



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Religious Studies A

Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Study of Religion

Option 1C - Islam

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Paper 1: Study of Religion 1C – Islam Mark Scheme

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • One teaching about the nature of al-Qadr is that it means Allah is in control (1) • The nature of al-Qadr means that Allah must be all-knowing (1) • It means that Muslims have freewill (1) • The nature of al-Qadr means that Muslims must not be fatalistic (1) • The nature of al-Qadr leads Muslims to have complete faith in Allah's will (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
1(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a reason. Award a second mark for development of the reason. Up to a maximum of four. • Allah's mercy is important to Muslims as they believe he will overlook their sins (1) and forgive them on the Day of Judgement (1) • Muslims believe Allah's mercy is important because it gives them hope (1) and shows them that he loves them (1) • It is important because it was through his mercy Allah sent revelation (1) to guide humanity (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/development • Development that does not relate both to the reason given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
1(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each purpose. Award further marks for each development of the purpose up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • An important purpose of Muslim holy books is to provide guidance (1) so that Muslims can use them to decide what is right and wrong (1). 'To each of you We prescribed a law and a method.' (Surah 5:48) (1) • One purpose is to warn humanity (1) that they will be judged according to their actions in Akhirah (1). '[We sent] messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise.' (Surah 4:165) (1) • A purpose of holy books was to teach the oneness of Allah (1) and correct any distortions that had occurred over time (1). 'O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth.' (Surah 4:171) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated purpose/development • Development that does not relate both to the purpose and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the purpose given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
1(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • Imamah is the most important Shi'a belief as it differentiates Shi'a Muslims from Sunni Muslims. Sunni Muslims also believe in Tawhid, prophets, Allah's divine justice and life after death. Imamah is a uniquely Shi'a belief making it the most important • It is the most important belief as it sets out who should lead Muslims after the death of Muhammad. The Imams are a key source of authority for Shi'a Muslims and combine political and religious leadership • The Imams gave guidance to Shi'a Muslims on how to live. After Muhammad, Shi'a Muslims follow the teachings of their Imams as Muhammad had stated in his hadith Arguments against the statement: • Tawhid is the most important Shi'a belief as it is the root of all Muslim beliefs, bringing all Muslims together. It is the key message from previous holy books and prophets and reiterated by Muhammad • Imamah causes division amongst Shi'a Muslims as they do not all agree on the final Imam. Ismaili communities do not recognise the same line of Imams as Twelver communities, causing disunity • Nubuwwah is the most important Shi'a belief as all Muslims recognise the long line of prophets, ending with Muhammad as the seal of the prophets. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different Muslim points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

SPaG

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

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • One way ablution is performed is by washing the whole body thoroughly (1) • A way ablution is performed is by washing the hands three times (1) • A way ablution is performed is by washing the whole face (1) • Ablution is performed by washing both feet (1) • Ablution is performed by focusing the mind on the worship of Allah (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
2(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a way. Award a second mark for development of the way. Up to a maximum of four. • Shahadah is reflected prominently in Islamic art (1) often decorating mosques and other buildings (1) • It is one of the first teachings taught to young Muslims (1), reflecting its status as the core Islamic belief (1) • Reciting Shahadah can be a rallying call for Muslims going through difficulties and oppression (1) because it gives them comfort that Allah is with them (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated way/development • Development that does not relate both to the way given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
2(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. - Greater Jihad is important as it allows a Muslim to reflect on their weaknesses (1) and improve themselves (1). 'Successful indeed is the one who purifies their soul' (Surah 91:9) (1) - It is important as Muhammad taught that this was of greater significance than lesser Jihad (1). This involves all the everyday struggles Muslims face to live a good Muslim life (1). 'Blessed are those who have performed the minor jihad and have yet to perform the major jihad.' When asked, 'What is the major jihad?' the Prophet (s) replied: 'The jihad of the self (struggle against self)' (Bihar al-Anwar 9:31) (1) - It is important because Imam Ali taught that improving oneself is a struggle against a person's own desires (1). This can be very difficult involving lots of sacrifices (1). 'One who struggles against himself so as to obey God, in the eyes of God, his station is that of a pious martyr.' (Al-Amidi, Ghurar ul Hikam wa Durar ul Kalim:3546) (1). Accept any other valid response.	- Repeated reason/development - Development that does not relate both to the reason and to the question - Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
2(d)	AO2 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • It commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his supporters at Karbala. He was regarded as the third Shi'a Imam and rightful leader of all Muslims, according to Shi'a Muslims • Some Shi'a Muslims argue that the other Sunni reasons for observing Ashura were not authentic, and take away from the true reasons for its significance • It solidified the split between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims and is considered to be the single most important event in the history of Shi'a Islam. Arguments against the statement: • Sunni Muslims also mourn the brutal death of Imam Hussain and his followers at Karbala. They recognise it as a tragedy and mark it as such • Sunni Muslims also commemorate Ashura as a day of great religious significance even prior to the events at Karbala; as the day the universe was completed, and the day the universe will end • Sunni Muslims fast on Ashura as they say Muhammad fasted on the day of Ashura in commemoration of the day the Israelites were freed from slavery by Musa. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different Muslim points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	12

