

Cambridge International AS & A Level

ISLAMIC STUDIES**9488/42**

Paper 4 Islam in the Modern World

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.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **11** 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, 2 and 3.

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks
Level 4	Detailed accurate knowledge with good understanding • 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 • 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 • 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 • 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, 2 and 3.

Level	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	Alternative conclusions with analysis of points of view - 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 - 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 - 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 - 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 - 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
1	‘Muslims should fulfil all their responsibilities towards their leaders.’ Discuss with reference to different points of view. 10 marks AO1 – Knowledge and understanding 15 marks AO2 – Analysis and evaluation Mark according to the levels of response marking grids for AO1 and AO2. 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. Introduction - The term leader can be used to describe a ruler or a religious leader. As subjects, Muslims have certain responsibilities that are expected from them towards their leaders. Agree - The most important duty of Muslims to their leaders is that they owe them obedience. Qur’an 4.59: ‘O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger.’ - Disobedience to leaders can jeopardise the outcome for Muslims in the afterlife as shown in this Hadith: ‘Whoever withdraws their hand from obedience to the Muslim ruler will find no argument in their defense when they stand before Allah on the Day of Judgment, and one who dies without having bound themselves by an oath of allegiance to a Muslim ruler will die the death of one belonging to the days of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance).’ (Sahih Muslim). - Even if Muslims are not happy with everything the leader is doing, they will still need to obey them and not rebel against them. “Whoever disapproves of something done by their ruler will have to be patient, for whoever disobeys the ruler even a little ‘i.e. A span’ will die as those who died in Jahiliyyah, ‘i.e. As rebellious sinner’. (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim). - It is also of the responsibility of the people to stop the leader if he is doing something wrong. Abu Bakr, in his address when he became a Caliph said: “I have been chosen to rule over you, though I am not the best among you. Help me if I am right; correct me if I am wrong.” - It is the responsibility of the people to speak up against the leader if he is unjust. Hadith of Ahmad: ‘A man asked the Messenger of Allah, “What is the best jihad?” The Prophet said, “A word of truth in front of a tyrannical ruler.”’ - Umar, during his caliphate established a successful system of judicial administration, where even the leader could be brought to justice by the people. Disagree - Candidates can disagree completely or partially with the statement and explain the reasons for their stance.	25

Question	Answer	Marks
1	• The people are not expected to obey if their leader tries to force them to do something that involves disobedience to God as shown in this Hadith: 'It is obligatory upon a Muslim that he should listen (to the ruler) and obey whether he likes it or not except when he is ordered to do a sinful thing, in such case there is no obligation to listen or to obey. (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim). • Also, leaders cannot expect the people to fulfil their responsibilities if they themselves are not leading the people effectively or are putting their self-interest first. • The doctrine of the separation of powers requires that the principal institutions of state; executive, legislature and judiciary are clearly divided, however, the people may feel reluctant to criticise/oppose their leaders for fear of reprisals. Conclusion Candidates should make an overall judgement focusing on the word 'all' to draw the discussion back to the statement and make a personal response.	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	To what extent are Muslim women able to hold a political office without compromising their religious values? Discuss with reference to a contemporary Muslim woman whom you have studied. 10 marks AO1 – Knowledge and understanding 15 marks AO2 – Analysis and evaluation Mark according to the levels of response marking grids for AO1 and AO2. 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. Definition Candidates could define what it means by ‘women holding a political office’, for example it could be any woman who has an important role in the political arena. Candidates could start by explaining that women have always held different roles without compromising anything, they can be mothers, wives, career women and social workers. • There is always the risk that women will have to compromise some of their duties when they are in a post of leadership. There is the possibility that a woman might neglect her family/children, which is part of her religious duties, in order to meet her obligations as a leader. • It is not just women who find it difficult to fulfil all their religious duties when they are in a position of leadership, men find it difficult to juggle all of their responsibilities too. • Reference can be made to Aisha as a woman in the past holding a political office. Aisha was not only the teacher of the Companions (<i>sahabas</i>) and the advisor to the Caliphs, but she was also the head of an army at the battle of the Camel. The fact that she was a good practising Muslim did not prevent her from being engaged socially and make a stance for justice when the need arose. • Other women, such as Razia Sultana, Ilhan Omar and Benazir Bhutto could be referred to showing that women are able to hold political posts without compromising their religious values. • Candidates could also refer to other women who were not able to hold a political office because they had to compromise their religious values as an alternative view. Conclusion • Candidates should come to a balanced conclusion about whether it is possible for Muslim women to hold a political office and abide by their religious values and the extent to which this is possible.	25

Question	Answer	Marks
3	To what extent should Muslims address challenges of modern society together with people of other faiths? Discuss with reference to different points of view. 10 marks AO1 – Knowledge and understanding 15 marks AO2 – Analysis and evaluation Mark according to the levels of response marking grids for AO1 and AO2. 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. Candidates could define/explain what challenges of modern society are, such as poverty, environment, climate change. People of other faiths could be non-Muslims or people of no faith. • Humans are social beings and living in a society will bring challenges with it. If there are issues in the society they live in, whether it affects them directly or indirectly, Muslims should try to address these as it is part of their religious duties. • Humans have been described in the Qur'an (2:30) as being vicegerent (<i>khalifa</i>). Muslims therefore understand that they have a duty of stewards/caretakers, and to try to look after and improve their environment. • "Whoever amongst you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then with his tongue. And if he is not able to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest form of faith". (Sahih Muslim) This hadith is clear proof that Muslims should be pro-active and involved in the society they live in and should try to change any social ills that they see. Being inactive in facing problems in society is sign of weak faith. • There are examples from the life of the Prophet (pbuh) where he interacted with people from other faiths, such as his participation in the pact for the protection of the weak, known as <i>hiflul fudul</i>. He also worked or sought help from non-Muslims, for example he employed a non-Muslim, reputed for his profession as a guide when he emigrated from Mecca (<i>hijra</i>). In another instance when he was coming back from Taif, he sought protection from Mut'im bin Adi, a non-Muslim chief to enter Mecca. There is nothing wrong in Islam for Muslims to work together with non-Muslims. • There are some challenges that Muslims face, such as Islamophobia/unfair laws targeting Muslims and therefore it can be useful to seek help from non-Muslims to find a solution to these issues. • However, some challenges cannot be addressed with people of other faiths. Because of the rules and restrictions in Islamic law, Muslims cannot address issues in the same way as non-Muslims. • Muslims for example will not agree to take loans to address problems like poverty, as they are not allowed in Islam to indulge in any transaction which involves interest. • When it comes to issues related to morals, Muslims would rather encourage marriage and preserve the family unit rather than partnership or single parent families, therefore working with some non-Muslims might not be possible.	25

Question	Answer	Marks
3	Conclusion Conclusion should be made weighing up how far challenges of the modern age can be resolved by Muslims working hand in hand with non-Muslims.	