

O'Levels & IGCSE Islamiyat

Difficult Questions according to ER

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Series	Variant	Difficult questions	Examiner Remarks
M/J 22	11	Write about the various tasks performed by some of the Prophet's Companions as his Scribes.	Weaker responses used a different approach. These answers included information about how the Qur'an was revealed in different ways and how companions used to preserve and memorise it. Such responses also gave precise details of the official compilation of the Quran under Abu Bakr and Usman.
M/J 22	12	(a) Give an account of the tribes living in Madina and the details of the Constitution of Madina that brought them all together.	Weak responses were also compounded by some irrelevant information. For example, an unnecessary emphasis on the expulsion of Jewish tribes, which was not relevant to the question, or extended notes with minute details of the bond of brotherhood created in Madina. Similarly, the Pledges of 'Aqaba, or the Prophet's migration.

M/J 22	21	(a) Give an account of the main reasons for the revolt against 'Uthman's rule and the events of the rebellion in Madina.	(a) Good responses showed an understanding of the reasons for the revolt against 'Uthman and they knew the events of the rebellion. Reasons for the revolt included, the appointment of relatives and clan members to important government posts, leniency shown towards them in both personal and professional conduct, 'Uthman's spending from the public treasury on his relatives and burning copies of the Qur'an. Some responses were confused about the names of cities from where the rebels came and the names of governors.
M/J 22	22	2 (a) Consensus (ijma') is the third source of Islamic law. Write an account of ijma' and give two examples of how it was practised in the time of the Companions. [10]	Weak responses did not have information about who was eligible to practise ijma. Good responses included the rules that were established for the sake of maintaining consistency in decisions made through ijma'. The second part (a) clearly asked the candidates to give two examples of ijma' from the time of the Companions. Weak responses did not focus on this key instruction, with examples ranging from when the Prophet ^{pbuh} practised shura to the present when covid rules were followed in mosques through ijma'. These examples were read as development of the first part of the question where the candidates were asked to write an account of ijma'. For marks to be credited for the second part of part (a) the examples needed to be from the time of the Companions. The main examples given were the election of the first caliph, the compilation of the Qur'an either in the time of Abu Bakr or 'Uthman, Taraweeh in congregation and two adhans for Friday prayers.
O/N 21	11	3 (a) Describe the main events of the Prophet's migration (hijra) from Makkah to his welcome in Madina. [10]	Successful responses to Question 3 had a comprehensive account of the different incidents that took place during the Prophet's journey from

			<p>Makkah to his welcome in Madina, particularly the experiences in the Cave Thawr. Strong responses went into considerable detail, describing events that happened between Cave Thawr and the Prophet's arrival in Madina. Weaker responses were highlighted by their lack of detail with many having just an outline of the events. Such responses proceeded from one incident to another without providing a thorough description. A close reading of the question is also necessary because some candidates described events that occurred after the arrival of the Prophet^{pbuh} in Madina.</p>
O/N 21	12	-	-
O/N 21	21	-	-
O/N 21	22	-	-
M/J 21	11	<p>3 (a) Describe the main events of the Prophet's migration (hijra) from Makkah to his welcome in Madina. [10]</p>	<p>Strong responses went into considerable detail, describing events that happened between Cave Thawr and the Prophet's arrival in Madina. Weaker responses were highlighted by their lack of detail with many having just an outline of the events. Such responses proceeded from one incident to another without providing a thorough description. A close reading of the question is also necessary because some candidates described events that occurred after the arrival of the Prophet in Madina</p>
M/J 21	12	<p>2 (a) Write about the ways in which Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman were involved in the compilation and preservation of the Qur'an. [10]</p>	<p>More successful candidates divided their response into several paragraphs, each going into considerable detail about one stage, providing specific names of the personalities involved and quoting their exact words where possible, referenced from reliable sources. Another distinctive quality of such answers was giving precise details of the process of compilation and different stages of it that was carried out by the committees formed in</p>