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable response.
Level 1	1–3	A superficial analysis of the statement that uses undeveloped arguments, underpinned by isolated elements of understanding of religion and belief. Judgements are asserted without clear links to the analysis.
Level 2	4–6	A basic analysis of the statement that uses some developed arguments to discuss different points of view, underpinned by limited understanding of religion and belief. This leads to simple judgements which have some links to the analysis, leading to a conclusion with limited justification.
Level 3	7–9	A good analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by a sound understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements which are clearly linked to the analysis, leading to a partially justified conclusion.
Level 4	10–12	A sustained and coherent analysis of the statement that uses logical chains of reasoning to discuss different points of view, underpinned by thorough understanding of religion and belief. This leads to reasoned judgements supported by the appraisal of arguments, leading to a justified conclusion that is consistent with the analysis.

'Point(s) of view' **always** means arguments for and against the statement. **Where specified in the bullet points under the question**, it may also include one of the following:

- different views within the religion
- non-religious views
- philosophical arguments
- ethical arguments.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • The Muslims were able to live free from persecution (1) • Muhammad was able to preach openly in Madinah (1) • Muhammad was able to escape an assassination attempt (1) • Muhammad was able to become a religious and political leader (1) • The Muslims were able to establish the first mosque to worship in (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
3(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing a belief. Award a second mark for development of the belief. Up to a maximum of four. • Ismaili Muslims believe Muhammad's son-in-law Ali was his rightful successor (1) and he was their first Imam (1) • Ismaili Muslims believe the spiritual leadership continues through hereditary succession (1) which is through the descendants of Ali and Fatima (1) • They believe the rightful seventh Imam was Ismail ibn Jafar (1) who they believe was appointed by the previous Imam (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated belief/development • Development that does not relate both to the belief given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
3(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each example. Award further marks for each development of the example up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • Analogy was used in the case of working during the time of Jummaḥ Ṣalaḥ (1). It was ruled that the ban on buying and selling goods could be applied to all types of work (1). 'O believers! When the call to prayer is made on Friday, then proceed diligently to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your business.' (Surah 62:9) (1) • It was used to outlaw the use of recreational drugs (1) by using the rulings on alcohol in the Qur'an (1). 'O believers! Intoxicants, gambling, idols, and drawing lots for decisions are all evil of Satan's handiwork. So shun them so you may be successful.' (Surah 5:90) (1) • Analogy was used to protect the property of orphans from destruction (1), as it was ruled that the Qur'an's ruling on unlawfully consuming it also applied to those that damage the property of orphans (1). 'Indeed, those who unjustly consume orphans' wealth in fact consume nothing but fire into their bellies.' (Surah 4:10) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated example/development • Development that does not relate both to the example and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the example given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
3(d)	AO2 12 marks, SPaG 3 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • The Qur'an contains the direct revelation from Allah. It contains his words and commands. According to some Muslims, known as Qur'anists, as long as Muslims follow the Qur'an they do not need any other source of authority • The Qur'an has not been distorted and has been protected from corruption by Allah himself. As such, it is the only source of authority worthy of following by Muslims • The Qur'an contains within it guidance on how to live for all Muslims of all times. Its message is universal and does not change according to societal and historical changes. Arguments against the statement: • The Qur'an's message is supplemented by the Sunnah of Muhammad. Many of the details on how to live are found in Muhammad's example so this is also a vital source of authority • The message of the Qur'an needs careful understanding and interpretation by qualified scholars to be able to apply it. Without their expertise, Muslims may misinterpret its message • According to Shi'a Muslims, the Imams have a deeper understanding of the hidden meaning of the Qur'an which they have inherited, so they are a vital source of authority. Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different Muslim points of view (as instructed in the question) cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.	15

