



GCE A LEVEL MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2022

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

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2022 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

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

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

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

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

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

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

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

Rules for Marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

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

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

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

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

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

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

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

Awarding no marks to a response

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

A Level Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 20 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;">17-20 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. • Insightful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • An extensive range of views of scholars/schools of thought used accurately and effectively. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">13-16 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. • Purposeful connections are made between the various approaches studied. • A range of scholarly views/schools of thought used largely accurately and effectively. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">9-12 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. • Sensible connections made between the various approaches studied. • A basic range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">5-8 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. • Makes some basic connections between the various approaches studied. • A limited range of scholarly views/schools of thought used. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-4 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. • Little or no use of scholarly views/schools of thought. • Very few or no connections made between the various approaches studied. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <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 30 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	<p>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. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • The views of scholars/schools of thought are used extensively, appropriately and in context. • Confident and perceptive analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p>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. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are used appropriately and in context. • Purposeful analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p>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. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Views of scholars/schools of thought are generally used appropriately and in context. • Sensible analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p>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. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Basic use of the views of scholars/schools of thought appropriately and in context. • Makes some analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p>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. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Little or no use of the views of scholars/schools of thought. • Limited analysis of the nature of connections between the various elements of the approaches studied. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1 OPTION B

A STUDY OF ISLAM

SUMMER 2022 MARK SCHEME

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

Section A

1. (a) Explain the role of the masjid (mosque) as the hub of the Ummah (community of believers) for men and women.

[AO1 20]

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

- **The masjid is the hub for the Ummah for communal worship** (jamaat). Prayer services are organised five times a day with the Imam leading. Muslims stand in rows, shoulder to shoulder, symbolising their unity. In some masjids facilities for women are provided in separate rooms. In some, there are no facilities for women and in a few, women and men mix in the same rows.
- The masjid is a hub at **Jumma (Friday) prayers**. All adult, male members of the community aim to take part, if they can, whereas for women prayer in the masjid is seen as optional. The Imam gives a sermon which can help to unite the community.
- **Special prayers at Id festivals** also unite the community and additionally to Friday prayers, Muslims embrace to celebrate. During Ramadan, special prayers and iftar meals may be held, at which members of the Ummah join together to share food and thank Allah for all they have been given. At Id, many Muslims will walk or travel a little further to attend a larger masjid, where they can meet members of the wider Muslim community.
- **Charitable collections** are made; charity is organised at Id and other times of the year through the masjid as its hub, uniting Muslims in the local areas with needy people both locally and around the world.
- **Masjids provide a central hub for education**, specifically for teaching the Qur'an, prayers and beautiful recitation (*tajwid*). Children often attend after school classes in the masjid and adults learn from the sermons given by the Imam.
- In countries such as Britain, and others **where Muslims live as a minority, masjids can be a central hub for support** and help so that members of the Muslim community can learn from each other about opportunities to integrate and discuss the problems they may face such as language, Islamophobia and so on. The masjid is also a hub where converts/ reverts to Islam can become more familiar with their faith and learn from other members of the Ummah.
- **Masjids are a hub for family matters** which bring together the Ummah to support families. This can be to support marriage guidance, negotiate divorce, and provide support to those facing bereavement, as well as organising the religious services for these events. They may organise circumcisions for the young and washing the body of the deceased, before burial.

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

(b) 'Prostration is the most important purpose of the masjid.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- **Prostration refers to the position of sajdah during salah**, Muslim prayers. Five times a day, Muslims pray facing Makkah and place their forehead on the ground symbolising total submission to Allah. This is thought to be one of the deepest spiritual moments during prayer in which Muslims connect with Allah.
- Since **prayer is one of the Five Pillars** of Islam, and a command for Muslims to complete, it follows that this must be the most important function of the masjid. The term 'masjid' means 'place of prostration'.
- **The masjid provides a clean place suitable for prayer**, with facilities laid out to perform wudu, ablution and enable prostration to take place. This is particularly helpful in busy places or where no other place is available. Furthermore, it was recommended by Muhammad to perform prayer in congregation, something which the masjid facilitates.
- A **Hadith of Muhammad** states: 'Wherever the hour of prayer overtakes you, you shall perform it. That place is a masjid.' This suggests that prostration in the masjid is very important.
- However, this could be disputed. Muhammad also said, recorded in a Hadith, that: 'The earth is a masjid for you, so pray wherever you are at the time of prayer.' This suggests that it is the action of prostration which is important, not the location where it takes place. Therefore, it might be argued that it is not essential for the masjid (building) to provide it exclusively.
- Furthermore, the **masjid provides many other functions. Education**, including how to read the Qur'an and how to pray, is an important function of the masjid. Without this, Muslims might not know how to pray at all.
- **Jummah prayers, said on Fridays, are required to be said in congregation** and organised in the masjid. Whilst daily prayer services might be said alone if needs be, Jummah cannot. Jummah includes reading a sermon and explaining teaching to the community, something which can be conducted by learned Imams in the masjid. Therefore, it may be argued that providing Jummah is an essential function of the masjid.
- **Discussion should focus on what is 'essential'** and distinguish between essential, important and less important functions of masjids. Reference might be made to different masjids. These might include the **Prophet's masjid in Madinah, which also was a centre for political leadership**, arguably essential in Madinah at the time. By contrast, modern masjids in secular countries might offer spiritual guidance as their only 'essential' function, providing meaning in life for Muslims negotiating the challenges of living in modern, secular society.

