

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/11
Paper 1

Key messages

Knowledge based questions require essay length answers. It is depth and detail of knowledge and information in a response that takes it to the higher levels.

Answers require proper labelling, clearly indicating **(a)** and **(b)** parts. They should not all be merged in one big paragraph.

Reading and understanding a question is of prime importance; evaluative questions require even more consideration as candidates often misread and miss important clues in the questions and consequently the quality and accuracy of the response is compromised too.

General comments

The standard of the responses has improved greatly, particularly in knowledge-based questions. Candidates are writing fuller responses, going well beyond a few pages with lots of details and highly accurate information supported by quotes.

The quality of responses to evaluative questions has always been good generally. However, at times candidates tend to rush and not read question properly which affects the quality of their response, or sometimes they give a very generalised answer.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Almost all the candidates attempted Question 1, answering both parts of the question. Better answers focused on the themes discussed in each passage, talking about God's omniscience, omnipotence, His lordship etc. Candidates also discussed how He is the sole creator hence only one that deserves worship from His creation. Similarly, for passage (iii) God's guidance offered to His prophets, prophet's higher intelligence, ability to contemplate and their undaunted belief in God was highlighted.

Some responses either merely paraphrased the actual passage or presented some general themes of Quran and did not focus specifically on the contents of the passages selected. Some candidates merely narrate the story, such as how Abraham observed the sun first then the moon and so on, without discussing the underlying theme of the story.

Candidates should mention which theme the passage belongs to and then proceed to describe what aspects of the main theme are discussed in the passage e.g., passage (iii) belongs to the theme of God's messengers. This passage shows how prophets were taught and guided by God. It also highlights the fact that prophets were not ordinary humans, they were highly intelligent and observed their environment and surroundings. Another aspect that could be discussed is the determination and conviction demonstrated by the prophets throughout their lives.

- (b) Some good answers talked about how these themes are important for Muslims by giving strong examples such as Ayat ul Qursi creating a sense of protection in Muslims, knowing that God knows all about them and protects everyone and everything. Similarly, some candidates talked about these passages making Muslims rely on God rather than putting their faith in money, status or influential people. Others talked about how Muslims are encouraged to ponder over the universe and find God's signs in there.

However, a number of candidates only made simple statements about what Muslims should or should not do, while others discussed the themes again. A large majority of candidates use some main Islamic beliefs and start the sentence with the words, 'the main theme discussed in this passage is that Allah is one', for part (a) of the question and for part (b), they would say, 'the importance of these themes is that Muslims learn that Allah is one'. Although these main beliefs are common to most of the passages and so relevant, it is only when candidates go beyond these basic points and elaborate on other themes and points of importance, that higher marks can be achieved.

Question 2

- (a) Most of the candidates did very well on this question. Excellent answers started with a brief history of compilation from the time of Prophet (pbuh) as an introduction, followed by the reason behind the compilation. They wrote extensively on both periods of compilation, mentioning names of the personalities involved and the procedure adopted, and supported the points with references. Some of the candidates who were able to attain higher marks also added details about the final form of the compiled manuscripts at the end of each period.

Less successful candidates either had sketchy details or missed one period altogether. Some weaker candidates confused the personalities and the roles played by them in compilation.

- (b) It was a well attempted question generally. Some of the most thoughtful answers talked about written Quran creating ease of reading particularly for non-Arabs, new converts and those with weaker memories. Some even linked the issue to the present times, saying how written form makes it easier to have digital copies that can easily be carried anywhere or translated in other languages. Role of written Quran in its preservation was also highlighted. Many, however, misunderstood the question and wrote extended notes on importance of Quran itself in Muslims' lives.

Question 3

- (a) This question was a popular choice. Better answers covered all the important events that happened along the journey of Isra and Miraj in considerable detail. Stronger responses mentioned details of all the Prophets who met Prophet (pbuh) on different levels of heavens, quoting some of the points from the conversations they had. Excellent responses gave detailed accounts of Lote Tree, made reference to the last two Ayaas of Quran given to the Prophet, along with specific details at the start of the journey.

On the contrary, less successful responses lacked depth and detail or had inaccuracies. Some gave an outline of the whole journey, which was accurate but there were no significant details of each stage of the journey.

