

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR MADRASAH EDUCATION



Nurturing Piety by enabling a learning environment that instils
the values of the Quran and the Ahlul Bayt (as)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ
أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ
وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى
الزَّكَاةَ وَالْبُؤْفُونَ بَعْدَهُمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil).

Surah al Baqara (2:177)



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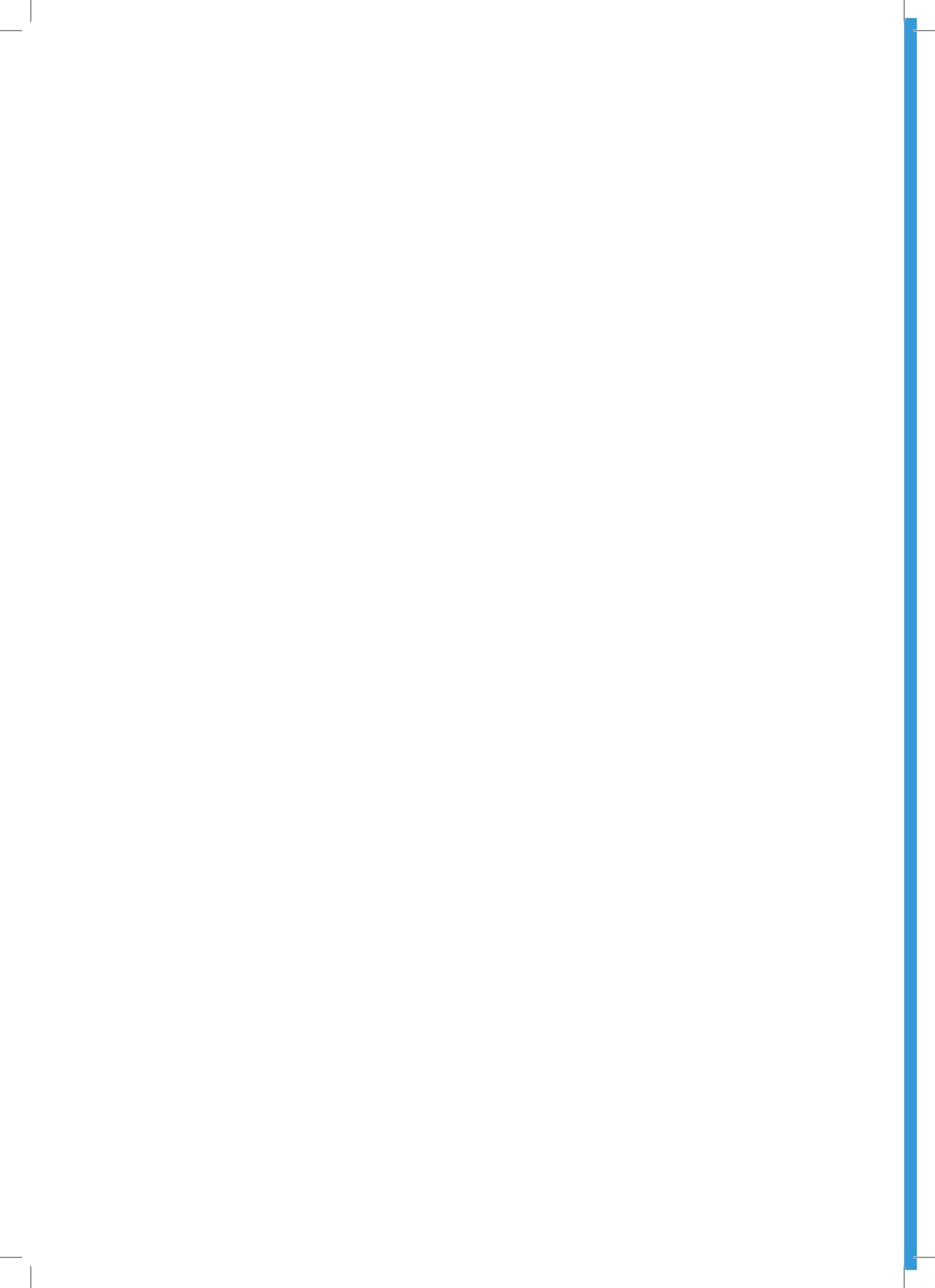
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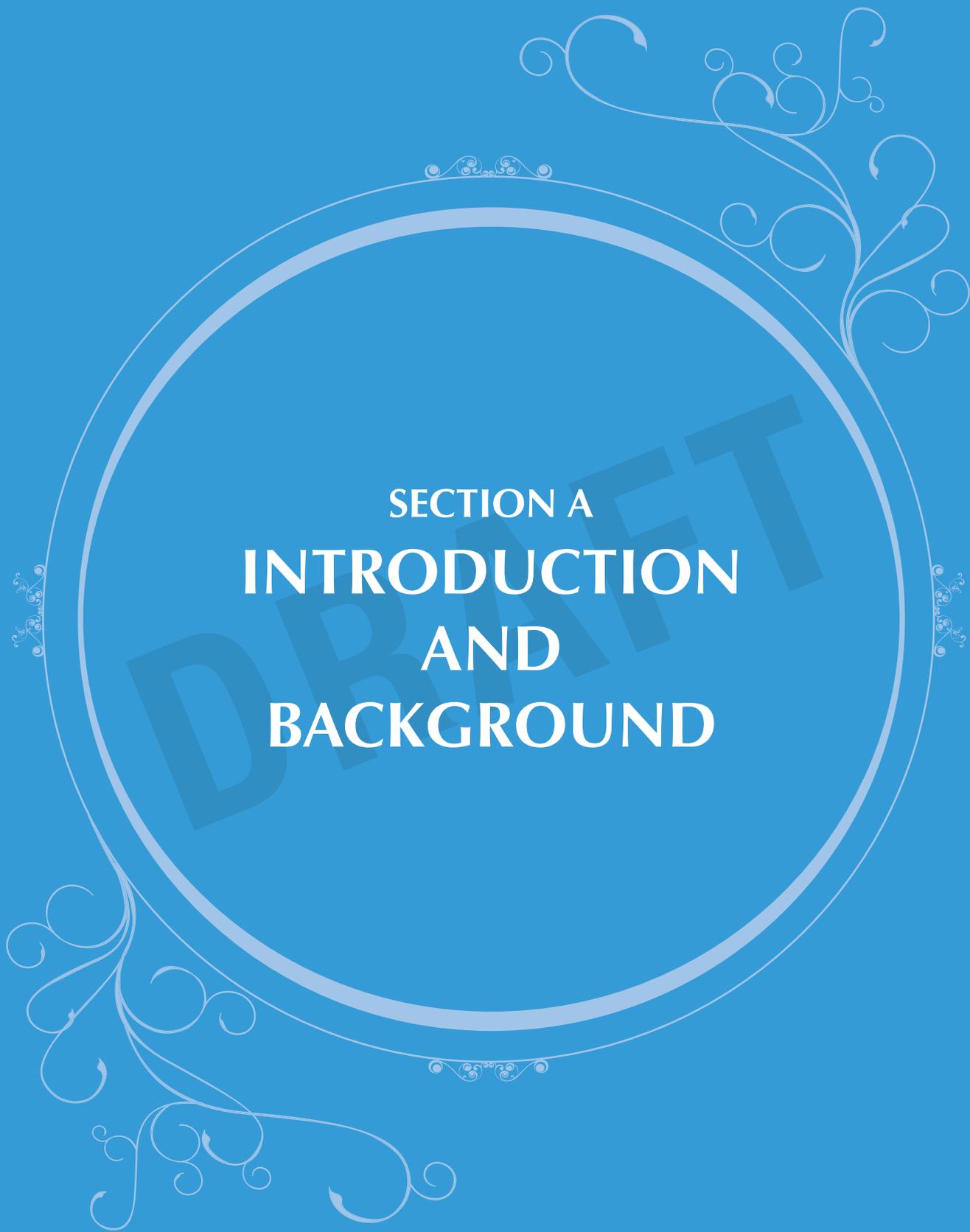
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SECTION A
**INTRODUCTION
AND
BACKGROUND**





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Time and again it becomes necessary for us to re-evaluate the methodology and contents of the teachings at our Madaris in order to meet the ever increasing challenges of the times so that our progeny remain strong in their faith and become good practicing Muslims in keeping with the teachings of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and his Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

Bearing this in mind, in order to have an input from the experienced and dedicated members of the community from all over the world so as to decide upon a way forward to impart the best possible form of religious education, a Madrasah Retreat was held at Dubai in February, 2011 which was attended by over *80 members* of the community representing over *25 madaris* of our international community. After a protracted discussion it was unanimously agreed at the Retreat that the best possible format for imparting religious education be devised. The direction for the way forward was decided upon and the project was named “**Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE)**”.

Whilst evaluating the present contents and methodology at our Madaris in various parts of the world, several questions arose in my mind:

1. Is only KNOWLEDGE sufficient?
2. Can the children who excel in their Madrasah exams necessarily become the good practicing Muslims in their day to day lives?
3. How can the knowledge and information being taught at Madrasah and schools sink into the hearts and minds of the children so that the same become sources of enlightenment and guidance for them in their day to day lives for their betterment in this world and for their salvation in the hereafter?

It became clear that with our teachings in the madaris over the past century, our children and adults have become more knowledgeable than previous generations, but has the level of Taqwa risen at the same pace?

Thus the task for the MCE team became huge - it became obvious that a lot of resources would be required for them to deliver excellence. It is gratifying to note that the sincere thoughts and efforts put in at the Retreat are coming to fruition. The team that was subsequently formed to implement the project has been working tirelessly and has so far put in about 6,000 man hours towards fulfilling the wishes and aspirations of the community. They deserve the best of compliments and I sincerely pray that may Almighty Allah increase their tawfiqat and give them added strength to complete the whole exercise in the shortest possible time. Support, advice and guidance provided by various individuals from other communities as well as our own are very much appreciated with sincere prayers that may Almighty Allah grant Ajr-e-Azeem to them and their families in this world and hereafter – *Ilahi Amen*.

Dr. Asgar Moledina
President
The World Federation of KSI Muslim Communities

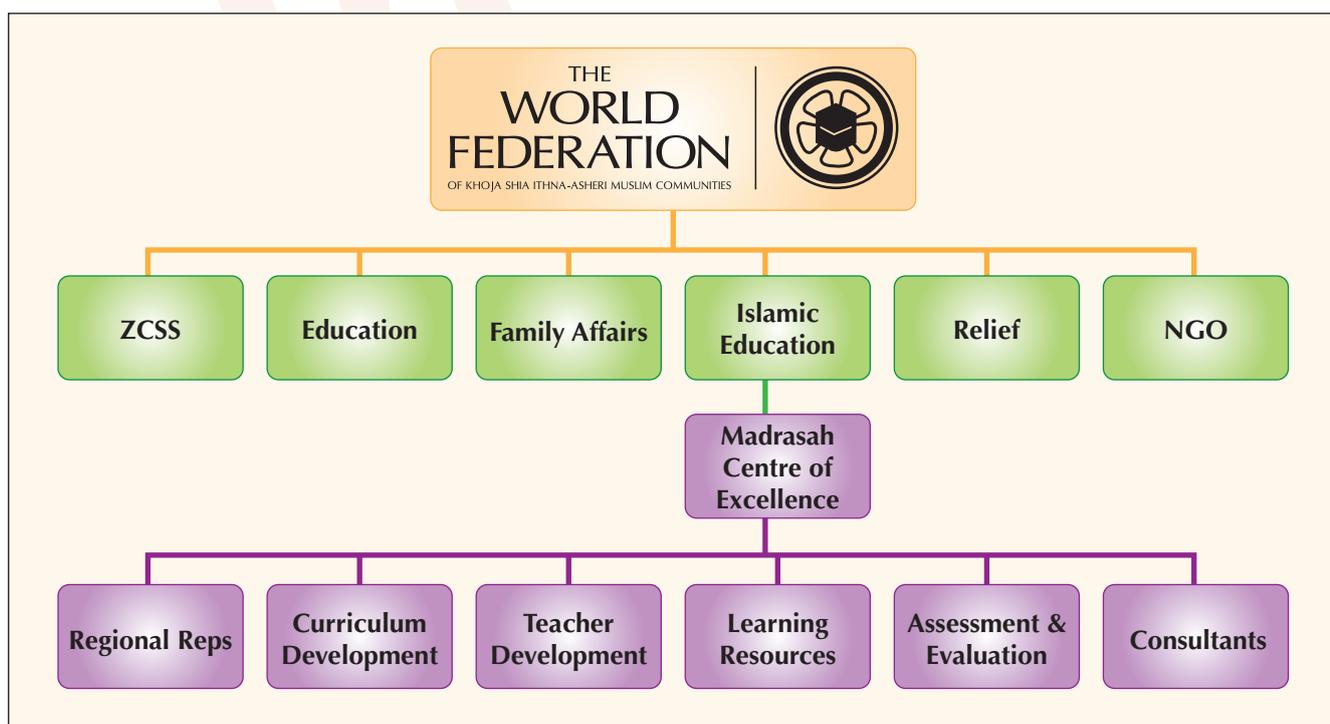


PREAMBLE

As a community we have survived for over 150 years. Our members are scattered across the globe, living in rapidly changing, pluralistic and diverse societies. There is overwhelming consensus that the key reasons we have succeeded in preserving our identity are our adherence to the Holy Qur'an and our emulation of the *Ahlul Bayt* (SA) as role models. One institution that has helped us promote and preserve Islamic values has been and remains our Madrasah.

A few years ago, when the office bearers of the World Federation met *Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli* - a leading Islamic philosopher and jurist based in Qum - to discuss the future of Islamic Seminary studies for our senior students post madaris, the respected scholar advised that ad hoc planning of religious studies, or for that matter secular studies, without a well thought out generation plan was futile. He argued that for communities to survive, the leadership must have a clear vision encompassing not only the immediate short and medium term requirements BUT that planning must cover the longer term. He stressed that Islamic education is 'holistic' in nature and that planning must commence from inception (the cradle) to completion (the grave) and that each stage of life must be charted out in clear steps.

With this holistic approach in mind, the World Federation organised a madrasah retreat in Dubai in February 2011, where over 25 madaris from Europe, East Africa, Middle East, North America, India and Pakistan were represented. At this retreat, stakeholders discussed the future of our madaris, and a strategy document was prepared for the madrasah agenda of The World Federation. This document was approved at The World Federation Conference in May 2011. A key recommendation was the formation of a formal structure to ensure that the madrasah agenda is always at the forefront of our leaders and our global organisation.





