GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2017

AS (NEW)
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
COMPONENT 1 - OPTION B
THE STUDY OF THE RELIGION ISLAM
B120UB0-1

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INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2017 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

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Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- "Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant points should be credited."
- "This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives."

Rules for Marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.

2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.

3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

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If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a ‘best fit’ approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content. Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners’ marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner. When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

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AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	**Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions** 25 marks Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including: - religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching - influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies - cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice - approaches to the study of religion and belief.
5	**21-25 marks** • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**16-20 marks** • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**11-15 marks** • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**6-10 marks** • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-5 marks** • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. **N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'**
0	• No relevant information.

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Band	**Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions** *25 marks* *Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.*
5	**21-25 marks** • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	**16-20 marks** • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	**11-15 marks** • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	**6-10 marks** • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	**1-5 marks** • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	• No relevant analysis or evaluation.

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Option B: An Introduction to the Study of Islam

MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic band descriptors provided.

Section A

1. (a) Explain **three** of the five categories of action that guide Muslim living.

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

Candidates can explain, with examples to support their explanations any **three** from the following five categories:

- **Wajib or fard (obligatory):** Actions that are necessary to comply with, e.g. observing 5 pillars, eating halal food, maintaining a high standard of personal hygiene, not allowing debt, and community obligations. Fard actions are mainly individual but the last one is collective. Community responsibilities include the performance of funeral prayers. Fard actions are binding and are all in the Qur'an and in the actions of Muhammad. They are rewarded when followed, whereas to neglect fard acts would mean punishment.
- **Mustahabb (preferred, commendable):** actions that are seen as noble. In Muslim life this involves the following, male circumcision, extra prayers, visiting friends and family, a tidy room, correct funeral rites, marriage, looking after parents.
- **Halal/mubah (permissible):** In Muslim life this involves the following areas: anything that is not in the other categories and covers freedom of personal choice and preference. Mubah is synonymous with the more popular use of halal to describe this category. Halal means 'blessed', or divinely allowed. Mubah or halal acts are neutral; there is no reward for acting within this category, nor any risk of sin or punishment.
- **Makruh (discouraged, reprehensible)** are seen as bad actions although not forbidden. In Muslim life this involves the following areas, urinating in stagnant water, sleeping late in the morning, certain rules during prayer e.g. cannot play with clothing or body, move head left or right or crack fingers, breathing into a beaker, abortion. No set punishment for such actions but they are seen as unvirtuous and unIslamic.
- **Haram (absolutely forbidden):** In Muslim life this involves following areas: drinking alcohol, eating pork, killing innocents, adultery, acts of homosexuality, shirk, euthanasia.

Candidates may explain each in turn **or** include the three within a general discussion of the role of the categories within Islamic teaching.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

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1. (b) 'The five categories are a clear guide for Muslim living today.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

The five categories are intended to support Muslim living but the issue here is whether or not they are 'a clear guide'.

- Categories make it simple for Muslims to follow their daily life without constantly having to refer to the full body of Islamic teaching.
- Some categories are very clear, e.g. fard and haram highlight crucial information.
- Viewing them as rigid laws can be the cause of confusion and a lack of clarity. For example, the coffee debate illustrates this fact well where in the 16th and 17th centuries in Makkah, and in other places such as Cairo, coffee drinking was acceptable; however, concerned with the possible behaviour of such social gatherings and coffee as an intoxicant, it was prohibited (haram). Later coffee was tentatively re-established as mustabah. This questions the stability of the categories.
- The fact they were developed in the first place highlights confusion; they are a stage ahead of a state of confusion and a move towards clarity. If they are applied thoughtfully today they may be seen as very useful as a guide.
- Some categories are unclear because there are also some modern medical issues that are not dealt with by the five categories, e.g. matters of bioethics, arguments about homosexuality within Islam.
- It is the example of Muhammad's sunna that should be the most useful guide primarily.
- Confusion when behaviour incorporates more than one category - there is a principle when one action devalues another it can become haram when in itself it is not, e.g. conducting business during Friday prayers. A neutral act can become meritorious depending upon intention.
  To see the five categories as a 'whole' is illogical; assuming some are clearer than others seems to devalue the categories. Indeed, it appears to be that their use in the pursuit of clarity is the real purpose for developing them so that they are a clear guide.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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2. (a) Examine the different types of giving in Islam. **[AO1 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

There are three recognised types of giving in Islam. Candidates should be able to recognise them and explain them, although not necessarily in equal depth.

