CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge O Level

ISLAMIC STUDIES **2068/12**

Paper 1 History and Scriptures **May/June 2026**

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: • the specific **content** defined in the mark scheme • the specific **skills** defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions • the **standard of response** required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks **positively**. This means that: • marks are not deducted for errors or omissions • marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for **other valid answers** which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate • the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged **only** when the mark scheme indicates that these features are **specifically assessed** in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must **consistently** apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the **full range of marks** defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and **must not** award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

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Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
✔	Correct point

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Using the mark levels

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

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Generic levels of response grids

Table A – AO1 Knowledge and understanding

Use this marking grid for **questions 1–4** part (b) and **questions 5** and **6** part (a).

Level	Marks		Description
	Q1–4 part (b)	**Q5, Q6** part (a)	
4	9–10	10–12	• Answers most aspects of the question, using a range of detailed, accurate and relevant knowledge. • Effective use of relevant examples or sources to support points made. • Demonstrates understanding through clear and well-developed explanations.
3	6–8	7–9	• Addresses many aspects of the question, using accurate and relevant knowledge. • Use of some examples or sources to support points made. • Demonstrates understanding through clear explanation, which covers the main points.
2	3–5	4–6	• Partially answers the question, using elements of accurate and relevant knowledge. • Minimal use of examples or sources. • Demonstrates some understanding which covers a few of the main points.
1	1–2	1–3	• An attempt to answer the question, using limited relevant knowledge. • Responses are unsupported by examples or use of sources. • Demonstrates a basic understanding.
0	0	0	• No creditable response.

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Table B – AO2 Evaluation

Use this marking grid for **questions 1–4** part (c) and **questions 5** and **6** part (b).

Level	Marks		Description
	Q1–4 part (c)	**Q5, Q6** part (b)	
3	5–6	6–8	• Evaluates the question showing awareness of various viewpoints. • Discusses the issues in a reflective way, with clear understanding. • Effectively shows the significance of belief and practice in the lives of Muslims. • Refers to relevant examples or sources to support points made.
2	3–4	3–5	• Includes some evaluation, may show awareness of one or more viewpoints. • There is discussion of one or more issues. • Shows some understanding of the significance of belief and practice in the lives of Muslims. • One or two examples or references to sources may be given.
1	1–2	1–2	• Answer is mainly descriptive, there may be an awareness of a single viewpoint. • Shows limited understanding of belief and practice in the lives of Muslims. • There is limited or no reference to examples/sources.
0	0	0	• No creditable response.