- (b) The question was challenging for majority of candidates. Only some were able to talk about God showing His support for the Prophet (pbuh) through this journey or the journey giving renewed hope to the Prophet and making him realise his status. Others discussed the importance of prayers without linking it to the question asked or talked more about the significance of this journey to the Muslims in general, not Prophet (pbuh) in particular.

Question 4

- (a) This was another popular question among candidates. . A large majority seemed to know all the basic facts about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Those going into further detail about each event such as the particulars of Prophet's stay with Halima Sadia and specific details of the sacrilegious wars and the subsequent Fadul confederacy, also quoting Prophet's statements about his command on Arabic because of his links with Banu Saad through Halima Sadia as well as the one expressing his appreciation of Fadul confederacy, achieved the higher marks.

Some of the weaker answers missed important details while just mentioning the names of the people Prophet (pbuh) stayed with and gave a brief summary of some of the important events. Others over- emphasised the event of first revelation, gave extensive details, and included events after that which were not very relevant.

- (b) Many descriptive answers writing prolonged notes about challenges faced by the Prophet (pbuh) in his early life were seen, only mentioning the lessons learnt in a sentence or two at the end. Others rushed answers without understanding what was being asked. Consequently, rather than focusing on what lessons could be learnt that are applicable in today's world, giving specific examples from the daily lives of the Muslims, candidates talked about a general code of conduct prescribing what Muslims should or should not do, hence not going beyond satisfactory levels.

Question 5

- (a) This question was attempted by a small number of candidates. Those who did attempt it seemed to struggle to find material for their response and answers tended to be short and generalised, briefly mentioning Hijra, talking about the brotherhood created in Madina and quoting the examples of Saad and Abdul Rehman.

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. .

- (b) Most of the responses were able to get to a satisfactory level by saying how Muslims should help others around them. General examples of helping someone in need and giving money or financial assistance to the poor were very common. Better answers were able to give examples of community coming together to help immigrants, showing how they can be offered shelter, financial help and moral support. It was only when an answer went beyond a simplistic statement such as 'Muslims should help others', giving precise examples of how a community could work as a united force whenever it faced any crisis or a situation that required extraordinary measures to cope with, that higher marks were achieved.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/12
Paper 1

Key messages

- It is important that candidates take time to read the question they are attempting to answer in order to understand what is required.
- Selection of relevant information is very crucial for scoring higher marks; it reflects on candidates' ability to understand and choose appropriate information, discarding irrelevant details while solely focusing on the significant facts and information.
- Evaluative questions require candidates to show their understanding of the facts, information and knowledge acquired. Therefore, the answer should focus on their own opinion and judgement, supported by some factual evidence. Candidates are not required to state facts again or give a narrative.

General comments

Overall, the standard of this paper was good. Candidates demonstrated a skilful selection of correct and pertinent knowledge, supported by accurate quotes to validate the points made in **(a) parts** of the questions. Many well-structured, coherent and confident responses were seen, starting with brief introductory paragraphs followed by clear and short paragraphs, each linking clearly to the question asked. Other responses included events or information which were not very relevant to the question.

There were many thoughtful and perceptive answers to **part (b)** questions, with candidates attempting to evaluate and justify their opinion with some evidence. Other candidates wrote descriptive notes or just made one or two simple statements without elaborating or linking the response to the question. Many responses did not include sound reasoning.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a)** Candidates are very familiar with the structure of these questions, choosing two out of three passages, describing their themes in **part (a)** and importance in **part (b)**.

Better answers focused on the actual themes and then elaborated them. They described God's mercy, His lordship and the guidance offered by Him to His creation in passage (1). They also described His relationship with the creation as the Creator and the Sustainer, hence deserving of worship in passage (2), and God's support and consolation offered to his Prophets and responsibilities given to them in passage (3).

Less successful responses either identified the wrong theme or merely paraphrased. Some tended to be very general, offering teachings which could be found in vast selection of passages rather than focusing on the ones provided. Some candidates seemed to have ignored the instructions in the question that asked them to be brief and spent time writing extensively about the Sura the passage is from, its number, meanings of the name of that Sura, where it was revealed etc., while only talking about the actual content in just a few lines. Where a passage consists of a complete Sura, some started talking about the characteristics of that Sura. Candidates are reminded to focus on the discussion of the themes.