The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE) is the vehicle that delivers and maintains the strategies for the WF madrasah programme. Its global structure provides focus and acts as a central place for madaris to seek help and support in the running of their institutions. Its focus is to attain harmony amongst the madaris and realise our vision by coordinating the four work streams –Curriculum Development, Teacher Development, Learning Resources and Assessment & Evaluation; all of which have their own unique foci.

The role of the Curriculum Development team is to develop a curriculum framework that meets the needs of our children and is relevant to their emerging context and social identity. It should meet the needs of individual madaris, but also lead to standardisation in madrasah education globally, so that the learning of children who relocate geographically is not adversely affected. The curriculum should be regularly updated and evolve to make it relevant for present and future generations.

Many attempts have been made in the past to devise a curriculum that serves the community. However, seldom has an effort been made to take several steps back and address first the principles that govern madrasah education.

The Curriculum Development Team therefore decided to start from first principles. Although the team wished to start working from a blank canvas, it was necessary to review and incorporate all the existing good work and best practice currently in use today.

An in depth review of all major curricula/syllabi currently used by the various KSI madaris worldwide was conducted to identify strengths and gaps. This study was very revealing and provided us with solid material to take this endeavour to the next level. We then invited well known scholars and educational experts in both secular and Islamic Education to Harben (near Milton Keynes, UK) in November 2012 and sought advice on how to proceed.

We were advised by the experts that any curriculum framework must be governed by values that shape the curriculum. The Curriculum Development team therefore identified and endorsed a set of core shared values and guiding principles to underpin the MCE Curriculum Framework. These values and principles have been created through a process of consensus and wide consultation with educationalists, religious scholars and madrasah teachers. They are a starting point for madaris to integrate values into their learning and teaching programs, and have been elaborated in section 7 of this document.

The Harben discussions led to an overwhelming consensus that the current ‘conventional’ approach to madrasah teaching needed to shift towards a more ‘integrated’ approach. There was unanimity that, as Islam is a complete way of life, the curriculum MUST reflect this and be portrayed as holistic rather than compartmentalised. Further, it was agreed that although there are merits in the conventional approach, a well-defined ‘integrated’ curriculum should not only cover all the aspects included within the conventional framework, but should also provide students with a more practical and relevant appreciation of Islam.

Following the Harben Retreat, extensive research and work was carried out between December 2012 and April 2013 to develop an all-encompassing framework for an integrated curriculum.



This framework is defined as a Qur'anic worldview on piety (*taqwa* or *birr*) as expounded by the *Ahlul Bayt* (AS). A student, having been through the curriculum, should be able to answer four fundamental questions in life: *Who am I? Where do I come from? What is my purpose in life? and Where am I headed?*

In this document, we present a draft framework to the community for consultation and feedback. Workshops will be held in every region to discuss this framework in more detail, and piloting of the draft curriculum will be carried out in a few madaris. Following a thorough consultation process and piloting, we intend to finalise the curriculum, and then start developing interactive, state of the art lessons based on the modules set out in this framework.

The MCE Curriculum Framework is a long-term educational reform for KSI madaris worldwide. As teachers and students work with the Framework, they will find that adjustments will need to be made to their learning and teaching programs. Similarly, the MCE will make adjustments to the Curriculum Framework to take account of issues arising from the experience of implementation. The Framework will also be modified in the light of regional and educational trends and changing community expectations. Further development, review and revision of the Curriculum Framework will be subject to collaborative and consultative processes before being incorporated.

DRAFT



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HISTORY OF MADRASAH EDUCATION IN THE KSI COMMUNITY

It was the spirit of inquiry and the desire to take an introspective look at our beliefs and practices that led to the emergence and subsequent evolution of the Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim community as we know of them today. The spark of this transformation ignited in 1862 when a twenty year old young man by the name of Mulla Qadir Husein Naif came to Mumbai from Madras (Chennai) to set up a madrasah in the Palagalli/Dongri area, in what was then widely known as the Khoja Mohalla. Although the original madrasah fell into disuse when Mulla Qadir Husein returned to Madras before proceeding to Karbala, it was later revived when Mulla Qadir Husein returned to Mumbai from Karbala in 1873.

In addition, the role of Minber was originally viewed as an extension to the role of the madrasah system serving post madrasah adults. The early madrasah of Mulla Qadir Husein served this dual purpose. For a long time, traditional madrasah teachers also served as Zakirs to effectively combine the role of Madrasa with that of the Minber, as they were complimentary to each other.

From 1926 onwards, Ulema started coming from India as Resident Alims in various Jamats in Africa. They performed the dual roles as Resident Alim and as Madrasah teachers. This practice continued until around the 1960's when the role of Minber started developing its exclusivity and became disconnected with the madrasah.

For a considerable time, it was generally left to the individual madrasah teacher, be it a local Mulla or a Resident Alim, to devise courses based on the specific needs of the local community. There was no standardised regional syllabus, lesson notes or text books available. In Africa, a first attempt at producing a text book for the madaris in the Gujarati language appeared in the form of Sham-e-Hidayat, written by Haji Mohamedjaffer Sheriff Dewji of Mombasa in 1939. Subsequent editions of this book were published in 1946 and 1956. These were widely used in East Africa, Madagascar, and also in Gujarat, India.

As time passed, the community became conscious of the need to improve upon and upgrade madrasah education system in terms of its content and its methodology in order to keep pace with the evolving modern academic educational standards and teaching methods. The community was keen to avoid any dichotomy of approach that could give rise to conflict and contradictions in the teaching methods applied in the mainstream schools and the madaris.

After the end of the Second World War in 1945, many boys and girls in Africa who previously would have restricted their education to primary levels only began to pursue secondary and further education. In the process, they were exposed to the wider world and multi faith influences. In order to provide a good religious foundation, it was clear that the role of madaris must be strengthened. But it was not until 1958, that Haji Ebrahim Husein Sheriff, then President of AFED, while on a visit to India, met with Dr. Zakir Husein Faruki and invited him to visit East Africa to review the performance of the madaris and explore the possibilities of blending the madrasah



system with that of the school system.

Dr. Zakir Husein Faruki toured major Jamats in East Africa and upon his return to India submitted an interim report. In his report Faruki maintained that the overall concept of Islamic education in madrasah was mainly focused on Fiqh. He stressed the need for a broad based approach that also addressed aspects of Islamic history and moral lessons. Dr. Zakir Husein also produced a set of text books for the Primary classes which focussed on moral lessons, aspects of Islamic history and the basic principles of Islam. These books written in Urdu, were later translated into English by Syed Farzande Riza Rizvi of Karachi and published from Pakistan. As this approach was a departure from the traditional outlook then prevailing in Africa, the community failed to give serious considerations to the report's recommendations.

In 1960, during Ayub Khan's Presidency, educational reforms were introduced in Pakistan which required imparting Islamic education in maintained schools as part of the overall educational syllabus. The Shia community in Pakistan campaigned for the preservation of the Shia outlook. When the Government of Pakistan invited the Shia community to submit their proposals, the community was not ready with any contingency planning and so responded with an interim report and the text books prepared by Dr. Zakir Husein Faruki.

In the West, Dr. A .S. Hashim of Maryland, USA, undertook commendable work in producing a set of twenty text books for the Madrasah Sunday classes that also served as an Islamic correspondence course. These text books covered a wide range of subjects written in a student friendly style and included illustrations. They essentially catered for inter denominational Islamic classes without sectarian bias. Both Shia and Sunni perspectives were adequately covered. Sadly this pioneering work done by Dr. Hashim has often gone unrecognised by many Shia Muslim organizations as people have been content to try to strive to re-invent the wheel without benefiting from the experience of others.

In the mid 1980's, a great initiative was taken by late Aliraza Nanji of Nairobi, ably assisted by a team of dedicated volunteers, in developing a comprehensive syllabus for madrasah education in English. The first set of draft notes was published in December 1986 and piloted mainly at the Haidery Madessa, Nairobi.

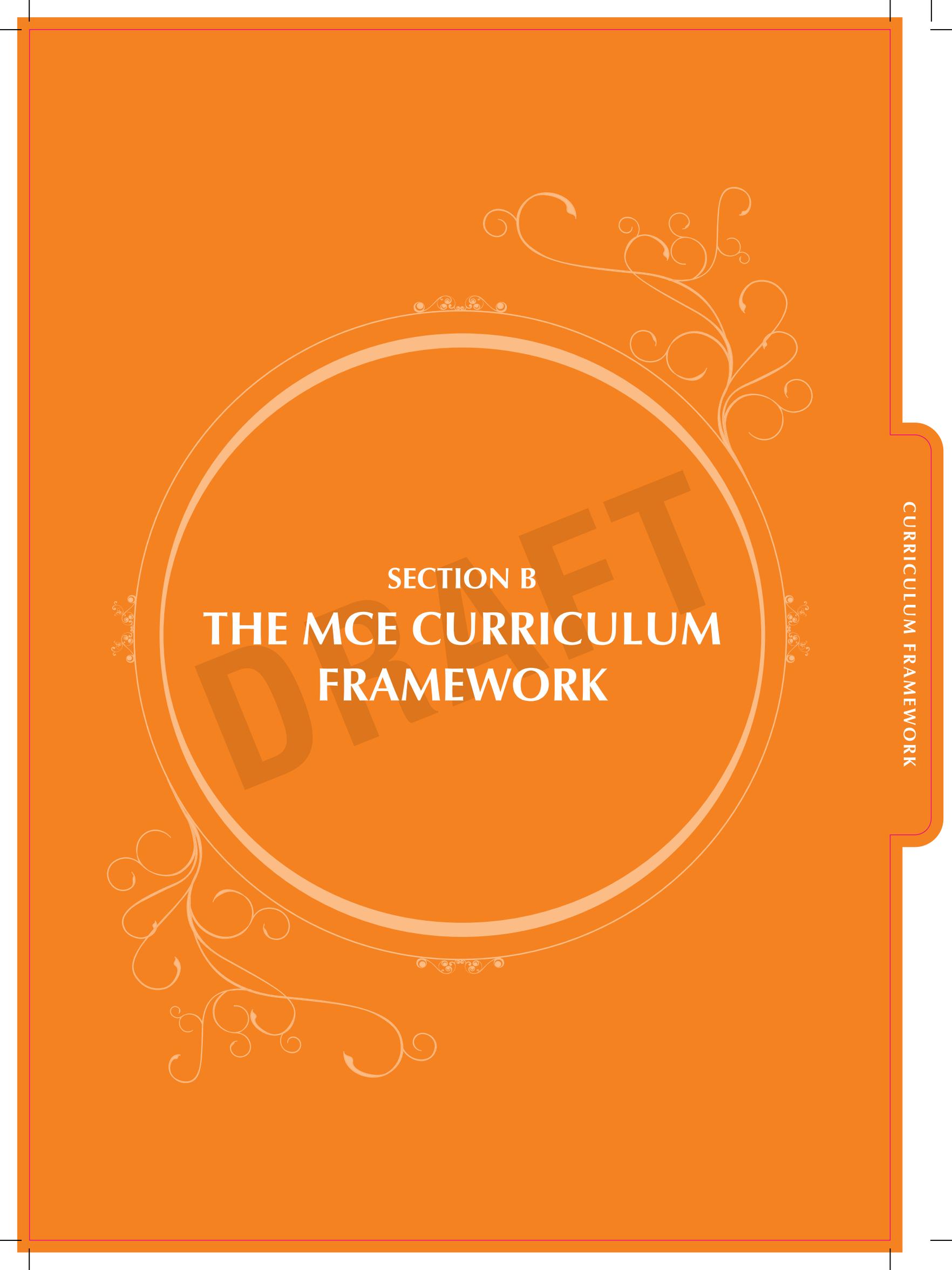
The team worked tirelessly to complete this noble project, and the first full set of notes was published in March 1988. This set catered for ages 5 to 16, and covered Akhlaqiyat, Tarikh, Qur'an and Diniyat. Aqaid was covered as a separate subject for ages 15 and 16. This syllabus has been widely used by the community in Africa and also in Europe and North America.

Education systems, teaching methods and teaching aid materials are constantly evolving developments that have to keep pace with the time and the challenges being faced. With the resettlement of community members in Europe and North America, the role of madrasah has been limited to only Sunday classes staffed by voluntary teachers, many of whom are not trained teachers or who have little prior teaching experience of any sort.



To help address the growing needs of our children, it is necessary to develop the madrasah education system so that it offers provision on par to that in mainstream schools. At the same time, apart from updating syllabi, course content and producing teaching materials, madaris teachers need support in improving their teaching skills. To achieve these objectives, the World Federation launched the Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE). The next section of this document provides the latest progress that has led to the development of the proposed curriculum - is a milestone in the history of the KSIMC.

DRAFT



SECTION B
**THE MCE CURRICULUM
FRAMEWORK**



1. INTRODUCTION TO THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

"We only sent you as a mercy to all mankind."

(Qur'an 21:107)

It would be more than reasonable for young Muslims to wonder why this message, delivered via our Prophet (SAW), appears not to be heard by so much of our contemporary world. They might equally wonder why so many people vilify the religion that has been perfected for us. Obeying the often repeated Qur'anic injunction for us to 'reflect,' they might conclude that it was not the message that was wrong (indeed how could it be); but rather how it was adopted by different Muslims throughout the world. All religions are, in essence, interpretations of divine revelation. The further away from the time of the original revelation by the Holy Prophets, the harder interpretation appears to get. We know, because we are so clearly told, that we must 'have faith and do good works;' that we must act as if we were Allah's deputy, His khalifa, here on earth; and we understand that nothing has been neglected in the Book (6:38). Yet so many Muslims appear to have such trouble living by these precepts. How do we help young people overcome this problem?

It is almost too simplistic to say education is the key to understanding, but it is nonetheless true. We too must emulate Qur'anic supplication: 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge' (20:114). For us, as educators, this is the start of our questions: Which knowledge do we impart? How do we transmit it? What skills do we need to provide young people with so that they can understand better? How do we offer consistency of message across all our educational institutions? For us in the West, most young Muslims attend after school or weekend madaris and Muslims of all schools of jurisprudence have been discussing the nature and delivery of a curriculum that offers some degree of consistency in teaching and learning, a diet that would be common no matter where in the world you happen to be. Such a common curriculum is, without doubt, long overdue.