			both the eras. Less successful responses were characterised by a lack of knowledge, inaccuracies, and imprecise and limited details.
M/J 21	21	2 (a) Write a detailed account of the two components of Hadiths: • chain of transmission (isnad) and • text (matn) [10]	More advanced answers wrote that it is the matn of a Hadith that helps to distinguish between a Hadith e Qudsi and Nabawi and gave Hadiths of each in support of their answer. Some candidates gave an account of only one component and therefore lacked detail, while in some cases candidates did not know what isnad and matn were. In those cases, candidates should be encouraged to use the English translation and develop their answer from there.
M/J 21	22	3 (a) Give an account of the election of Abu Bakr and the expedition he sent to Syria soon after becoming caliph. [10]	Weaker responses contained a brief summary of the election and lacked detailed knowledge. Further development could have included why Abu Bakr was the natural choice, and quotations from his speech could have been used to develop the account.
O/N 20	11	2 (a) Using passages from the syllabus write about what God says about His relationship with two of His Messengers. [10]	Some lost focus along the way and talked about events that were not covered by the passages present in the syllabus, such as details of the prophet Ibrahim’s encounter with his nation and the subsequent events. Another common mistake was putting more emphasis on stories that were from within the relevant passages but were not relevant to the question asked.
O/N 20	12	5 (a) Write about the brotherhood in Madina that developed between the Helpers (Ansar) and the Emigrants (Muhajirun). [10]	Most of those attempting it gave a basic answer describing who the Helpers and the Immigrants were, the bond of brotherhood created between them, and a vague description of help offered by the Helpers. Better answers gave details of the pairs created, precise information about what Ansars offered to Muhajirun, quoting the Abdur Rahman incident and Qur’an verses about the Helpers and the Immigrants.

O/N 20	21	3 (a) Give an account of the administration of the caliphate under 'Uthman. [10]	Weaker responses were characterised by a focus on the compilation of the Qur'an in his caliphate with little else included. There were responses in which his biography was well written prior to him becoming caliph but unfortunately no marks were awarded for irrelevant content. Furthermore, content that focused on the rebellion and his assassination were not credited as this question had a specific focus of the caliphate under 'Uthman. The best responses included Uthman's administrative measures and his achievements (which were linked to how they led to a good administrative process).
O/N 20	22	2 (a) Write an account of: • the reasons given by scholars for compiling Hadith collections, and; • the checks made to confirm their authenticity. [10]	In many responses, one part of the answer was stronger than the other. However, Musannaf and Musnad compilations were not the focus of this question. If they were referenced relevantly, perhaps as development, this knowledge was rewarded but, in some cases, simply writing an account of them did not answer the question. Hence, it is extremely important that candidates write relevant answers and if they use material that is not specific to the question they need to legitimately link it to the question as part of the response for it to be read as development.
O/N 19	11	-	-
O/N 19	12	-	-
O/N 19	21	-	-
O/N 19	22	-	-
M/J 19	11	5 (a) In Madina, the Helpers (Ansar) and Emigrants (Muhajirun) were made brothers. Give an account of the main developments of this relationship. [10]	Stronger responses could have been achieved if candidates had explained who Ansars and Muhajirun were. Specific details of the brotherhood created between them, giving names of a few pairs, including information about what was offered by Ansars and what was

			accepted or declined by the Prophet (pbuh) and the Muhajirun, would have improved responses. Hence candidates could talk about each Ansar family taking one Muhajirun family into their household to share everything with them and Ansars offering shares in their orchards of palm trees which was refused by Prophet (pbuh), although it was agreed that Immigrants could work on them and share the yield. Quoting Quran passages about the Helpers and the Immigrants as well as one restricting inheritance to blood relations only, could have also improved responses
M/J 19	12	5 (a) Write a detailed account of the lives of Hamza ibn Abd al-Muttalib and Khalid ibn Walid during the lifetime of the Prophet. [10]	This was not a popular question. There were some basic facts about both personalities that almost all the candidates attempting this question wrote about. Better responses included specific details of individual events such as war strategies employed by Khalid bin Waleed in Mau'tah or in-depth narration of the event of Hamza's acceptance of Islam. Similarly, some strong quotes such as the dialogue between Hamza and Abu Jahil or the Prophet's statements about Khalid's acceptance of Islam and him being God's sword earned candidates higher marks as it showed greater depth of knowledge.
M/J 19	21	4 (a) Write about the following : • The benefits of private prayer (du'a) in a Muslim's life. • The times when God is thought most likely to accept du'a. [10] (b) How does du'a bring a believer closer to God? [4]	Some responses did not have sufficient detail about when the opportune moments are for acceptance of prayers. d. These were correct but more detail was required. Some good points were made and written about the benefits of prayer (du'a) but quite a few answers were too limited to achieve well.
M/J 19	22	5 (a) 'Prophets played a central part in conveying God's message to humanity.' Write an account of Muslim belief in prophets. [10]	This question asked candidates to write about Muslim belief in prophets. Some very good answers were seen, but some candidates only wrote about Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). In other responses, more

