

ISLAMIC STUDIES

Paper 8053/01

Paper 1

General Comments

Most candidates appeared well prepared for the examination and there were a number of excellent scripts from a range of Centres. Many candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the subject. **Questions 1, 3, 4, 7, 11 and 12** remained the most popular and were answered satisfactorily. **Questions 2, 5, and 8** were less popular and less well answered. Very few candidates attempted **Question 9 and 10**. Candidates are encouraged to read the questions carefully before answering in order to realise the specific requirements of them.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

The majority of candidates answered this question reasonably well, although some answers were very general statements about the life of the Prophet.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates were able to offer relevant information, some however lacked development.
- (b) Stronger candidates explained very well the importance of the people of Medina in the early years of Islam.

Question 3

- (a) In this part candidates were expected to explain why Abu Bakr thought it necessary to resist the false prophets who rose up in his time. Most candidates were able to achieve high marks but some only stated the history of false prophets.
- (b) Part (b) was generally well answered. There were some very good answers where candidates were able to provide factual information as well as explanation and evaluation.

Section B

Question 4

- (a) This question was quite well answered by the majority of candidates. There were some excellent answers from candidates who presented well detailed accounts including dates, names and specific circumstances.
- (b) In this part candidates were required to explain why early Muslims thought they should make a written copy of the Qur'an. A number of candidates repeated the answer from part (a).

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates performed reasonably well in part (a). Some candidates appeared to misread the question and only translated the surah, al-Fatihah.

- (b) This part of the question was not answered so well but the best candidates gave references from the Qur'an to make an authentic and compelling answer.

Question 6

This question was very well answered with many candidates achieving high levels.

Section C

Question 7

This question was very popular and many of the candidates who attempted it did well. There were some outstanding quality responses to this question.

Question 8

- (a) The question was very well answered. In this part many candidates were able to describe the distinctive features of a Muslim marriage ceremony and a Muslim funeral with detailed examples.
- (b) Some candidates experienced difficulty with this part of the question as they were unable to relate these observances to the principles of early Islam. They tended to concentrate on the pre-Islamic Arabian society. There were a few good answers to this part of the question.

Question 9

This question was not popular as a very small number of candidates attempted it. Answers to part (a) and (b) revealed a very limited understanding of the subject matter.

Section D

Question 10

Again this was the least popular question and the few candidates that attempted it did not do very well.

Question 11

This was the most popular question in this section and many of the candidates did it well. There were some excellent answers from the candidates who revealed a reasonable level of knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Question 12

The question was well answered by most candidates. Part (a) was generally much better attempted than part (b). Many candidates were able to provide a detailed account of the legal principles of *ijma'* and *qiyas*. Part (b) was poorly answered as many failed to appreciate that the question asked candidates to explain how these sources of Islamic law can be put into practice in Muslim societies today and this was not addressed properly. There was however, some exceptionally good knowledge and understanding expressed by a number of candidates.