

CONFERENCE VERSION



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

AUTUMN 2020

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

B120UB0-1

INTRODUCTION

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 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.

AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 25 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>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">21-25 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 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. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">16-20 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 demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">11-15 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 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. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">6-10 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. • 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. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-5 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. • 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. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 25 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	21-25 marks <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. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	16-20 marks <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. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	11-15 marks <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. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	6-10 marks <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. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	1-5 marks <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. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

Component 1

Option B: An Introduction to Islam

Mark Scheme

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

Section A

1. (a) **Examine the Makkan reaction to Muhammad's message.** [AO1 25]

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

- The development of Islam in Makkah came over many years from the time the prophet received his first revelation in 610 CE on Mount Hira, to the time of the migration to Madinah in 623 CE
- Some months after receiving the first revelation of the Qur'an, Muhammad gathered his relatives together on a hilltop and explained his message. He reminded them of the trust they had built up in him and asked them to follow him and trust him with the message of Islam. They rejected his call and spoke disparagingly of Muslims.
- It is said that Muhammad taught the basics of faith in Makkah by outlining the rejection of idols in favour of the unity of the one unseen God in the belief known as tawhid. Muhammad's conversations with those involved in the pilgrim trade, buying and selling idols in Makkah, became fraught and argumentative, but nevertheless he helped to develop clear and uncompromising beliefs in monotheism.
- Muhammad was able to preach whilst his uncle Abu Talib gave protection. At this stage the Makkans held him in contempt because he threatened their customs and way of life based around the Makkan pilgrim trade to idols in the Ka'aba.
- After Abu Talib's death, persecution grew. A camel's entrails were thrown on Muhammad whilst he was praying. People who converted to Islam were tortured. Bilal, a slave who had been freed when he converted, was tortured with a heavy rock on his back in the hot desert.
- The community were exiled in a barren valley and they struggled with hunger. Nevertheless, the Makkan reaction only served to increase the bonds between Muslims and strengthen their resolve. However, when things became too much they migrated to Madinah.
- The hatred the Makkans felt towards the Muslims was shown in that they tried to pursue the Muslims who had left the city to claim asylum in Abyssinia and those who left for Madinah, as they wanted to destroy Islam.

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

- (b) **‘Muhammad’s message could only be truly understood in Pre-Islamic Arabia.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Pre-Islamic Arabia refers to the period up to the coming of Muhammad’s revelation in 610 CE and the early years of his preaching in Makkah. It was a period in which society was tribal: people were loyal to their clans and obeyed their Shaykh leaders in all matters. Muhammad was a member of the Quraysh so was expected to show loyalty to his tribe. This meant supporting the sale of idols to pilgrims as the Quraysh benefitted from the pilgrim trade and were keepers of the Ka’aba.
- It could be argued that Muhammad’s preaching against idols and idol worship can be seen in this context. He was focused on converting his wider family to the message of Islam. He was able to preach at first due to the protection of his Uncle, Abu Talib. Then he was exiled to a barren valley for disloyalty after his Uncle died. Therefore, Muhammad’s years of preaching in Makkah were very much rooted in the context of tribal ties in Pre-Islamic Arabia.
- However, it could be argued that Muhammad’s message was in opposition to the practices of pre-Islamic Arabia and so not defined by it. Muhammad was trying to define a new way of worship and a new message which rejected the habits of the Arabs and was intended to provide an example for Muslims of how to change their lives and reject tribalism for faith. The term ‘jahiliyyah’ is used for Pre-Islamic Arabia and is seen as a period or state of being to be rejected.
- It could be argued that Muhammad brought the same message of monotheism as the other, earlier prophets and his message was to complete the line of messages and leave an example for Muslims to follow for all time. If his examples are truly timeless then they cannot be defined by one period of time and must be understood in general terms, applicable in any time.
- Muhammad believed he was given messages from God and so it could be argued the only definition he needed was God’s word. He didn’t shy away from challenging practices of his time if God commanded it.
- Nevertheless, some of Muhammad’s messages need understanding in the context of the time. Pre-Islamic Arabia was known for abuse of women, whereas Muhammad made a point of referring to women with more respect; perhaps not quite equality but an improvement. It could be argued that Muhammad’s message was for his own time and that today some Muslims believe they need to understand this and go further to address modern issues.