The English word 'curriculum' comes from the Latin, 'currere' meaning to run, a fast chariot, a course-which later became a course of study. Interestingly, in Arabic the curriculum is '*rihat talaba al ilm*' which is translated as 'the journey in the search for knowledge.' Both definitions share the idea of a journey, a course to be run. This curriculum framework provides the outline, the key components in terms of skills, attitudes, values and content to be taught. Sitting beneath this outline is the syllabus which provides a more detailed description of what is to be taught. The syllabus in turn is distilled into the schemes of work with their individual lesson plans. Our innovative, pioneering and ambitious curriculum framework offers such a comprehensive course but very much within the context of the 21st century learner. It builds upon the work of our ancestors who wrestled with the same issues of design and delivery. Inshallah, its effective implementation will help young Muslims understand better, and assist them in their own 'race to do good.' (3:114)



2. PURPOSE OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

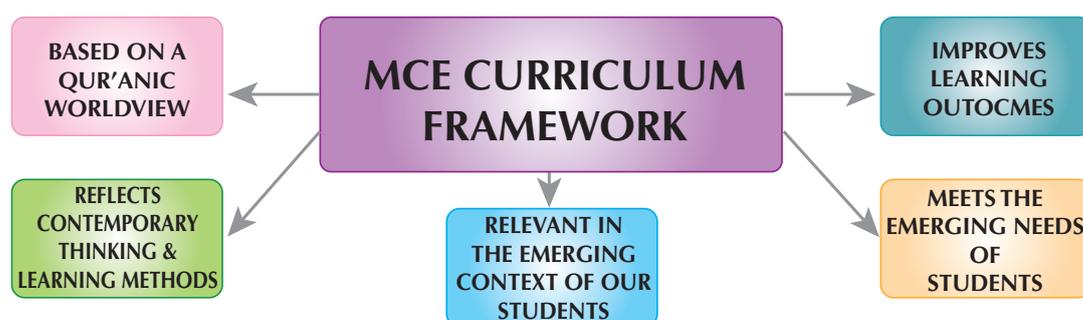
The Curriculum Framework aims to improve the learning outcomes of all students and to enable madaris to develop learning and teaching programs which meet the needs of their students and which responds to changes in their local communities. The great majority of community students will attend madrasah from the age of 4 to the age of 15. It is important that during this time they develop into good practicing Muslims, and acquire the tools to deal effectively with the challenges which they encounter, both now, as young people, and in the future, as adults.

The Madrasah Curriculum Framework sets out what all students should know, understand, value and be able to do as a result of the programmes they undertake in madrasah from the age of 5 through to the age of 15 or 16. It is neither a curriculum nor a syllabus, but a framework identifying common learning areas and broad outcomes for all students. It is intended to give madaris and teachers flexibility and ownership over curriculum in a dynamic and rapidly-changing world environment. The framework does not prevent madaris from offering programmes that enable students to achieve outcomes additional to those specified in this document.

The learning areas and outcomes aim to ensure that all students in the madaris have the Islamic knowledge, understandings, skills and values necessary to participate and apply in a changing world. They also aim to ensure that students achieve their personal best and develop a sense of pride in themselves, their madrasah, their community and their environment.

Our society is characterised by rapidly changing attitudes to religion, belief, family and institutional structures. Changes in the work environment, global political and socioeconomic conditions and the rise of sectarianism and extremist ideology especially within the Muslim community, will continue to pose challenges throughout the twenty-first century.

The Curriculum Framework reflects contemporary thinking about what students need to learn in order to lead successful and rewarding lives in the twenty-first century and how madaris and teachers can best help them to learn. It provides teachers, parents and the community with a clear statement of what students are expected to achieve as a result of their madrasah education. The Framework helps teachers to develop specific programs and judge the effectiveness of their teaching by the outcomes students achieve. It provides a basis for madaris to identify gaps in their syllabi, review their performance and plan for improvement.





3. AIMS OF THE MADRASAH CURRICULUM AND UNDERPINNING LEARNING AREAS

The framework is based upon four foundational curricular aims which are key to aligning resource development and allocation, teacher development, pedagogy, assessment and evaluation. They are also essentially ethical and moral statements, making transparent the values and ambitions to which our community aspires. Madaris are expected to contribute, in a balanced way, towards attaining the vision and mission of the Madrasah Centre of Excellence by development in all of the following 4 aims:

- i. **Religious** – Madrasah education is expected to promote the religious understanding of students.
- ii. **Intellectual, physical and mental wellbeing** – Madrasah education of pupils is expected to enable them to have a rational understanding of Islam, and use reason in understanding the Islamic tradition. It is also expected to contribute to students' physical and mental wellbeing; and to contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the community.
- iii. **Spiritual** – Madrasah education of pupils is expected to inculcate piety (taqwa) and nurture the students into God-conscious individuals
- iv. **Moral** – Madrasah education of pupils will promote ethical values enabling them become good citizens and role models in society

In turn, these aims are underpinned by the following learning areas which will be further distilled into knowledge, skills, attitudes and values:

1. Learning area: Akhlaq

Akhlaq is the plural of the word *khulq* which means disposition. "Disposition" is a faculty of the soul (*nafs*) which unconsciously inspires actions. The level of human perfection is determined by discipline and effort. Man stands between two extremes, the lowest is below beasts and the highest surpasses even the angels. The movement between these extremes is discussed by *'ilm al-akhlaq'* or the science of ethics.

Akhlaq should therefore focus on two aspects: how to live one's own life and how to interact in society, as is enjoined by Rasulullah (s) in his statement, "*Ta'atul Khaliq wal khidmatul makhluk*" (Obedience to Allah (s.w.t) and service to mankind). The former aspect leads to self-development (*through al-akhlaq al-fardi*) – how to achieve moderation (*I'tidal*) over the powers which are inherent in a soul (*nafs*) and to avoid the dangers of both their excessive or deficient development. The latter aspect results in societal well-being (*through al-akhlaq al-ijtima'*) - what are the appropriate modes of social intercourse and what are the associated rights and obligations of individuals, or groups of individuals, with whom we come into contact and who may have a different ethnic, cultural, ideological or religious background than our own.



2. Learning area: Tarikh

Like Akhlaq, Tarikh too has to be rooted in the ultimate goal that Islam cherishes for human society. Put succinctly, that goal is the establishment of a just and an equitable society, as is so eloquently stated in the Holy Qur'an - "*liyaquma an-nasu bi'l qist*" - so that mankind may maintain justice (57:25). Justice implies enactment of law based not on the interests of individuals or a class, but based on human wisdom guided by divine revelation. Equity signifies treatment of individuals based solely on their ethical behaviour without regard to their social class or position in society. Only adherence to the teachings of the Qur'an as expounded by the practices of our Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt guarantee the establishment of divine law.

Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. established a city-state in Madina, the first Islamic state that integrated all the affairs of the ummah, political and military as well as social and economic. The state extended its boundaries to cover a large part of the populated areas of the Arab Peninsula during his own lifetime. Imam al-Mahdi (atfs) will establish the Islamic Government at the end of time but now, on a more comprehensive basis (all Inclusive) and on a much larger (global) scale. Tarikh should trace the history between these two epochs and focus how and why Muslims strayed from the Islamic model, and how and where the groundwork is being laid for a worldwide government during the period of awaiting (intizaar).

3. Learning Area: Fiqh

The word *fiqh* is an Arabic term meaning "deep understanding" or "full comprehension". Technically it refers to the body of Islamic law extracted from detailed Islamic sources (which are studied in the principles of Islamic jurisprudence) and the process of gaining knowledge of Islam through jurisprudence. *Fiqh* is an expansion of the code of conduct (Sharia) expounded in the Qur'an, often supplemented by tradition (Sunnah) and implemented by the rulings and interpretations of Islamic jurists.

Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) plays a hugely important role in the life of a Muslim. In order to follow the orders of Allah, it is necessary for every baligh person to acquire knowledge of and understand fiqh. Through the study of fiqh, the student will learn about the five kinds of religious dictates - Wajibat (duties), muharramat (forbidden acts), mustahabbat (voluntary acts of worship), makrouhat (abominable acts), and mubahat (permissible acts).

In the teaching and learning of fiqh, factors such as inter-faith understanding, Western environment, contemporary issues, regional variations and language suitability have to be taken into account.

4. Learning Area: Aqa'id

Aqa'id is the plural form of Aqidah. It describes the beliefs of the Islamic faith. However, this term has taken a significant technical usage in Islamic history and theology, denoting those matters over which Muslims hold conviction. Literally, the word '*aqidah*' is derived from the root '*aqada*', which means "to tie" or "knot".



These beliefs are referred to as Usool-e-Deen or roots of religion. They are:

- a) Tawhid (Oneness): The Oneness of Allah.
- b) Adalah (Justice): The Justice of Allah.
- c) Nubuwwah (Prophethood): Allah has appointed perfect and infallible prophets and messengers to teach mankind the religion (i.e. a perfect system on how to live in "peace").
- d) Imamah (Leadership): God has appointed specific leaders to lead and guide mankind — a prophet appoints a custodian of the religion before his demise.
- e) Qiyamah (The Day of Judgment): Allah will raise mankind for Judgment

5. Learning Area: Qur'anic studies and recitation

The Qur'an is the book of divine guidance and direction for humanity and the text in its original Arabic is the literal word of God, revealed to Prophet Muhammad s.a.w through the angel Jibraeel over a period of twenty-three years. It is God's final revelation to humanity. The Qur'an has solutions to all the problems of humanity irrespective of how complex they may be and in what age they occur.

The Qur'an describes itself as "the discernment or the criterion between truth and falsehood" (*al-furqan*), "the mother book" (*umm al-kitab*), "the guide" (*huda*), "the wisdom" (*hikmah*), "the remembrance" (*dikr*), and "the revelation" (*tanzil* - something sent down, signifying the descent of an object from a higher place to lower place). It is a book of guidance, sometimes offering detailed accounts of specific historical events, and often emphasizing the moral significance of an event over its narrative sequence. The Qur'an is used along with the hadith to interpret sharia law.

The Qur'anic content is concerned with the basic beliefs of Islam which include the existence of God and the resurrection. Narratives of the early prophets, ethical and legal subjects, historical events of the prophet's time, charity and prayer, also appear in the Qur'an. The Qur'anic verses contain general exhortations regarding right and wrong and the nature of revelation. Historical events are related to outline general moral lessons. Verses pertaining to natural phenomena have been interpreted by Muslims as an indication of the authenticity of the Qur'anic message

The central theme of the Qur'an is monotheism. God is depicted as living, eternal, omniscient and omnipotent (2:20, 29, 255). God's omnipotence appears above all in his power to create. He is the creator of everything, of the heavens and the earth and what is between them (13:16, 50:38, etc.) All human beings are equal in their utter dependence upon God, and their well-being depends upon their acknowledging that fact and living accordingly.

In Madrasah education, the study of Qur'an is split into three stages.

- i. Recitation (observing the correct rules of Tajweed) and memorisation.
- ii. Translation of selected verses or surahs from Arabic.
- iii. Understanding of selected verses or surahs through Tafsir (explanation).



6. Learning Area: Comparative religion

Comparative religion is the study of religions concerned with the systematic comparison of the doctrines and practices of the world's religions. In general, the comparative study of religion provides students with a deeper understanding of the fundamental philosophical concerns of religion such as ethics, metaphysics and the nature and form of salvation. Studying such material is meant to give one a richer and more sophisticated understanding of human beliefs and practices regarding the sacred, numinous, spiritual and divine.

Spirituality is at the core of this curriculum framework, and has been weaved into every learning area. The term spirituality does not have a precise definition. One can infer that the aim of spirituality is to relate to God, to accustom oneself by rehearsal, taming, training and exercise all the way through his life to reach the highest level of belief or Iman and to uplift oneself to high values. It can also be defined as a person's personal development in order to become a true Muslim by understanding, practicing, and exhibiting individual and social values of Islam.

There are numerous āyāt (verses or signs) of the Holy Quran that indicate the importance of spiritual purification. God talks of the *nafs* (self) and says: "Whoever purifies it has succeeded; and failure is the lot of whoever corrupts it," (Qur'an 91:9-10). Furthermore, Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is quoted in the Qur'an: "The Day [of Judgement] whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, except him who comes to Allah with a sound heart," (*bi-qalbin salim*) (Qur'an 26:88-9). Moreover, God mentions the role of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "A similar (favour have you already received) in that We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, rehearsing to you Our signs, and purifying you, and instructing you in the Book and the Wisdom (*al-hikma*), and in new knowledge that beforehand you did not know," (Qur'an 2:151).

Spirituality lessons can be developed by first prioritising the most important characteristics of a true Muslim. For example, in an Islamic character education curriculum, the content should involve basic categories. These qualities entail, but are not limited to: characteristics that relate to *one's relation with God* (such as devotion, obedience, thankfulness, remembrance, and repentance), characteristics that relate to *one's relation with oneself* (such as humbleness, honesty, honour, responsibility, and determination), characteristics that relate to *one's relation with others* (such as bigheartedness, empathy, pardoning, devotion, and sympathy) and characteristics that relate to *one's attitude to life* (wittiness, fair-mindedness, broad-mindedness, creativity, and optimism).



4. BACKGROUND TO THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

History

- A madrasah retreat was hosted in Dubai in February 2011 by the World Federation to discuss the needs of our madaris worldwide.
- One of the key outcomes of this retreat was for a curriculum development work-stream to look into updating the madrasah curriculum.
- A Curriculum Assessment Questionnaire was designed in 2012 by the work stream members with feedback from retreat participants to gather preliminary data which would give direction to curriculum development within the MCE.
- The questionnaire was sent to all KSI madaris.
- Responses were submitted by 30 madaris globally.

Survey results at a glance

- 74% of respondents agreed that we needed a global curriculum with regional variation.
- Most respondents agreed that the current curricula provided adequate material for Fiqh, Tarikh, Akhlaq and Qur'an. However, only 48% of respondents felt that Aqaid was adequately covered, and only 38% agreed that spiritual development was adequately covered.

When asked whether the current curricula met the needs of our students,

- 55% felt the curriculum meets the needs of ages 14+
- 32% felt the curriculum meets the needs of ages 16+
- 51% agreed that the resources available meet modern standards.
- 47% agreed that the language and presentation of the current resources meets modern needs.

The following areas were seen to be seriously lacking both in content and substance:

- i. Comparative Religion
- ii. Contemporary issues – Islam and terrorism, Akhbari-USuli debate, Irfan etc.
- iii. Interfaith understanding
- iv. Youth related issues - media, internet, social networking, gender interaction etc.
- v. Spirituality

In terms of teaching resources,

- 97% of respondents agreed that there was a need for new teaching guides and student manuals.
- 86% of respondents agreed that education experts and religious scholars should be involved in developing a new curriculum.

Based on these results, the curriculum development team of the MCE started the task of creating a global madrasah curriculum that should meet the needs and aspirations of the community.



