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# **GCE AS MARKING SCHEME**

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**SUMMER 2023**

**AS  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - UNIT 1  
OPTION B: AN INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM**

**2120UB0-1**

## **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.

### **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.

## AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 15 marks
	<p><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i></li> <li>- <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i></li> <li>- <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i></li> <li>- <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i></li> </ul>
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language /vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
4	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.</li> <li>• A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set.</li> <li>• Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance.</li> <li>• A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question.</li> <li>• Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples.</li> <li>• Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary</li> <li>• Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B. A maximum of 1 mark should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</b></p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant information.</li> </ul>

<b>Band</b>	<p align="center"><b>Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 15 marks</b></p> <p align="center"><i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i></p>
5	<p align="center"><b>13-15 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• The response shows an excellent standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
4	<p align="center"><b>10-12 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed.</li> <li>• The response shows a very good standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Very good spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
3	<p align="center"><b>7-9 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed.</li> <li>• The response shows a satisfactory standard of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Satisfactory spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
2	<p align="center"><b>4-6 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed.</li> <li>• Partially accurate response, with some signs of coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence.</li> <li>• Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.</li> <li>• Some minor, recurring errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>
1	<p align="center"><b>1-3 marks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue.</li> <li>• Very limited accuracy within the response, with little coherence, clarity and organisation.</li> <li>• An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set.</li> <li>• Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence.</li> <li>• Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary.</li> <li>• Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the meaning and clarity of communication.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant analysis or evaluation.</li> </ul>

**GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES – UNIT 1**  
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To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

**Section A**

Either,

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 (a) **Examine the concept of tawhid (oneness) with reference to Allah. [15]**

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

- The Arabic word tawhid translates as ‘oneness’ and it refers to the basic principle within Islam that Allah is one and that no one is equal to him.
- It is the foundation of the Islamic faith and seen as a teaching that defines Islam.
- It is contained within the first Pillar of Islam (The Shahadah), the declaration of faith that defines a Muslim.
- According to scholars, this definition sets the foundation for all of the Islamic articles of faith. The Shahadah shows that the complex teaching of tawhid is acknowledged.
- Allah is the term for God in Arabic and the work has existed before Islam. But with the revelation of Islam, it has been made very clear that ‘Allah’ does not belong to any pantheon, but stands alone, above and beyond all else. Allah is the only one true God. This fact for Muslims is made extremely clear through the teachings of tawhid.
- The best description of Allah through the Qur’an is seen in Surah 112, and the title of this Surah is often translated as ‘Oneness’. It is noted clearly in Islamic teaching that only Allah is God, ‘the only one’. Nothing within or beyond this world is eternal; Allah is the eternal. Allah is unique because no one is like him. Allah only is God and no one can even question this, and this in essence is tawhid.
- In practical terms, to a Muslim, this means by acknowledging and following the teachings associated with tawhid a person becomes a ‘real’ Muslim; that is a Muslim that submits to Allah’s greatness, the only true God.
- Tawhid instructs someone straight away to think about worshipping.
- Tawhid inspires awe. In this context, it is a practical medium on which to ibadah (worship) and not only the actual act of prostration, but by thinking of Allah when undertaking daily activities.
- Tawhid also is shown in the idea of Allah as the only creator through his omnipotence. Allah’s omnipotence is shown clearly through the act of creation as Allah is transcendental but on the same time keeps control and is close by.

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

- (b) **‘The Islamic concept of Allah is totally coherent.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[15]**

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

- The idea of monotheism is not unique to Islam, and technically it did not come from Islam. Despite this, Islam emphasises the idea of absolute monotheism.
- One line of reasoning is that Allah is ‘One’, he has no comparable force, is beyond the earth and in the end is transcendental. Allah is also the only creator and judge, he’s benevolent and incredibly close to people. Can transcendence and closeness come together?
- It could be argued that it is not coherent at all. If Allah was beyond everything, how could Allah deal with the creation? A link with this world would contaminate any purity that Allah has.
- Also, if Allah is beyond the physical kingdom of existence, and by using Hume’s empirical argument, we would not know about Allah or more relevant we could not know about Allah. That is why there is an epistemological element to this argument.
- The emphasis within Islam on angels shows that direct divine communication is impossible but that indirect divine communication is possible.
- Another argument could imply that it is human understanding is lacking rather than the lack of reasoning associated with the concept of Allah. As humans, we are not perfect and our nature means that we are unable to understand the true nature of Allah.
- Another line of reasoning could be that there is no link between the lack of coherence and the concept of Allah, but that there is a link between the resources that we have that can express this, such as that words are inadequate and imperfect. When we use the earthly to explain the other worldly, we are fighting in vain; but this is the only hope that we have.
- There will always be problems and inconsistencies whilst dealing with the concept of Allah. But the reasonings that is provided for these inconsistencies that determine if it’s possible to use the term coherent or not and this depends on individual’s faith.

