



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES A 8062/15

Paper 1 Islam

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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Mark Schemes for GCSE Religious Studies

This paper requires expert markers who have wide knowledge and understanding of the particular subject content of the Specification. With the exception of the multiple-choice question, many of the questions asked have many different credible answers and students are able to bring to their answers their own knowledge, understanding and background. They will offer details, arguments and evidence which the examiner, with the help of the mark scheme, will need to judge as credible or not. It is therefore important that the examiner has a good understanding of the principles and spirit of the mark scheme in order to be fair and consistent when marking students' answers. The Content included is designed to be as helpful as possible but in many cases is not exhaustive. So Content sections are introduced by the sentence:

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

this is to remind examiners that there may well be additional correct answers which, with their expertise, they will be able to allow. With all questions if an examiner has any doubt about answers being creditworthy they should consult their team leader.

Structure

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the question; Each question is printed in full before its target and mark scheme. It is always important that examiners remind themselves of the exact question being asked. In particular, they will need to do this in instances where the answer appears to be 'straying' from the question set or perhaps offers a valid alternative not included in the mark scheme
- target; The target provides the specific assessment objective which the question is testing. It reminds examiners of the skills the question is designed to test, eg knowledge and understanding, evaluation
- the total marks available for the question and if Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is assessed
- the typical answer(s) or content which are expected
- generic instructions related to the question target of how to award marks (ie levels of response grid).

Themes papers guidance (Specification A and Short Course)

In questions where students may choose religions from which to illustrate their answer, there may be some general Content, ie credible comments which students will make which could be applied to any religion or perhaps to a secular viewpoint as well. Where these are appropriate they are usually given first. The mark scheme will also include, under separate headings, Content sections for each of the six religions allowed within the Specifications.

General Guidance

.../. means that these are acceptable alternative answers in the mark scheme, eg Guru Har Krishan / Guru Tegh Bahadur / Guru Gobind Singh.

Answers may include specialist terms, in Hebrew or Arabic for example. If this is the case, the mark scheme will usually indicate this by providing in brackets the English as well, eg 'Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)'. In such questions, answers will be credited whether provided in the original language or in English.

Some mark schemes use bullet points to separate content. Each bullet point refers to a different possible 'belief' or 'teaching' or 'way', depending on the question. Obliques (.../...) used within the bullet point indicate different ways in which the point may be expressed and points which may be made to give the further detail or development needed for the second mark.

Where a student has crossed out a complete answer, it should be marked if it remains legible, unless an alternative is provided in which case only the alternative should be marked. When part of an answer is crossed out, then only what remains should be considered.

In questions where credit can be given to the development of a point, those developments can take the form of:

- example or evidence
- reference to different views
- detailed information.

1-mark multiple-choice questions

Such questions have four alternatives and the one correct answer will be given together with the correct letter, eg 'Answer: D Trinity'.

2-mark short-answer questions

The principle here is provided in the mark scheme: 'One mark for each of two correct points.' Students may give **more than** the two answers required by the question. In such instances:

- **award for the first two answers only, wherever they appear**
- if a student gives more than one answer on the first line and another answer/other answers on the second line, the 'first two answers' will be the **first two** on the first line and **only these two** should be considered for marks. Other answers must be ignored
- if on the first line the first two answers given are correct, award two marks, regardless of what is written elsewhere in the answer
- if the first two answers can only be awarded one mark yet there is a third answer that is correct, this correct third answer must be ignored and no mark given for it
- however, if the student gives some **elaboration after the first answer**, which is clearly developing their first answer, (which they are not required to do), do not consider this elaboration to be their second answer (unless the elaboration happens to contain a second correct answer to the question asked), regardless of whether there are other answers provided. In this case, the second answer also, if correct, may be credited for the second mark.