- **Sadaqat**
  Giving in excess of zakat and freely from one's own heart. Sadaqat today has come to mean any kind of voluntary giving in the broadest sense. Encouraged as an act that brings merit and spiritual benefit when practised on a regular basis, incurring divine favour and an investment in one's future in preparation for the afterlife.
- **Zakat**
  Zakat is an act that 'purifies', defined as 'giving for the sake of purification' and based on Sura 9:103. Zakat is seen as the spending referred to in the fourth pillar of Islamic teachings. Zakat requires 2.5 percent of an individual's wealth and assets based on an annual average. There are certain exceptions for the poor. It stems from a time of trade and a time when currency was not simply coin but today, money is the most common form of zakat. Land and goods offerings still persist in certain parts of the world. Muslim Aid identifies it is the category of the 'poor and needy' that who might receive zakat; there are specific guidelines based upon Qur'anic teaching.
- **Khums**
  Khums originated with war booty during Muhammad's time, twenty per cent of which went to Muhammad and his family. Khums means 'a fifth'. Not really practised widely after the death of Muhammad, it has become an important means of financial support in Shi'ism for the leaders who coordinate its distribution. Khums is much broader than zakat in that it is more specifically defined than just surplus income. It covers all sorts of earnings, e,g. things such as profits from land investments, riches from war and discovered treasure. Like zakat, it is calculated after basic needs are met and covers all business investments, trading, agriculture, savings and earnings, inheritance and gifts.

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2. (b) 'The main reason for giving in Islam is to support the poor.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

There are different reasons for giving but the issue here is whether or not 'support for the poor' is the main reason. Candidates may use some of the lines of reasoning below to support their argument.

- Islam has always had a major concern with equality and concern for those in need. Originating from the time of Muhammad his radical social teachings expressed a concern for orphans, widows and the poor.
- Muhammad gave to the poor in establishing the pillar of almsgiving. This is compulsory and also the bare minimum. Extra giving is both encouraged and commended.
- Concern for the poor is certainly an important aspect of Islam; it runs through four of the five practices in that after fasting the festival of Id-ul-Fitr remembers the poor, after Hajj the festival of Id-ul-Adha gives food to the poor and prayers for the poor.
- It appears to be a major focus of the teachings of Muhammad.
- Establishment of many Muslim charities with a clear emphasis on the poor, for example, Muslim Aid, Islamic Relief, Muslim Hands, and the Ummah Welfare Trust demonstrate that giving seems to be focused on the poor.
- Argument based upon the reasoning that it is 'obedience' that is the main reason due to a Muslim being one who submits; submission to the one God Allah and recognition of Muhammad as seal of the prophets.
- Islam, following Muhammad's example, has concern for any social injustice, e.g. Muhammad did much for the status of women and orphans, the neglected in society, and this can be applied today including giving help to the abused and those who are in need of medical treatment and not just the poor.
- There are spiritual benefits to giving for individuals and communities involved: giving is a demonstration of Allah's compassion; it encourages personal sacrifice and a concern for others.
- Concern for the poor may be the main reason for giving but not the only one. The main reason does not mean it is the priority and giving should always extend beyond the poor.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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Section B

3. (a) Outline the different ways in which the Qur'an is used and treated by Muslims. **[AO1 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

The emphasis on the question is different ways so there should be several 'ways' outlined and, where appropriate, exemplified.

- Its treatment and use reflects the fact that it is the actual words of Allah.
- The Qur'an is both treated and respected in daily life; this demonstrates it is revered, e.g. a person has to be physically and spiritually pure before handling it.
- The role of the Qur'an in the daily life of a Muslim is the focal point of the Islamic faith.
- The Quran is used for worship and prayer by both individual Muslims and the community.
- For legal and social guidance it presents Muslims with a guide to living. In everyday life reference to teaching to implement the Sharia law. It is referred to for every aspect of life such as religious instruction, family guidance, legal rulings and social behaviour.
- Used at rites of passage, to link procedure to faith.
- At fasting it is read through and is a focus for worship for both the individual and the community.
- The Qur'an is used for spiritual inspiration. It is used in worship and daily prayer as a means to come closer to God. There are specific recitations and readings at key times and at key religious events throughout the year such as Ramadan and Eid.
- In public prayer verses are repeated to focus on Allah.
- Moral guidance. It is used as a basis of moral conduct, e.g. the five categories of ethical action have been extracted from the principles established in the Qur'an.
- Used as a key reference point for religious, social, moral, political and historical issues; indeed, in the Academy it is the one source of investigation.
- It is studied at madrassah.
- If Arabic is not understood, to be able to recite the Qur'an in Arabic still has religious merit.
- Muslims remember the first event of the revelation during Ramadan on the night of power (Lailat Al-Qadar); the whole focus of Ramadan, Eid and the accompanying celebrations.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

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3. (b) 'The message of the Qur'an can never be translated with accuracy.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

The Qur'an is held to be eternally relevant as the actual words of Allah; however, the issue here is whether or not any value or relevance is 'lost in translation'. Candidates may use some of the lines of reasoning below to support their argument.