5. DEVELOPING THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The curriculum development team started working on developing a global madrasah curriculum in March 2012. An in depth study of all major curricula/syllabi currently used by KSI madaris worldwide was carried out to identify strengths and gaps. This was done by tabulating the following syllabi on a spreadsheet:

- Shia Ithna-asheri Madrasah, Stanmore
- Hujjat Saturday Workshop (QFatima)
- ISSC, Brampton
- East End Madrasah, Scarborough
- Centre Madrasah, Bathurst
- Husseini Madrasah, Dar-es-Salam
- Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission School (AIMS), Karachi
- Haydari Madrasah, Nairobi
- Dubai Madrasah
- AQA GCSE and A Level Islamic Studies

This exercise identified three main approaches to teaching at madaris:

1. Conventional Approach

Individual subjects (Aqaid, Fiqh, Akhlaq, Tarikh, Qur'an) are taught independently with minimal overlap E.g. Husseini Madrasah, Dar-es-Salaam and SIM, Stanmore

Conventional Approach

SIM, Year 7 (Age 11)				
Aqaid	Fiqh	Akhlaq	Tarikh	Qur'an
Not taught	Adhan Iqamah Wudhu Salat: Philosophy, method, munafiyat, ta'qibat, qasr salat, place, clothes & times of salat Fasting: significance, types, conditions, mubtilat, makruh acts whilst fasting, fasting when travelling	Parents: respect, rights & duties Adab of dressing Generosity Pride & humility Self humiliation Jealousy & Envy Sabr Being considerate to the underprivileged Complaining when in distress Forsaking duties Looking at non mahram	Me'raj Prophet's journey to Taif Pledges of Aqaba & Ridwan Hijra to Madina and Declaration of brotherhood Change of quibla Battles of Badr, Uhud, Ahzab, Khybar & Muta Story of Fadak Invitation of foreign states to Islam The lapsed umra and Conquest of Makka	Respect of Qur'an & Akhlaq of its recitation Divisions Tafseer of suwer Lahab, Nasr and Teen Punctuation Qalqala Rules of laam Rules of nun and mim mushaddadah Wajib sujud in Qur'an Arabic numbers



2. Hybrid Approach

Content from various subjects relating to a particular topic is integrated to provide a more holistic appreciation of the topic.

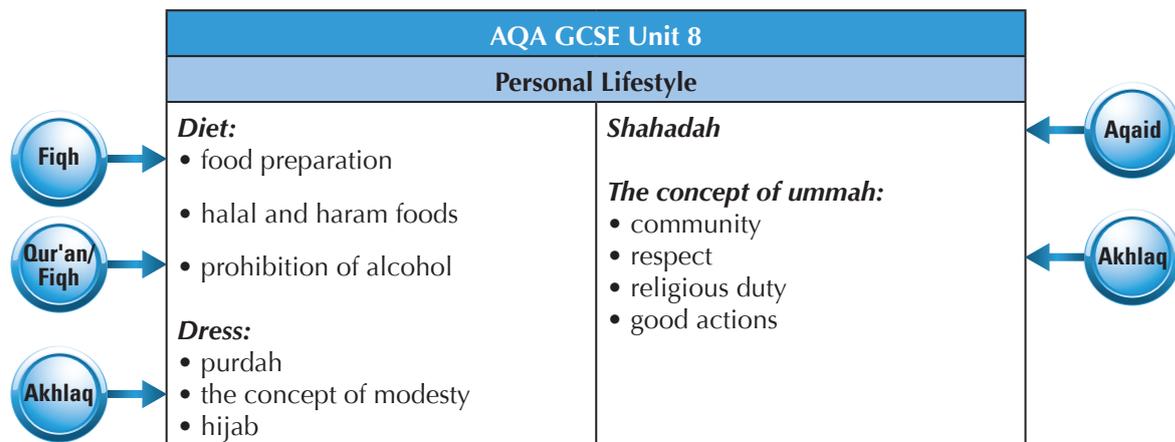
Examples of hybrid approaches include:

(a) QFatima, Hujjat Saturday Workshop, Stanmore

Year 6: Ages 10 – 11		
	Q-CONCEPTS	Q-LIFE
	Intro to risalat al-huqooq	Detailed explanation on buloogh
	Interfaith and intersect discussions	Haidh and Istihadha (girls)
	Intro to Ayat an-Nur (24:35)	Cycle of life: Birth, Buloogh, Family life, career, old age, death
		Femininity and masculinity

(b) Ahlulbayt Islamic Mission School (AIMS), Karachi

PERSONALITY BUILDING, Year 8 (Age 11)		
	Islamic Culture	Lessons from Sahifa Sajjadiyyah
	Controlling anger	Supplication 1: in praise of Allah
	Equality: Public treasury during Imam Ali's caliphate	Supplication 10: seeking asylum with Allah
	Family life in Islam: rights of family, helping each other	Supplication 20: For noble moral traits
	Hijab	Supplication 20: Against shaitan
	Jihad: value, fundamentals and types	Supplication 24: For his parents
		Supplication 28: Fleeing to Allah
		Supplication 39: Asking pardon

**(c) AQA GCSE Islamic Studies****3. Integrated Approach**

Overarching themes that cut across core courses and foundational themes for individual courses that are linked (e.g. to the Qur'an). Currently, there is no truly integrated model in use at our madaris.

These results were presented to a panel of experts in Nov 2012 at the Harben retreat.

THE HARBEN RETREAT**Objectives:**

- i. To chart out a clear methodology and approach to madrasah education
- ii. To put processes in place for the development of a global madrasah framework, curriculum and syllabus

At this meeting of education experts and ulema had in-depth discussions on:

- Models for Islamic education at madrasah level
- Guiding principles for the creation of a global madrasah curriculum
- Weaving spirituality into the madrasah curriculum
- The role of madrasah: Ta'lim or Tarbiyah?
- Dealing with sensitive issues – Crises of conscience
- Approaches to Islamic education in the secular world

The following papers were presented:

- An introduction to the MCE curriculum development – *Shaykh Safder Jaffer*
- Our madaris worldwide: An overview of existing KSI syllabi – *Aly Nasser*
- Developing the Siraat manuals for Toronto madaris – *Shaykh Khalil Jaffer*
- Component structure of the madrasah learning program – *Dr Bashir Datoo*



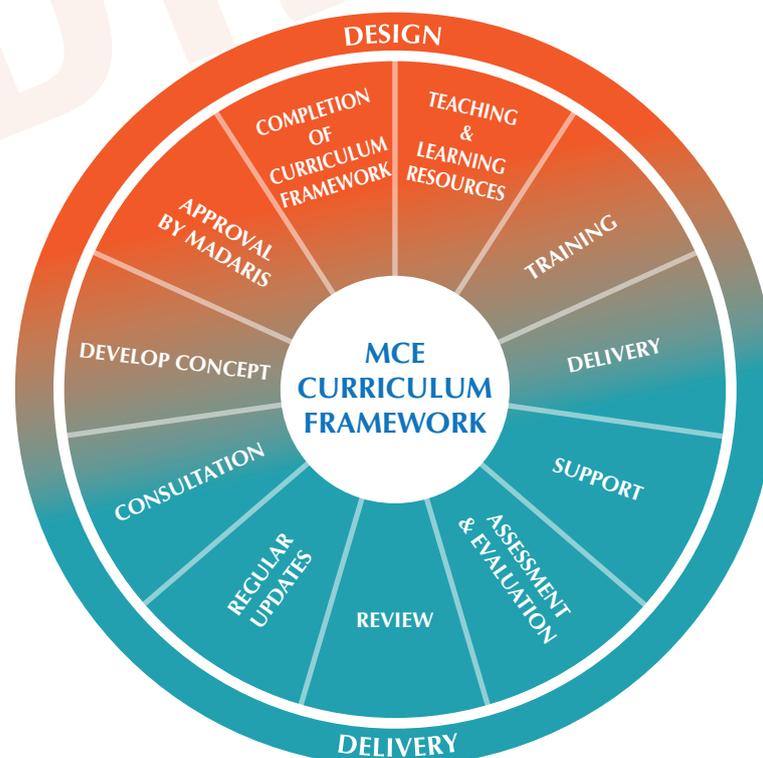
- Weaving spirituality within madrasah education – *Shaykh Mohamed Ali Shomali*
- Crises of conscience – *Syed Muhammad Rizvi*
- Learner centred approach to Islamic education and its reflection in the curriculum – *Dr Abdullah Sahin*
- The Ta'lim project – *Dr Shiraz Thobani*
- Practical steps to developing a curriculum: The ICE experience – *Maurice Irfan Coles*
- AIMS curriculum and methodology – *Syeda Samina Rizvi*
- An insight into Shia Ithna-asheri Madrasah (SIM) – *Sajjad Govani*
- An insight into Hussein Madrasah Girls Section, Dar-es-Salaam – *Raziabai Janmohamed*

Key outcomes of the Harben Retreat:

It was agreed that an integrated approach to Islamic education would be best suited for our madaris, although some degree of subject specialisation may be necessary for senior students. Further, madrasah education must be learner-centred to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of the learner.

Having agreed on the approach and model for a new madrasah curriculum, more research and brainstorming was required to fully understand what an integrated curriculum would look like, and how it would translate to actual lessons in the classroom.

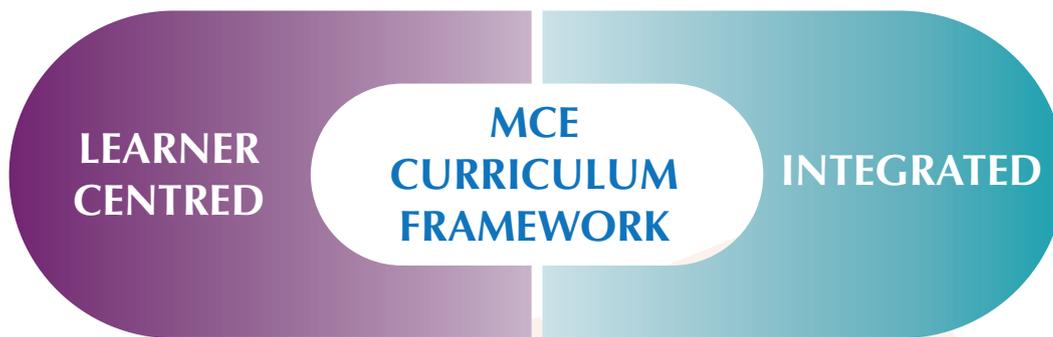
Following on from the Harben Retreat in Nov 2012, extensive research and work was carried out between Dec 2012 and April 2013 to develop guiding principles for a new curriculum, as well as an overarching framework for an integrated curriculum.





6. KEY FEATURES OF THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The MCE Curriculum Framework has two key features which make it different from other existing syllabi. Firstly, it uses a learner-centred approach. The curriculum has been developed based on the needs of the learner at every stage. Secondly, it is completely integrated. All lessons have been developed based on an overarching framework, rather than being compartmentalised into the traditional madrasah subjects.



6.1 LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH

There are generally considered to be two predominant approaches in education: teacher-centred approaches and learner-centred approaches. Put simply, the first places the teacher at the centre of the child's learning experience where the teacher decides what, when and how the content will be taught. The latter reverses the roles, enabling the student to exercise far more autonomy over their own learning. Traditionally and understandably, madaris teaching has been more teacher than learner focused, largely because so much content had to be taught and so much material had to be learnt. Constraints of time and the need to memorise dictated much of the teaching and learning style.

Teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches are not, however, polar opposites. Indeed, it is probably best to see them as a continuum with some aspects of teaching requiring the teacher to dictate the pace, style and content of the lessons; through to aspects which are better suited to learner reflectivity, self-study and collaborative work. Pupils have never been passive recipients of blocks of knowledge but the electronic age in which we live and student absolute familiarity with Information Technologies demands that madaris try to offer a similarity of diet with mainstream schooling otherwise pupils could well dismiss their madaris experience as old fashioned and second class. Madaris must embrace these technologies because it enables deeper learning and understanding to take place, encourages far more learner autonomy and responsibility, and should over time and as pupils mature, lead to a reflexive approach to the teaching and learning process on the part of both teacher and learner.

There are, however, major implications of a shift to a more learner-centred approach—implications for curriculum design, for teaching and learning methodologies, for assessment



and for continuing professional development. A more teacher centred approach placed great stress on the content that pupils needed to learn in a given timeframe. In contrast, the learner centred curriculum focuses more on what the student can do, the competences that have been achieved and how they translate these into action. It encourages an approach which allows students to research, learn and feedback at their own pace. The table below provides an example of learner centred teaching methods in the context of the madaris and at home.

LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACHES

At home	At the madrasah
✓ Independent research on a given topic	✓ Buzz groups (short discussion in twos or threes)
✓ The use of apps	✓ Pyramids/snowballing (Buzz groups continuing the discussion into larger groups)
✓ Writing a blog	✓ Cross-overs (mixing students into groups by letter/number allocations)
✓ Using a twitter feed	✓ Rounds (giving turns to individual students to talk)
✓ Independent projects	✓ Debates
✓ Creating a Facebook page	✓ Brainstorms
✓ On line group discussion	✓ Student class presentations
✓ Peer mentoring of other students	✓ Role play
✓ Reflective diaries and learning journals	✓ Poster presentations
✓ Producing newspaper articles	✓ Writing reflections on learning
✓ Writing think pieces on various subjects	✓ Collective class evaluations
✓ Memorisation of the Quran	✓ Producing mind maps
	✓ Self-Organised learning environments (SOLEs)

6.2 AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Moving from a teacher centred to a learner centred approach has profound implications for curriculum design and delivery because it fundamentally alters the relationship between the teacher and the taught and demands that we re-examine our curriculum methodology. For our purposes there are two major approaches to the organisation of learning: the conventional and the integrated. The conventional is that which is currently used in most



madaris and consists of a course by course approach that provides an in-depth and age-appropriate study as an integral part of core provision. Madrasah teachers are familiar with this and could relate to any revised madrasah curriculum framework, especially if it is tied into a course based conceptual framework. The age old issue is however that for the learner, the emphasis tends to be more on learning specific subject content and jumping through a hoop testing regime, rather than making interconnections between knowledge areas and applying this to everyday lived situations.

An integrated approach can still be subject centred but transcends the traditional subject boundaries. Teaching units from subject disciplines are fused together around a meaningful organising themes/concept such as the Qur'anic worldview. The themes that flow from the structure literally form an overhead arch and transcend, or cut across, all the courses. Additionally, themes are arrayed into tiers or layers, with each succeeding theme in a lower-level tier being a part of a broader theme of the preceding higher-level tier so that they form a nested hierarchy.

Although this framework takes an integrated approach, provisions will be made for subject specialisation in areas where discipline-based study adds greater value to a student's understanding of the subject matter.

WHY DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED APPROACH?