- (b) Better answers explained how the themes contained in the passages are important for Muslims now. Some thoughtful answers talked about themes creating a sense of appreciation in Muslims, making them obedient to God and more thankful for the bounties bestowed upon them. Excellent answers were able to show how these themes could make Muslims responsible environmentalists who then look after and preserve nature, or how Muslims are offered hope in times of personal tragedies and losses.

Other responses usually paraphrased or gave a standard answer of 'Muslims should not do shirk' or 'Muslims should only worship God' for every passage. Another common mistake was to repeat the teachings of the passage rather than telling about how these themes play a part in the lives of Muslims.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates found this question challenging, though some good answers were seen. Strong responses chose any two prophets, referred to the passages in the syllabus rather than doing mere paraphrasing, discussed the relationship aspect, threw light on how God was the teacher, and pointed out how he taught each prophet in a different way. Some candidates also wrote about how God bestowed special bounties on his chosen people, giving examples of his support in the form of miracles, etc. God's mercy and forgiveness and His prophets' obedience and undaunted belief in Him was also highlighted through Adam's repentance and Abraham's firmness in his belief in God. Excellent responses focused on the relationships between master and slave, teacher and student, pardoner and negligent, independent and dependant, protector and protected.

Many candidates simply narrated the text without any attempt to demonstrate the relationship aspect. The relationship between God and these prophets was immersed in the narrative of the passages, e.g. Adam's story as told in the Qur'an, his creation, his knowledge, bowing down of angels apart from Iblis, etc. Some candidates wrote about all the miracles given to Isa by God, but did not explain that this was God's way of helping prophet Isa and supporting him in his mission because of the scepticism of his people in his prophethood. The story of Ibrahim was not well done as candidates wrote about other events, such as sacrificing his son, building Kaabah, which were not part of the syllabus. Better responses were about the incident of him observing the signs of nature to finally discover the Creator behind it all, thus showing that without God's guidance he would have gone astray like the people of his time.

- (b) Some good answers were seen in response to **Question 2(b)**, using examples of traits such as steadfastness, patience and trust in God, shown by the prophets while facing trials, and demonstrating how they are applicable to the lives of Muslims in general, or the personal lives of the candidates themselves, giving explicit examples of their conduct while facing any difficulty.

Weaker responses included lengthy notes on the conduct of prophets, narrating detailed events from the lives of the prophets and the Prophet (pbuh), only to say 'we should do the same' at the end. Often candidates would only offer advice on how to face trials in life generally. Although the stimuli for this question was about how Allah's Messengers face trials and our response to trials, candidates went off on a tangent and wrote about different lessons learnt from the life of the prophets, e.g. Adam was forgiven by God, so we need to ask forgiveness etc.

Question 3

- (a) This question was well answered. There were many thorough, well developed responses with detailed information about the three main phases of the journey, i.e. the departure, the stay in Cave Thaur and subsequent events with some valid quotes from the Qur'an in support of the points made. Excellent answers also demonstrated extensive knowledge and understanding by giving profound information about many events and personalities involved in this event, which are not generally very well known such as Amir bin Fuhayrah, Abdullah Bin Uraiquit, Umme Mu'abd, etc. There were some very good quotes as well which took the answers to Level 4. Also, the ayat from Sura Yaseen that the Prophet (pbuh) read when leaving his house while throwing dust on their face as well as the ayat from Tawbah (9:40) about them being two with Allah as third, were well known by most candidates.

Candidates who did not answer this question well either spent too much time on writing about the background of the event, giving details of pledges of Aqaba and atrocities on Muslims, or wrote extensively about events that happened after the arrival of Muslims in Madina. Many candidates

focused too much on the departure of the Prophet (pbuh) and the stay in Cave Thaur, while giving sketchy details of events that happened after the Cave Thaur stay or missing them altogether.

- (b) Better answers were developed to show the significance of the construction of mosques as the Prophet's first task on his arrival, e.g. to show freedom of worship, to help new converts or to demonstrate importance of worship in congregation. Most responses were descriptive, giving details of later functions of the mosques in Madina or talking about the roles of mosques in general.

Question 4

- (a) This question was generally well attempted and some excellent responses gave detailed account of the Hajj performed by the Prophet (pbuh), specifically mentioning all the observances and their sequence followed by a detailed note on the last sermon delivered by the Prophet (pbuh), and finally an account of his illness and departure from the world. Some candidates also gave details of the event of Ghadir khumm, hajj under Abu Bakr and other administrative measures taken by the Prophet (pbuh) in the last year of his life, which was all very relevant. Better answers quoted all important points from the last sermon along with last revelations.