Level	Mark	Descriptor
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3 marks	High performance	• Candidates spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Candidates use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Candidates use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(a)	AO1 3 marks Award one mark for each point identified up to a maximum of three. • One origin of Sufism is understood to be pre-Islamic mystical practices (1) • Sufism is considered to have its roots in the religious experiences of Muhammad (1) • Sufism is traced back to the simple lifestyles of Muhammad's closest companions (1) • Sufism is traced back to the teachings of early Muslim ascetics (1) • One understanding of the origins of Sufism is that it was a reaction against the wealth and lifestyle of some of the caliphs (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Lists (maximum of one mark)	3

Question number	Answer	Reject	
4(b)	AO1 4 marks Award one mark for providing an attitude. Award a second mark for development of the attitude. Up to a maximum of four. • Some Muslims disagree with the use of music because Abu Bakr referred to it as satanic (1). He was the successor to Muhammad and therefore has influence (1) • Some Muslims agree with the use of music because Muhammad allowed it in his presence at a celebration (1), and did not tell them to stop playing it (1) • Some disagree with the use of music because they believe it will take them away from the worship of God (1). Muhammad cursed those who used musical instruments along with those who drank alcohol (1). Accept any other valid response. Candidates who do not consider different attitudes within Islam cannot be awarded more than 2 marks.	• Repeated attitude/ development • Development that does not relate both to the attitude given and to the question.	4

Question number	Answer	Reject	Mark
4(c)	AO1 5 marks Award one mark for each reason. Award further marks for each development of the reason up to a maximum of four marks. Award one further mark for any relevant source of wisdom or authority. • The mosque is important as a place to worship Allah (1) and to affirm Allah's unity (1). 'The places of worship are only for Allah, so do not invoke anyone besides Him.' (Surah 72:18) (1) • They are important as a place of education (1) where Muslims can gather to learn about their faith (1). According to Imam Muslim, Muhammad said 'Any group of people that assemble in one of the Houses of Allah to recite the Book of Allah, learning and teaching it, tranquility will descend upon them, mercy will engulf them, angels will surround them and Allah will make mention of them to those (the angels) in His proximity.' (Riyad as-Salihin 1023) (1) • The masjid acts as a safe haven for the community (1) and a place to gather together (1). 'We made the House a place of return for the people and (a place of) security' (Surah 2:125) (1). Accept any other valid response.	• Repeated reason/development • Development that does not relate both to the reason and to the question • Reference to a source of wisdom that does not relate to the reason given.	5

Question number	Indicative content	Mark
4(d)	AO2 12 marks Candidates must underpin their analysis and evaluation with knowledge and understanding. Candidates will be required to demonstrate thorough knowledge and understanding as well as accuracy of religion and belief when responding to the question and in meeting AO2 descriptors. AO2 Arguments for the statement: • The key purpose of a mosque is to provide a space for congregational prayers. This should be done in a simple building so that the focus remains the prayers and not the decorative calligraphy • Spending money on calligraphy is a waste of the community's resources which are most often very limited. Surely Allah would prefer the money to be used to help the vulnerable rather than artistic calligraphy • The first mosque was a simple building without fancy decoration. Muslims today should also follow Muhammad's Sunnah and continue his example of frugality and simplicity. Arguments against the statement: • Calligraphy in a mosque acts as a constant reminder of Islam's message. Verses from the Qur'an in calligraphy remind worshippers of their key beliefs and rejection of idolatry • Calligraphy in a mosque is a celebration of the Qur'an's verses. Being surrounded by these verses gives comfort and acts as a source of spiritual focus and constant remembrance • The mosque acts as a symbolic home of the local Muslim community and decorating it with calligraphy is a way of showing its importance to the wider community. Accept any other valid response.	12

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