



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2024

**A LEVEL
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIT 3 - OPTION B
A STUDY OF ISLAM
1120UB0-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

UNIT 3 – OPTION B: A STUDY OF ISLAM

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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.

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

<p>Band</p> <p>(marks)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Section A questions 30 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>(25-30 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • 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. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p>(19-24 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>(13-18 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>(7-12 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable) • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>(1-6 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied (within and/or across themes where applicable) • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication. <p>N.B. A maximum of 3 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	<p align="center">Assessment Objective AO2- Section B questions 30 marks</p> <p align="center"><i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
<p align="center">5</p> <p align="center">(25-30 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p align="center">4</p> <p align="center">(19-24 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p align="center">3</p> <p align="center">(13-18 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p align="center">2</p> <p align="center">(7-12 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context. • Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<p align="center">1</p> <p align="center">(1-6 marks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation. • 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 (within and/or across themes where applicable). • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary. • Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.
<p align="center">0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

WJEC GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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

Section A

1.	Explain different sources used to form shari'a (the way).
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[AO1 30]

This question could be answered from the point of view of breadth and/ or depth. For example, a candidate might concentrate on two sources in detail, or give an overview of four or more sources. Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses will be credited.

- **The main sources** used to form the shari'a are the Qur'an, sunna (clear trodden path) and hadith (report), qiyas (analogy) and ijma (consensus). Shi'a scholars may use aql (reasoning). These sources are sometimes divided into the primary sources of Qur'an and sunna, and the rest, which are secondary sources.
- **The Qur'an** is the word of God for Muslims. This is the first source of shari'a because nothing can go against God's word. However, in many cases the Quran does not give specific guidance. For example, it tells Muslims to pray but does not specify how.
- The **sunna of Muhammad** is the second source of shari'a. As Muhammad was seen as a perfect person and the final prophet and messenger from God, everything he did is an example for Muslims to follow. Sources for what he did are mainly the Hadith, several collections of saying passed down through a chain of narrators and recorded in various books such as Bukhari. The sunna explains to Muslims how and when to pray, for example.
- **Ijma is the consensus of scholars.** Where the Qur'an and sunna are silent, the scholars try to come to an opinion to help people follow shari'a. In Shi'a Islam the Imams give authoritative rulings without error, whereas in Sunni Islam the scholars give guidance.
- **Qiyas is making analogy with a similar ruling** or guidance from earlier times. This is also used in new situations. Scholars look for something similar. So, in the case of smoking, which is not covered by the Qur'an or sunna, scholars may consider if the guidance to avoid intoxicating substances applies.
- **Shi'a Imams may use aql, reasoning, which is similar to qiyas.** They may use reasoning a little further than analogy because they are believed to be able to interpret the sources of shari'a without error.
- In all cases the **Qur'an and sunna come first.** No new ruling can be made which contradicts these original sources. However, the secondary sources are seen as complementary and authoritative to help Muslims find guidance where the primary sources are unclear.

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

2.	Explain the challenge of shari'a law within a non-Islamic secular state.
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[AO1 30]

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

- **A state governed by Islamic principles first and foremost puts God at the centre** of its law. This means looking at the Qur'an, the word of God for Muslims, and putting revealed religious teachings centre place in law making.
- This is very different from **secular governments which are based on democracy**: law is made according to the will of the people, formed through political debate and personal decision making.
- The media have shown images of **Islamic State in Syria** in recent years, giving the impression that a state governed by Islamic principles might be dangerous and threatening to secularisation. However, this is an extreme example.
- A state governed by Islamic principles faces issues of how to deal with **non-Muslim minorities**. In the early days of Islam, non-Muslims paid an extra tax, called Jizya, and although they had rights to freedom of worship, their evidence was not treated equally in shari'a courts.
- This is a challenge to secular states because modern governments have prioritised equality and human rights. People are given equal rights in court and pay the same tax whatever their religion, or if they have no faith at all.
- Islamic principles have often been taken to mean **separate roles for men and women**: men as the breadwinners and women as bringing up children in the home. Although women may work, it is of secondary priority. Shari'a courts hear divorce cases and although women have a right to divorce, their views are not given the same weight.
- In secular societies, women are given equal rights to careers, and are treated equally in court. In secular states such as western Europe, concern has been raised about the position of women in shari'a courts, reflecting the challenge to secularisation.
- **The challenge varies according to the interpretation of Islam** taken. Some states have taken a radical policy and interpreted Islam literally, as in the days of early Islam. Others have blended Islam with democracy. Hence, the challenge to secularisation is quite different in Saudi Arabia from Indonesia for example.

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

Section B

3.	'Western perceptions of Islam are influenced entirely by the media.'
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Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- The media is very influential in the modern world: daily television and social media beam news around the world. Inevitably some of this is about Islam and Muslims, creating impressions in people's minds.
- In western countries, many people live in areas where few, if any, Muslims live. Even in some cities, Muslims tend to congregate in some areas more than others. This means that people may not know any Muslims so they will gain information wholly from the media.
- The media report incidents of war and terror more than they report positive news stories about Islam, according to research by Pervez Sadia and others. As a result, a negative impression may be created in people's minds. This has led some Muslims to complain that Islamophobia has been created by the media.
- However, there are many other ways which people could find information about Islam and Muslims. Mosques often hold open days, and there are growing communities of Muslims in Wales and England. Engagement in community initiatives could bring people into contact with Muslims and give them opportunities to learn more about each other.
- Some Muslims and others created a group called Together Facing a New Totalitarianism. They argue that there are many things wrong amongst Muslims and that the media has a duty to report them. So, if people gain negative perceptions from the media, that does not mean the media are creating them, they are merely reporting what is going on.
- Muslim leaders such as Ziauddin Sardar claim that the media are feeding negative stereotypes to people, forming perceptions. However, there are also positive programmes about Islam's contribution to art and civilisation, which might create a good impression.
- Ultimately this question could be about how well integrated Muslim communities are. The more integrated they are, the more people can gain perceptions from each other directly through social contact. The more people lead separate lives, it leaves the media as the only source wholly responsible for western perceptions.

