

3.4 ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (314)

In the year 2021, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) was tested in two papers. *Paper 1(314/1)* consisted of six structured essay questions and candidates were required to answer five. The paper tested the *Quran, Hadith/Sunnah, Devotional acts* and *Pillars of Iman*. *Paper 2 (314/2)* also had six structured essay questions of which candidates were required to answer five. This paper tested *Akhlaq, Muamalat, History of Islam and Muslim scholars*. Both Paper 1 (314/1) and Paper 2 (314/2) were marked out of a maximum of 100 marks each and time allocation for each paper was 2 hours and 30 minutes (2½ hours). Each question in the two papers carried a maximum of 20 marks.

The questions in the IRE examination tested candidates:

- Knowledge of the factual materials relevant to each topic in the syllabus.
- Understanding of the meaning and interpretation of each of the topics.
- Ability to express themselves on the basis of evidence and argument.
- Appreciation and evaluation of the materials studied in each topic.
- Ability to respond and apply the religious, moral and social issues raised in each topic.

3.4.1 General Candidates' Performance

The table below shows candidates' performance in IRE at the KCSE level for the last four years.

Table 10: Candidates' Overall Performance in IRE in the last four years

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2018	1		100	34.91	17.33
	2		100	33.56	18.66
	Overall	28,662	200	68.33	34.17
2019	1		100	37.63	20.03
	2		100	28.21	17.34
	Overall	32,685	200	65.79	35.68
2020	1		100	43.58	20.26
	2		100	36.66	19.74
	Overall	32,687	200	80.18	37.69
2021	1		100	43.57	20.13
	2		100	46.79	20.63
	Overall	36,711	200	90.30	38.41

Observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) The candidature increased from **32,687** in 2020 to **36,711** in 2021
- (ii) In the year 2021, candidates' performance improved in Paper two.
- (iii) The overall mean improved from **80.18** in 2020 to **90.30** in 2021

This report analyses the candidates' general performance in the year 2021 KCSE IRE examination papers, paying special attention to the questions where candidate's performance was relatively poor.

An attempt has been made to highlight possible causes of the poor performance. The report also gives samples of expected responses and makes suggestions to the teachers of IRE with the hope of helping them evaluate and improve their teaching methods and approaches with the aim of improving candidate's performance in future.

3.4.2 IRE Paper 1 (314/1)

The mean for IRE Paper 1 (314/1) dropped from **43.58** in 2020 to **43.57** in 2021. The questions in which candidates' performance was relatively poor in the year 2021 KCSE IRE Paper 1 (314/1) examination were: **1 (b)**, **4 (c)** and **5 (b)**.

Question 1(b)

How can Muslims apply the teachings of Surah Al-Asr in their lives?

Weaknesses

Candidates gave the teachings of Surah Al-Asr instead of explaining how they would apply the teachings

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should guide learners on how to answer questions that require high order thinking skills.

Expected Responses

- (i) Muslims must utilise their time properly in beneficial activities that please Allah
- (ii) Muslims must have sincerity of faith in Allah and purity of action. Sincerity in a Muslim will make one secure in all his/her endeavors
- (iii) Muslims must spend their time and life in pursuit of righteousness e.g. performing acts of Ibadah, working, studying for the sake of Allah and human benefit
- (iv) Muslims must stand for the truth in speech and action even if it is against self or those close to them.
- (v) Muslim should encourage one another to be patient in times of calamity/difficulty and help one another in overcoming such adversities.
- (vi) Muslims should seek success here and in the hereafter by leading virtuous lives based on Iman, good-deeds, upholding truth and being patient

Question 4(c)

Discuss the rationale for punishment in Islamic law

Weaknesses

Candidates gave examples of crimes and their punishments

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to teach the sub topic of crime and punishment exhaustively, explaining the justification for punishment not just the types of crimes and their punishments

Expected Responses

- (i) Punishment helps to reduce crime in the society e.g. knowing that you will be given 80 lashes for slander will deter you from committing the offense
- (ii) It provides criminals and wrong doers with an opportunity to reform e.g. a thief will not steal again after their hands are chopped off
- (iii) It acts as a deterrent to those who may be tempted to commit crimes e.g. seeing an adulterer

- stoned to death will deter others from the illicit act
- (iv) Punishment guarantees law and order in the society
 - (v) Ensures that justice prevails in the society by punishing those who are guilty
 - (vi) It builds a deep feeling of abhorrence for transgression against fellow human beings and against Allah in the society
 - (vii) It helps in minimizing disorders and corruption in our society
 - (viii) It helps in reducing the violation of people's rights in the society

Question 5 (b)

In which ways can Zakat promote economic development of a nation?

Weaknesses

Candidates lacked the content to express themselves, they kept on repeating themselves.

