



RS.IB14 Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets and the Finality of Risalah

AQA 8062 • Calculators not allowed • about 50 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

- 1** This question checks key vocabulary about Muhammad's status in Islam and the Nabi/Rasul distinction, in the context of Khatm an-Nubuwwah.
- (a) State what is meant by 'Khatm an-Nubuwwah' as used in Muslim belief about Muhammad. (1)
- (b) State what is meant by the Arabic term Nabi in Islamic teaching. (1)
- (c) State what is meant by the Arabic term Rasul in Islamic teaching. (1)
- (d) Give one reason why some figures in Islam are called Rasul rather than Nabi. (1)
- (e) Give one example of a prophet in Islam who is universally described as a Rasul rather than only a Nabi. (1)

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

- 2** Explain two reasons why Muslims believe Muhammad is the final prophet, referring to Islamic belief in your answer.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 Explain two differences between a Nabi and a Rasul, using Islamic teaching in your answer.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Explain two ways the phrase 'Seal of the Prophets' in Surah 33:40 is used as evidence that no prophet will come after Muhammad. Refer to this sacred writing in your answer and give its reference.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 Give three reasons why the finality of Muhammad's prophethood is important for most Muslim communities today.

(Total for Question 5 is 3 marks)

6 Explain the importance of the belief that Muhammad is the final prophet for a Muslim's understanding of scripture and law.

(Total for Question 6 is 6 marks)

- 7** Explain two ways belief in Muhammad's finality might affect the daily religious practice of a Muslim individual.

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

- 8** State two types of evidence, other than Surah 33:40, that Muslims use to support Muhammad's finality, and briefly explain each.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

- 9** Give three ways the idea that Muhammad is the last prophet helps maintain unity within the global Muslim community.

(Total for Question 9 is 3 marks)

- 10** Explain two contrasting Islamic responses to modern movements or individuals who claim new revelation after Muhammad. Refer to a source of wisdom or authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 10 is 5 marks)

- 11** Explain two reasons some Muslims place strong emphasis on studying Hadith collections when defending the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.

(Total for Question 11 is 4 marks)

- 12** Explain the significance of distinguishing between Nabi and Rasul for understanding the role of Muhammad in Islam.

(Total for Question 12 is 6 marks)

- 13** Evaluate the statement, 'Muhammad's finality as the Seal of the Prophets is the most important quality of his prophethood.' In your answer you should give reasoned arguments to support this statement, give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view, refer to religious arguments, and reach a justified conclusion.

(Total for Question 13 is 15 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.IB14 Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets and the Finality of Risalah

Question 1

- (a) **B1** the belief that Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets, meaning no prophet will come after him, oe
- **(a) Answer: The belief that Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets, meaning no prophet will come after him.**
- (b) **B1** a prophet who receives revelation from Allah, often for personal guidance or for a particular community, oe
- **(b) Answer: A prophet who receives revelation from Allah, often for personal guidance or for a particular community.**
- (c) **B1** a messenger sent with a revealed scripture or law to deliver guidance to a wider community, oe
- **(c) Answer: A messenger sent with a revealed scripture or law to deliver guidance to a wider community.**
- (d) **B1** because they were given a scripture or a universal message to deliver, oe
- **(d) Answer: Because they were given a scripture or a universal message to deliver.**
- (e) **B1** Muhammad or Musa or Isa, oe
- **(e) Answer: Muhammad (other acceptable answers: Musa, Isa).**

Question 2

- **B1** point 1: Muslims cite the Quranic statement that Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets, indicating finality, oe
- **B1** development: this is based on Surah 33:40 which explicitly calls Muhammad khatim al-nabiyyin, providing scriptural authority, oe
- **B1** point 2: the completion of guidance in the Quran and the finality of the sharia given through Muhammad, oe
- **B1** development: Muslims believe the Quran is the final revealed scripture and Muhammad completed the message sent through earlier prophets, oe
- **Answer: E.g. Surah 33:40 calls Muhammad the Seal of the Prophets, and Muslims believe the Quran is the final scripture completing previous revelation.**