There are six reasons why the integrated approach is preferred:

- a) Put simply, we don't think in boxes and, though we are forced to by our education systems, we don't learn in boxes either. Studies of the human brain reveal that we learn best when our brain is encouraged to do joined up thinking, uniting the left and right sides, seeking connections and creative solutions. We think best when we think holistically.
- b) The Qur'an is the central focus of any madrasah curriculum and it provides the overarching structure. This is the foundation of our deen which from its inception was holistic. Its principles permeate every area of life and we are continually encouraged to reflect and see the signs of God. Young Muslims need to understand that for every action there is a reaction and that integrated learning leads to integrated thinking and integrated action.
- c) The organising themes allow young people to explore laterally often at their own pace and are better suited to the digital age.
- d) Integrated studies bring together traditionally separate subjects so that students can grasp a deeper and complete understanding.
- e) Stand-alones can fail to create connections between areas and do not help to reinforce previous learning that might otherwise seem unrelated to many students.
- f) Neuro-scientific studies have shown that a non-compartmentalised learning approach is essential for modern-thinking students because in the world outside the classroom, content is not stand-alone.



7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Values are fundamental to shaping curriculum. In recognition of this, the Curriculum Development (CD) team of the MCE has identified and endorsed a set of core shared values and guiding principles to underpin the Curriculum Framework. These values and principles have been created through a process of consensus and wide consultation with educationists, religious scholars and madrasah teachers. They are a starting point for madaris to integrate values into their learning and teaching programs. Madaris may add to this minimum set or interpret and promote the values in relation to their particular madrasah ethos or mission statement.

The curriculum will:

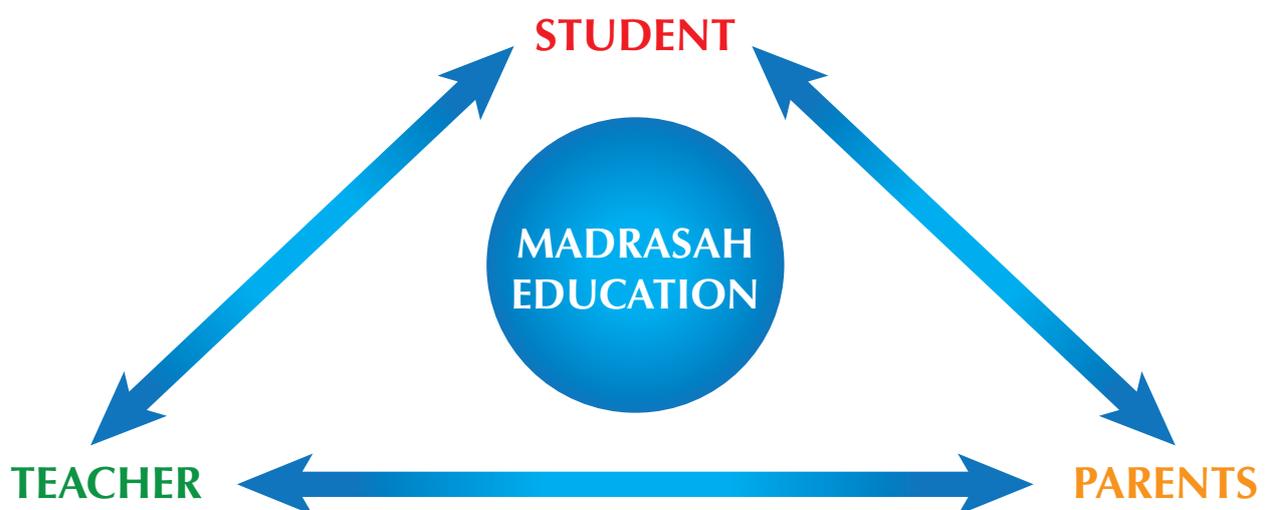
- **Be based on the overarching themes and sub-themes of the Qur'anic Worldview as expounded by the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as)**
- **Be broad and balanced** to impart to students knowledge of all the basic Islamic sciences, so students have a keen understanding of their faith and history
- **Stress inter-connections** among related concepts, ideas, events and personalities, so students appreciate the holistic nature of Islam
- **Be age-and region-appropriate**, so all students can readily assimilate information
- **Incorporate relevant skills**, so it leads to critical appreciation and analysis as well as application to real-life situations
- **Develop a set of positive attitudes and values of love and service for Allah (SWT) and the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as)** and of justice and equity for societies at large
- **Seek to nurture students** to become God loving and God conscious.
- **Be taught by practicing Muslims**, teachers who will be encouraged to act as role models
- **Be reinforced by parents** who will be encouraged to provide an Islamic environment in their homes to ensure that learning translates into practice
- **Teach students to understand and respect diversity of faiths** at the same time as they have a sound grounding in Islam so that they exhibit values that project a wholesome image of the religion
- **Encourage the development of a sense of social consciousness**, so that students become responsible and compassionate members of the society at large



- **Provide a platform for growth** and facility for tapping into reliable resources, so students become life-long learners of Islam and apply the learning in an ever evolving socio-political environment
- **Encourage an understanding of environmental responsibility**, resulting in respect and concern for the natural and cultural environments and a commitment to regenerative and sustainable resource use
- **Encourage the development of self-esteem and confidence**, so that as madrasah graduates embark on their vocational careers they can defend and explain Islam in a rational manner
- **Provide a strong foundation** which, when coupled with the reinforcement offered by the family and the community, would lead to a strong sense of identity with their Islamic beliefs and values so that graduates can better meet future challenges, specifically,
- **Help students develop an intellectual framework** and the ability to make sound judgments in order that they might make informed decisions in life consistent with Islamic spiritual and moral norms.

The Role of Parents:

Parents play a very crucial role in the religious education and training of their children. This role is arguably more important than the role of the madrasah in imparting religious education. The modular approach in this curriculum framework will not only enable parents to refresh their own knowledge and understanding of Islam, but also make it easier for them to impart this knowledge to their children, especially those living in remote areas and unable to attend madrasah on a regular basis. The integrated approach simplifies the process of learning without watering down the actual content, enabling parents (who are not qualified teachers) teach their children with relative ease. The Learning Resources Team of the MCE will also develop special resources for parents to make this task easier





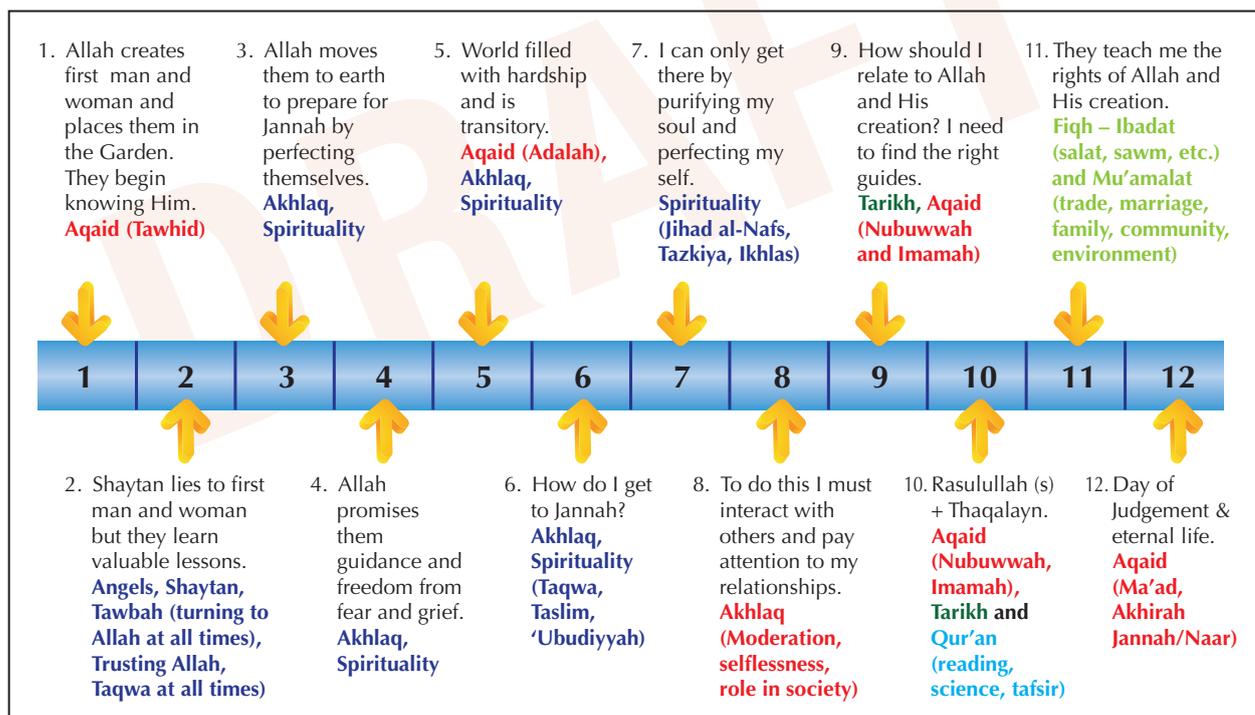
8. THE STRUCTURE OF THE MCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The MCE Curriculum Framework consists of an overarching conceptual framework based on the Holy Qur'an verse 2:177, from which eight learning modules have been developed.

8.1 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The vision of the MCE is nurturing piety in our students. Piety, or taqwa, is based on a Muslim's relationship with his Lord. Based on this understanding, it is necessary to fully comprehend our relationship with our Creator. The key questions one must ask include Who am I? Where do I come from? What is my purpose in life? and Where am I headed?

This understanding is illustrated in the model below:



Verse 2:177 beautifully encapsulates the true meaning of piety (al-Birr), which forms the overarching statement for this curriculum.



8.2 THE QUR'ANIC WORLDVIEW

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ
مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى
الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ
وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ
بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۗ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ
الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

It is not righteousness to turn your faces towards the east or the west; but righteousness is [reflected in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Messengers; and one who gives the wealth, for His love, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the [stranded] traveller, the beggars, and to those who are in bondage; and one who maintains the prayer and gives the zakāt; and those who fulfill the pledge when they promise; and they are patient in [financial] stress, [physical] distress and in heat of battle. These are those who have been true [to the faith], and these are the God-conscious. *Al-Baqarah (2:177)*

This verse encapsulates the fundamental vision of what it means to be a true Muslim. It starts with rejection of the notion that just outwardly expression of worship is not the criterion of a good Muslim. “*It is not righteousness to turn your faces towards the east or the west...*” A good Muslim bases his life on a sound belief system, submits to the Divine guidance, and lives an ethical life. This is summarized in one word “*al-birr*, righteousness”.

The next sentence in defining righteousness presents the foundation of a sound belief system: the beginning and the end: “*...but righteousness is [reflected in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day...*” The origin of everything is Allah as the Creator of the universe, in particular the human beings as exemplified in the form of Adam and Eve. It also talks about the return of the humans to their Creator for judgement and its consequences.

However, judgement and its consequences are meaningless without a roadmap or a system of guidance that humans will have to follow. And so, indeed, the Almighty Allah did provide a system of guidance in this world: “*...the Angels, the Book and the Messengers; ...*” The angels were created by Allah not only to manage the universe but also to help in conveying the Divine guidance to Allah’s vicegerents (*khulafā*) in the form of prophets, messengers, and



Divinely-appointed Imams on this earth. The angels played an important role in bringing the Divine Books and revelations to the prophets and the messengers.

The Divine guidance came in the form of prophets and messengers, some with and others without revealed books, starting with Prophet Adam (a) and ending with Prophet Muhammad (s). Thereafter, the Divine guidance continued in the form of Imamate, divinely appointed successors of the Prophet of Islam, starting with Imam 'Ali (a) and ending with Imam al-Mahdi (a). The fundamental role of the Imams of Ahlul Bayt is to convey the true meaning of the Qur'an and the authentic sunnah of the Prophet, and to provide the best role-models for living as true Muslims. The Qur'an has indeed presented the Ahlul Bayt as the example of par excellence of al-abrār (pl. of barr and bārr), the righteous ones. (See 76:5)

Commitment to such a sound belief should manifest in actions. An important proof of true faith is the willingness to give away a portion of our wealth for the sake of pleasing Almighty Allah: *"...and one who gives the wealth, for His love, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the [stranded] traveller, the beggars, and to those who are in bondage..."* This refers to the voluntary charity, hence the term "for His love."

Then comes the issue of commitment to the rituals that have been introduced by Islam: *"...and one who maintains the prayer and gives the zakat..."* Interestingly, the verse only mentions two pillars (arkān) of the faith: salāt and zakāt. Both emphasize the dual level of commitment necessary for salvation in the Hereafter: Islam does not only emphasize the human-God relationship (on the vertical plane), it also gives importance to human-human relationships (on the horizontal plane). Salāt symbolizes the human-God relationship; and zakāt symbolizes the human-to-human relationship.

With a sound belief system and practical proof of a person's commitment to the faith, the verse now reminds us of the moral and ethical disposition of a Muslim on a personal level: *"...and those who fulfill the pledge when they promise; and they are patient in [financial] stress, [physical] distress and in heat of battle..."* Akhlāq is the inner disposition and character of a person. Two important ethical values have been highlighted in this verse: *wafā'u 'l-'ahd* and *'abr*. "Fulfillment of a pledge" is a dimension of truthfulness that is the basis of faith. "Patience" is the most important quality in facing the challenges of life and maintaining the faith under pressure.

The verse ends with an important conclusion: *"These are those who have been true, and these are the God-conscious."* Truthfulness cannot exist without chastity, courage, wisdom, justice and other related virtues; truthfulness is the basis for faith and action. Combination of a sound belief system, a true commitment in practice and a noble character together are hallmarks of the true Muslims and the true *Muttaqin*.

Wal-'āqibatu lil muttaqīn – the final success will be for the pious ones! (7:128)

8.3 THE EIGHT MODULES OF THE CURRICULUM

Verse 2:177 can be divided into three main sections: (a) the origin, (b) the path, and (c) the end.

(a) The Origin

Module 1. The Creator & His Creation.

(b) The Path

Module 2. Divine Guidance.

Module 3. Roadmap to Self-Purification.

