

Cambridge International AS & A Level

ISLAMIC STUDIES**9488/22**

Paper 2 Islamic Law (Shariah) and its Application

May/June 2025**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 50

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

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This document consists of **17** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.











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
N/A	Highlighting areas of text
N/A	Allows comments to be entered in speech bubbles on the candidate response.
N/A	Allows comments to be entered at the bottom of the RM marking window and then displayed when the associated question item is navigated to.
	Too vague
	Level one
	Level two
	Level three
	Level four
	Level five
	Not answered question
	Indicates that the point has been noted, but no credit has been given.
	Evaluation

Generic levels of response descriptors

These level descriptors address assessment objectives (AOs) 1 and 2, and should be used in conjunction with the indicative content for each question in the mark scheme.

Assessment objectives**AO1 Knowledge and understanding**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings, texts, beliefs and practices including their relevance for individual Muslims and communities.

AO2 Analysis and evaluation

Analyse, evaluate and discuss evidence, points of view and issues in Islam.

Generic marking principles

- (a) Examiners should use the performance summary statements at the top of the descriptors to help to identify a level which matches the candidate's response. However, the final decision on the band and the mark within the band should be made on the basis of all the descriptors in the level and not primarily using the performance summary statement.
- (b) Examiners should start at the lowest level, if the answer meets all the criteria they should then move to the next level and so on. The Examiner should repeat this process until there is a match between the overall answer and the level descriptor. Examiners should use a best-fit approach when deciding upon the level, it is possible for a different level to be chosen for each AO.
- (c) If the Examiner identifies all aspects of the level descriptor within the answer then the highest mark for the level should be given. Examiners should also make reference to the indicative content when deciding on the mark within a level to ensure that there is sufficient relevant content evident within the answer for the level and mark. Examiners should be prepared to credit material in answers which is not contained in the indicative content.
- (d) The Examiner may need to make a judgement within a level or 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:
 - Where the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, you should award the highest mark.
 - Where the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, you should award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range.
 - Where the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, you should award the lowest mark.

AO1 Knowledge and understanding grid

(For Questions 1(b), 2(b), 3(a) and 4(a))

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks
Level 4	Detailed accurate knowledge with good understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a range of detailed, accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates understanding through a well-developed response. • Fully addresses the question. • Good understanding of the wider context, if relevant. 	9–10
Level 3	Mostly accurate knowledge with some understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a range of mostly accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates understanding through a developed response. • Addresses most aspects of the question. • Some engagement with the wider context, if relevant. 	6–8
Level 2	Partially accurate knowledge with limited understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a range of knowledge which may be partially accurate. • Demonstrates limited understanding through a partially developed response. • Attempts to address the question. • Attempts to engage with the wider context, if relevant. 	3–5
Level 1	Limited knowledge and basic understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a limited range of knowledge which may not be accurate. • Demonstrates basic understanding through a limited response. • Response is relevant to the topic, but does not directly address the question. • Little or no reference to the wider context, if relevant. 	1–2
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

AO2 Analysis and evaluation

(For Questions 1(c) and 2(c))

Level	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	Alternative conclusions with analysis of points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses the importance and/or strength of different points of view in detail. Uses accurate evidence to support a coherent and well-structured discussion. Coherent conclusion to the question which evaluates knowledge and points of view and assesses alternative conclusions. 	9–10
Level 4	Coherent conclusion supported by evidenced points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses different points of view in some detail. Uses accurate evidence to support a well-structured discussion. Coherent conclusion to the question which evaluates knowledge and points of view. 	7–8
Level 3	Clear conclusion with different points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises different points of view and discusses at least one in some detail. Uses accurate evidence to support discussion. Clear conclusion to the question which is linked to a range of knowledge and points of view. 	5–6
Level 2	Basic conclusion with a supported point of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses one point of view. Uses supporting evidence for one or more relevant points. The support may not be wholly relevant or accurate. Attempted conclusion to the question which is linked to knowledge and/or a point of view. 	3–4
Level 1	Limited interpretation with a point of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> States a point of view. Little or no supporting evidence. Attempted interpretation which may not directly address the question. 	1–2
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

AO2 Analysis and evaluation

(For Questions 3(b) and 4(b))