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(a)	**Describe <u>two</u> features of the way women were treated during the pre-Islamic period.** Award **one** mark for identifying each example and **one** mark for further description of each. • Most women were not given any rights • They were married and divorced easily • Women were often shared between many men • Women could not own property, though there were some noble women who were able to and were respected • Daughters were considered a burden and often buried alive. Accept any other valid points.	**4**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(b)	**Explain the different ways that the polytheists worshipped in Makkah.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' response to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • Most of the Arabs in Makkah worshipped idols before Islam. They had different gods and goddesses that they prayed to and gave sacrifices to. • Some of those idols were Hubal, the chief idol, Laat, Uzza and Manat. • These polytheists knew about one God called Allah and thought about him as the supreme god, but they took other idols as intercessors, believing that they could help them with their needs rather than going to Allah directly to pray. • The Kaʿba was important to them and housed many idols. People came from all over Arabia to worship the idols there. They would circumambulate the Kaʿba, in a state of nudity as they believed their clothes were impure. They would clap and sing whilst going round. They would also stay at Arafat. • Part of their worship was animal sacrifices, which they believed would please their gods and protect them from harm. • Some would also worship nature and hold trees, the sun, moon and stars in reverence believing they could gain benefit from worshipping them. • They also believed that angels were the daughters of God and would worship them as well as worshipping the spirits of their ancestors.	**10**	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(c)	**To what extent did the coming of Islam change pre-Islamic society in Makkah? Give reasons to support your answer.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • The coming of Islam changed Makkan society considerably, as women and children were treated better. They were given rights and respected more than they were before. Children, especially girls, were treated better because they were not to be killed. • Trade also changed because people had to be more honest and usury was forbidden. This allowed fairer deals in the marketplaces. • On the other hand, it could be said that some aspects of Makkan society didn't change as people still formed groups as tribes, and certain tribes continued to have more privileges than others. Also, those who were not idol worshippers were more inclined to become Muslim and so they were already living better, less corrupt lives, so the change wasn't as great for them.	**6**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(a)	**State <u>four</u> miracles related to Prophet ʿIsa (AS).** Award **one** mark for each valid response up to a maximum of four marks. Responses might include **four** of the following: • His birth was a miracle as he was born without a father • He spoke from the cradle to defend his mother • He breathed life into clay birds • He was able to heal the blind • He cured the lepers • He was given the miracle of being able to bring the dead back to life. Accept any other valid points.	**4**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(b)	**Describe Prophet Adam's time in heaven <u>and</u> the reasons he was sent to Earth.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • Adam (AS) was created by God from clay and lived in the heavens with his wife Eve (*Hawwa*). Adam (AS) was created without a soul and then the time came for God to breathe life into him. 'After I have created him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall you down, prostrating yourselves to him' (Surah Sad, ayah 72). • The angels were commanded to prostrate to Adam (AS) and they all did except Satan (*Iblis*), who was a jinn. Satan (*Iblis*), revealing his pride, refused to comply with God's command, declaring, 'I am better than he. You created me from fire, and You created him from clay.' (Surah al-Aʿraf, ayah 12). • God gave Adam (AS) free will, power of perception and reasoning, and a capacity for creativity. He was also given knowledge and taught the names of all things. • Adam (AS) felt lonely and so God created a partner for him from his rib to provide comfort and tranquillity for each other. They lived in paradise in freedom, roaming the gardens and enjoying everything it had to offer. God had given them one condition, that they were not to go near one particular tree, nor eat of its fruits.	**10**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(b)	• Satan (*Iblis*), being jealous of Adam (AS), started to whisper to Adam (AS) that he was only being prevented from the tree as it offered immortality. He managed to convince Adam and Eve (*Hawwa*) to eat from the tree. They were called by God who asked: 'Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan is to you a clear enemy?' (Surah al-Aʿraf ayah 22). • They felt sorrow and guilt for their disobedience and turned to God for forgiveness. 'Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.' (Surah al-Aʿraf ayah 23). • Due to this act, God expelled Adam (AS) and Eve (*Hawwa*) from heaven and sent them to Earth, where they were to live, die and be resurrected. They were also sent with Iblis to be enemies to one another.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(c)	**To what extent can the lessons learned from the story of Adam (AS) help Muslims in their lives today? Give reasons to support your answer.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • Prophet Adam's story can help Muslims understand that they are also created to worship God and so they should remember him often. • It can also help them understand that Satan (*Iblis*) will try to tempt them away from doing good and so they should remain vigilant against his whisperings. • It can help them see that everyone makes mistakes, even prophets, and so the best thing to do is to turn back to God in forgiveness. He has also taught Muslims ways to seek forgiveness and Prophet Adam's prayer of forgiveness is something Muslims can recite. • Another view could be that the lessons learned were only specific to Adam (AS) as he was being tested to teach him lessons which would help him live his life on Earth. Thus, these lessons would not apply to Muslims today as the world has changed.	**6**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(a)	**State <u>four</u> ways the Quraysh persecuted Muslims in Makkah.** Award **one** mark for each valid response up to a maximum of four marks. Responses might include the following and/or other relevant information: • The Quraysh beat the Muslims in different ways • They put heavy rocks on Bilal under the hot sun • They called them names and made fun of them • They tied Sumayya and her husband to a tree and tortured them • They branded Khabab with his own tools • They threw rubbish on them • They boycotted Banu Hashim which caused hardships for them. Accept any other valid points.	**4**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(b)	**Describe the Prophet's first year in Madinah and his interactions with the different tribes.