4 and 5-mark answer questions

Examiners should take care to note the target of the question. Clear information is provided for these types of question on how to award marking points. Examiners should carefully read the additional instructions provided for each type of question (eg for influence questions the final sentence in the general guidance box reminds the examiner that the second mark (detailed explanation) awarded in each case must show clear 'influence').

12-mark answer questions

The 12-mark questions test Evaluation skills (AO2). The mark scheme for these answers is based on Levels of Response marking in which the examiner is required to make a judgement on the completed answer taken as a whole.

Level of response marking instructions

In GCSE Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, level of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Level of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Level of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. If examiners have any doubt about what level to award a response, they should consult their team leader.

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before examiners apply the mark scheme to a student's answer they should read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. They should then apply the mark scheme. It may be necessary to read the answer more than once to be sure of assigning the correct Level.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in 12-mark questions.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.	3
Intermediate performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.	2
Threshold performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.	1
No marks awarded	• The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.	0

0 1

Islam: Beliefs

0 1 . 1

Which one of the following is the meaning of the term ‘Imamate’?

[1 mark]

- A Angel**
- B Festival**
- C Holy Book**
- D Leadership**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

Answer: **D Leadership**

0 1 . 2

Give two Muslim beliefs about the prophet Adam.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

He was the first prophet of Islam / first man on Earth / He is mentioned in the Qur'an / Hadith / first khalifah / he was created from dust, clay / he is regarded as the father of the human race / he lived in the Garden of Bliss / he is treated with respect / angels were asked to bow down to him / Iblis refused / He was tempted by Iblis (satan) / God created Hawwa (Eve) as his partner / he ate fruit from the forbidden tree / he was thrown out of the garden / he was forgiven for his error / he built the first Ka'aba / he was given knowledge of all names, things e.g. planting seeds / taught how to bury the dead / he was a role model / he had many children / he was tall, etc.

NB: Where candidate refer to the 'Original Sin' this is NOT creditworthy.

NBB: Where candidates refer to the nature of Prophet Adam this is creditworthy up to 1 mark.

0 1 . 3 Explain two ways in which the Prophet Muhammad influences Muslims today. [4 marks]

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a ‘detailed explanation’ the ‘influence’ of the way must be included.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- The Prophet Muhammad received the Qur’an / this may influence Muslims to follow / read / memorise / observe the Night of Power / the teachings of the Qur’an and obey God’s teachings / it may influence them to live life according to the laws and teachings set out in the Qur’an.
- Muslims believe that he is the final messenger of God (seal of Prophets) / this may influence Muslims to follow his Sunnah and the teachings in the hadith / e.g. being kind to your neighbour, etc.
- The Prophet travelled on a night journey / this may influence Muslims to pray Salah.
- Muslims believe he is chosen by God for his final message / this may influence them to respect him / they will not draw pictures of him / they will say ‘peace be upon him’ after his name is mentioned / some may kiss their hands when his name is mentioned / they will praise him regularly / send blessing on him (durood) / they may visit his grave in Medina / some may celebrate the life, birth of the prophet through the mawlid.
- They will follow in his footsteps / this may include marrying / treating the elderly and the poor with compassion / studying his life and works, etc.

0 1 . 4 Explain two Muslim beliefs about predestination.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Second belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Muslim belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- Some Muslims believe that God has already determined everything that will happen in the universe (Al-Qadr) / he has ordained things and written down everything in the 'book of decree'.
- Muslims believe that this life determines what happens in the afterlife / showing humans have freewill.
- Some Muslims believe that God's omnipotence means that he determines everything that is going to happen / they believe that humans still have free will / but God is aware of their ultimate choice.
- Many Muslims believe that God knows everything that is going to happen / but humans still have free will / so they can make their own choices.
- Predestination is one of the Six Articles of Faith / this is an integral part of Muslim belief.
- Some Muslims believe that humans have the ability to act freely and change the outcome of things / some things like life and death are decreed, whereas the smaller things are up to individuals to decide, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

‘Only what God has decreed will happen to us. He is our Master: let the believer put their trust in God.’ (Qur’an 9:51).