Question 3

- **B1** point 1: a Rasul is sent with a new scripture or law and a universal message, whereas a Nabi may receive revelation without a new scripture, oe
- **B1** development: example, Musa and Isa are Rasul associated with Torah and Injil, while some Nabi give guidance but not a new scripture, oe
- **B1** point 2: a Rasul has a specific mission to a people or nation, while a Nabi may have a more limited role, oe
- **B1** development: Rasul are often named in the Quran as bringing a message to a whole community, whereas some prophets are primarily for a smaller group, oe
- **Answer: E.g. Rasul bring a new scripture or law and have a broad mission; Nabi may receive revelation without bringing a new scripture and may serve a narrower role.**

Question 4

- **B1** point 1: Muslims read the phrase as a literal statement of finality, that Muhammad completes prophethood, oe
- **B1** development: this is linked to Surah 33:40, which calls him khatim al-nabiyyin, taken as a clear scriptural end to new prophets, oe
- **B1** point 2: the phrase is used to show continuity and completion with earlier prophets rather than replacement, oe
- **B1** development: Muslims argue that the Quran confirms and preserves earlier revelation so there is no need for a further prophet to correct or add to it, oe
- **B1** reference: explicit mention of Surah 33:40 is made correctly, oe
- **Answer: E.g. Surah 33:40 is taken literally to mean finality of prophethood; it also supports the idea that Muhammad completes earlier revelation so no further prophet is needed, reference: Surah 33:40.**

Question 5

- **B1** it preserves the authority of the Quran as complete guidance, oe
- **B1** it upholds the centrality of the Sunnah and Hadith as sources of guidance linked to Muhammad, oe
- **B1** it prevents claims of later prophets that might split the community, maintaining unity, oe
- **Answer: Any three: preserves the Quran's authority; upholds the Sunnah and Hadith linked to Muhammad; prevents later prophetic claims and so supports unity.**

Question 6

- **Level 3** (5-6): A detailed, well-organised answer that explains several ways finality affects understanding of scripture and law, with accurate use of Islamic concepts and clear links between reasons.
- **Level 2** (3-4): An answer that explains some ways finality affects understanding of scripture and law, with some relevant supporting detail, though links may be thin.
- **Level 1** (1-2): Limited content with one or two relevant points about the effect of finality on scripture and law, little development.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Belief in finality supports the idea that the Quran is the complete and preserved revelation, so Muslims treat it as the ultimate legal and moral source.
 - It gives the Sunnah and Hadith authority as explanations of Muhammad's practice implementing the Quranic guidance, so law is derived from both sources.
 - If no prophet can come after Muhammad, new teachings must be interpreted within the framework of what Muhammad taught, limiting innovation in sharia.
 - Finality helps maintain unity and a common reference point for interpretation across Muslim communities, though different schools may still disagree on detail.
 - Some Muslims see finality as providing stability in law and morality in changing times, while others debate how to apply fixed texts to new situations.

Question 7

- **B1** point 1: a Muslim may follow the Sunnah closely because Muhammad is seen as the final model for behaviour, oe
- **B1** development: this could affect worship, dress, family life and ethical choices that follow prophetic example, oe
- **B1** point 2: a Muslim may treat the Quran as the final authority, using it to resolve doubts instead of expecting new revelation, oe
- **B1** development: this can lead to seeking guidance from scholars and established schools of law rather than awaiting new prophetic instruction, oe
- **Answer: E.g. following the Sunnah as the final behavioural model; treating the Quran as the final authority and turning to scholars for interpretation.**

Question 8

- **B1** evidence 1: Hadith literature that describes Muhammad as the last prophet, oe
- **B1** explain 1: Hadith record sayings and practices where companions refer to finality, supporting Quranic reading, oe
- **B1** evidence 2: the belief that the Quran completes earlier scriptures, oe
- **B1** explain 2: if the Quran is complete and preserved, Muslims argue there is no need for further prophetic correction, oe
- **Answer: Hadith statements supporting finality, and the doctrinal idea that the Quran completes earlier revelations, each briefly explained.**