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

2. (a) Explain different ways in which Muhammad provided leadership in Madinah. [AO1 25]

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

- Muhammad was a political, military, religious and social leader: he was seen as leader in many different spheres and admired for his leadership qualities.
- In the first instance he entered Madinah at the request of quarrelling tribes who knew of his reputation as a peacemaker and invited him to help heal rifts in the city. Thereafter Muhammad decreed that Madinah was a centre of peace and reconciliation: no weapons were allowed in his Mosque or compound, and Islam developed as a religion of peace largely through his strength of leadership.
- There is no denying that Muhammad was also a skilled military leader who led Muslims to victory at the Battle of Badr. He was skilled at strategy and built up the strength of Muslims after defeat at the Battle of Uhud before his triumphant entry into Makkah. It could be argued that this was the most important aspect of his leadership since without this the fledgling Muslim community might not have survived and flourished.
- Muhammad was the political leader of Madinah in the early years of his life there. He created the Constitution or Charter of Madinah under which all people were required to peacefully protect and uphold the rights of others regardless of religion. Some see this as supportive of interfaith relations and others of secular leadership.
- However, Muhammad was also a leader exclusively for Muslims and expelled Jewish tribes when he faced issues of dispute. Many of the traditions of Islam, including the detailed practice of many aspects of the Five Pillars, and payment of Zakat, were started with Muhammad's leadership in Madinah. In this way he was both a religious and social leader: leading prayers and organising Zakat for the poor.
- Muhammad took advice from his companions and always thought first about God's will when making decisions. His strength of character led many to follow him and remain loyal through difficult as well as good times. This helped inspire a generation which went on to expand the Muslim community after his death.
- Muhammad left many different examples of leadership which Muslims might apply nowadays in different situations. This has helped to create diversity in leadership seen in the Muslim world today. He did not instruct Muslims to develop any one style of leadership after he was gone. Nevertheless, all leaders since trace their inspiration back to the model of Muhammad's leadership in Madinah.

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

- (b) **‘Muhammad was a complete leader of the city of Madinah, for all its people.’**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Muhammad had many different roles: statesman; political and military leader; religious authority and inspirational example. It is a question of judgement how far he fulfilled all these roles and which was needed to make him a ‘complete’ leader.
- Muhammad led the city of Madinah for all its people under the Charter of Madinah which he introduced. Under this model people of different tribal and religious backgrounds agreed to live in peace and defend each other’s rights. Some see this as a radical departure from the prevailing tribalism and a model for different communities coming together in peace under a secular style of government. It could be argued that this made Muhammad a ‘complete’ leader because he was addressing the needs of everyone in the city.
- On the other hand, the quotation might be challenged. Muhammad preached Islam and sometimes went into conflict with other groups. Even during peaceful leadership, he did not grant others full equality with Muslims. It could be questioned how far he really did lead Madinah for all its people.
- Furthermore, whilst facing hostility from Meccans and engaging in battles, Muhammad’s military leadership and strategy might be seen as most important. There would be no point setting up a Charter for it to be destroyed by enemies. Therefore, it could be argued that he was primarily a political leader who focused less on other aspects of leadership.
- It could also be argued that Muhammad’s most important role was to set the pattern of religious practices for Muslims for their daily life then and in the future, regardless of where they lived. The importance of the five pillars was set by Muhammad’s leadership in Madinah and has affected Muslims world-wide through hundreds of years. In this way he was a leader for Muslims, not everyone, but could be said to be ‘complete’ in that he addressed religious as well as political aspects of leadership which are often separated nowadays.
- It might be argued that Muhammad’s role was first and foremost the deliverer of God’s message in the Qur’an and so he was more of a messenger than a leader. In fact he was known as a good listener who resolved tribal conflicts. Candidates could argue this detracts from leadership or makes him an even more complete leader for considering people’s views.