- The Qur'an is the final, uncorrupted message from God to humanity. Emphasis and insistence within Islamic theology that the actual words have divine characteristics as the actual words of God spoken. Any translation could lose some meaning and distortion is possible.
- The Qur'an has a unique intermediary spiritually phonic level that is the actual Arabic words of Qur'an. It is from this that arises the Islamic teaching of i'jaz ('inimitability'), that the Qur'an has no equal and cannot be compared or imitated. Translation clearly threatens i'jaz.
- Interpretation is not always a bad thing and can be good, especially when one considers the application of the meaning of the Qur'an and this opens up the opportunity for scholarly debate and a deeper understanding of the sacred text.
- As translation takes place, decisions are made on which words to use. This is where interpretation enters the process and allows for variant translations of the Qur'an today. This could be seen as a good thing and definitely relevant for the millions of Muslims unable to read Arabic.
- To understand the true nature of Islam and the revelation from God, one has to study the original Arabic. In support of this is the fact that translations may allow errors.
- Arabic poetry in the Qur'an; its unparalleled beauty and power, its inspirational qualities and sense of great authority and wisdom.
- The Qur'an can have several meanings on a spiritual level and still be considered the actual words of Allah and so translation does not distort but only serve to enrich understanding of Muslim life.
- The recitation of the Qur'an itself is seen to have a spiritual authority and powerful impact.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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4. **(a)** Explain what Islam teaches about Akhirah (Day of Final Judgement).

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

Candidates may answer in breadth or in depth.

- Akhirah in Arabic means 'hereafter' or 'afterlife'; often used in the Qur'an within the context of the Day of Final Judgement.
- Akhirah is also related to the teaching about the Mahdi or 'guided one' that appears in both Shi'a and Sunni traditions. The Mahdi will appear for several years (depending on tradition) before the final day.
- Afterlife begins for all Muslims with the Day of Final Judgement.
- The day itself is beyond time as we know it and lasts much longer in real terms.
- On the Day of Final Judgement the mu'min (believers) will be saved but the kafir (unbelievers) will perish in Hell.
- The day begins with Israfil blowing his trumpet to awaken the dead and all people are gathered together on a plain. Allah will reconstruct decomposed bodies to the details of fingerprints.
- Individuals are selected and organised into groups identified by their sins.
- Following interrogation and judgement by Allah in accordance with the introduction of the two 'recording angels', Raqib and Atid, final judgement is announced.
- Those destined for Heaven access the final obstacle and cross a bridge to paradise, which is as thin as a human hair and as sharp as a blade, beneath which lay the fires of Hell.
- Hell is like a bottomless pit with a stream of boiling water. It is full of hypocrites, polytheists, sinners, tyrants, immoral peoples, arrogant peoples. People are chained and those sent to Hell are made deaf, dumb and blinded, inhabitants of Hell are guarded by 19 fierce angels and a furnace, fanned by winds, is constantly burning.
- Those sent to Heaven are greeted on arrival, together with spouse, by the 'Guardians of Paradise'. Heaven is a place where death does not exist, it has every fruit a human desires with beautiful gardens with fountains and rivers of milk, wine and honey.

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4. (b) 'Muslims should live in constant fear of Final Judgement.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

The teachings in Islam about the afterlife and the Day of Final Judgement evoke both inspiration and aspiration to receive reward, but also the underlying fear of punishment. The issue here is which element of the teaching is the driving force for a Muslim in daily life. Candidates may use some of the lines of reasoning below to support their argument.