			focus was given to the miracles given to the prophets rather than the overall belief.
O/N 18	21	3(a) How did the arbitration following the Battle of Siffin lead to the emergence of the Kharijites?	Those candidates who did so tended to misunderstand the question. Some candidates wrote accounts of the Battle of Camel followed by Siffin etc. Some candidates wrote a concise account of the Battle of Siffin and went on to briefly say how it led to the emergence of the Kharijites. These answers, though a little brief, were relevant and rewarded accordingly.
O/N 18	-	-	-
O/N 18	-	-	-
M/J 18	11	Q3(a) How did Islam grow in the years between the Prophet's first revelation and his first public preaching in Makkah?	This was the most popular of the optional questions, although very few of the candidates who attempted it appeared to understand what material the question asked them to focus on. Almost all responses were focussed on a description of events after the revelation – references to the ways Islam grew in the first couple of years were few and far between. Some candidates gave detailed accounts of the first revelation, some of the first public preaching and some gave descriptions of both of these and almost nothing else. Many candidates wrote about the persecutions after the first public preaching, some went as far as the migrations and subsequent wars and a few gave the entire history between the first preaching and the conquest of Makkah. The few candidates who did attempt to focus on the early growth of Islam found it difficult to give detail beyond a list of names of the first Muslims.
M/J 18	12	The Prophet's relationship with the Quraysh changed after he began to receive revelations. Describe the differences in the	Answers should write about the Prophet's status in the community prior to Islam and after. A comparative approach will likely score higher. Level 3, 7, answers

		way the Quraysh treated him after this event.	should know most of this information with some detail. Level 4 answers will know all this information, and have more detail, including quotations.
M/J 18	22	Write in detail about Muslim belief in Life after Death and the Day of Judgement.	Candidates in this answer need to write in detail as the question is asking them about Muslim belief in Life after Death and the Day of Judgement. Responses could include information such as: Belief in life after death is a fundamental belief of Muslims. Candidates also need to write about the Day of Judgement and here they could say that at the appointed hour, which is only known to God, this world will come to an end.. It is the detail and development of some or many of the points given above that will earn candidates the mark desired. Where necessary, marks should be given even if the points are not mentioned above, but are relevant.
O/N 17	11	5 (a) Write about lives of the Companions Bilal ibn Rabah, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib and Salman al-Farsi.	(a) Those who answered this question well provided details about each companion in the question. Many good to excellent responses included appropriate and accurate detail. Other candidates needed to develop their answers by providing information about more than one or two of the figures and then only vaguely touching on the third.
O/N 17	21	4(b) Why in your opinion is it desirable that the pilgrims should visit Madina after the performance of hajj or umrah?	Candidate's opinion on why it is desirable for Muslims to visit Madina should be credited on its own merit. Some could say that Madina is a sacred city and is significant in the history of Islam as Islam flourished and spread from Madina, or that it was the city chosen by the Prophet (pbuh) to live in even after the conquest of Mecca, or that he sanctified Madina just as Ibrahim sanctified Mecca. Hence making it desirable for Muslims to visit it. A variety of reasons could be given.
O/N 17	21	5(a) Write an account about the relationship between belief in	The fifth article of Islamic faith is belief in divine decree which means

		God's divine decree and human responsibility.	that everything good or bad, all moments of happiness or sorrow, pleasure or pain, come from God. The above is a very detailed response to the question asked written for the guidance of examiners. Candidates are not expected to write in this much detail but must cover the points made in the given answer, the mark will depend on the depth of the answer.
M/J 17	11	3 (b) Why is it important for Muslims to show obedience to God in difficult situations	They could say that in difficult times, such as times of war, they should not give up hope of victory or of ease in their situation, and that they should continue to pray and worship God and carry on doing good deeds, because These are just some examples; candidates can give others but should give reasoning for their choices.
M/J 17	12	5(b) The scribes had the Prophet as a source of information. How useful is the internet as a source of information about Islam?	Candidates could say it is a useful source of information because e.g. there is a lot of information easily available on the internet so it is possible to do a few searches and find a lot of sources available for you to read on a subject. The Qur'an and most hadith books are all online now, so people can easily access the information they need. People who may not have access to books about Islam can learn about it online, and would be useful for those interested in Islam.
M/J 17	22	2(b) Why are some Muslims not in favour of the use of analogy (qiyas) in solving present day issues?	Answers could say that it depends very much on the ability of a legal expert to find comparisons between two principles and because it is practised by individuals it makes some Muslims uneasy. Some others e.g. Shi'a Muslims may feel that it relies on the opinion of one individual which can be subjective and hence be reluctant to use it.

A Note from Mojza

This resource for Islamiyat (2058) has been prepared by Team Mojza, covering the content for O Level 2022-25 syllabus. The content of this resource has been prepared with utmost care. We apologise for any issues overlooked; factual, grammatical or otherwise. We hope that you benefit from these and find them useful towards achieving your goals for your Cambridge examinations.

If you find any issues within these notes or have any feedback, please contact us at support@mojza.org.

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