‘The Lord has created and balanced all things and has fixed their destinies and guided them. (Qur’an 87:2-3).

‘God does not change the condition of people (for the worse) unless they change what is in themselves.’ (Qur’an 13:11).

‘Those who believe, do good deeds, keep up the prayer, and pay the prescribed alms will have their reward with their Lord.’ (Qur’an 2:277).

‘If Allah wills’ (Qur’an)

‘God created the pen and told the pen to write’ (Hadith)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

NB: Reference to the Six Articles of Faith, if applied to predestination can be credited as a source of authority.

0 1 . 5 'Believing in the Five Roots of Usul ad-Din is the best way to please God.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.	3
Intermediate performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.	2
Threshold performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.	1
No marks awarded	• The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- The Five Roots in Shi'a Islam (tawhid, prophethood, adalat, resurrection and imamate) contain the key aspects of belief / following these will allow a Muslim to fulfil the obligation to Allah / thus pleasing God.
- The first of the Five Roots (tawhid) is considered to be the cornerstone for all Muslims / believing in the oneness of God (tawhid) helps Muslims to please God and reach Jannah / 'Say He is Allah the one.' (Qur'an 112:1).
- In Shi'a Islam the Prophet Muhammad and the imams emphasised the following of these roots / the prophet was the closest to God and so following these roots would also be the best way to please God.
- Following the teachings of the twelve imams would enable a Muslim to know what actions to perform to please God / they were divinely chosen and ensured Islam stayed pure.
- Believing in the afterlife and resurrection are key beliefs contained in the Qur'an / this belief allows Muslims to remain focused on pleasing Allah.
- Following the prophets as role models is what God commanded / 'Follow Allah and follow his messenger' (Qur'an 4:59).

Arguments in support of other views

- For Sunni Muslims belief in the Six Articles are the best way to please God / they are mentioned in the Qur'an and numerous hadiths.
- Following the Five Pillars is equally as important / they show belief in practice / Salah brings a Muslim closer to God, thus pleasing him.
- Believing in predestination is a key belief that supports God's supremacy / helping Muslims to avoid committing shirk / therefore pleasing God by doing so.

- Belief in angels allows Muslims to remember God at all times / this is the best way to please God as it keeps Muslims away from sin.
- Belief in holy books guides Muslims in their everyday life / this is the best way to please God as this is what he instructed.
- Belief alone is not sufficient / it must be supported with action / the prophet said 'Belief without action is not true belief.' (hadith) / this may include following the Five Pillars / giving voluntary charity, etc.
- There is no 'best way' to please God / all paths lead to God / this may include being kind to your neighbour / believing in angels and holy books / standing up for injustice, etc.

0 2

Islam: Practices

0 2 . 1

Which one of the following celebrates the end of Ramadan?

[1 mark]

- A Ashura**
- B Id-ul-Adha**
- C Id-ul-Fitr**
- D Jummah**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

Answer: **C** Id-ul-Fitr

0 2 . 2

Give two actions that Muslims perform during the Night of Power.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

They may read the Qur'an / cleanse the body (wudu) / may perform the night prayer (taraweeh, tahajjud) / may spend the night at the mosque / search for the Night of Power / may listen to talks and religious poems in the mosque / may seclude themselves in the mosque during the last ten nights (perform itikaaf) / may pray for those that have died (du'a) / may repent for their sins / may give zakah, charity / some may visit the graveyard / listen to the completion of the Qur'an, etc.

0 2 . 3 Explain two contrasting reasons why Muslims give alms (charity).

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs

First contrasting reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Contrast may mean opposing or may mean different views.