- Muslims may go as far as to say that it is imperative to live in fear of Final Judgement as it is a key Muslim belief.
- Awareness of Final Judgement and punishment and living in constant fear of this will ensure good Muslim behaviour.
- One fundamental aspect of the Day of Final Judgement is the handing over of the book of deeds, a record taken during an individual's life by two angels where every thought, intention and action has been noted.
- It is the teachings about the terrors of Hell following Final Judgement that have the potential to instill constant fear and ensure good behaviour.
- Being mindful of Final Judgement to ensure good behaviour could mean an unhealthy and unbalanced spiritual life through focus on the negative aspects of Islam only.
- A direct impact upon their actions in life then it should be to inspire positive behaviour and obedience to Allah. To promote the mercy of Allah and Heaven for faithful believers; in demonstating the will of Allah by living a moral life, then one does not have to fear judgement.
- There is more of a focus in Islam on the importance of the five pillars, the ummah, going to mosque, and good moral character in this life, and these should be the primary focus.
- Promoting teachings about the Day of Final Judgement could also motivate others who do not believe in converting to Islam. This purpose of 'warning', then, would be in keeping with the message that Muhammad brought to the Makkans.
- There are Muslims that may rationalise their beliefs to a more symbolic interpretation of the Day of Final Judgement; the importance for such Muslims lies not in the literal beliefs, but more in the implications of the teachings: live a good life and then you will not have to fear judgement.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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5. **(a)** 'Explain the different ways in which Ashura is observed within Islam.

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

Candidates should focus their answers on why Ashura is commemorated/observed and how Ashura is commemorated/observed.

Why it is commemorated/observed

- Ashura is celebrated on the tenth day of Muharram. It is remembered by ***all Muslims*** and celebrated worldwide. For Sunni Muslims it was originally a day of fasting and obligatory.
- It was Muhammad who, first ruled that Ashura should be a day of fasting from dawn to sunset.
- When Muhammad later chose Ramadan as the obligatory month of fasting, Ashura became voluntary and so it remains for Sunni Islam.
- For Sunni Muslims, Ashura commemorates the Exodus led by Moses but it can also commemorate other key events in Islamic history, such as: creation; birthdays of the prophets Adam, Ibrahim and Isa; Nuh stepping onto the earth again after the flood; Ibrahim's test to sacrifice his son; and, Job test and his suffering removed.
- Expectation the Day of Final Judgement will fall on this day.
- Within Shi'a Islam, Ashura has its own significance and forms a major part of religious identity through several unique practices; the deaths of Husayn and Ali are the main focus of events.
- Shi'a Muslims remember the events of the battle of Karbala.
- Ashura is generally not seen as a division between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims.

How it is commemorated/observed

- Main practice for some Sunni Muslims is a fast.
- No other types of worship are required of Sunni Muslims but some may visit and learn from Islamic scholars, perform works of charity, be kind to orphans, show kindness to family and recite prayers.
- Shi'a Muslims do not fast during Ashura. Ashura is of particular importance to the Shi'a population and the centre for major events associated with the festival is the historic city of Karbala in Iraq.
- It is remembered worldwide by Shi'a Muslims.
- Shi'a Muslims hold processions through the streets of Karbala.
- Shi'a Muslims engage in mourning and cut themselves or cover themselves in blood.
- Plays are held (ta'ziyah) that recalls the events of the battle of Karbala.
- Pilgrimages are made to Husayn's tomb.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

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5. (b) 'The practices involved at Ashura clearly express Shi'a identity.'

Evaluate this view. **[AO2 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

Since it is mainly Shi'a Muslims that tend to follow specific practices at Ashura the issue here is whether or not these practices define Shi'a identity. Candidates may use some of the lines of reasoning below to support their argument.

- The focus on suffering and persecution during Ashura in terms of the street procession clearly expresses and accentuates Shi'a identity.
- Shi'a Muslims see themselves as actually taking part in the tragedy and identify themselves with the injustices commemorated.
- The ta'ziyah reminds Shi'a of the fight against the persecution and suffering of worldly political powers. Shi'a Muslims see themselves as under oppression and persecution at times by unsympathetic governments and the ta'ziyah is an expression of the community's cementing of its identity and a mark of the endurance against the odds.
- There are more specific teachings and practices within Shi'a Islam that could be argued to represent Shi'a identity more clearly, such as the strong belief in the special leadership of the Imam or ways in which they practice Islam in their daily lives.
- Ashura reminds Shi'a Muslims of the healing powers of Husayn's death and his attitude of forgiveness for those who had acted unjustly towards him and his family. This gives hope for the Day of Final Judgment for all Muslims. Shi'a Muslims reason that as al-Husayn's martyrdom was believed to have been divinely ordained Ashura becomes a symbol of Allah's mercy and justice for all.
- Sunni Muslims do not acknowledge Ashura in the same way as Shi'a but remember births of prophets, the liberating step that Nuh took from the ark, and the triumph of Musa leading the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery. The practice that emerges from this is simply voluntary fasting. This is another reason that not all practices involved at Ahura express Shi'a identity.
- Shi'a Islam has very little difference to Sunni Islam when considered overall and that rather than expressing specific identity it emphasizes one aspect that accentuates their identity.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised

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