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

2. (a) Explain the religious and moral benefits of Ramadan for Muslims.

[AO1 20]

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

- **Ramadan is the Muslim month of fasting**, which takes place once a year. This brings many **religious benefits** and candidates may explore several areas here: personal prayer; communal prayer; reciting the Qur'an; a time for spiritual refreshment; remembering the 'night of power'; obligatory fasting emphasises self-sacrifice, obedience and following the example of Muhammad.
- **Religious and moral benefits may overlap** e.g. Muslims also try to forgive others in their hearts, in preparation for Id, so that they can make a fresh start and celebrate Id prayers together, standing side by side in the masjid without enmity.
- Id-ul-Fitr is both **morally and spiritually** important as a time for sharing food, and in general greeting everyone as equals. After Id prayers, rich and poor alike hug each other with the greeting, 'Id Mubarak!' A special payment called Fitrana is paid in the masjid at Id. The masjids organise this to help those in need.
- The **moral benefits** of Ramadan include both in action and in thought or inspiration. **Muslims may invite the needy to join them in iftar meals** to 'open' the fast at sunset. They may also provide for them in the masjid.
- Some Muslims are unable to fast, and it is a tradition that they **provide food for needy people** in return. Some traditions state they should provide for around 70. Others sponsor food donations to provide for meals in masjids. Many Muslims make an effort to give to food banks and directly to charity of various causes during Ramadan.
- **Moral conduct is also an important aspect of fasting**. Muslims try hard not to swear or backbite, believing these actions break a person's fast as much as eating would. Another tradition is that Muslims should be absolutely truthful in everything they say during the month. Sex is prohibited during fasting hours and Muslims also stay away from venues and activities which might tempt them to detract from their fast.
- **Muslims not only do-good things but also try to cleanse their thoughts during Ramadan and Id**. Ramadan is a time to think about doing the right thing and consider those less fortunate, particularly those who do not have enough food to eat.
- The aspects of good conduct during Ramadan and Id are those which are expected of Muslims throughout the year. Ramadan and Id are a period of intense focus which helps Muslims put behind them their misdemeanours and make an effort to conduct themselves in morally upright fashion, which they hope will support them for the rest of the year.

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

- (b) 'Id-ul-Fitr should be treated as a religious celebration and not a social occasion.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Id-ul-Fitr is a celebration at the end of Ramadan, which is often described in terms of religious observances and social celebrations. This statement suggests that the religious aspects of Id should be the focus of all that Muslims do during the festival.
- **The first main activity of Id is to attend Id prayers.** Muslims give thanks to God for their Ramadan fast and for everything Allah has given them. Attendances at masjids are very high and sometimes several prayer sessions are organised to fit everyone in. This suggests that most Muslims consider Id prayer as compulsory and the most important aspect of the day. Whilst many other activities take place during the days of Id, prayer is a common denominator. Some Muslims have to go to work on Id day, in which case they often arrange to attend the earliest prayer in the morning before attending their employment. This suggests that Muslims should consider Id an entirely religious occasion, because the essential activity of the day is religious.
- **Other activities are also religious.** Some families visit graves to pray for loved ones, as well as joining families at home for celebratory meals. Those meals usually start with a du'a prayer, in which individuals cup their hands upwards and thank Allah for the food they share. This suggests that the activities after prayer are also entirely religious.
- **However, spending joyful times with families is something many look forward to.** Id for many includes eating out, visiting the cinema, or going out to the countryside. Muslims believe it is right to relax and enjoy Id after a whole month's fasting during which they have made an extra effort. These social aspects of Id are uppermost in the minds of many.
- **Muslims set limits during their social activities.** For example, they usually do not celebrate by drinking alcohol, since that is against Islamic teaching. Social activities such as going to the pub for Id are therefore ruled out. This suggests there is a combination of religious and social in the activities that Muslims carry out: social celebration within the confines of what is religiously accepted.
- **The statement could be challenged as a false separation of religious and social.** Islam is considered by many Muslims as a whole way of life, encompassing religious and social activities. If Allah made the world and predetermines everything in life, then religious and social matters are included in that. Everything should be regarded as religious in a sense, even if it is not overtly so.

