categories of ethical action.** [AO1 20]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- There are five categories of action which have been defined in Islam, to help give Muslims guidance. These are different from the five pillars and are identified as:
  - Wajib/ fard – an obligatory action
  - Mustahab – a preferable or recommended action
  - Halal/ mubah – an action which is permitted as good
  - Makruh – an action which is permitted but disliked, reprehensible
  - Haram – a forbidden action.
- These categories were derived from the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad and defined in Sharia law by the main authors of the law schools. They may be applied to modern day issues to help Muslims understand what is best to do.
- Wajib/fard issues include the five pillars of Islam. As the Muslim population has expanded and Muslims have moved to more countries, many mosques have been built to accommodate Muslims who wish to pray five times a day. Those at work or school might apply the requirement to pray in quiet spaces or by delaying some prayers until later.
- Mustahab actions include marriage; care for parents, friends and family; keeping clean and tidy and saying extra prayers. Traditionally Muslims lived in extended families, but situations nowadays mean that many apply this duty through different arrangements. Many visit their parents often and make arrangements to join them for festivals and weddings.
- Halal actions include eating halal food, killed in the name of Allah in a certain way. Many Muslims apply this by looking for food standards labels to verify the authenticity of their food.
- Makruh actions include sleeping in, bad eating habits and abortion under certain circumstances. Muslims might apply this by keeping neat, clean and tidy and being well mannered in their personal habits.
- Haram actions include eating pork, drinking alcohol, killing innocents and committing adultery. Muslims might apply this today by checking ingredients of food to see there are no pork products or alcohol included, they might also stay away from certain social situations, such as night clubs, which might lead to haram sexual activity.
- Some Muslims might apply these categories with some adjustment for modern circumstances or living as a minority in a multi-faith environment. Others consider the five categories to be strictly applied as a test to keep on the straight path set by the example of Muhammad.
- Many different examples could be chosen, credit as relevant.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

(b) **'The five categories of ethical action are clear and easy to apply today.'**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 30]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- The five categories of action might seem clear and straightforward. Every action can be classified according to the five categories making it easier for Muslims to make decisions to live their lives. They do not have to deliberate as to whether something is allowed or not; just follow what has been defined.
- The origin of the five categories goes back to the Sunnah of Muhammad interpreted through the schools of Islamic Law. A great deal of scholarly debate over the centuries has arrived at the application of many issues.
- However, the circumstances in which the five categories were defined were very different from today. Certain principles underlie them: a Muslim should not harm themselves or their livelihood; they should choose foods which are clean and healthy as well as blessed by God. These were applied in an age before modern living and before the degree of mixing seen in modern multi-faith societies.
- Halal food is one area of debate. In the UK there are several different opinions about it. One opinion is that only food licenced by a particular Muslim authority is permissible. Another is that any food authorised by another Muslim is halal and if they are in error, there is no fault on the Muslim who eats having trusted them. A third view is that all meat except Pork is halal because food of the 'people of the book' is also permissible and the UK is a Christian country, so all meat sold is acceptable. A fourth opinion is that only free range, naturally reared animals are halal because animal welfare is also an Islamic requirement. This suggests that the five categories are not clear to apply today.
- Another point of view is that the categories are clear but not easy to apply. A Muslim might prefer halal food or to pray the five daily prayers on time but find this difficult to apply in modern life.
- Some Muslims argue that Sharia law should be reformed and reinterpreted for today's world, or that individual interpretations should be re-examined in the light of Islamic principles, to make them clearer for Muslims to follow today.
- Others argue that the five categories are easy to apply and that any hardship faced when reconciling them with modern living is a test of faith.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.