If similar reasons are given, only **one** of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- They have been instructed by God in the Qur'an / 'For those who give in charity, men and women, and loan to Allah a beautiful loan.' (57:18).
- Follows in the footsteps of the prophet Muhammad / 'Spend of that which We have bestowed upon you before death comes to one of you.' (hadith).
- Giving charity (zakah) is one of the Five Pillars of Islam / those that have the means to do so must give charity to the poor / purifies your wealth / it is part of the Ten Obligatory Acts.
- For Shi'a Muslims giving khums is considered a duty / this is paid to the imams, the prophets and those in need / 'Know that whatever of a thing you acquire, a fifth of it is for Allah, for the Messenger, for the near relative, and the orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer.' (Qur'an 8:41).
- Giving charity helps to remove sin / 'Charity stops calamity' (hadith) / removes materialism (greed for wealth).
- Helping others is key part of Islam / giving sadaqah (voluntary charity) to those in need brings immense reward.
- It allows the poor to partake in religious festivals, e.g. giving Zakat-ul-Fitr before Id prayer to allow the poor to partake in this festival, etc.

0 2 . 4 Explain two reasons why Muslims perform ablution (wudu).

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Muslim belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- It is commanded by God / commanded by the prophet Muhammad (sunnah) / a requirement for Salah / Muslims must wash their hands, face and feet in order for Salah to be valid.
- Ablution cleanses the body from physical / spiritual impurities / they are then able to pray in the congregation / connect with God.
- Performing ablution allows Muslims to get into the right frame of mind / washing represents a spiritual journey towards God.
- For some Muslims ablution is also required before touching the Qur'an / or any item with the verses of the Qur'an.
- Ablution is performed before completing the circumambulation (tawaf) of the Ka'aba / this follows clear instructions given in the Qur'an, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

'None touch it except the purified' (Qur'an - 56:79).

'O believers! When you rise up for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet to the ankles.' (Qur'an 5:6).

'When the Prophet wanted to do tawaf, he did wudu.' (hadith).

'When a slave makes ablution and rinses his mouth, his wrong deeds fall from it. As he rinses his nose, his wrong deeds fall from it. When he washes his face, his wrong deeds fall from it until they fall from beneath his eyelashes.' (hadith).

Cleanliness is half of faith (hadith).

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

0 2 . 5 'Following the Five Pillars is the most important duty for a Muslim.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Arguments in support

- The Five Pillars (Shahadah, Salah, Sawm, Zakah and Hajj) are an obligation / form the building blocks of Islam / following them brings a Muslim closer to God / gives them an opportunity to reach Jannah.
- The prophet emphasised the importance of following the Five Pillars / he guaranteed paradise for the one who followed them sincerely / 'Islam is built on Five Pillars' (hadith).
- The Five Pillars are mentioned in the Qur'an repeatedly / showing the importance they hold in the life of a Muslim / following them brings the pleasure of Allah / 'Pray Salah and give Zakah' (Qur'an).
- Muslims will be questioned about how they performed the Five Pillars / this will ultimately decide their afterlife / making it the most important duty for a Muslim.

- The pillars allow Muslims to gain closeness to God / they help to remove sin, e.g. Hajj / they show commitment and devotion to God / they help to make the world a better place e.g. Zakah / they build the ummah, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- Actions alone are not sufficient / the Prophet taught that 'all actions were dependent on intentions' (hadith) / it is more important that any act of worship is done for the right reason.
- Other duties are equally as important / for example being kind to your neighbours, visiting the sick, / caring for the elderly / having good manners.
- For Shi'a Muslims the Ten Obligatory Acts may be seen as a more important duty / they are a more complete way of life / help a Muslim to fulfil the obligation sent down by God.
- Standing up for injustice / lesser and greater jihad may be considered more important / this is not part of the Five Pillars, but the Prophet emphasised this in numerous hadiths.
- Reading the Qur'an maybe considered a more important duty / it allows Muslims to understand what God expects of them.
- Celebrating festivals is an important duty / it allows Muslims to show gratitude to Allah and builds the ummah, etc.