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

Section B

3. (a) **Explain the significance of niyat (intention) and wudu in preparation for prayers in Islam.** [AO1 25]

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

- There are many different types of prayers in Islam, including the main salah prayers which are said five times a day; du'a prayers which are personal requests; extra nafila prayers and Sufi wurd prayers.
- All of these prayers require a Muslim to state their intention before beginning to say any of the words or do any of the actions of prayer. The intention or niyat may be said quietly or even mouthed silently, as it is an individual intention made by a believer to God. Without this intention the prayer is not valid. Muhammad criticised hypocrites who prayed to be seen by others and said that their prayer was not valid: it is the intention to dedicate the prayer to God alone which makes the prayer valid in Islam.
- When stating the niyat, a Muslim must be clear about what prayer they are saying and how many rakat units they will perform if a salah or nafila prayer. Other prayers also contain words dedicating the action to God. Before eating, a Muslim might say a short du'a to thank God for their food.
- The point of niyat (intention) in du'a prayers is that Muslims are recognising that all comes from their Creator. When making a personal du'a request a Muslim will usually qualify it by asking for whatever God wills for them. They accept that is best, because God is believed to be the best of planners.
- Wudu is a physical act which includes washing (or, where water is not available, dry ablution using sand) in a ritual act to prepare for prayer. Wudu must be performed to clean the body to be decent before God in prayer, and to clear the mind of other thoughts so that the believer can focus on their prayers. Traditional sayings from the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad suggest that Muslims who regularly perform wudu also cleanse themselves of sin.
- Shi'a Muslims perform wudu three times per day, before each prayer session. Sunni Muslims perform wudu when they know they have broken the last Wudu before performing their next prayer. Wudu is generally performed before Sufi prayer sessions as well.
- Whilst both are important, it might be argued that niyat (intention) is more significant because it focuses the believers mind and if it is not possible to complete wudu (ablution) in some circumstances then a Muslim may still pray provided they have the right intention.

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

- (b) **'For Muslims, no prayers are ever more important than Jummah prayers.'**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- Jummah prayers replace the mid-day prayer for Muslims on Fridays and are expected to be performed by adult, male Muslims together in congregation. Other prayers are also performed in congregation, throughout the week, and Muslims gain reward for doing so. However, the other five daily prayers may also be said alone, whereas Jummah prayers require Muslims to come together and cannot be said alone. Therefore, it might be argued that this constitutes greater importance.
- Jummah prayers include a sermon, in which Muslims may learn more about their faith. They also enable Muslims to gain fellowship and strength from meeting and discussing matters with their fellow believers.
- However, Muslims are commanded to follow the five pillars including salah prayer. Jummah is not singled out as a separate pillar. It could be argued that it is more important to establish religious practice day to day, wherever a Muslim is, than pray once a week on a Friday. Whilst Muslims may try to do both for many it might not be possible to attend mosques due to work or school, so they balance the needs of gaining an education and providing income for their families, which are also duties in Islam, with their duty to pray when they can. Muslim travellers may also say the regular midday prayer in place of Jummah.
- There are other special prayers which might mean more to individual Muslims. The Id festival prayers come twice a year and may be a time when individuals can connect with relatives and make a fresh commitment to Islam.
- One tradition suggests that should Id fall on a Friday, the Id Prayer becomes more important than the Jummah prayer, which is no longer considered compulsory.
- If a Muslim performs Hajj, their du'a prayers whilst standing on the Plain of Arafat may feel like the most important prayer of their life since it is here where they believe Judgement may take place in future and here where they receive forgiveness from their past sins. Jummah prayers are thought to carry with them forgiveness for misdemeanours carried out since the last Jummah, whereas standing at Arafat receives forgiveness from a lifetimes sins.
- In some Mosques women are provided with facilities but not all and not all on an equal basis. It is usually taught that women are not required to attend Jummah but must complete the five daily prayers. Therefore, it could be said that a prayer which half the population is not required to complete cannot be the most important one.