Module 4. Rasulullah (s)

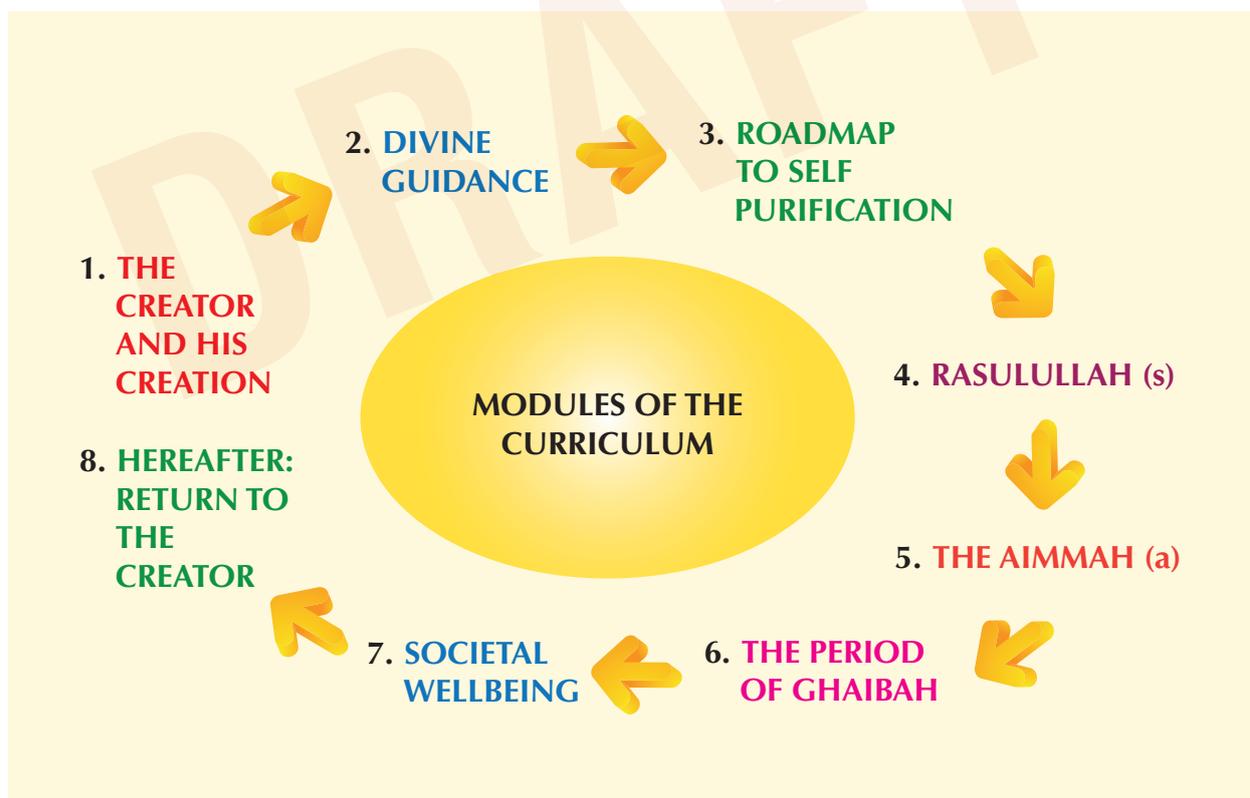
Module 5. The Aimmah (a)

Module 6. The Present Imam & the period of his ghaybah.

Module 7. Societal Wellbeing.

(c) The Return

Module 8. The Hereafter: Return to the Creator.



Each module consists of main themes which have been listed below. The main themes are further divided into sub-themes, which form the actual lessons. The sub-themes are grouped in six age bands. Some sub-themes run through age bands as they develop in complexity, whereas others are only covered at the appropriate age band.



Module 1: The Creator and His creation

This module is dedicated to man's relationship with his Creator. It covers Tawheed in great depth, discussing the existence of Allah (swt), His unity to His various attributes. It also covers the creation of the universe, the angels, the jinn, and man. It looks at the history of Nabi Adam and his children. Key concepts of tawba and istighfar, dua and munajat, as well as the daily prayer are also covered here, as they form the basis of our relationship and communication with Allah.

The main themes covered in Module 1 include:

- Allah is the creator of the universe
- Allah's Attributes
- Proving God's existence
- The angels and jinn
- Creation of Man (Nabi Adam and Sayyida Hawwa)
- The children of Adam
- The purpose of creation (Ubudiyyah)
- Need for religion
- Islam is the perfect religion
- The Kalema
- Man's relationship with Allah
- Du'a and munajat
- Tawba and istighfar
- Shirk, blasphemy and apostasy
- Worshipping Allah—Wudhu and salāh



Module 2: Divine guidance

Having created us, Allah (swt) continues to nurture and guide us. This module covers the lutf and adalah of Allah (swt), and explores the understanding of the various schools of Islamic theology, especially in relation to the adalah of Allah (swt). It also discusses Divine guidance in form of nubuwwah. Starting with the early stages of humanity on this earth, it focuses on the ancient nations and the prophets, especially the ulul ‘azm prophets, and the challenges that they faced, lessons that we can learn from their history, and universal values that we derive from their teachings. The Qur’an is also covered extensively in this module.

The main themes covered in Module 2 include:

- Adālah of Allah
- Dhulm - Tyranny and oppression
- Schools of Theology
- Qadhā and qadr
- Nubuwwah
- The Ulul azm and other select Anbiya
- How Allah communicates with His prophets and the creation
- Revelation and divine books
- The Qur’an
- Miracles of Anbiyā
- Knowledge and learning
- Role of the madrasah
- Places of worship



Module 3: Roadmap to self-purification

This module discusses the roadmap (sharī'ah) sent down by Almighty Allāh for self-purification in order to attain the company of al-abrār, the righteous ones. This module talks about character building and rituals of our faith that identify us as Muslims. It covers most of the furū'u 'd-dīn and moral-ethical issues.

The main themes covered in Module 3 include:

- The Sharia
- The body:
 - Tahārah and Najāsah
 - Ghusl
 - Food and drink
 - Bulugh
 - Ādāb
- The soul
 - Understanding the nafs and Tazkiyat an-nafs
 - Jihad al-Akbar
- Taqwa
- Sawm – a prescription for taqwa
- Balance between earthly life and the hereafter
- Moral and ethical traits
- Major and minor sins
- Niyyah—purity and sincerity of intention
- Hajj—Journey to Allah
- Trial and tribulation
- Sabr



Module 4: Rasulullah (s)

This module is a continuation of the concept of Divine guidance but focusing on the Prophet of Islam: his life, his sirah and sunnah, and his family, including the immaculate ladies Khadija and Fatima (a).

The main themes covered in Module 4 include:

- Arabia before Islam
- Ancestors of Rasulullah (s)
- Seera of Rasulullah (s)
- Lady Khadija (sa)
- Companions of Rasulullah (s)
- Succession to Rasulullah (s)
- Spread of Islam after the wafat of Rasulullah (s)
- The Ahl al-Kisā
- Lady Fatima Zahra (a) – daughter of Rasulullah (s)



Module 5: The Aimmah (a)

This module is also a continuation of the concept of Divine guidance but focuses on the divinely appointed successors of the Prophet (s). This module covers the issues related to Imāmah and Khilāfah, the concept of divine appointment, and the qualities of such Imams. It also covers the lives of the Aimmah of Ahlul Bayt (s) from the first to the eleventh Imam, and explores key concepts relating to Imamah and wilayah.

The main themes covered in Module 5 include:

- Concept of Imamah
- The Aimmah
- Companions of the Aimmah
- The Umayyad dynasty
- The Abbasid dynasty
- Shi'i sects
- Azadari
- Tawassul and Shafa'ah
- Tawalla and tabarraḥ
- Ziyarah to the holy shrines



Module 6: The period of ghaybah

This module is dedicated to the Imam of our time, Imam al-Mahdi (a). It covers the history of Imam al-Mahdi, the concept of ghaybah, the long life of the Imam, and the challenges faced during the ghaybah. It also covers the important subject of ijtiḥād and taqlid, and explores the lives of some prominent ulema.

The main themes covered in Module 6 include:

- Imam al-Mahdi (a)
- Concept of the Mahdi in Shi'i theology
- Concept of a saviour in other faiths
- The ghaibah
- The 'Ulamā
- Ijtihād and Sources of Islamic law
- Taqlid
- Schools of jurisprudence
- Khums and zakāt
- Jihād al-Asghar
- Taqiyyah
- Salafi history and doctrine



Module 7: Societal wellbeing

This module is a continuation of the roadmap to self-purification but more on a social level, and therefore it is named as “societal wellbeing.” Islam is not a religion of individuals. It is a religion of a community and a global ummah. Al-amr bil ma’rūf and an-nahi ‘anil munkar symbolize the social aspect of the community: we have to promote goodness in society and prevent social evils.

The main themes covered in Module 7 include:

- The family unit
- Mahramiyyah and Hijāb
- Marriage and divorce
- Relationship with one’s neighbours
- Relationship with the Muslim community
- Relationship with the wider community
- The media
- Amr bil Ma’ruf and Nahi anil-Munkar
- Fitna and Fasād
- Vices: Zina, drugs and intoxicants
- Friendship
- Sexuality in Islam



Module 8: The hereafter – Return to the Creator

This is a standalone module under the section “The Return”. It covers death, barzakh, resurrection, day of judgement and its consequences in the form of paradise and hell.

The main themes covered in Module 8 include:

- Death and dying
- Preparing for death
- Self-accounting and criticism
- Suicide and euthanasia
- Wills and inheritance
- Obligatory and recommended acts for the deceased
- Bereavement
- Barzakh
- Qiyāmah
- Heaven and hell

By going through the various sections of these eight modules, a madrasah graduate would leave with a sound belief (‘aqīdah), a good personal disposition (akhlāq) which caters to fulfil the rights of Almighty Allāh and His creatures, and pride in the history of our faith, especially in the Prophet (s) and the Imams of Ahlul Bayt (a).

In the words of Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin (a): “My Lord...make my children righteous, God-conscious, insightful, hearing, and obedient.” (As-Sahifah, Du‘a no. 25)



8.4 TRANSLATING THE MAIN THEMES INTO LESSONS

It is envisaged that each madrasah would have at least three 45 minute lessons per week, and approximately 24 teaching weeks per annum (excluding tests/exams, parents day, special events etc.)

This curriculum therefore caters for 48 lessons per annum, based on the 8 modules (96 lessons to be taught over a 2 year period), as well as 24 lessons (one lesson a week) dedicated to learning Qur'an.

	Teaching Weeks			
	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24
Period 1	Module 1	Module 3	Module 5	Module 7
Period 2	Module 2	Module 4	Module 6	Module 8
Period 3	Qur'an / Languages / Activities			

The sub-themes in each module have been sub-divided into six bands based on student age:

BAND A	4 - 5 YEARS
BAND B	6 - 7 YEARS
BAND C	8 - 9 YEARS
BAND D	10 - 11 YEARS
BAND E	12 - 13 YEARS
BAND F	14 - 15 YEARS

This approach allows madaris to implement the new curriculum with relative ease, regardless of the number of classes they have.

8.5 SUBTHEMES

The main themes in each of the eight modules have been further broken down into subthemes, and divided across the six age bands. Some sub-themes run across age bands as they develop in complexity, whereas others are only covered at the appropriate age band.

Modules 1 to 7 have been covered in each of the six age bands. This will allow students to study these modules every year, throughout their time at madrasah, with varying degrees of depth based on their age.

Module 8 has been covered in the last 3 age bands, enabling students to study this module from age 10 to 15 years.



MODULE 1: THE CREATOR AND HIS CREATION

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Allah is the Creator of the universe
2. Allah has the most beautiful names
3. Allah created Man. The first man is Nabi Adam
4. Allah is everywhere. He knows everything. He is Rahman, Rahim and Raziq
5. I am a Muslim. Islam is my deen
6. The Kalema
7. I begin in Allah's name
8. Du'a: I ask Allah for help [including adab of du'a]
9. Introduction to Furu' ad-deen
10. Muqaddamat as-salah: How to perform wudhu
11. I pray to Allah - The five daily prayers (including actions of salah)
12. Adhan and Iqamah

BAND B (6 - 7 YEARS)

1. Allah is one. Why can we not have more than one God?
2. Allah's creations: Angels, Jinn and Animals
3. Nabi Adam and Sayyida Hawwa
4. Who is Iblis? Why did he disobey Allah?
5. Pride and Arrogance
6. Habil and Qabil
7. Jealousy and envy
8. Tawba: Saying Astaghfirullah; Allah forgives those who repent sincerely
9. Worship – When to perform wudhu; Wājib and mustahab parts of wudhu
10. Translation and merits of adhān and iqāmah
11. Muqaddamāt as-salāh: Qibla, place, time and clothes of salāh
12. Recitations in salāh [wajib and mustahab parts]

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. Allah's attributes: Sifāt al-Thubutiyyah
2. Shaitān's promise to misguide the children of Adam; how he misguides us
3. The purpose of man's existence
4. The need to follow a religion
5. Meaning of Islam and why it is the perfect religion
6. What is kufr? Meaning of kāfir
7. Conditions for wudhu
8. Mubtilāt of wudhu
9. Muqaddamāt as-salāh: Niyyah
10. Correct performance of salāh
11. Ta'qibāt as-salāh and sajdah al-shukr
12. Khushu' [humility]



BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Allah's attributes: Sifāt al-Salbiyyah
2. The basis of our relationship with Allah: Greed, Fear or Love?
3. Greed and contentment
4. Salāh: wājib and mustahab parts; rukn and ghayr rukn; jahriyyah and ikhfātiyyah
5. Sajdah: Things on which it is permissible and the 7 parts that must touch the ground
6. Salāt al-jamā'ah: Importance, benefits and conditions
7. Mubtilāt of salāh
8. Du'a: Adab; best times; why some du'as are not accepted
9. Translation of salāh: qirā'ah and qunut
10. Translation of salāh: dhikr of ruku', sujud, tashahhud and salaam
11. Salat al-Ayat
12. Salat al-Qasr

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. We know Allah through His signs in creation
2. Importance of supplicating to Allah; short ad'iya from the Qur'an
3. Iman and yaqin; qualities of a mu'min
4. Nifaq; definition of a munafiq; overview of Sura Munafiqun
5. Tawba an-Nasuha: Steps towards true repentance
6. Salāt al-jamā'ah: How to join; qualities of imām al-jamā'ah
7. Salāt al-jumu'ah and the eid of jumu'ah
8. Qadhā salāt
9. Wudhu jabira and praying with physical challenges
10. Concentration in salāh
11. Introduction to Shakkiyāt as-salāh (including salāt al-ihtiyāt and sajdah as-sahv)
12. The children of Adam and procreation

BAND F (14 - 15 YEARS)

1. Ma'rifa of Allah
2. Muwahhid (definition and complexities)
3. Proof of Allah's existence
4. Alternate theories about creation of the universe and our response to them
5. Why some people refuse to believe in God (Atheists and Agnostics)
6. Shirk – levels; why it is unforgivable
7. Key differences between the Shi'i and the Sunni Muslims [including anthropomorphism]
8. Blasphemy and apostasy
9. Salah – Philosophy
10. Tark as-salāh
11. Salāh at work, when travelling and in public places
12. Mustahab salāt