Some candidates focused more on the last sermon itself and the details of Prophet's illness, whereas weaker responses demonstrated confusion as to whether certain general principles of Islam did or did not form part of the last sermon. Some candidates seemed to have confused the time frame and wrote about the Conquest of Makkah or Tabuk Expedition instead.

- (b) There were some quite insightful answers offered in response to this question, particularly on racism and the treatment of women with some sound reasoning. Better responses showed application of the teachings in the present world.

Many candidates were able to correctly identify the teaching, but did not develop reasons as to why the teaching is important, while some wrote more about the actual teachings and just made simple suggestions of acting upon them. Some candidates chose to write on several teachings rather than one, and therefore were not able to score many marks as they could not provide enough reasoning for each point chosen. Many candidates wrote about teachings which were not even part of the last sermon of the Prophet (pbuh).

Question 5

- (a) 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.

- (b) Overall, this question was not well answered. Responses were often brief and vague, containing simple statements on showing loyalty to Allah, the Prophet (pbuh) or to friends, neighbours etc. Some candidates only talked about how Hamza and Khalid showed loyalty, but did not say much about how Muslims could show loyalty. Some candidates seemed not quite sure about what loyalty meant and just wrote about the responsibilities of a Muslim generally or the lessons they learn from Hamza's life, e.g. he loved the Prophet (pbuh) so we should love him too. Other candidates who did focus on loyalty were too generic as they would only say 'we need to be loyal to our family and friends', without giving any explanation on how to do that.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/13
Paper 1

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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.

- (b) Most of the responses were able to get to a satisfactory level by saying how Muslims should help others around them. General examples of helping someone in need and giving money or financial assistance to the poor were very common. Better answers were able to give examples of community coming together to help immigrants, showing how they can be offered shelter, financial help and moral support. It was only when an answer went beyond a simplistic statement such as 'Muslims should help others', giving precise examples of how a community could work as a united force whenever it faced any crisis or a situation that required extraordinary measures to cope with, that higher marks were achieved.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/21
Paper 2

Key messages

Most candidates were well prepared for the examination. Candidates achieved well where they were able to read the question carefully and respond to the specific focus being asked about. Less focused answers tended to include a lot of generalisations, sometimes not relevant, and were not able to focus on what was being asked by the question.

General comments

It was important to spend the appropriate time on each question, some candidates rushed their part (a) answers and seemed to spend longer on part (b) which attracts less marks overall. In part (a) answers candidates who achieved the higher marks were able to distinguish between what the question was specifically asking and simply giving all they know on that topic. Part (b) answers which showed evaluation and reasoning achieved well.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Well structured responses were seen for the teachings given in the Hadiths for **part (a)**. Good responses were able to express the teachings given in the first Hadith rather than repeating what was given in the translation.
- (b) This was answered well by most candidates. Some responses contained repetition on the teachings given in **part (a)** which meant that candidates did not always focus on the specifics of the question.

Question 2

- (a) This question asked candidates to give an account of the checks made on the *isnad* and *matn* of Hadiths. The majority of the candidates were able to give a good account of the checks made on the narrators and the text. Where examples were offered of how the narrators collected the Hadiths which showed their upright character and the strict measures that were placed on Hadith collection, the examples were taken as development of the answer.
- (b) Evaluative responses were needed for this part of the answer in which candidates needed to say why in their opinion the checks were important to confirm the authenticity of Hadiths. A range of responses could be given e.g. they help in classification of Hadiths and making Islamic law or create unity in the *ummah* etc. The point/s made needed to be discussed in order to achieve well.

Question 3

- (a) A two part answer was needed in response to this question, (i) giving the reasons for the unrest against Uthman and (ii) an account of the rebellion in Madina that led to his martyrdom. Some candidates for the first part gave good reasons for the unrest but were unsure about the events of the rebellion. The best responses contained details such as the correct names of the key rebels, names of the garrison cities where the three rebel columns set off from, the response of the inner council of Companions etc... Where the details were given accurately the candidates were able to achieve well.
- (b) Candidates who responded well to this question were able to give their own views and say what lessons the principles and martyrdom held for present times. Some said that though 'Umar understood the threat made by Abu Lulu, he did not increase his security or shy away from fulfilling his duties and that modern day rulers could show the same faith in *Qadr* and the will of God and fearlessly lead their community/country. Less good responses tended to make a point but not discuss it.

