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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

ISLAMIC RELIGION AND CULTURE

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 2056/01

Paper 1

General comments

Candidates' knowledge of topics such as Muhammad's Farewell Address, Umar's political and religious achievements, the set Hadith and Sura Zilzal was less detailed than in previous years. Despite this, the candidates' ability to present the facts was much better than their ability to comment upon them.

Questions 4, 10 and 11 were not popular with candidates and were not well answered.

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 12 were the most popular. Part **(a)** of **Questions 2, 3 and 12**, which required knowledge of Muhammad's life before the Farewell Address, was best answered.

The paper was of the same level of difficulty as in previous years.

Most candidates completed five questions in the time allowed. Only the very weakest candidates answered sections from too many questions.

There is still a marked tendency for candidates to provide material relevant to part **(b)** in part **(a)**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates obtained satisfactory marks for part **(a)** and some obtained full marks. Part **(b)** was less well done since candidates tended to list a couple of changes instead of explaining how five new practices differed from previous practices.

Question 2

Muhammad's early life was very well known by a wide range of candidates. In part **(b)**, candidates often listed the Prophet's virtues without linking the later successes to the earlier experiences. This meant that half marks were the most that could be awarded.

Question 3

A good or very good knowledge of the difficulties in Mecca was displayed and a satisfactory understanding of the superior welcome and opportunities which existed in Medina was evident.

Question 4

In part **(a)**, candidates did not show the detailed knowledge of the Farewell Address shown last time the question was set. In part **(b)**, the better candidates made some assessment of political and religious successes but most listed a few of Muhammad's virtues.

Question 5

Umar's political and religious successes were less well known this year than in previous years. As the weaker candidates gave descriptions of Umar's conversion. In part **(b)**, the better candidates mentioned Umar's strength of character and the Muslim conviction they were fighting for Allah. The better training of the Muslim army, the weak state of the Byzantine and Persian empires and the juster Muslim administration was less often mentioned.

Question 6

Few candidates attempted this question. The better ones were aware of the problems caused by Mu'awiya, Aisha and the Kharijites but their accounts of these problems were very confused. The weakest candidates mistook Ali for Uthman. In part **(b)**, the evaluation of these problems was usually poor.

Question 7

In part **(a)**, many candidates wrote about the Five Pillars instead of the articles of faith. Candidates who did write about the articles of faith often gained full marks for this section. In part **(b)**, candidates tended to list the contents of the Quran without giving several reasons why holy books were important to Muslims.

Question 8

In part **(a)**, candidates who knew the basic facts about Zakat, such as rates paid and official recipients, did very well. Some otherwise very able candidates ignored the basic information and wrote about the benefits of Zakat in part **(a)** not part **(b)**. In part **(b)**, more candidates than usual rightly provided Examiners with a mixture of personal and community benefits.

Question 9

This question was somewhat better answered than in previous years. It is essential that in part **(a)** candidates describe the *religious* features of the marriage rites and that in part **(b)** they explain the *religious* significance of these features. The Examiners are aware that the details of the marriage ceremony can vary in different Islamic countries.

Question 10

This was not a popular question and most candidates who answered it did not have a good knowledge of the set Hadith. Without this knowledge it was impossible to provide the three good present-day applications required in part **(b)**.

Question 11

This was not a popular question and most candidates wrote about the end of the world without any reference to Sura Zilzal. A few who did know the set sura well gained full marks for part **(a)**. In part **(b)**, the Examiners expected candidates to provide five examples of how a strong belief might affect a person's life. Most candidates mentioned only one, avoiding evil.

Question 12

This was a very popular question and most candidates answered part **(a)** very well. A significant number achieved full marks. In part **(b)**, full marks were awarded for any four reasons why the Hadith are necessary. Credit was also given for any well expressed example. Most candidates provided two appropriate reasons.