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

4. (a) Explain the role of Ramadan in shaping Muslim identity. [AO1 25]

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

- Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam regarded as compulsory for Muslims to complete if they are able. It is a month of fasting which is one of the most well-known in the year. At this time, Muslims spend more time focused on their faith and performing additional activities, which for many is important in shaping their identity.
- Muslims get up early, before dawn, to eat the pre-dawn meal *sehri*, then make their intention to fast for the day in obedience to God. Therefore, God-consciousness becomes part of a Muslim identity particularly through the month of Ramadan.
- Muslims then pray the early morning prayer as well as the normal daily prayers, just as they might throughout the year. Many make a special effort to pray during Ramadan, even if they do not at other times of the year, believing it to be a good time to make a fresh commitment to their faith.
- During the day Muslims go about their normal work just as they would if they were not fasting. In fact, one tradition is that fasting is entirely between a believer and God so Muslims should keep the fact whether or not they are fasting private. However, it may be harder to focus due to the physical demands of fasting. This is significant as a test of faith and Muslims strengthen their resolve to commit to their faith. Some see this as an example of the greater Jihad against temptation.
- As well as abstaining from food, Muslims try not to swear or backbite, believing that these actions also break their fast. This is significant in that it reflects a saying of the prophet: that the thing which weighs heaviest at Judgement is good character.
- In the evening, many Muslims eat an *Iftari* meal together, often inviting others or joining a meal in a mosque. This strengthens the bonds of fellowship. Muslims might give to charity at this time to remember the poor who have little food and feel empathy with them. *Iftaris* have become a significant tradition, with some large events held to show those of other faiths aspects of Islam and shape a communal aspect of Muslim identity.
- Sometimes non-Muslims are invited to join in the meal as an open demonstration of how this important Ramadan as a month of fasting shapes Muslim identity.
- *Tarawih* prayers are additional, optional prayers read in the evening by Sunni Muslims and consist of either 20 or 8 rakats according to different schools of thought. They include recitation of the whole Qur'an over the month, strengthening Muslims connection with this, their divine authority. Shia Muslims might attend speeches in mosques on occasion instead. These events help shape a Muslim identity with prayer and the Qur'an at its heart.

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

(b) 'The reward for Muslims who fast is purely personal.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- 'Reward' for fasting is often referred to by Muslims. As one of the five pillars of Islam, obedience to them gains good deeds which benefit a Muslim when it comes to the Day of Judgement. They may complete the act of fasting in the hope that it may help them gain the reward of eternal life in heaven. Since every Muslim is judged individually, this could be seen as a purely personal reward.
- Those who fast may also gain benefit in this life. A Muslim makes their personal intention to carry out an act of worship, in this case fasting, under their breath before the start of the action. During the day this helps Muslims remember God and develop a deeper sense of God-consciousness (Taqwa) in their life. Since the sense of God-consciousness is personal, developing this could be seen as a personal benefit.
- Some Muslims fast in environments where they are the only one fasting, such as where they live and work alongside those of other faiths. In that case fasting can be an inner struggle to follow God's command whilst others around are not fasting, and so be a deeply personal struggle which gains personal reward.
- However, there are many benefits from Ramadan for Muslim families. It is a time when families get together for sehri (pre-dawn) and iftari (sunset) meals every day for a month. Some make time to visit relatives and to make amends for their quarrels with the belief that God will then forgive them.
- The Muslim community may gain from increased attendance at mosques. The sense of fellowship between Muslims who attend mosques together for the additional Tarawih prayers may help to inspire both individuals and groups of Muslims to become more committed to their faith. It may help strengthen the bonds between worshippers. At the evening prayers the whole of the Qur'an is recited, in stages, enabling Muslims to appreciate its beauty and learn more about their holy book.
- Ramadan may benefit the world-wide community of Muslims. It is a time when Muslims feel the hunger of those who do not have enough to eat, through their fasting. Charitable collections are made and money given to help those in need in different parts of the world, providing material benefit as well as strengthening the ties between rich and poor.