Question 4

- (a) Some responses did not have sufficient detail about when the opportune moments are for acceptance of prayers. The most popular time written about by candidates was in *sujood* and *tahajud*. These were correct but more detail was required. Some good points were made and written about in benefits of prayer (*du'a*) but quite a few answers were too limited to achieve well.
- (b) Well reasoned answers were given for this part question. The best responses were able to explain and present a view and discuss it, with reference to examples.

Question 5

- (a) In this answer a lot of responses focused on how the month of Ramadan should be spent but not on how it is observed. Some candidates only wrote very briefly about *suhoor* and *niyat*. The best responses were able to respond to both parts of the question and provide a well-balanced answer.
- (b) Most candidates were able to provide good evaluative responses to this question.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/22
Paper 2

Key messages

- Candidates are advised to take time to read the question they are attempting to answer.
- Answers should contain detail and depth related to the question asked, and not just general outlines of the main points.

General comments

Overall, the standard of responses for this paper was good.

Question 1 was answered well. For **Question 2**, many only wrote about *isnad* and *matn* of Hadiths and mentioned Bukhari and Muslim by name without much development. Some wrote good accounts of the Successors of the Successors, whilst a small majority went on to give an account of the compilation from the Prophet's time. **Question 3** was popular, but some seemed to have confused accounts of the Battle of Camel with Siffin. **Questions 4** and **5** were answered well.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were able to give the teachings of the two Hadiths they chose to write about competently. For the first one they expressed an understanding of the teaching rather than simply paraphrasing it. For the second Hadith, the focus was mainly on getting/wanting for a believer the same that one wants for oneself. An element of the teaching that could be brought out is that for belief to be sincere, concern for fellow beings is critical. Many gave examples of the brotherhood between the *Ansars* and *Muhajirun* in **Part (a)**, which would have been better suited in **Part (b)**. Good understanding of teaching was shown for Hadiths 3 and 4.
- (b) Candidates who wrote lengthy answers in **Part (a)** tended to repeat themselves in **Part (b)**. Therefore, when discussing the response e.g. of Hadith 2, it would be better to use practical examples in **Part (b)** so that repetition does not occur and time is saved.

Question 2

- (a) In this question, candidates needed to write about a specific period in the compilation of Hadiths. They needed to focus their answer on the period of the Successors of the Successors and say how they focused on *isnad* and *matn* in their work of compilation by establishing rules to determine the authenticity of Hadiths, and how they combined the *musnad* and *musannaf* collections in the form of a sunan/sahih book. Also examples and challenges they faced in performing this task needed to be given. The names of the compilers of this period should have been given as well as what they produced.

Many candidates focused on the *isnad* and *matn* of Hadiths and mentioned the names of Bukhari and Muslim without adding more details. Better responses included more detail and development.

- (b) This **Part (b)** question asked the candidates to give reasons for why *isnad* was important in establishing the authenticity of a Hadith. Many candidates wrote about what *isnad* was, which they had already written about in **Part (a)** and therefore repeated themselves. Candidates here needed to focus on saying that genuineness of *isnad* is important to establish to know that it comes from

the Prophet (pbuh) as it is used to practice the faith correctly and because Islamic law is derived from the knowledge given in the Hadiths.

Question 3

- (a) A twofold response was needed in answering this question; the reasons for Mu'awiya's opposition to 'Ali and an account of the Battle of Siffin. Strong responses gave a detailed list of reasons for Mu'awiya's opposition to 'Ali, whilst less successful ones gave the common reasons like Mu'awiya was an Ummayyad and he was removed from office which he resented and resisted leading to the battle. When writing about the battle, the answer needed to be more focused on the events of the four days rather than the arbitration that followed it.
- (b) In this part answer, candidates had to select any one consequence which in their opinion was the most serious outcome of the battle and give reasons why they had chosen it. When candidates gave more than one reason, the stronger one was marked. The best answers included one reason as well as its ripple effects. For example, if the emergence of the kharijites was chosen as the most serious consequence and the candidates went on to write about 'Ali's weakened authority on this account and how it led to the Battle of Nahrawan and finally his martyrdom, this was a well evaluated answer where one consequence led to several problems.