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

Section B

3. (a) **Examine Muslim beliefs about the roles of rasul (messenger) and nadir (warner).**

[AO1 20]

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

- **Several roles are assigned to prophets in Islam**, including the general term nabi (prophets), rasul (messengers) who brought holy books, nadir (warners) and risalah (the message they brought). In practice, many of these terms apply to the same people and are sometimes used interchangeably. Nevertheless, the terms rasul and nadir have specific meanings in the context of their missions.
- **The role of rasul (messenger) applies to Muhammad, Isa (Jesus), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and Dawud (David).** This is because they received specific messages from Allah. These came in the form of texts revealed in stages, often by angel Jibril sometimes appearing as an angel or human, or sometimes through dreams, apparitions and events. The books received included the scrolls to Ibrahim, the Psalms to Dawud, the Torah to Musa, the Gospels to Isa and finally the Qur'an to Muhammad.
- **The Qur'an states that this was the same message.** The Qur'an 42.13 states: 'The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - the which We have sent by inspiration to thee - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein.'
- **These messages are said to be the same in essence: encouragement to follow the belief in One God;** to accept the prophethood of the messengers and follow their examples; and to believe in the afterlife and judgement. The message itself can be seen as positive encouragement and a call to Islam.
- **The role of warner** – the Qur'an includes a message to prophets to say: 'I am but a Warner open and clear.' (Qur'an: 46.9). This role can apply to any prophet, not just those who brought a revealed text. Indeed, Muslims believe there were around 144,000 prophets sent through the ages at different times and to different peoples, the last being Muhammad.
- **The warning is against idolatry and social injustice, and all that surrounds this.** People are warned that if they do not clear their places of worship of idols then a terrible fate awaits them. If they do not give justice to others then they face Allah's wrath. This warning is also meted out by rasul messengers as in the case of Muhammad's warning to the Makkans.
- **All of these prophets are seen as equal and similar:** all are people and are not in any way divine or worshipped in their own right. Due to the texts left and the well-known stories associated with rasul prophets, these tend to be uppermost in the minds of Muslims as an inspiration to follow faith and to heed their warning about judgement.

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

(b) **'Muhammad was the ideal prophet and messenger.'**

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Ideal can be taken to mean perfect and a model to follow. This statement suggests the things which Muhammad did, his sunna, form an ideal example for Muslims to follow wherever they are in the world and whatever time period they lived in.
- **The character of Muhammad** is much respected by Muslims and viewed as a perfect model to follow. The Hadith of Bukhari record many occasions when he was selfless, polite and considerate. These are universal aspects of character which can be applied whatever the situation and whatever times a person is living in.
- **However, there were many prophets before Muhammad who brought the same message in their own ways to different peoples and different cultures.** The Qur'an 3.144 states 'Muhammad is no more than an apostle: many were the apostles that passed away before him.' If Muhammad was ideal for all times, then there would have been no need for the previous prophets. Muhammad as the seal of the prophets and final messenger might, therefore, be considered the ideal prophet for his own time.
- **Shari'a law is based on the Qur'an and the sunna of Muhammad.** This codifies what he did as a source for law, suggesting that it is ideal and beyond dispute. However, there are differing opinions about the use of shari'a in today's world and some argue that it should not be taken literally as it was based on Muhammad's examples in a very different time.
- **Other sources of shari'a include the Qur'an directly, where it gives clear guidance; the agreement of scholars, *ijma*, and analogy with other situations, *qiyas*.** Shi'a Muslims may also use reasoning, *aql*. These other sources are needed, it could be argued, because Muhammad does not provide an ideal example for all times and there are many gaps in the guidance given to Muslims for modern times.
- **If Muhammad's example was ideal, it could be argued, then there would be no need for other sources** and there would be no debate today because everything would have been settled. It could be argued that today's world needs further guidance because of new situations which have arisen, particularly in the fields of technology and medical ethics.
- Many modern scholars and Imams would not question the authority of Muhammad as ideal, but say they are adding guidance and interpretation based on what Muhammad would have done.
- Discussion might focus on the meaning of ideal, and if Muhammad was part of Allah's plan, then that is regarded as best for them, and so ideal. At the same time, they may need more guidance as that is also part of a test from God for their lives.

