
GCSE

Religious Studies A

8062/15 Islam

Report on the Examination

8062

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General Introduction to the November Series

This has been an unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts while taking into account the unusual circumstances and limited evidence available.

Overview of Entry

This was an exceptional series given the pandemic, entries were considerably lower than what we have been accustomed to on this paper. We saw a narrower range of student responses which was to be expected.

Comments on Individual Questions

1.1

A large number of students failed to correctly identify the correct answer; it seems that many confused the Five Roots with the Five Pillars.

1.2

This question was well answered by most students. Answers included the building of the Ka'aba, sacrificing his son and reinstating monotheistic belief.

1.3

There was a wide range of responses here with many focussing on the practical elements of the Qur'an. Many students however failed to focus on the 'influence' and were therefore capped at 2 marks.

1.4

This question was well answered by most. However far too many students did not explicitly refer to the source of authority and thus did not gain the fifth mark. Centres are reminded that this question requires students to make explicit reference to the source of authority to which they are referring to, eg the Qur'an says....The Prophet Muhammad taught...

1.5

A variety of responses were seen here with the more advanced arguments referring to the need to prove oneself in order to enter heaven. Some students referred to secular arguments which were creditworthy as long as they were arguments a Muslim might reasonably hold. The more able

students used a variety of specialist key terms and were awarded 3 for SPaG where control of meaning was evident.

2.1

Students performed better on this multiple choice question concerning the Hajj than they did in the beliefs section.

2.2

Some students mixed up the Five Roots with the Ten Obligatory Acts and this clearly wasn't creditworthy. Many students listed the Ten Commandments and this maybe something that centres will need to pick up on when recapping topics across different papers.

2.3

We saw some lovely answers here. The better responses were able to look at the difference between Sunni and Shia prayer. Many students talked about the congregational prayer and the different ways Muslims prepare for salah and these were all creditworthy.

2.4

Again, as in 1.4 many students dropped a mark as they failed to make clear reference to religion. Some students clearly mixed the Night of Ascension with the Night of Power and this may need revisiting in lessons.

2.5

This question was answered very well on the whole. Many students used the remaining Pillars to evaluate the statement and this worked well on the whole. Some students did not complete the question and this may be due to a timing issue.

Concluding Remarks

On the whole the paper allowed students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of both Sunni and Shia Islam. Centres need to ensure that the source of authority is made explicit in the 5 mark question as this is where many students lost marks.

For this series, in addition to the mark scheme, a general marking guidance document was provided to examiners across GCSE Religious Studies specifications to support marking. This document is available via Secure Key Materials for teachers should they wish to use it to support their marking of mock examinations.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.