Advice to Teachers

Teachers need to expose learners to application questions

Expected Responses

- (i) Zakat helps in poverty alleviation.
- (ii) Eliminates crimes such as theft thus creating security which is conducive for development.
- (iii) Helps in maintaining peace and harmony and good will among citizens which creates a good atmosphere for development.
- (iv) Contributes to economic development as it is a form of tax.
- (v) Promotes equality/brotherhood/unity which are motivating factors for development.
- (vi) Bridges the gap between the rich and poor and raises the standards of living for the poor.
- (vii) Cleanses the soul against greed thus helps in the fight against corruption.
- (viii) Reduces debts.

3.4.3 IRE Paper 2 (314/2)

The paper tested the syllabus adequately and all questions were within the syllabus, the performance improved from a mean of 36.66 in 2020 to 46.79 in 2021. Questions which posed challenges to candidates were 2(b), 5(a) and 6(b)

Question 2(b)

Discuss seven ways through which Muslims can fight against radicalisation and terrorism

Weaknesses

Some candidates gave the effects instead of describing ways of fighting against radicalisation and terrorism

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should expose learners to higher order thinking skills. There is need to train learners on how to answer application questions.

Expected Responses

- (i) Educating Muslim youth on the effects of radicalization and terrorism on our society.
- (ii) Engaging the Muslim youth in productive programmes in the society to avoid idleness.
- (iii) Creating job opportunities for the youth to engage them in what is beneficial to them.
- (iv) Creating periodical awareness programmes on matters concerning radicalized groups and discouraging the youth from joining them.
- (v) Advocating for stiffer punishments for those found guilty of radicalization and terrorism.
- (vi) Disassociating radicalization and terrorism with Islam as it is a misconception that needs to be corrected.
- (vii) By forming peace campaigns where all members of the society are invited regardless of their faiths.
- (viii) Inculcating a sense of patriotism in the youth.
- (ix) Coming up with camps where de-radicalization of those who are already radicalized can be done.
- (x) Lobbying the government to address injustices that may lead to radicalization and acts of terrorism.
- (xi) Sensitizing learners in schools on the effects of radicalization and terrorism
- (xii) Reporting those people who are suspected to be involved in the vices to relevant authorities

Question 5 (a)

Discuss seven factors that influenced the spread of Islam in the interior of Kenya

Weaknesses

Candidates lacked content, some of them gave the factors that influenced the spread of Islam in Northern of Kenya

Advice to Teachers

Teachers should the History of Islam exhaustively and just expose learners to revision questions and answers.

Expected Responses

- (i) The Kenya Uganda railway opened the way for Muslims to access the interior of Kenya to spread Islam.
- (ii) Intermarriage between Muslim traders and the locals facilitated the spread of Islam.
- (iii) Conversion of local rulers, e.g. Nabongo Mumia who encouraged their people to embrace Islam and welcomed Muslim traders to his kingdom.
- (iv) Establishment of trading centres in the interior such as Sultan Hamud, Kibwezi, Nakuru, Kisumu, led to interaction between Muslim traders and locals which led to the spread of Islam.
- (v) Quran teachers who moved with traders as they ventured in to the interior, taught the locals Islam.
- (vi) Building of mosques and madrassas in the interior attracted locals to Islam.
- (vii) Culture of Muslims attracted the locals to Islam.
- (viii) Muslim traders who moved to the interior for trade interacted with the locals and spread Islam.
- (ix) Use of Kiswahili language eased communication between the Muslim traders and and the local people thus facilitating the spread of Islam.

Question 6(b)

Discuss five contributions of Muslims to the political development in Kenya in the Nineteenth Century

Weaknesses

Candidates mixed contributions on political, social and economic development

Advice to Teachers

Teachers to train learners on how to answer analysis questions

Expected Responses

- (i) Muslims participate in the development of the constitution and other laws.
- (ii) They take part in vying for elective positions as governors, senators, members of parliament, members of the county assembly
- (iii) They participate in the election process in Kenya, i.e. they take part in voting.
- (iv) Some Muslims have served as Cabinet secretaries, ambassadors, principal secretaries, etc.
- (v) Muslims participated in the fight for independence of Kenya.
- (vi) Muslims are members of political parties in Kenya.
- (vii) Muslim organizations lobby the government in championing the interest of the Muslims.

Advice to Teachers

- Students should be trained in higher order thinking skills e.g. application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. It is evident from the answers given that majority of I.R.E students are only exposed to questions that require them just to recall answers.
- Teachers should use the recommended text books by K.I.C.D, and not the revision books that have flooded the market, because they tend to have wrong information that misleads the students.
- Teachers require capacity building in the setting of I.R.E examination questions.
- Teachers to teach candidates on how to answer application questions.

Conclusion

- Despite the slight improvement in performance in paper two, there is still need for teachers to change their style of teaching and to train students on how to answer application questions as these form the majority of the questions in these papers.
- Teachers in IRE require in-servicing so as to acquire techniques and BEST practices in the teaching and examining of IRE.
- All teachers handling KCSE candidates need to acquire this feedback report so as to know the weaknesses of the previous candidates and prepare theirs better.
- The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development need to ensure that the IRE course books are accessible to all schools that offer IRE.
- Teachers should strive to teach all topics as stated in the syllabus, not just give students answers to possible examination questions.