Question 4

- (a) Both belief in God and belief in angels needed to be written about in this answer. As two Articles of Faith were being asked for, the depth of answers needed to carry a balance. For belief in God, many candidates wrote exclusively on His Oneness and though they supported the content with quotes, this was not a balanced account. Answers needed to refer to all the aspects of Muslim belief in God. In some answers, belief in God was a sketchy response, whilst belief in angels was a long response. Both parts needed to be answered in similar depths to reach top levels. If candidates only wrote about one belief and gave a comprehensive account of it, they could not be given full credit.

It is very important for candidates to understand the requirement of a question before they start writing an answer.

- (b) Good evaluative responses were given for this part answer. In most answers, candidates wrote about how belief in angels strengthen one's faith, makes Muslims believe that the Qur'an was indeed a revealed book, keeps Muslims in check as they are conscious of their deeds being noted and their accountability, etc.

Question 5

- (a) 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. Why God gave miracles to his chosen prophets was a **Part (b)** question, but did not mean that the candidate had to focus the **Part (a)** response exclusively on the miracles some prophets were given.
- (b) This was well answered, but some candidates who wrote in depth about the miracles of prophets in **part (a)** tended to repeat themselves.

ISLAMIYAT

Paper 0493/23
Paper 2

Key messages

Most candidates were well prepared for the examination. Candidates achieved well where they were able to read the question carefully and respond to the specific focus being asked about. Less focused answers tended to include a lot of generalisations, sometimes not relevant, and were not able to focus on what was being asked by the question.

General comments

It was important to spend the appropriate time on each question, some candidates rushed their part (a) answers and seemed to spend longer on part (b) which attracts less marks overall. In part (a) answers candidates who achieved the higher marks were able to distinguish between what the question was specifically asking and simply giving all they know on that topic. Part (b) answers which showed evaluation and reasoning achieved well.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Well structured responses were seen for the teachings given in the Hadiths for **part (a)**. Good responses were able to express the teachings given in the first Hadith rather than repeating what was given in the translation.
- (b) This was answered well by most candidates. Some responses contained repetition on the teachings given in **part (a)** which meant that candidates did not always focus on the specifics of the question.

Question 2

- (a) This question asked candidates to give an account of the checks made on the *isnad* and *matn* of Hadiths. The majority of the candidates were able to give a good account of the checks made on the narrators and the text. Where examples were offered of how the narrators collected the Hadiths which showed their upright character and the strict measures that were placed on Hadith collection, the examples were taken as development of the answer.
- (b) Evaluative responses were needed for this part of the answer in which candidates needed to say why in their opinion the checks were important to confirm the authenticity of Hadiths. A range of responses could be given e.g. they help in classification of Hadiths and making Islamic law or create unity in the *ummah* etc. The point/s made needed to be discussed in order to achieve well.

Question 3

- (a) A two part answer was needed in response to this question, (i) giving the reasons for the unrest against Uthman and (ii) an account of the rebellion in Madina that led to his martyrdom. Some candidates for the first part gave good reasons for the unrest but were unsure about the events of the rebellion. The best responses contained details such as the correct names of the key rebels, names of the garrison cities where the three rebel columns set off from, the response of the inner council of Companions etc... Where the details were given accurately the candidates were able to achieve well.
- (b) Candidates who responded well to this question were able to give their own views and say what lessons the principles and martyrdom held for present times. Some said that though 'Umar understood the threat made by Abu Lulu, he did not increase his security or shy away from fulfilling his duties and that modern day rulers could show the same faith in *Qadr* and the will of God and fearlessly lead their community/country. Less good responses tended to make a point but not discuss it.

Question 4

- (a) Some responses did not have sufficient detail about when the opportune moments are for acceptance of prayers. The most popular time written about by candidates was in *sujood* and *tahajud*. These were correct but more detail was required. Some good points were made and written about in benefits of prayer (*du'a*) but quite a few answers were too limited to achieve well.
- (b) Well reasoned answers were given for this part question. The best responses were able to explain and present a view and discuss it, with reference to examples.

Question 5

- (a) In this answer a lot of responses focused on how the month of Ramadan should be spent but not on how it is observed. Some candidates only wrote very briefly about *suhoor* and *niyat*. The best responses were able to respond to both parts of the question and provide a well-balanced answer.
- (b) Most candidates were able to provide good evaluative responses to this question.