Question 9

- **B1** provides a single, shared reference point in scripture and prophetic example, oe
- **B1** discourages rival prophetic claims that could split communities, oe
- **B1** encourages common legal and moral frameworks derived from Quran and Sunnah, oe
- **Answer: Any three: shared reference point; discourages rival prophetic claims; encourages common legal and moral frameworks.**

Question 10

- **B1** response 1: the mainstream Muslim view rejects such claims and labels them false because Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets, oe
- **B1** development: this rejection is supported by Surah 33:40 and by Hadith that affirm finality, oe
- **B1** response 2: a small number of groups accept a later figure as a prophet or reformer and reinterpret finality, oe
- **B1** development: such groups often appeal to different readings of scripture or to extra-Quranic claims, and face opposition from mainstream scholars, oe
- **B1** reference: a correct reference to a sacred text or Hadith is made, oe
- **Answer: Contrast: mainstream rejection based on Surah 33:40 and Hadith versus minority groups who reinterpret finality or accept a later claimant, with reference to scripture or Hadith.**

Question 11

- **B1** point 1: Hadith provide sayings and explanations of Muhammad which clarify Quranic phrases like Seal of the Prophets, oe
- **B1** development: scholars use authenticated Hadith to show how companions and early Muslims understood finality, oe
- **B1** point 2: Hadith help establish the Prophet's practical example so claims of later revelation can be compared and tested, oe
- **B1** development: the Hadith record allows jurists to judge whether new teachings fit the prophetic example, reinforcing rejection of false claims, oe
- **Answer: E.g. Hadith clarify the meaning of Quranic phrases and show early Muslim understanding; Hadith allow comparison of later claims with the prophetic example.**

Question 12

- **Level 3** (5-6): A well-developed response that explains clearly how the Nabi/Rasul distinction shapes understanding of Muhammad's role, with accurate examples and logical links.
- **Level 2** (3-4): An answer that explains some relevant ways the distinction affects understanding of Muhammad, with limited development or examples.
- **Level 1** (1-2): Limited points about the distinction with little explanation or exemplification.
- **Indicative content:**
 - As Rasul Muhammad is seen as the bearer of a final revelation and law, so he has authority to teach and the community treats his teachings as normative.
 - Understanding Muhammad as Rasul rather than only Nabi explains why his words and actions in the Sunnah influence legal and moral rulings beyond private inspiration.
 - The distinction helps explain why Muslims accept the Quran as universal guidance and view Muhammad's role as governance of a community under divine law.
 - The Nabi/Rasul distinction also clarifies why some figures in Islamic history are honoured as messengers with scripture while others are respected as prophets without new scripture.
 - Different Islamic groups may emphasise the distinction differently, affecting how they apply the prophetic example to law and theology.

Question 13

- **Level 4** (10-12): A well-structured, well-argued response that evaluates both sides in depth, uses relevant religious argument and evidence accurately, and reaches a justified conclusion.
- **Level 3** (7-9): A balanced response that gives clear arguments for and against, with some religious support and a conclusion, though depth or balance may be limited.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Some attempt to evaluate with basic arguments for and against, limited use of religious evidence, and an undeveloped conclusion.
- **Level 1** (1-3): Simple or brief points with little evaluation and little or no religious evidence or conclusion.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Arguments supporting the statement: finality secures the completeness and authority of the Quran and Sunnah, preventing later false claims and preserving unity; it underpins legal and theological continuity.
 - Religious evidence for supporting view: Surah 33:40 and Hadith are used as scriptural foundations that affirm Muhammad as khatim al-nabiyyin, suggesting finality is central.
 - Arguments against the statement: other qualities of Muhammad may be more important, such as his role as exemplar of moral conduct, his compassion, or his role as a messenger who brought guidance and salvation; these qualities shape daily practice and personal faith.
 - Religious evidence for alternative views: Quranic verses describing Muhammad as an excellent example to believers (for example Surah 33:21) and numerous Hadith emphasising his character and mercy.
 - Consideration of nuance: finality is important for communal identity and authority, while prophetic moral example is crucial for individual piety and ethics, so importance may vary by perspective.
 - Conclusion: a justified judgement weighing communal and individual priorities, showing awareness that both finality and prophetic example are significant and the answer may prioritise one over the other with reasons.