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

4.	'The Muslim Council of Britain is entirely effective.'
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Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- The Muslim Council of Britain is an umbrella body representing different Muslim groups, mosques and charities in the UK. There are similar groups in different areas such as the Muslim Council of Wales. Responses to terrorism, Islamophobia, interfaith issues, participation in ceremonies, consultation with government on policy, providing guidance in education and support for Muslims in general are some of the areas which the MCB is actively involved in.
- To be 'entirely effective' suggests that it operates successfully in helping Muslims in the many different issues which the Muslim Council of Britain addresses. It also could be argued that it is 'partly' effective in addressing some of them, or not effective in any of them.
- It might be argued that the MCB is entirely effective, because it is the largest umbrella group and has managed to gather mosques and organisations from a diverse range of backgrounds. The MCB has taken part in public events, such as at the Cenotaph for Remembrance Services. It has also led 'not in my name' demonstrations and issued condemnation of terrorist atrocities. Furthermore, the MCB has supported individuals facing Islamophobia with its 'tell mama' campaign. Together, this represents a wide range of areas in which the MCB has made impact and addressed issues.
- However, it could be argued that in some areas the MCB has not been effective. Its guidance for schools was seen as controversial, and its response to the government's Prevent programme led to difficult relations with central government for some time. Difficult relations made it hard for the MCB to represent Muslims about other issues and take their concerns to government. Furthermore, the fact that many Muslims still complain of Islamophobia suggests that, despite the MCB's best efforts, it has not been entirely effective by outcome.
- It could be argued that there are many factors influencing Muslims and issues that they face. It is therefore difficult to judge the effectiveness of the MCB because it is only one of many factors. Therefore, it might be argued that its effectiveness is dependent on context for each issue addressed.

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

5.	'The family is central to the Islamic religion.'
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Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- The Muslim family often consists of an extended family of grandparents, parents and children living together and helping each other. The older generation often help children learn aspects of their faith. The family setting is the context for passing on the religion to the next generation, as children are expected to be brought up as Muslims.
- Mothers have a particularly important role, so much so that Muhammad said that: 'Paradise lies at the feet of the mother.' The mother is often the one who teaches a child the first few words of the Qur'an. The grandfather often reads the adhan, the call to prayer, into the ear of a baby.
- In terms of marriage, often Muslims regard it as the union of two families and the choice of partner is arranged, with consent, from the parents. This means that the focus of youngsters is on the family, and not forming relationships of their own and leaving the bounds of the family.
- All of this suggests that the family is central to the Islamic religion. However, the main commands of Muhammad were to carry out the Five Pillars of Islam. The masjid is the place where the religion is taught, recitation of the Qur'an is learned and prayers are performed on the whole. It could be argued that to carry out the most important commands of Islam the family is not necessary at all, so is not central to the Islamic religion.
- A Muslim must answer directly to God themselves at judgement. They can help members of their family in practical matters, but ultimately it is an individual's own deeds and intentions that matter. These are central to the Islamic religion and a person cannot pray or fast on behalf of anyone else. Therefore, perhaps the family is not central.
- Discussions might focus on what aspects of Islam are central and which of these the family is important for. Different views might be held by different Muslims about how far the family helps them and is central to being committed to and practising their faith.
- An alternative line of argument could be to understand the term 'family' as tantamount to the Ummah, giving the term an entirely different perspective.

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

6.	'Islamic ethical teachings are ineffective as a guide for living for Muslims today.'
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Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Ethics might be defined as moral principles which guide a person's conduct and behaviour. Islamic ethics are based on the teachings revealed in the Qur'an, the word of God, and guided by the examples of Muhammad in his sunna. It could be argued that these are timeless guides for all ages, and so effective today. Alternatively, it could be argued that these inevitably miss out new issues such as matters of medical ethics, so cannot be effective.
- Islamic ethics are linked to judgement and the afterlife. Muslims behave in a certain way in the hope of eternal life in paradise. This could be regarded as ineffective today. Modern governments control people with secular laws produced by consent of democratically elected parliaments. This could be seen as more effective because it is closer to the will of the people.
- However, it could be argued that for a Muslim committed to Islam, Islamic ethics are effective, because they are based on something a person strongly believes in. This means that a Muslim would be inspired and committed to following through ethical actions even when no one was watching to enforce them.
- Islamic ethics may be understood as public and private. For example, sexual conduct in public is considered unacceptable, but in private is a personal matter, dependent on a person's conscience and their accountability to God. It may be argued that if Islamic ethics guide people living today to make personal choices, but that they are free to do so, then it does provide an appropriate guide for today.
- Some Islamic ethics are tied to punishments which are regarded as ineffective and inappropriate for today. For example, in some countries the death penalty is still applied because it is believed to be justified as a deterrent, and was used in the times of Muhammad. However, the fact that many executions have taken place in certain places suggests that it is not effective, otherwise there would be very few, if any. Furthermore, it could be argued that ethical actions cannot be enforced through fear, which simply oppresses people.

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