Level	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	Alternative conclusions with analysis of points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses the importance and/or strength of different points of view in detail. Uses accurate evidence to support a coherent and well-structured discussion. Coherent conclusion to the question which evaluates knowledge and points of view and assesses alternative conclusions. 	13–15
Level 4	Coherent conclusion supported by evidenced points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses different points of view in some detail. Uses accurate evidence to support a well-structured discussion. Coherent conclusion to the question which evaluates knowledge and points of view. 	10–12
Level 3	Clear conclusion with different points of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises different points of view and discusses at least one in some detail. Uses accurate evidence to support discussion. Clear conclusion to the question which is linked to a range of knowledge and points of view. 	7–9
Level 2	Basic conclusion with a supported point of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses one point of view. Uses supporting evidence for one or more relevant points. The support may not be wholly relevant or accurate. Attempted conclusion to the question which is linked to knowledge and/or a point of view. 	4–6
Level 1	Limited interpretation with a point of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> States a point of view. Little or no supporting evidence. Attempted interpretation which may not directly address the question. 	1–3
Level 0	No relevant material to credit.	0

Question	Answer	Marks
EITHER		
1(a)	<p>Give <u>five</u> Islamic teachings which were revealed in the Qur'an.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>One mark should be awarded for each response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe in the oneness of God • Believe in the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) • Believe in the reality of judgement • Believe in life after death • The command to pray (but not the detail of five prayers) • Reject associating others besides God (<i>shirk</i>) • Help neighbours • Show compassion to those in need e.g. orphans • Almsgiving (<i>zakat</i>) <p>Note: Islamic teachings exclusively from the Hadith should not be credited.</p>	5

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	<p>Explain how Islamic teachings were made clear by progressive revelations of the Qur'an.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Mark according to the AO1 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qur'an was sent down from heaven to earth and revealed to Muhammad (pbuh) in the form that we know it over many years, beginning in around 610 with the Night of Power, and ending with Muhammad's death. • Over that time, there were many different situations which needed addressing, including what to do when Muslims faced persecution in Mecca, and how to deal with enemies in Medina, as well as other matters setting up the Medina state. • The first messages of the Qur'an revealed in Mecca tended to be in short, simple style and focus on the main beliefs of the oneness of God (<i>tawhid</i>), prophethood (<i>risalah</i>) and life after death (<i>akhirah</i>). As time went on, Muslims needed more detail about these and additional information about the Day of Judgement and predestination was added to help clarify those teachings. • The concept of abrogation (<i>naskh</i>) is a debated area, based on the Qur'anic verse 2.106. 'None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten but We substitute something better or similar; knowest thou not that Allah Hath power over all things?' • This suggests that God has the power to provide more clarification or even replace a verse to provide a clearer one in a new situation. • The position of alcohol is one example: at first, it was revealed that alcohol should not be drunk at prayer time, because it distracted some of the companions; later it was revealed that alcohol was considered a forbidden (<i>haram</i>) substance in all situations. • There were other situations which the Qur'an clarified, particularly relating to living together with those of other faiths in Medina; to crime and punishments and in what circumstances they should be given; and relating to battle, conflict and peace making. • These clarifications help Muslims to gain guidance in different situations today and help scholars to understand the meaning of the Qur'an. 	10

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p>To what extent do Muslims need to consider the whole Qur'an for determining Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>)? Explain your answer.</p> <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation</p> <p>Mark according to the AO2 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for analysis and evaluation.</p> <p>Answers may refer to any Islamic religious theory or teaching. Candidates may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All relevant arguments must be credited.</p> <p>Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>) is determined first and foremost by the Qur'an as a primary source, but also formulated from the Hadith, also a primary source, and other secondary sources where necessary. • The Qur'an is the first source of Islamic law and naturally Muslims want to find out what God teaches, best sourced from God's directly revealed words in the Qur'an. Those who have learned all the Qur'an by heart (<i>hafiz</i>) may also be valued by scholars because they know all the Qur'an and can refer to it. • Some verses of the Qur'an, such as the prohibition of alcohol, can be clearly understood by reading the whole book and might be misinterpreted if only a few verses were read. • Some verses of the Qur'an can be interpreted in different ways, such as allegorically and metaphorically, so therefore it is best to refer to the whole Qur'an to be as clear as possible about the meaning. • The Qur'an does not always cover all matters, such as details of the five daily prayers, which are found in the Hadith. Therefore, it is not necessary to search the whole Qur'an when it does not contain guidance on this matter, especially since there is another primary source available. • Referring to the whole Qur'an could be time-consuming and confusing in the minds of ordinary Muslims, who often want clear teachings summarised in a couple of the most relevant verses to help them guide their daily lives. <p>Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates should come to a balanced conclusion about how far the whole Qur'an needs to be considered, against how far part of it is necessary for forming Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>). 	10