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

Or,

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 (a) Examine Muslim beliefs about nabi (prophets) within Islam. [15]

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

- Muslims believe that nabi (prophets) deliver Allah's messages (risalah) and they accept the 25 anbiya (prophets) that are named in the Qur'an.
- A prophet is sent to every generation.
- Muslims believe that prophets are without sin, and Allah has selected them individually due to their good moral character.
- Within Islamic theology, the term 'nabi' also includes the role of the rasul (messenger) or nadir (warner) that were sent purposely by Allah to instruct human beings as people need guidance from Allah at all times. Humanity cannot work out what is the divine will by reasoning alone.
- Believing in the risalah (message) is an essential part of a Muslim's life. Through the risala, Allah's will is revealed to humanity and this is how it has been done since the dawn of time. The unity and greatness of Allah means that he is unable to communicate directly to human beings. But messengers enable human beings to receive instructions on how to achieve Allah's will.
- The rasul is also relevant throughout Islamic history as a nadir (warner) due to the nature of the message delivered. (Surah 46:9, 42:13)
- Islamic teaching occasionally differentiates between the nabi and the rasul. Traditionally both terms could be used and they could refer to all prophets in Islam; however, scholars differentiate.
- Technically, a rasul and a nabi brings a written message to give and this is their specific task. By understanding these terms, a nabi (prophet) is not necessarily a rasul (messenger), but a rasul is also a nabi.
- A prophet is born a prophet according to the will of Allah and upholds the religious traditions of the previous prophets.

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

**(b) 'Muhammad was the ideal prophet.'**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[15]**

- Within Islam, Muhammad has the unique title of 'Seal of the prophets' due to the final revelation of the Qur'an. As the final revelations were with humanity for eternity, the need for the messenger was no longer needed and therefore this could support the argument that Muhammad was indeed the ideal prophet.
- One line of reasoning could include the idea that the idea of finality suggests to some that the task was complete, that Muhammad had completed the task perfectly, which portrays Muhammad as a perfect messenger of God and one that showed that it was indeed possible to complete the task perfectly.
- Another argument could include the fact that this idea also suggests that Muhammad showed the character of an ideal prophet. This is supported by the Hadith Bukhari, where Muhammad is described as an unselfish person and fully aware of others by his nature.
- Also, the ideal character for a prophet becomes clear as part of his qualities, such as generosity and modesty. The Hadith also describes Muhammad as a man of peace, that silenced conflict. He was an important social and political person when he led the people of Madinah.
- However, it could be said that the qualities of perfection could be exaggerated and raised to a level above that of a leader and more closely linked to a shirk.
- Another argument could be that Muhammad was no different to earlier prophets; he was no angel, or son of God, only a way to transfer Allah's revelation.
- In reality, Muhammad was illiterate when the first revelation was made. He lived normally, despite a difficult upbringing and worked as a merchant and was married to Khadijah. He was mortal and subject to Allah's will like anyone else and died and buried.
- It could also be argued that Muslims believe in Tawhid and that connecting partners with Allah is a sin. Therefore, Muhammad should not be raised to a special status in order to encourage a certain way of worship. There are no pictures of Muhammad anywhere, although it is possible to consider him within the Seal of the Prophets and unique within other messengers, this is only a suggestion of his role and does not give him a higher status. He will always remain a humble messenger.

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

## Section B

Either,

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 (a) Explain the social importance of Id-ul-Fitr for the Muslim community. [15]

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

- Id-ul-Fitr is celebrated on the 1 of Shawaal to mark the end of fasting at Ramandan.
- The word 'Id' means 'returning regularly' and suggests starting afresh or renewal, therefore it is suitable that Muslims regard the three days of celebration as an opportunity to start again morally and spiritually, and to consider the moral and spiritual benefits that they achieved by fasting in the previous year.
- **Unity** – The main purpose of the celebration is to unite the ummah. Usually there is a call to prayer or drumming in some places in order to signify the end of the fast and the beginning of Id. This moment is a happy time with much affection shown and greetings of 'Id Mubarak' that means 'a blessed celebration' or 'happy celebration'. It often leads to members of the community gathering on the streets with family, friends and neighbours.
- An important aspect of Id-ul-Fitr is that the ummah can gather in the mosque, although this can be a large gathering in the open air, in order to show unity with regards to beliefs and practices. Usually, people will wear new clothing which represent how Ramadan has invigorated them and their spirituality.
- **Support for the poor** – Prayers are said, and following this, the Imam gives a sermon about helping the poor. Although these principles are shown later by giving food to the poor, it is a requisite to give to charity through fitrana, a payment made during Id-ul-Fitr that is paid before the festival. Muslims are also encouraged to forgive and forget any differences, problems or conflict with others that arose during the year. Muslims also thank Allah for giving them taqat (strength and perseverance) in order to succeed during Ramadan.
- At midday, Muslims share the food that they have prepared with family and friends. Food is important to feed guests, family and the poor. Often, there is a great deal of food and food for everyone that needs it, with any leftover food being given to the poor.
- Sometime during the day, Muslims visit the graves of relatives and refresh the areas around the graves and offer du'a prayers according to Muslim tradition. This follows the example of Muhammad visiting his mothers grave.
- The main focus of Id-ul-Fitr is the community; the giving, forgiveness, sharing and uniting in prayer.