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • On arrival in Madinah, the Prophet (pbuh) was welcomed by the Muslims in Madinah (Ansar), and everyone wanted him to stay with them. He chose to stay at Abu Ayyub al-Ansari's house and began work on building the mosque in Madinah. • The main tribes living in Madinah when the Prophet (pbuh) arrived were the Aws and Khazraj and the Jewish tribes of Banu Nadir, Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Qurayza. Added to that were the Muslims who migrated from Makkah collectively known as the Muhajirun. • Most of the Aws and Khazraj tribes had become Muslim. The Prophet (pbuh) created bonds of brotherhood between the Muslims of Makkah and Madinah called the *mawakhat*, where one Ansar was paired with one Muhajir. The Ansar were keen to share their belongings and resources with the Muhajirun to make their lives more comfortable. • The Prophet (pbuh) also wanted to make good relations with the Jewish tribes living there, and so included them in the Constitution of Madinah. Some of the main points were that each tribe was responsible for their own ward and the release of prisoners, that the Jews would have help and equality and would not be oppressed, that the Jewish tribes would fight with the Muslims if Madinah was under threat, that the Jews would be one political community along with the believers and that Madinah would be a sacred place for all members of the treaty.	**10**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(c)	**Assess the importance of the Prophet's actions during his first year in Madinah for the Muslim community.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • The Prophet's actions were important as he wanted to establish a Muslim community as soon as possible. Living for 13 years in Makkah under the Quraysh had meant that it had been hard for Islam to become established, and Muslims did not feel free to worship as they wanted. • Establishing a mosque as the first task meant that there would be a focal point for the Muslims. It would emphasise the importance of prayers and of social interactions. It helps Muslims understand the role the mosque should play in their communities. • Making treaties with the tribes that lived there was important to establish peaceful relations, which can also be helpful for Muslims now to know that the community should try to make good relations with their neighbours from different faiths.	**6**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(a)	**State the names of <u>four</u> people who supported the Prophet (pbuh) during his childhood.** Award **one** mark for each valid response up to a maximum of four marks. Responses might include **four** of the following: • Amina • Halima Saʿdiyyah • Baraka / Umm Ayman • Abdul Muttalib • Abu Talib Accept any other valid points.	**4**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(b)	**Describe the Prophet's relationship with Khadija.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • Khadija bint Khuwaylid was the Prophet Muhammad's first wife, and his only wife until she died. They were married when the Prophet (pbuh) was 25 and Khadija was 40. • Khadija was married before and was widowed. She had children from her previous marriages and the Prophet (pbuh) took her children on as his own. • Khadija was initially the Prophet's employer, as she had employed him to carry out trade for her. She was a wealthy woman and relied on others to trade for her – however, often people would try to take advantage of her and so she was looking for someone reliable and trustworthy to carry out the work for her. After she had employed Muhammad (pbuh) her profits increased and her trade flourished. • During the marriage they had six children, four girls and two boys, both of whom had died in infancy. The Prophet (pbuh) had also taken in his cousin ʿAli to look after when Abu Talib had found himself in financial hardship. On top of this, the Prophet (pbuh) had taken his freed slave, Zayd, as his adopted son, showing that both the Prophet (pbuh) and Khadija were happy to care for others.	**10**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(b)	• Khadija supported the Prophet (pbuh) financially and emotionally – this allowed him to spend more time in seclusion leading to the first revelation in the Cave of Hira. Khadija was also there to support him after the first revelation and took the Prophet (pbuh) to her cousin Waraqa who confirmed his prophethood. • Khadija always supported and believed in the Prophet (pbuh), something that the Prophet (pbuh) never forgot in his later years. Their relationship was built on mutual trust and respect, and the Prophet (pbuh) always knew of her nobility and status with God, who sent glad tidings of paradise to her through the angel Jibril.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(c)	**Evaluate the significance of the relationship between the Prophet (pbuh) and Khadija for Muslims today.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • The significance of their relationship for Muslims today is that Muslims can understand husband and wife relationships in an Islamic context, without having to rely on outside sources to know how to make a marriage work. Understanding that the Prophet (pbuh) was loving and caring towards his wives shows how husbands should be towards their wives and families. • This is particularly true in the case of Khadija who was his only wife for this time and all his children at this time were from her, therefore he spent his time and focus caring for them. • Knowing how the Prophet (pbuh) interacted with Khadija in his marriage, showing his love and respect for her, can help prevent marriages being dominated by one spouse, as Muslims should learn that both helped and supported each other when they needed it. • They also contributed to easing the financial burdens of the household which is an important lesson for Muslims now.	**6**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(a)	**Explain the main teachings of Surah 63.9-11 <u>and</u> how they encourage Muslims to be charitable.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • These verses warn against being intoxicated with the love of this world. Two major things that distract from God are mentioned in the first verse – wealth and children. These are mentioned because of the prominence of them in people's lives, but it also refers to all means of enjoyment in the world that cause distraction from God. • Being engaged with these things is not *haram*. To some extent it can be said that it is not only permissible but also obligatory to seek wealth for survival and for looking after a family, and also to ensure children are well looked after and educated. • But love for these things should not deviate from remembrance of God. • The second verse emphasises making the best of opportunities to spend in the way of God, in the state of good health, before the signs of death appear. Charity is effective in averting calamities and punishments. However, Muslims should not wait until death before they give in charity. • When death is near people will want more time to use their wealth for good, but God will not give them extra time. So it's a reminder to not delay in giving and doing good deeds and to not worry about poverty when giving.	**12**	O ye who believe! Let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. If any act thus, the loss is their own. (9) and spend something (in charity) out of the substance which We have bestowed on you, before Death should come to any of you and he should say, 'O my Lord! why didst Thou not give me respite for a little while? I should then have given (largely) in charity, and I should have been one of the doers of good'. (10) But to no soul will Allah grant respite when the time appointed (for it) has come; and Allah is well acquainted with (all) that ye do.(11)