Question	Answer	Marks
OR		
2(a)	<p>Outline the use of secondary sources of Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>).</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qur'an is the word of God, and the Hadith a source for Muhammad's sayings, actions and approvals, the Sunnah. These are the primary sources of Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>), and if these clearly teach something then there is no need to use any secondary source. • Secondary sources should never contradict the Qur'an and Hadith. • Secondary sources can add to, clarify and make explicit established teachings. • Consensus (<i>ijma'</i>), the agreement of scholars, can be used when the primary sources are unclear or do not cover a matter. • If consensus (<i>ijma'</i>) is not possible, analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) can be used to compare a new situation with an existing teaching to help find a way forward and give guidance to Muslims. • Other secondary sources such as the habits of the Medinans and local cultural practices (<i>'urf</i>) may also be considered, but never above the primary sources of Qur'an and Hadith. • Many Muslims regard it as the preserve of scholars to use secondary sources so that they know they are well versed in the primary sources and do not make any new interpretation to detract from them. 	5

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	<p>Explain the use of reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) as a source of Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>).</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Mark according to the AO1 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) literally means intellect and is used as a secondary source to derive rulings in Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>). It is considered a means to connect human beings to God using the rational intellect of the human mind. It may be defined specifically in jurisprudence as dialectical reasoning. The word reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) is used in verb form in the Qur’an, rather than reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) on its own. Therefore, in Islamic law (<i>shariah</i>) reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) is used not to claim any divine understanding but to use intellect to make sense of signs in nature and scriptures, to better help Muslims understand them. As a secondary source, reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) is not needed where the primary sources of the Qur’an and Sunnah (through the Hadith) provide guidance and rulings. However, where they do not and a new situation is faced, after attempt is made to gain scholarly consensus (<i>ijma’</i>), then reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) may be employed. There are traditions of using reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) from Sunni and Shi’i sources, but a larger number of Shi’i scholars use it, especially those of the Twelver Shi’i sect who believe their Imams are empowered to make guidance to help their people in the time before the Twelfth Imam returns to guide them. In Sunni sources, al-Ghazali acknowledged reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) as the foundation of the believer but focused his efforts on understanding the intellect of the Prophet (pbuh), thereby limiting its use by later scholars. Some limitations are placed on people able to carry out reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’). Many law schools insist an Islamic scholar considered qualified to make authoritative teachings (<i>mujtahid</i>) is the appropriate person to exercise reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) because they can do so in the wisdom of knowledge gained by years of study of the Qur’an and Hadith and Islamic law. This ensures their intellect is in accordance with traditional teachings. Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, who founded the Jaf’ari law school used by many Shi’i Muslims, described reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) as the sacred realisation of God’s love through intellect and incorporated this into his law school. Therefore, any ruling derived through intellect should not be oppressive and should be given in the spirit of loving care for the community of followers. Reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’) opens ‘the gates of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>)’ (al-Ghazali) and this has always been used by those who employ reasoning (‘<i>aqī</i>’), especially from Shi’i sources. Sunni sources often prioritise analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) and therefore claim the ‘gates of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) are closed’ soon after the time of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions (<i>sahaba</i>). 	10