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

5. (a) Examine the role of nadir (warner) carried out by God's messengers.
[AO1 25]

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

- Prophets and messengers were sent to earth by God to warn people to turn away from their wrongdoing and follow the message of God. This happened repeatedly throughout history until the time of prophet Muhammad. All of the messengers were said to bring the same basic message of Islam which was completed with Muhammad, the last and final messenger.
- Idolatry was a repeated issue which messengers such as Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Dawud (David) and Isa (Jesus) warned against. Each of these messengers was known as a rasul who brought a holy book or scrolls to the people of their time. It was seen as necessary in each case to warn against idolatry and to return to the worship of the one God.
- Ibrahim (Abraham) went out one night and looked at the moon and stars and was inspired to think that they could not be gods. He warned the people not to worship idols and eventually became the guardian of the Ka'aba which he set up as a centre for monotheism.
- Prophets also warned against immorality, corruption and selfishness. For example, prophet Lut (Lot) warned the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their lack of faith, greed, promiscuity, assault and male rape. He gave a message of forgiveness for repentance but not one person heeded his warning, so the city was destroyed.
- Prophet Muhammad repeatedly warned the Makkan idol worshippers to turn away from their gods of stone and worship the one unseen God. He asked them to accept that there would be a Day of Judgement and Afterlife dependent on actions and intentions in this world, and continually warned them that their refusal to turn away from idols might lead to everlasting damnation.
- In Madinah, Muhammad particularly warned against hypocrisy. There were some who professed to be Muslim but did not truly believe and prayed just to be seen and benefit from social standing. Muhammad warned against backbiting and cheating, arguing that such actions would be taken into account on the Day of Judgement.
- Despite the role of nadir (warner), God's messengers were also sent with messages of hope of everlasting life in heaven for those who repented and worshipped the one God. Their message always contained more forgiveness than warning, reflecting the mercy of God.

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

(b) 'Messengers in Islam failed to have any lasting impact.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

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

- In Islamic tradition it is said that there were 124 000 prophets who came from the time of the first man, Adam, up to the last prophet, Muhammad, each with a message for their own people. However, these messages were part of the same message of monotheism which was completed by Muhammad, seal of the prophets. It could be argued that because there were so many prophets, this is evidence that each prophet did not have any lasting impact.
- Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) was said to have set up the Ka'aba as a centre of monotheism and stopped the worship of idols by the people of his time. Yet by the time of the coming of Muhammad, Makkah was once again the centre of the pilgrimage trade where people bought and sold idols. This might be seen as evidence that Ibrahim had no lasting impact.
- Yet the story of Ibrahim and his test of faith in which he was asked to be prepared to sacrifice his son for God is still well known today and the focus of the Id ul-Adha festival. This suggests that Ibrahim's impact was great that he inspires Muslims even today, thousands of years later, with the message of sacrifice.
- Prophet Muhammad left his Sunnah as an example to Muslims and a major source of authority in Islam. The way Muslims pray, for example, is spelled out by Muhammad's actions. Muhammad, the last and final messenger, therefore had a lasting impact on Muslims around the world today.
- It could be argued it is not the messenger but the message which counts, and the message was ultimately from God. An extension of this argument could be that for a messenger to have lasting impact could lead to a cult or worship of an individual rather than the unseen God. Therefore, it is not a failure that messengers themselves had less impact but it was part of God's plan to focus Muslim worship away from individuals.
- Candidates might debate how far different Muslims today have been influenced by the messengers of the past. Some might say that Muslims need to re-interpret the examples of the messengers for the modern context, and it can be unhelpful to focus too much on people who lived in very different times. Others might argue that the messengers were perfect people and Muslims should always be able to take principles from messenger's examples to apply in the modern world.

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