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

- (b) **‘Fasting in Islam benefits the individual far more than the community.’**  
**Evaluate this view.** [15]

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

- Fasting is obviously beneficial for the individual and it is a personal religious duty.
- However, on the other hand it is likely that fasting is the most common practice that everyone one does together. Therefore, it is of religious benefit to unite and strengthen the ummah.
- One argument, could be that the individual develops spiritually and that a period of intense prayer and meditation is beneficial. While fasting, the concentration is on Allah alone at all times. Additional prayers are offered in order to be more aware of Allah. It is also a time to read the Qur’an.
- Another argument could include the idea that the individual develops morally as Ramadan gives Muslims the opportunity to develop self-control. It leads to a renewal of moral obligations and includes personal moral aims. Moving the concentration from the ‘self’ towards thinking of others is the greatest moral benefit to Muslims during Ramadan.
- It is also possible to argue that fasting like this could mean that one of the main reasons for fasting is missed. The community plays a great part in the fasting. Muslims fast together and at the same time. Daily, Muslims gather to meditate on their fast and eat together when the fast is broken. This unites the ummah. In addition, the empathy for the poor and the tax that is paid, and food given to the poor and needy is beneficial for the structure of the community.
- It could be argued that fasting obviously affects individuals and the community in different ways and one could not argue that one is benefited more than the other. You could also suggest that this is not the best way to appreciate Ramadan e.g. on the part of the individual. It is more correct to suggest that the benefit affects the community and therefore the benefit would be shared for example correct behaviour towards others ensures a more peaceful society.

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

Or,

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 (a) Explain reasons why giving is important in Islam. [15]

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

- References to nature and purpose will be credited where appropriate.
- As giving is the fourth pillar within Islam, it is usually understood literally and it encouraged often.
- Giving is popular during important times within the calendar, such as the Hajj. Giving encourages support for the ummah and lays a solid economic foundation.
- It is a clear link to Muhammad and the example that he provided and it is an extension to the first community that was founded by the prophet.
- The rich also benefit from the opportunity to give and to share. It is an opportunity for rich Muslims to achieve and play their part by putting Allah's will to work. The spiritual benefit this sacrifice is far greater than a feeling of ownership or connection to the material world.
- Due to the nature of the fourth pillar, Islam disapproves strongly if people make a show of giving. According the will of Allah, it is not the people who are rich that have created their situation. Therefore, self-gratification is completely alien to the fourth pillar.
- It is possible to summarize the reasons for giving within Islam in four ways: obedience to Allah's will, compassion towards others, personal sacrifice that gives priority to Allah over one's self, physical and spiritual personal and social benefits.
- In practical terms, the idea of being generous is also reflected by outlawing interest on borrowing, this is seen as a moral principle within Islam.
- There is a strong understanding within Islam that God, not humanity that creates the wealth of humanity. Everyone is equal in the eyes of God, so that the way wealth is distributed unequally in the world creates an opportunity for Muslims, especially ones that are blessed with wealth, to try and bridge the gap.
- The idea of giving provides a feeling of psychological duty as well as a direct responsibility to Allah. The idea of helping the poor are the foundation of two main festivals. After the Hajj, food is distributed to the poor, and after Ramandan has finished, part of the festivals involves gifting the poor. This therefore benefits the ummah.

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

- (b) **‘Supporting the poor is essential within Islam.’**  
**Evaluate this view.**