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	<p>Compare the use of analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) and reasoning ('<i>aql</i>').</p> <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation</p> <p>Mark according to the AO2 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for analysis and evaluation.</p> <p>Answers may refer to any Islamic religious theory or teaching. Candidates may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All relevant arguments must be credited.</p> <p>Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') literally means intellect whereas analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) is analogical deduction, using precedence from something which has a similar cause. These are both used as secondary sources of Islamic law. <p>Similarities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') and analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) as secondary sources are never used in contradiction to existing or established rulings, where they have been proven with reference to the Qur'an or Hadith primary sources. Both employ the use of primary sources to make deductions and support rulings. Where reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') and analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) fill a gap in knowledge not covered by primary sources, quotations from primary sources are used to justify the intellect shown or the analogy. There is a variety of use of both, by different scholars, and it is untrue to say all Shi'i use reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') and all Sunni analogy (<i>qiyas</i>). Imam Hanifa encouraged the use of analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) for Sunnis, and this was also supported by Imam Shafi, but opposed in general by Imam Hanbal and by Imam Bukhari, the collector of Hadith, who said that if the Prophet (pbuh) did not know something he remained quiet and did not engage in speculation through intellect. <p>Differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') does not restrict the use of intellect in the same way as analogy (<i>qiyas</i>): it is not necessary to find comparisons within the framework of similar causes. Intellectual endeavour can therefore be used more freely. Many scholars, particularly from a Shi'i perspective, rejected analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) because they felt that many different and potentially divisive interpretations could be deduced. Reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') made in context of scholarly learning inspired by the authority of the line of Imams was considered more unifying. Reasoning ('<i>aql</i>') traditions are very much alive and have always been made according to Shi'i sources, whereas Sunni use of analogy (<i>qiyas</i>) has been quite varied with some arguing that it essentially supports personal interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) and should therefore be restricted. <p>Conclusions</p> <p>Conclusions might make a personal judgement about the extent of difference and similarity between the two approaches.</p>	10

Question	Answer	Marks
EITHER		
3(a)	<p>Explain the use of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>), giving examples.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Mark according to the AO1 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) means to make effort to solve a legal question in Islam, which is not clearly solved by the Qur'an, Sunnah and by the consensus of scholars (<i>ijma'</i>). If a question has already been clearly answered, then individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) is not made. Individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) also means personal endeavour to find a solution. Drinking alcohol is forbidden in Islam but today there are many other substances such as tobacco and modern drugs not specifically covered. Individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) has been made to make fresh interpretations of what is an intoxicating substance as well as consideration of what is harmful and therefore disallowed on that basis. Taxation and banking are one area for Muslims to consider. Interest is considered forbidden but share of ownership is a new interpretation which has enabled a new form of mortgage to be made which is considered permitted in Islam. This re-interpretation may be seen as a form of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>). In the area of criminal law and punishment, some argue that the main point is to ensure the punishment fits the crime and that society is protected, as well as individuals feel redress. Original, literal punishments might include cutting of hands. However today, some argue that new interpretations be made within the context of the time to harmonise the intention and what is acceptable bearing in mind modern human rights. In each case the individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) is made by individual opinion, taking into account any relevant original, primary source, the Qur'an and Hadith, and re-interpreting the general principles for the problem arising in the modern day. The individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) made is never in contradiction to these primary sources and may take into account scholarly agreement but not necessarily in agreement or consensus, because its nature is individual, and so is only a commitment binding the person making the opinion and their sworn followers. 	10

Question	Answer	Marks
3(b)	<p>‘Individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) ends with the companions (<i>sahaba</i>).’ Do you agree? Explain your answer.</p> <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation</p> <p>Mark according to the AO2 – 15-mark levels of response marking grid for analysis and evaluation.</p> <p>Answers may refer to any Islamic religious theory or teaching. Candidates may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All relevant arguments must be credited.</p> <p>Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The companions (<i>sahaba</i>) were those who lived around Muhammad (pbuh) and therefore knew his Sunnah well and could apply it. <p>Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The companions (<i>sahaba</i>) knew Muhammad (pbuh) best so any opinions made after the companions (<i>sahaba</i>) might be considered less reliable. To make opinions which were to be regarded as legal rulings might then be seen as a step too far. The scholar al-Ghazali also took that opinion, and after his time it was said that the ‘gates of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>)’ had closed. The long time that had gone by since the companions (<i>sahaba</i>) was too great for individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) to be reliable and in any case, he believed that the scholars had already solved legal questions. Many scholars from Hanafi and Shafi’i schools of thought decided that the days of individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) were over. Any new problems could be addressed by copying and applying earlier opinions (<i>taqlid</i>) rather than making totally fresh interpretations. <p>Disagree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholars are well versed in the Qur’an and Hadith and knowledgeable enough therefore to make personal opinions to solve new problems which arise, in the light of existing teaching. Many Salafis recommended individual interpretations (<i>ijtihad</i>) because they said this would strengthen the Muslims, who had become too reliant on following scholars’ opinions (<i>taqlid</i>). The companions (<i>sahaba</i>) left knowledge which the Muslims of today could read about and make their own interpretations. Throughout history there have always been some Muslims who made individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>), including Shi’i scholars, modern reformers, including Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who encouraged Muslims to take up modern education for their social advancement in South Asia. Individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) therefore has an important role to play in social advancement for Muslims, to make sense of modern problems. <p>Conclusions</p> <p>Conclusions should be made weighing up how far individual interpretation (<i>ijtihad</i>) may be made after the time of the companions (<i>sahaba</i>) or whether it should end with them.</p>	15