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

4. (a) Examine challenges to Islam from two scientific theories about the origins of the universe.

[AO1 20]

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

- Scientific theories about the origins of the universe commonly studied include the Big Bang theory, Steady State theory and Expanding/Oscillating Universe theory. Other theories may be credited where relevant.
- **The Big Bang theory** suggests that the universe began spontaneously through scientific forces. These involved an explosion of dense matter outwards to form the universe. The power of this 'big bang' continues to propel the universe in an expanding direction.
- **The Big Bang theory challenges Islam** because there is no need for a creator God to start the process. It began, according to this theory, with a dense mass, which exploded because of the laws of physics.
- **This challenges Islam because Muslims believe there must be a 'first cause' to the universe**, which they call God. It cannot be spontaneous, according to the Qur'an 21:30 'Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before we clove them asunder?'
- **The Steady State theory** proposes that the universe was always there and will go on forever, so there is no need to believe in a 'first cause'. The universe will carry on in much the same way, with small changes here and there, without end.
- **This challenges Islam because Muslims believe in both a start and an end to the universe**, with the Day of Judgement and the Afterlife. The Steady State theory is therefore in opposition to this key belief.
- **Albert Einstein's theory of relativity** suggests that space and time were relative, not fixed, and could change according to the laws of physics. This negates the need for a Creator God with a plan, challenging Muslim beliefs.
- **The Expanding/ Oscillating Universe** theory suggests that the universe has been through a series of cycles, with various big bangs and phases but no single origin or explosion. Again, there is no need to believe in a first cause or God, as the universe was always there.
- **This challenges Muslims such as Avicenna and Al-Biruni** who stated that there must have been a first cause because of the unity in the universe and the freshness in creation, opposing the idea of uncoordinated cycles.
- **Muslims find information about the origin of the universe largely from the Qur'an** and from the interpretation of this by scholars. Therefore, it is a challenge to be presented with scientific evidence and rational explanation, which appears to give a different message from revealed text, which in the eyes of Muslims is from Allah and therefore beyond question.

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

- (b) 'Islamic responses to scientific views about the origins of the universe are ineffective.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Muslims have responded to the challenges of scientific views in different ways. Commonly, they make the case for the importance of believing in a **Creator God as the first cause behind the universe, so rejecting the theories** which describe it as having taken place spontaneously.
- Beyond that, **some Muslims reject the scientific challenges and others try to harmonise them with aspects of Islamic beliefs**. The Qur'an refers to the heavens and the earth as being joined then split, which could be interpreted as in agreement with the Big Bang, or could be interpreted differently.
- **Muslim philosophers in the Middle Ages provided material which can be used to make effective responses** to scientific challenges. Al-Biruni, a Muslim thinker and traveller from Uzbekistan in the Middle Ages, spent time studying and discussing the universe around him. He concluded that time was relative and had different cycles. He also discussed his ideas with other leading Muslim philosophers at the time, especially Avicenna. This suggests that Muslims are able to blend aspects of scientific thinking with their beliefs, without difficulty.
- **Other Muslims, such as al-Ghazali, rejected the move to a rational approach**, inspiring Muslims to take a devotional standpoint from which they found it difficult to respond to scientific and philosophical progress in the enlightenment and modern world.
- Modern Muslims similarly take different views. **Harun Yahya insists on there being a Creator God because of Qur'anic revelation**, which he believes needs no scientific validation. However, he interprets the Qur'an as predicting that the universe is steadily expanding in agreement with scientific theories. Some criticise this approach as reading too much into the revelations and so failing to respond to the challenges rationally. However, he has been popular with Muslims and effective at communicating his traditional messages through video lectures.
- **Dr Usama Hasan, a scientist and Imam, accepted scientific views** and rationalised them with the Qur'an, but his acceptance of evolution led to criticism and rejection by other Muslims. This suggests that, taken as a whole, Islamic responses have been divided.
- Scholars Haslin Hasan and Hafiz Mat Tuah said that modern **science influences the way Muslims think about the origins of the universe**. So, there is some way to go to make an effective response from the perspective of Islam.
- **Discussion might conclude with an assessment of what is effective and ineffective**. To some, rejecting the challenges from the standpoint of accepting revealed texts is a robust and effective position to take. To others, the failure to engage with scientific rationalism by some has made Islamic responses ineffective.