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(a)	• This encourages Muslims to be charitable as they should know that giving charity will not decrease their wealth and that God will reward them for spending in good causes. • It also encourages Muslims to be charitable with their families, e.g. by spending on them to give them a good upbringing, something that will be pleasing to God.		

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(b)	**To what extent is it easy for Muslims today to be charitable? Give reasons to support your answer.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • It may be considered easy for Muslims to be charitable as there are many ways to do this. They can be charitable with their wealth as there are many organisations and charities that have made it easier for Muslims to donate to them. This can be done in person in charity boxes, online or through donation pages. • Another way it might be easy to be charitable is to give locally to people that you know are poor or struggling to afford basic items for daily living. Even giving to family members who are struggling can be an easy way of being charitable with wealth. Paying for someone's meals or paying for someone to go to Hajj / umrah, is another way of being charitable with wealth. • Sometimes it might not be easy for Muslims to give money and so they could be charitable with their time instead. They may give a few hours to volunteer with a charity or even just give a bit of time to help someone move house or to do some tasks to help a neighbour. • It may be that for some it is not easy to be charitable as people often have busy lives with work and have to support their own families. This might make it harder for people to take time out to help others or even give financially if they are on a low income.	**8**	

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(a)	**Explain the teachings of Hadith 31 <u>and</u> how Hadith 31 relates to wanting the best for others.** Use Table A levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • This Hadith is about not being attached to worldly possessions. It encourages Muslims to be content with what they have and to not dwell on what they do not have. God will be happy with a person being content with what he has provided for them. • Humankind is prone to seek immediate pleasures and gratification. 'You desire the commodities of this world, while Allah desires [for you] the Hereafter.' (8.67) Being indifferent towards the world means that you accept God's plan and what He wills for you. • Certainty in faith allows a person to accept a loss rather than want the loss to be returned, e.g. loss of a child or loss of wealth. That person has hope in meeting God. • God wants Muslims to take from the world only the provisions that they need for their journey, without depriving themselves of legitimate needs. • Lawful things of the world are only to be renounced when they become the main focus. • Renouncing what people possess, means to not covet what others have, to not envy what God has given to others, and having trust in His plan. • It can also mean to not ask from others, e.g. begging for things that others have that you do not.	**12**	A man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, [will cause] Allah to love me and the people to love me.' So he (peace be upon him) said, 'Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what people possess and the people will love you.'

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Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(a)	• God will love those who do not have strong attachments to the world and the people will love those who do not envy them or desire what they have, but rather wish well for them and are happy for what God has given them.		
6(b)	**To what extent can Hadith 31 encourage Muslims to live simpler lives? Give reasons to support your answer.** Use Table B levels of response grid to mark candidates' responses to this question. Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited. • Hadith 31 can encourage Muslims to live simpler lives because it is asking them to not be attached to the world and its worldly possessions. • For some Muslims it may be difficult to live without consuming and buying lots of things because the world is affected by consumer markets with people being advertised to all the time, being told that they need to have certain things to be comfortable in their lives. • For some people, having a big house or certain cars, or the latest fashion is important, and with many Muslim brands being created it can be difficult to avoid the feeling of wanting or needing lots of goods. • However, it could be said that for many Muslims living simple lives without many things is easy as there are lots of Muslims around the world that already live like this. For some it may be due to poverty, but for some it may be due to living in communities that do not feel they have to have more than they need.	**8**	A man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, [will cause] Allah to love me and the people to love me.' So he (peace be upon him) said, 'Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what people possess and the people will love you.'

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