Question	Answer	Marks
OR		
4(a)	<p>Describe the importance of the Mahdi for Shi'i Muslims.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Mark according to the AO1 – 10-mark levels of response marking grid for knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mahdi is an essential part of Shi'i belief, especially for Twelver Shi'i, the main branch of Shi'i Islam. • The Mahdi was born in Samarra and kept hidden. When his father was killed by the 'Abbasids, he was hidden in the Minor Occultation. This was important in preserving Shi'i beliefs and leadership from political opponents and oppression. • Four Imams in turn contacted the Mahdi; after this he entered the Major Occultation. The Mahdi roams the earth but is unknown. There are many traditions about individuals meeting the Mahdi, and these are important as spiritual inspiration for Shi'i Muslims. • During the Major Occultation, jurists perform the role as guide for the Muslim community. This gives legitimacy to the leadership of the Imams who guide Shi'i Muslims. • The Mahdi is regarded as the leader and single legitimate ruler of the Muslim world by Shi'i Muslims. • Some traditions suggest that the Mahdi will return towards the end of time, to save the world from chaos, suffering and the abandonment of Islam by dark forces known by some as the Sufyani. • The Mahdi will reappear with the sword of 'Ali, by the Ka'ba, and a divine cry will call people, angels and spirits (<i>jinn</i>s) to help defeat evil and evil's supporters, according to some traditions. • 'Isa will return and join the Mahdi to defeat evil in the form of the Antichrist (<i>Dajjal</i>). Some traditions suggest it is 'Isa who does this with Mahdi's support and others that it is the Mahdi who plays an essential role in defeating the Antichrist (<i>Dajjal</i>). • The Mahdi then unites the world in a seventy-year reign of peace and justice, like paradise on earth, before the end of time. During this period all people are united under Islam and loyalty to 'Ali, in Shi'i belief. • There are some variations in accounts and some differences between different Shi'i branches, such as Ismaili, about the Mahdi – credit alternative accounts where relevant. 	10

Question	Answer	Marks
4(b)	<p>Compare interpretations of the Mahdi by Sunni and Shi'i Muslims.</p> <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation</p> <p>Mark according to the AO2 – 15-mark levels of response marking grid for analysis and evaluation.</p> <p>Answers may refer to any Islamic religious theory or teaching. Candidates may propose, analyse and evaluate some of the following arguments. All relevant arguments must be credited.</p> <p>Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mahdi is a messianic figure explained in various sources by Sunni and Shi'i Muslims. <p>Similarities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mahdi will appear in Mecca, or in Medina and then in Mecca, and be of good appearance and call the good to help in the fight against evil, at a time of great suffering, oppression and wickedness according to different Hadith and other traditions held by both Shi'i and Sunni Muslims. Towards the end of time, the Mahdi will return to oppose evil and unite the world in a reign of justice and peace, according to traditions in both Shi'i and Sunni Islam. The Mahdi will face and defeat the Antichrist (<i>Dajjal</i>) and other enemies, with the help of or in support of 'Isa, and will drive out corruption and wickedness. <p>Differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The importance of the Mahdi as leader of Shi'i Muslims is not paralleled in Sunni traditions. To Shi'i, the Mahdi is also the political leader and unifier and even recognised as leader of the Muslim world. To Sunnis, although popular, belief in the Mahdi is not considered essential. Scholar Ibn Khaldun suggested the important events at the end of time were completed by 'Isa and belief in the Mahdi was therefore not necessary. According to Sunnis, the Mahdi will descend from Hasan's family line; according to Shi'i he will be of Husayn's family line. <p>Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overall evaluation may conclude with the extent of the similarities and differences and their significance with regards to Islamic beliefs and practices. 	15