

Candidate Style Answers

GCSE Religious Studies A

OCR GCSE in Religious Studies: J620

Unit: B577 (Islam)

These candidate style answers are designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Religious Studies A specification for teaching from September 2009.

GCSE Religious Studies A

J620 B577 Islam 1 (Beliefs, Special Days, Divisions, Interpretations)

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE specifications and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Qualifications Manager, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a “good” or “excellent” response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded “medium” or “high” to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

| 1(e) 'You don't have to keep all of the Five Pillars to be a good Muslim.' Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Islam in your answer. (12) | |
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| <i>Candidate style answer</i> | <i>Examiners commentary</i> |
| <p><i>Most Muslims would say that this is just not true. The 5 Pillars are the foundation of Islam, supporting the religion like pillars hold up a building. Allah gave each one of the pillars to the people through Muhammad (pbuh) and therefore they are regarded as important, showing a Muslim's dedication to God and the Ummah. Each pillar in turn makes the Muslim focus on Allah and brings the community together.</i></p> <p><i>I agree with this view because if you belong to a religion you don't pick and choose your favourite bits. You should follow all the rules and practices</i></p> | <p>High Level Response</p> <p>This is a good response addressing the question and linking it to Islam from the outset. A first view is given with an argument and evidence in support of it which is then developed/discussed showing deeper understanding of the significance of the issue, i.e. how keeping the pillars brings them close to Allah and each other.</p> <p>The candidate then goes on to offer their own thoughts on this view, offering a reason for why they agree with it.</p> <p>Another view (opposing) is then offered – note the link “On the other hand”.</p> |

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| <p><i>because if they have been given by God they are important.</i></p> <p><i>On the other hand there may be some Muslims who agree with the statement. The reason they might agree is because there are some pillars that you do not have to follow if you are unable to do so. You may not be able to go on Hajj because you are unwell or cannot afford it. You might not be able to fast because of your age or health and you may be too poor to give Zakah. Some Muslims find it hard to pray 5 times a day but if they genuinely can't keep one or more of the pillars Allah understands. Allah gave the rule "only if you can afford it and are fit enough".</i></p> <p><i>I can see therefore why some Muslims would say you can still be a good Muslim without completing all the pillars. I think the important thing is what your intention is. Muslims believe that it is your intention to do it if you could that counts with Allah. However, I still think that most Muslims would only count themselves as true Muslims if they had made every effort to complete all the pillars to their best ability.</i></p> | <p>Relevant arguments are offered in support of this view, once again developed with examples to show deeper knowledge and understanding of the issue.</p> <p>Personal engagement with the argument is shown in the final paragraph. There is appropriate comment about the view and relevant evidence/argument is offered in support of it.</p> <p>Use of Muslim terminology is accurate and appropriate, and the written communication is good.</p> |
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| <p>1e) 'You don't have to keep all of the Five Pillars to be a good Muslim.' Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Islam in your answer. (12)</p> | |
| <p><i>Candidate style answer</i></p> <p><i>I agree cos you cant always do the pillars if you go to work and you family needs to get the money for food so god will not punish you if you have not done your pillars. sometimes you can do extra praying when you get home at night and god is happy with you doing it.</i></p> <p><i>there are 5 pillars and you must do them if you are a muslim. You must wash before you pray and have a prayer mat. the 5 pillars hold up Islam like a building and are very important to the religion. I think one of the pillars is about you mustnt eat and drink when it is daytime and this is important to</i></p> | <p><i>Examiner's commentary</i></p> <p>Medium Level Response</p> <p>This is a medium level response towards the lower end of the band because it shows a limited understanding of the question.</p> <p>Is the candidate confusing pillars with prayers?</p> <p>A personal viewpoint is offered with an attempt at supporting it with an argument. The argument does contain an element of implicit understanding in it (God is compassionate and doesn't punish non performance of ritual if there is a genuine reason) but it is vague and not really developed. The candidate could say more about which pillars are not compulsory or mention that Allah is more interested in the good intentions of the believer than in the rigid performance of rituals.</p> <p>There is some relevant comment/information</p> |

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| <p><i>show you can give things up for allah</i></p> <p><i>On the other hand some people will say you must pray 5 times a day because you cant be a muslim if you don't follow the rules..</i></p> | <p>about the 5 pillars but it is not used to make appropriate judgements about the statement. To improve: the answer could explain why some people are exempt from the pillars.</p> <p>The final paragraph might look like another viewpoint but the argument is about prayer rather than the 5 pillars and it is not developed to show why it is a valid argument/reason in the context of this question.</p> <p>Written communication is hampered by some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar</p> |
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