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

5. (a) Explain the importance of greater jihad as a personal spiritual struggle for every Muslim.

[AO1 20]

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

- Jihad is commonly thought of as a holy war, but in fact there are different sorts of jihad. A Hadith of Muhammad states: 'The fighter against unbelief is he who fights against his ego in obeying God.' This refers to the idea that greater jihad is a personal struggle for every Muslim.
- **Muhammad used to visit caves and meditate upon Allah, and often faced personal struggles** in his journey of faith. He said: 'The mujahid is the person who makes jihad against himself for the sake of Allah.' He also said: 'What is better for you than spending gold and silver, and better than fighting your enemies? ... The remembrance of Allah.' In carrying out a personal spiritual struggle, Muslims are following the example and words of Muhammad.
- **Averroes described the greater jihad as the jihad of the heart against the temptations of the devil.** Muslims believe that the devil can send temptations to people to lead them away from the straight path of Islam. This could mean the temptation of doing something else other than praying; to go after riches rather than pleasing Allah; to disobey Islamic prohibitions on alcohol or taking interest and so on. The struggle comes in the heart and minds of Muslims: what really matters most to them and have they the strength to fight against their basic desires for wealth and pleasure and instead to put first the commands of an unseen God.
- **Sufis throughout the ages have described the greater, spiritual jihad as the jihad of the *nafs*,** roughly interpreted as the struggle against the self. Rabia of Basra wrote about this using mystical language in her poetry. There are different stages to the struggle: against selfishness, hypocrisy, weakness, ambition, self-pity and imbalance. The struggle is to rise through various stages from being wicked to critical to disciplined to relaxed, contented, pleased and pure, ultimately in all-embracing God-consciousness. Stages of dhikr/zikr along the way are the way in which Sufis fight with their self and overcome their desires to find a deeper connection with Allah.
- **For many Muslims living in the modern world, it is a personal struggle to remain true to their faith** as well as engage and be part of modern living. To Muslims living alongside others, it may be a struggle to refrain from engaging in actions considered disapproved of or forbidden, because of the social desire to be part of a group. Young Muslims may be tempted at university. Or, they may be tempted to follow materialism and give less importance to prayer, skipping a few sessions. Many interpret it as an important personal struggle to make sense of their beliefs and struggle with their own self to be committed to Islam.

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

- (b) 'Teachings about lesser jihad are no longer relevant for Muslims today.'

Evaluate this view.

[AO2 30]

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

- Lesser jihad refers to the outward struggle, often, though not always, equated with holy war. Teachings for lesser jihad originate from the Qur'an and the sunna of Muhammad, added to by the examples and teachings left by his closest companions, particularly Abu Bakr. These have been further interpreted over the ages and by many modern Muslim scholars for the modern world.
- **Muhammad fought jihads against the Makkans** and against disloyal tribes in Madinah. These have historical context. They are said to be defensive and necessary in order to establish Islam at the time, within the norms of tribal society.
- **Some Muslims feel that these teachings are still relevant** because all teachings from the Qur'an and sunna are relevant. However, it does not mean they are commands for today. The teachings can be interpreted to mean that lesser jihad may be practiced against enemies or that lessons can be learned from these historical studies, but the teachings are not to be applied today because the context is so different.
- **Abu Bakr, following Muhammad's examples, specified that lesser jihad must be defensive**, not to gain wealth or land, not to harm or involve women or children, and not even to destroy trees or harm crops. It could be argued that these apply only to those times when such warfare existed. On the other hand, the principles might be applied today. The principles of only use action when attacked first and sheltering the vulnerable, as well as avoiding needless destruction, can be extracted from Abu Bakr's teachings and applied in today's world.
- **Islamists, such as Sayyid Qutb, believe that the original Islamic teachings are still relevant.** He said: 'When God restrained Muslims from jihad for a certain period, it was a question of strategy rather than of principle.' Islamists argue that lesser jihad is valid to establish an Islamic system, which has been seen in various movements, some extreme, in different parts of the world.
- **Others, such as the Muslim Reform Movement, believe there is no place for violent, lesser jihad, in today's world.** They highlight that the times were very different in early Arabia and that the principles of Islam are based around peace: these principles should be reinterpreted for today's world. Abuses have taken place including acts of terrorism, claimed in the name of Islam by some Muslims, and staunchly rejected by most Muslims. This means that violent teachings should be flatly rejected in their view.
- Discussion might focus on which teachings and in what sense they are no longer relevant – the literal teachings or principles; teachings about making peace through struggle or teachings about taking up arms.

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