**[15]**

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

- The reasons for giving in Islam is usually centered on obedience, personal sacrifice, and the value of benefits gained.
- Islam has always been concerned with equality and care for those in need. This stems from the time of Muhammad when his social teachings asked for care towards orphaned children, widows and the poor.
- One argument to support this idea could be to acknowledge the emphasis Muhammad placed on his role with the poor when establishing the fourth pillar. This is compulsory and adhering to this pillar is the minimum expected of a Muslim. Extra giving is encouraged and praised.
- Also, the theme of caring for the poor flows through four of the five pillars, as, over fasting, Id-ul-Fitr remembers the poor, and after the Hajj, the festival of Id-ul-Adha gives food to the poor, and prayers are said over the poor often. This is therefore seen as an important teaching for Muhammad. (Surah 2:61)
- An additional argument could be that the fact that many Islamic charities have been created that emphasise the poor, for example Islamic Aid, Islamic Relief, Muslim Hands and the Ummah Welfare Trust.
- One line of reasoning could include the idea that Islam is based basically on the Shahadah, submitting to Allah and acknowledging Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets. Possibly the message of caring for the poor comes from the message that Allah gave to humanity, but it comes second to submitting to Allah.
- Also, Islam by following the example of Muhammad, worries about any social injustice. For example, Muhammad did many things for the status of women and this teaching remains important within Islam today and care was shown to widows too.
- The argument could also suggest that religious and social practices are the foundation of Islam, not only giving to the poor.
- Another line of reasoning could include the idea that care for the poor is essential within Islam, but not the only focus. Islam is far more complicated and contains all of life.

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

Or,

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 (a) Outline Muhammad's role as a religious, moral, political and military leader in Madinah. [15]

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

- Muhammad showed wisdom and diplomacy as a leader. His wisdom when dealing with tribal and religious differences was essential in such a volatile situation with such divisions in Madinah. Muhammad's main role was to try and unite the various elements in the best way.
- Muhammad did this by developing the Madinah Constitution, an agreement that noted that there was one ummah, it was possible to count Jews as part of that ummah and Muhammad was the main arbitrator in every decision. According to scholars, this agreement tied every Muslim together in order to attack and protect, ensuring the safety of the community. This agreement gained extensive respect and faithfulness, that strengthened the society under the framework of Islam.
- There were still some who outwardly supported Muhammad but were conspiring against him. But Muhammad succeeded in deleting any threat.
- The external conflict with the people of Makkah meant that Muhammad's new situation was still difficult. It was an important moment for Islam. Islam lead attacks because it had to, and a series of battles began within the early development of Islam. These established Muhammad's good name as a great military leader.
- Badr – this was the most famous and influential battle. According to the history, the 'angels were fighting on the side of the Muslims'. Muhammad ordered the battle during the holy month when war was not allowed – although this was an unusual decision, the Qur'an 2:216 shows the justification that it was the only decision and the lesser of two evils. The great success of Muhammad meant that those in Madinah who were unsure, joined Muhammad.
- Uhud – the Jews had refused to accept Muhammad as a prophet and they economically had the upper hand in Hijaz. Three thousand Quraysh marched towards Madinah to support the Jews that Muhammad had attacked. Muslims met them. The Quaraysh did not take advantage of their victory. Muhammad led an army to Makkah the next day and camped for several days. This unusual behaviour raised spirits and again, showed Muhammad's leadership skills.
- Al-khandaq – There were more disagreements between the Jewish and Muslim tribes and this led to uncertainty and suspicion. Muslims and faithful Bedouins marched towards Madinah. Muhammad, who still recalled the loss at Uhud, took Persian advice and built a trench around Madinah. This meant that the enemy was open to attack and would not be able to respond without losses. Muhammad's forces were victorious.
- Muhammad inherited the Jewish-Arabia heritage that had monotheistic values. As Islam accepted previous prophets they were returning to old traditions. Using the Ka'aba meant that Islam accepted traditions that were established. Also, Allah, the name of God was upheld as one of the eternal truths and was developed through the idea of absolute monotheism.

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

- (b) **‘The establishment of the first masjid was the most important factor in the development of Islam in Madinah.’**  
**Evaluate this view.** [15]

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

- The first masjid in Madinah had many purposes such as a community centre, a meeting place for military planning as well as a place for prayer. It also a place for religious instruction, charity and medical assistance and offered a refuge for many, this therefore ensured that Islam had a focal point from which all aspects of the faith could be developed.
- It could be argued that the masjid became a centre for all teachings, practices and religious development for the muslim community and there for as an important focal point and as such was incredibly important as to ensure Islam flourished and thus creating the early Muslim ummah.
- However, it could be argued that the Suras show the development of Islam and that the Suras ensure the progression of Islam and offer a practical guide for life away from Madinah.
- Another line of reasoning could include the idea that religious beliefs and practices which were focused within the masjid in Madinah were established here first and therefore led the way for further development. Everything stemmed from the masjid where it became the heart of the community and it was importantly Muhammad’s headquarters. The various Islamic practices which are still familiar today such as regular prayers, fasting, offering aid to the poor, a centre for justice and religious teaching were all part of the first masjid which offered a blueprint for other communities.
- However it could be argued that it was Muhammad’s social reforms which were of the greatest importance.
- It could also be argued that the Suras which offered advice on all of the religious and social reforms that had taken place were of the greatest importance, especially in the context of the development of Islam – (ideas such as the Pillars, rituals, marriage, trade, finance, war/peace). This ensured that Islam was accessible outside of the confines of the masjid.

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