MODULE 2: DIVINE GUIDANCE

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Adalah: definition and basic explanation
2. Importance of justice and being just
3. Allah's actions are based on hikmah and are not without purpose
4. Nubuwwah: definition and mission of Anbiya
5. Anbiya of Allah – first and last, number, names of ulul Azm, those who are still alive
6. Nabi Nuh
7. Nabi Musa – birth and childhood
8. Nabi Ibrahim's conversation with his uncle
9. Guidance of Allah through divine books: The 4 famous books and other suhuf
10. Places of worship: Hurma and ādāb of visiting masājid and Islamic centres
11. Adab of reciting and listening to Qur'an
12. Adab of learning and qualities of a good student

BAND B (6-7 years)

1. Nubuwwah: Why we need Anbiya
2. Miracles: Proof of Prophethood
3. Nabi Ibrahim destroys the idols
4. Nabi Ibrahim is thrown into the fire
5. Nabi Yunus
6. Nabi Salih
7. Importance of reciting the Holy Qur'an
8. Allah brings us from darkness to light – Ayat al-Kursi
9. Importance of attending madrasah and acquiring knowledge
10. Respect for teachers and ulama

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. Adalah: Why Allah cannot be unjust; discussion on equality and equity
2. Lutf of Allah
3. Nubuwwah: Qualities of a Nabi; functions; difference between Nabi and Rasul; no. of rusul
4. How Allah communicates with his Anbiya – dreams and direct communication
5. How Allah communicates with his Anbiya – Wahy
6. Nabi Isma'il: Birth and early days in the desert
7. Nabi Ibrahim is told to sacrifice his son
8. Eid al-Adha
9. Nabi Ibrahim and Nabi Isma'il build the Ka'ba – his prayer and progeny
10. The Ka'ba and Bayt al-Ma'mur; Masjid al-Haram
11. Masjid: design, features and history
12. Role of a masjid in the lives of Muslims



BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Adalah: Philosophy of suffering, and why Allah does not stop injustice
2. Our knowledge is limited and so our judgement is relative
3. Dhulm – types and causes
4. Tyrants in history – their characteristics and atrocities
5. Consequences of supporting tyrants and remaining silent in the face of tyranny
6. Bullying
7. Nubuwwah: Isma of Anbiya; tark al-awla
8. Nabi Ayyub
9. Nabi Idris
10. Nabi Hud
11. Nabi Dawud; Zabur
12. Nabi Sulayman

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. Nabi Musa causes the death of a man and leaves for Madain; Nabi Shu'aib
2. Nabi Musa and Nabi Harun's joint mission
3. Nabi Musa and Bani Isra'il
4. Nabi Musa and Khidr
5. The Tawrat
6. Nabi Yahya and Nabi Zakariyyah
7. Sayyida Maryam
8. Silence: Importance
9. Nabi 'Isa: His mission and disciples
10. The Injil and the Bible
11. The Qur'an: Scribes; recording; compilation and preservation
12. Tafseer of the Holy Qur'an; types of tafaseer; names of famous Shii and Sunni tafaseer

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Adalah: Qada and Qadr; amr bain al-amrain
2. Schools of Islamic theology: Ash'ari and Shi'i [key differences]
3. Nabi Lut
4. Nabi Ya'qub and his sons
5. Nabi Yusuf [early life; arrival in Egypt]
6. Nabi Yusuf and Zulaykha; in prison
7. Subjugation and humiliation
8. Nabi Yusuf: Minister of Egypt
9. The Qur'an: Types of verses [Makki & Madani, Muhkam & Mutashabih, Naskh]
10. Sujood in the Qur'an
11. Tahrif in the Qur'an
12. Islamic culture; and distinguishing between religion and culture, rituals and superstition



MODULE 3: ROADMAP TO SELF-PURIFICATION

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Niyyah – defn. and importance; Qurbatan Ilallah
2. Taharah – toilet etiquette
3. Table manners
4. Adab of sleeping
5. Adab at home
6. A Muslim’s home
7. Cleanliness is part of faith
8. Importance of honesty at all times
9. Sawm brings us closer to Allah [Introduction to Sawm] and month of Ramadan
10. Hajj – journey to Allah
11. Evils of lying
12. Israf

BAND B (6-7 years)

1. Niyyah – what is it? How to make niyyah
2. The Sharia – defn and importance
3. Tahara and najasah – definitions
4. Grooming and personal hygiene
5. Food and drink: Why its important to eat only halal food
6. Hospitality, and adab of being a guest
7. Concept of sin and consequences of sinning
8. Cheating and stealing
9. Bukhl
10. Greed
11. Personal integrity: keeping promises, secrets etc.
12. Developing will-power and self-control [sawm helps us do this]

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. The 5 ahkām (wājib, mustahab, mubāh, makrūh, harām) and types of wājib actions
2. Najasah – ‘Ain najis things
3. How najasah spreads; mutanajjis
4. An introduction to Mutahhirat
5. Bulugh – defn., when it happens, basic rulings
6. Ghusl – wajib and mustahab ghusl; how to perform
7. Halal and haram foods [incl. meat and seafood]
8. The soul: the body and soul; nature of soul; types of nafs; Jihad al-Akbar
9. Sinning corrupts the soul, causes hard-heartedness
10. Sawm: Types; benefits
11. Sawm: Niyyah; timings; mubtilat
12. Adab of dressing



BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Purity and sincerity of intention: Ujb and Riya
2. Hypocrisy; Sura al-Munafiqun
3. Mutahhirat (1) [Water; types of water]
4. Basic rulings regarding najasat al-'Ain
5. Gender specific: Istibra [boys], Haidh and istihadha [girls]
6. Important rulings regarding eating at restaurants, houses of non-Muslims and public places
7. Sins: Major and minor sins
8. Backbiting and slander
9. Rajab, Sha'ban and Ramadan: Season of spirituality
10. Significance of the month of Ramadan; Laylat al-Qadr
11. Philosophy of sawm
12. Sawm: conditions and rulings

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. Najasah: Hadath and Kabath
2. Mutahhirat (2)
3. Bulūgh [including keeping a beard] – Boys; Haidh and Istihādha rulings – Girls
4. Boys – Janābāh [ghusl, makruh/harām acts]; Girls – Janābah and Nifās
5. Dhibh
6. Steps to purifying the soul; obstacles to purifying soul
7. Balance between worldly life and hereafter
8. Trials and tribulations: Why and how Allah tests us
9. Sabr
10. Sawm – Rasulullah's sermon welcoming the holy month of Ramadan
11. Sawm – those exempt from fasting [including rules of sawm whilst travelling]
12. Hajj – types, istitā'ah

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Shari'ah: Its role in the life of a Muslim; role in modern society
2. Food and drink: Alcohol
3. Smoking and its effects [incl. shisha]
4. Taqwa: meaning, importance, how to acquire it
5. Controlling the powers of the soul
6. Pornography and masturbation
7. Sawm: Qadha fasts
8. Sawm: Consequences of not fasting; Kaffara
9. Moon sighting
10. Eid al-Fitr and salat al-Eidain
11. Hajj – philosophy; acts in Makkah
12. Hajj – acts outside Makkah



MODULE 4 – RASULULLAH (S)

BAND A (4-5 YEARS)

1. Birth of Rasulullah
2. Ashab al-Fil [Surat al-Fil]
3. Qualities of Rasulullah
4. Rasulullah and the old lady
5. Rasulullah is as-Sadiq and al-Amin
6. Childhood of Rasulullah
7. Companions of Rasulullah (1): Bilal
8. Ahl al-Kisa and hadith al-Kisa
9. Salawat on Rasulullah and his progeny
10. Rasulullah's relationship with Sayyida Fatima
11. Tasbih of Sayyida Fatima (a)
12. Importance of being self-sufficient

BAND B (6-7 YEARS)

1. Lady Khadija
2. Rasulullah's marriage to lady Khadija
3. The cave of Hira
4. The first revelation
5. Bi'thah
6. Da'wah dhul Ashira
7. Abu Talib and his support for Rasulullah
8. Abu Lahab's opposition to Rasulullah
9. Companions of Rasulullah (2)
10. Lady Fatima: her life and personality
11. Nadhr; Sura al-Dahr
12. Rasulullah's youth

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. Arabia before Islam
2. The period of Jahiliyyah
3. Ancestors of Rasulullah
4. Abdul Muttalib and his sons
5. Public declaration of Prophethood
6. Opposition to Rasulullah's mission
7. The plight of the early Muslims
8. Migrations to Abyssinia
9. The event of Mubahala
10. Companions of Rasulullah (3)
11. Sura an-Nas and Sura al-Falaq
12. Madina: city of Rasulullah; Masjid an-Nabawi

**BAND D 9 (10 – 11 YEARS)**

1. Boycott of Banu Hashim
2. Aam al-Huzn
3. Visit to Taif
4. Me'raj
5. Pledges of Aqaba
6. Hijrah – departure from Makkah
7. Hijrah – arrival in Madina [Islamic calendar starts with hijrah]
8. Ansar and Muhajiroon
9. Companions of Rasulullah (4)
10. Imam Ali: successor of Rasulullah
11. Hadith al-Thaqalain
12. Treatment of Ahl al-Kisa after wafat of Rasulullah

BAND E (12-13 YEARS)

1. Madina – The first Islamic state; the constitution of Madina
2. Why Madina was more receptive to Rasulullah compared to Makkah
3. Adab of dialogue and da'wah
4. The challenges faced by the Madinan state
5. The battle of Badr
6. The battle of Uhud
7. Companions of Rasulullah: Hamza b. Abdul Muttalib
8. The battle of Khandaq
9. The battle of Khyber
10. The battles of Moota and Hunayn; other ghazwa
11. The wives of Rasulullah
12. Fadak

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. The treaty of Hudaibiyah and the pledge of Ridwan
2. Conquest of Makkah
3. Deputations from foreign lands
4. Rasulullah's letters to foreign rulers
5. The final pilgrimage
6. The event of Ghadeer
7. The last days and wafat of Rasulullah
8. The spread of Islam during the lifetime of Rasulullah
9. The event of Saqifa
10. The period of the first caliph
11. The period of the second caliph
12. The period of the third caliph



MODULE 5 – THE AIMMAH (A)

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Aimmah – Why do we need Aimmah?
2. The names of the Aimmah
3. How do we show our love and respect to the Aimmah?
4. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam Ali (a)
5. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam Hasan (a)
6. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam Husayn (a)
7. Importance of hard work [story from Aimmah]
8. The Ahl al-Bayt
9. Rasulullah’s relationship with Imam Ali
10. Rasulullah’s relationship with Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn
11. Sura al-Kawthar – brief overview and merits
12. Names of the Islamic months

BAND B (6-7 years)

1. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam Zain al-Abidin (a) [du’a & munajat]
2. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam al-Baqir (a)
3. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam as-Sadiq
4. Importance of knowledge; ahadith about acquiring knowledge
5. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam al-Kadhim [forgiving others]
6. Ummul Baneen
7. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of ‘Abbas b. ‘Ali (a)
8. Bravery
9. Loyalty
10. Who are the Shi’a?
11. Remembering the Aimmah – short ziyarah after salah
12. Importance of time-keeping and punctuality

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. The concept of Imamah
2. Qualities and functions of an Imam
3. ‘Ilm al-ghayb
4. The life and personality of Imam al-Baqir (a)
5. The life and personality of Imam al-Sadiq (a)
6. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam al-Rida (a)
7. Brief introduction and lessons from the life of Imam al-Taki (a)
8. The life and personality of Imam al-Hadi (a)
9. The life and personality of Imam al-Askari (a)
10. Controlling anger
11. Hilm



BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Companions of Imam Husayn (a)
2. Azadari
3. The Tawwabeen
4. Brief history of Mukhtar and how he brought the perpetrators of Kerbala to justice
5. The life and personality of Imam Zain al-Abidin (a)
6. The period of Imamate of Imam Zain al-Abidin (a)
7. An introduction to sahifa al-Kamila
8. The life and personality of Imam al-Kadhim (a)
9. The life and personality of Imam al-Ridha (a)
10. The life and personality of Imam al-Taki (a)
11. An overview of the Abbasid dynasty
12. The post Abbasid era

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. The life and period of caliphate of Imam Hasan (a)
2. The assassination of Imam Hasan (a)
3. Mu'awiya b. Abu Sufyan
4. The establishment of the Umayyad dynasty
5. Events leading to the tragedy of Karbala
6. The tragedy of Karbala
7. The aftermath of the tragedy of Kerbala
8. Lady Zaynab – her life and personality
9. The long term impact and lessons from the tragedy of Kerbala
10. Ziyarah of Imam Husayn (a) [incl. Zyarat 'Ashura and Zyarat Warith]
11. Wilayah of Ahl al-Bayt
12. Tawalla and Tabarra

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Imam Ali's relation with the first 3 caliphs; why he didn't fight for his right
2. Companions of Imam Ali (a)
3. Events that led to the appointment of Imam Ali as the fourth caliph
4. The period of Imam Ali's khilafah
5. Islamic governance: Imam Ali's letter to Malik al-Ashtar
6. The battle of Jamal
7. The battles of Siffeen and Nahrwan
8. The Kharijites and the assassination of Imam Ali (a)
9. Munajat of Imam Ali (a)
10. An introduction to Nahj al-Balagha
11. Tawassul
12. Shafa'ah



MODULE 6 – PERIOD OF THE GHAYBAH

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Imam Mahdi is the Imam of our time
2. Showing our love and respect for Imam Mahdi
3. Dua Faraj (Allahumma kun liwaliyyik)
4. Importance of charity in Islam
5. Stories about Imam Mahdi (a)

BAND B (6-7 years)

1. The family of Imam al-Mahdi
2. The birth of Imam al-Mahdi
3. The titles of Imam al-Mahdi
4. Dua for the safety and the reappearance of the Imam
5. Writing ariza to Imam Mahdi
6. Zakat – Helping the poor and the needy
7. Adab of giving sadaqa
8. Lessons from the lives of the ulama –Part 1

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. Meaning of ghaybah and why Imam is in ghayba
2. Ghayba al-Sughra
3. Introduction to taqlid (incl. important terminology)
4. Qualities of a mujtahid and selection of marja at-taqlid
5. Zakat – charitable work of Islamic organizations
6. Lessons from the lives of the ulama – Part 2
7. Age and longevity of Imam al-Mahdi
8. Ashab al-kahf
9. How Imam Mahdi guides his followers [examples in history]
10. Masajid associated with Imam al-Mahdi
11. Eid of Jumuah
12. Sura al-'Asr – brief tafseer and merits



BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Ghayba al-Kubra and how the Imam guides us while in ghaybah
2. Our responsibilities during the period of the ghaybah
3. Introduction to ijtihad
4. How to use the risala of a marja (including technical terms in the risala)
5. Du'a al-Iftitah – overview and main themes
6. Hadith and its components
7. Preparation for ghaybah during the lives of the later Imams (incl system of wikalah)
8. Dua Ahad
9. Zakat and sadaqa
10. Recognizing the Imam of our time and praying for his safety and reappearance
11. The month of Sha'ban and Munajat Sha'baniyyah
12. Ziyarah Nahiya of Imam al-Mahdi

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. Philosophy of ghaybah
2. General signs of the Imam's reappearance
3. Specific events before the reappearance of the Imam (including Dajjal, Sufyani, etc.)
4. Concept of the Mahdi in Islam
5. Concept of the saviour in other faiths
6. Necessity of taqlid and why mujtahideen have differences in fatawa
7. Sources of Islamic law
8. Laylat al-Bara'ah
9. Dua an-Nudbah (merits and main themes)
10. Khums – A brief history
11. Khums – Important rulings
12. Khums – where/how it is utilized

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Return of imam al-Mahdi
2. Establishment of a just and equitable society
3. Schools of jurisprudence: Sunni + Ja'fari
4. Shi'i schools of jurisprudence: Akhbari and Usuli
5. Canonical books of Shii and Sunnis
6. Concept of jihad al-Asghar in Islam and its application during the ghaybah
7. Taqiyyah and its application
8. The Crusades
9. The Sultanates – Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal
10. The Islamic revolution of Iran
11. Salafi history and doctrine
12. Lessons from the lives of the 'ulama – Part 3



MODULE 7 - SOCIETAL WELL-BEING

BAND A (4 - 5 YEARS)

1. Respect for parents
2. Love for siblings
3. Love and respect for grandparents
4. Being polite and respectful to maids, nannies, gardeners, drivers, etc.
5. Importance of keeping good friends
6. Good manners when visiting someone's house
7. Being helpful to Muslim brothers and sisters
8. Islamic greetings and adab of greeting
9. Common Islamic phrases in everyday use
10. Selfishness and altruism
11. Justice; being just
12. Special role and position of mothers in Islam

BAND B (6-7 years)

1. Du'a for parents
2. How to select friends
3. Importance of unity among Muslims
4. Caring for the elderly and people with disability
5. Thinking positive of others and hiding their shortcomings
6. Animals in the Qur'an
7. Kindness to animals
8. Consequence of disobedience to parents
9. There is no compulsion in religion (Sura al Kafirun)
10. Adab of giving and receiving gifts
11. Lost and found property
12. Iyadah – visiting the sick

BAND C (8 - 9 YEARS)

1. Rights of parents
2. Silat ar-Rahm
3. Qualities of a true friend
4. Rights of a fellow Muslim
5. Caring for the environment
6. Mahram and non-Mahram
7. Hijab for men and women
8. Importance of unity
9. Racism and discrimination
10. Observing and participating in non-Islamic festivals

**BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)**

1. Responsibilities of parents towards their children
2. Qat' ar-Rahm
3. Relationship with neighbours
4. The local Muslim community and our responsibilities towards it
5. Social networking
6. Amr bil Ma'ruf and Nahy anil Munkar at the individual level
7. Institution of marriage in Islam
8. Modesty and chastity
9. Luqman's advice to his son
10. Imam Ali's advice to his children
11. Status of women in Islam and the four perfect women in paradise
12. Ummatan Wasata – Moderation in life

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. Riba
2. Standing up for just causes
3. Behavior with friends and peer pressure
4. Supporting humanitarian causes
5. Amr bil Ma'ruf and Nahy anil Munkar at the societal level
6. An Islamic wedding
7. Drugs and intoxicants
8. Singing and dancing
9. Fitna and fasad
10. Husn al-Zann and Su' al-Zann
11. Relationship of Muslims with the wider society
12. Islamic governance – Imam Ali's letter to Malik- al-Ashtar

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Understanding the generation gap
2. Citizenship and civic duties
3. Respect for other faiths
4. Gender interaction
5. Islam in the media
6. Using the media to promote Islamic image and values
7. Spouse selection
8. Relationship with one's in-laws
9. Divorce in Islam
10. Sexuality in Islam
11. Islam and human responsibilities and rights (Risalat al-Huqooq)
12. Safeguarding shahwa before marriage



MODULE 8 HEREAFTER - THE RETURN TO THE CREATOR

The lessons for this module start at age 10 due to the nature of the topics covered.

BAND D (10 - 11 YEARS)

1. Concept of Qiyamah and its different names in the Qur'an
2. Meaning of death
3. Death is a transition to the next world
4. Period of Barzakh
5. Sequence of events leading to Day of Judgment
6. Punishment in hell: temporary or permanent
7. Resurrection: Objections and proof
8. Allah demonstrates resurrection to Nabi il-Zair and Nabi Ibrahim
9. Short suwar and verses describing heaven and hell
10. Necessity of reward and punishment
11. Wadi-us-Salam and Wadi al-Barhut
12. Talqin and questioning in the grave

BAND E (12 - 13 YEARS)

1. Self-accounting and self-criticism
2. Preparing for death (including Thawab al-Jariyah)
3. Obligatory and recommended acts on the deathbed
4. Obligatory and recommended acts following death
5. Separation of the soul from the body
6. Events on the Day of Judgment – Part 1
7. Events on the Day of Judgment – Part 2
8. Levels of heaven and hell
9. Amanah and Khiyanah
10. Qur'anic description of heaven
11. Qur'anic description of hell
12. Overview of Sura Yaseen – Merits of reciting and main themes

BAND F (14-15 YEARS)

1. Ghusl al-Mayyit
2. Kafan
3. Salat al-Mayyit
4. An Islamic burial (Dafan)
5. Process of bereavement (including 'Iddah)
6. Remembering the deceased (recommended acts and specific prayers)
7. Obligations of children for the deceased parents
8. Islamic Will
9. Inheritance
10. Sanctity of life in Islam
11. Islamic attitude to suicide and euthanasia
12. Abortion



8.6 SPECIAL THEMES

These themes have either been introduced briefly or not included in the eight modules, mainly because they are more appropriate for senior students (16+).

1. Irfān
2. Sufism
3. Wilāyat al-Faqih
4. Religious pluralism
5. Inter-faith and Intra-faith studies
6. Raj'ah
7. Bada
8. Islamic Philosophy
9. Popular misconceptions of Islam
10. Science in the Qur'an
11. Islamic government
12. Marriage and divorce
13. Slavery
14. Effect of colonialism on Muslim countries
15. Spread of Islam in Europe
16. The identity and history of the KSI community
17. Sexuality in Islam
18. Interfaith dialogue
19. Crime and punishment
20. Tijāra
21. End of life decisions
22. Rules of inheritance
23. Islamic medical ethics [cloning, IVF, organ donation & transplants, fertility treatment, genetic engineering]



9. THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK IS FOR ALL STUDENTS

The MCE Curriculum Framework is an inclusive framework for all madrasah students. Inclusivity means ensuring that all groups of students are included and valued.

The Curriculum Framework does this by:

- specifying a wide and empowering set of outcomes for students to achieve;
- providing a basis for programs that challenge all students and offer all groups of students opportunities to achieve these outcomes;
- recognising and valuing the different knowledge and experience of different groups of students; and
- taking into account the diversity among madrasah students worldwide: for example, in terms of gender, languages, culture, learning capacity, socioeconomic background and geographic location.

The curriculum development team has drafted learning outcomes for every lesson (sub-theme) within the new curriculum. The learning outcomes will:

- ensure that the lessons are relevant and meet the needs of the learner
- guide the creation of notes for student textbooks
- help the teacher prepare appropriately for the lesson
- guide the teacher in assessing student learning



10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The implementation of a new curriculum framework will take time, patience and training. Madaris teachers will be nervous as they make the transition from their known existing and probably safe models to one that is innovative and learner centred. Madaris teachers will want some fully worked up examples of schemes of work for them to trial before they have sufficient confidence to adapt the methodology to their unique context. Successful implementation will require four distinct but interrelated phases once the framework has been approved.

PHASE ONE: CONSULTATION

The MCE Curriculum Development team has been working on preparing this draft curriculum framework based on the feedback received from madaris worldwide, as well as input and advice from educationalists and ulema. This draft framework will now undergo a period of consultation with madaris and other stakeholders to ensure it is relevant and addresses the needs of our students. At the end of the consultation phase, the draft framework will be reviewed and amended based on the feedback received from the stakeholders.

PHASE TWO: PILOTING STAGE

The curriculum will be piloted in a few medium-sized madaris in all major regions globally. Madrasah teachers involved in the piloting of the curriculum will receive relevant training and guidance from the MCE. The curriculum development team will also provide sample lesson plans and course material to assist teachers in trialling the new curriculum.

PHASE THREE: COMPLETION

Lessons learnt from the pilot will be instrumental in finalising an agreed curriculum framework and lesson planning format which will be rolled out over time to all madaris. The longer term aim would be to produce a complete age-appropriate set of lessons, teaching and learning resources for universal application.

PHASE FOUR: THE WIDER ROLL OUT

The agreed framework and lessons will be rolled out to all madaris worldwide. Teachers will be asked to evaluate the curriculum and lessons at regular intervals to enable the MCE make the necessary revisions for future editions.



IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

Phase 1: Nov 2013 – Feb 2014

Phase 2: Feb – Apr 2014

Phase 3: Mar – Dec 2014

Phase 4: Jan 2015



11. LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

11.1 LEARNING STYLES AND METHODS

"I see and I forget, I hear and I remember, I do and I understand."-Confucius

Students learn best by seeing the value and importance of the information presented in the classroom. If the students are not interested in the material presented, they will not learn it.

In order to achieve the ultimate goal of student learning it is important to use a combination of teaching methods and to make the classroom environment as stimulating and interactive as possible.

Students learn in many different ways. It is very important for all teachers to understand how students learn and process the information to make learning more comprehensible and meaningful for the students.

Learning is reflected in the way we respond to environmental, social, emotional and physical stimuli, to understand new information. Learning style is defined as the way that information is processed. There is no right or wrong learning style. Most children show a preference for one of the following basic learning styles. There are three main learning styles; visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic:

Visual

Visual learners learn by watching. They conscript images from the past when trying to remember. They visualize the way things look in their heads. Forty percent of students fall into this category.

Auditory

These individuals discover information through listening and interpreting information by the means of pitch, emphasis and speed. These students learn by listening and remember facts when they are presented in the form of a poem, noise or melody.

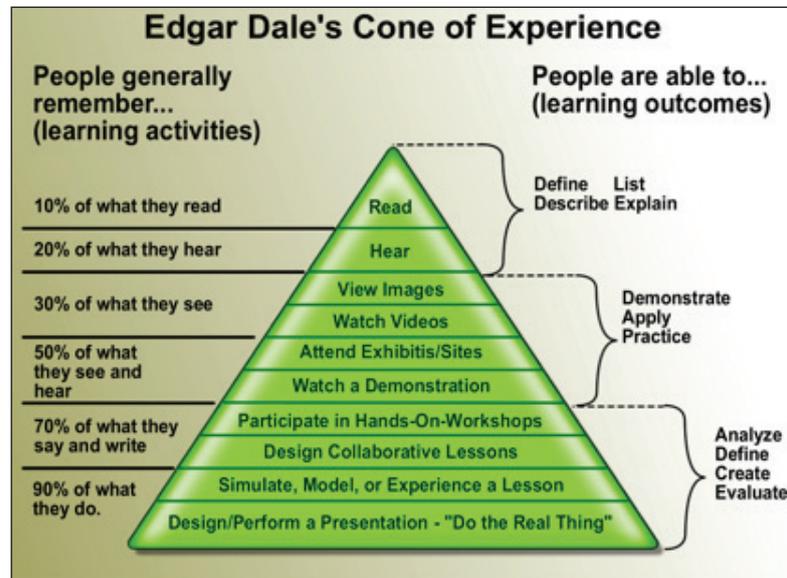
Kinaesthetic

Kinaesthetic learners learn best with an active, "hands-on" approach. These learners favour interaction with the physical world. These students make up 50 per cent of students and can have difficulty learning in a traditional setting.

The researchers suggest that only 10 percent of students learn best through auditory style, but 80 percent of instructional delivery in classrooms is auditory. The preferred learning style suggested by the students in different researches is kinaesthetic style of learning (Gilakjani, 2012).



The educationist Edgar Dale's "Cone of Learning" suggests that students only retain about 10% of what they read compared to 90% of what they do.



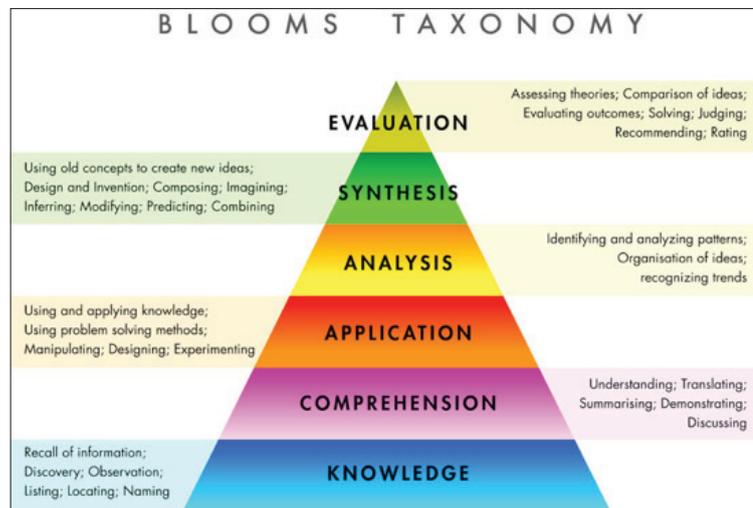
The figure above shows what students will be able to do at each level of the Cone (the learning outcomes they will be able to achieve) relative to the type of activity they are doing (reading, hearing, viewing images, etc.). The numerical figures on the left side of the image, what students will generally remember, indicate that practical, hands-on experience in a real-life context will allow students to remember best what they do. Again, it is important to remember that this does not mean reading and listening are not valuable learning experiences, simply that "doing the real thing" can lead to the retention of the largest amount of information. This is in part because those experiences near the bottom of the Cone, closer to and including real-world experiences, make use of more of our senses; it is believed that the more senses that are used, the greater our ability to learn from and remember an event or experience.

When thinking about a typical madrasah classroom, it is rare to find different styles or approaches to learning incorporated into a class. While it may seem impossible to do this, it can be done through thoughtful planning and preparation. It does force teachers to conceptualize the class differently—with a focus on the variety of ways in which students learn. Also, the various inventories on learning styles allow teachers to gain insight into areas which are well developed and identify areas that need further development.

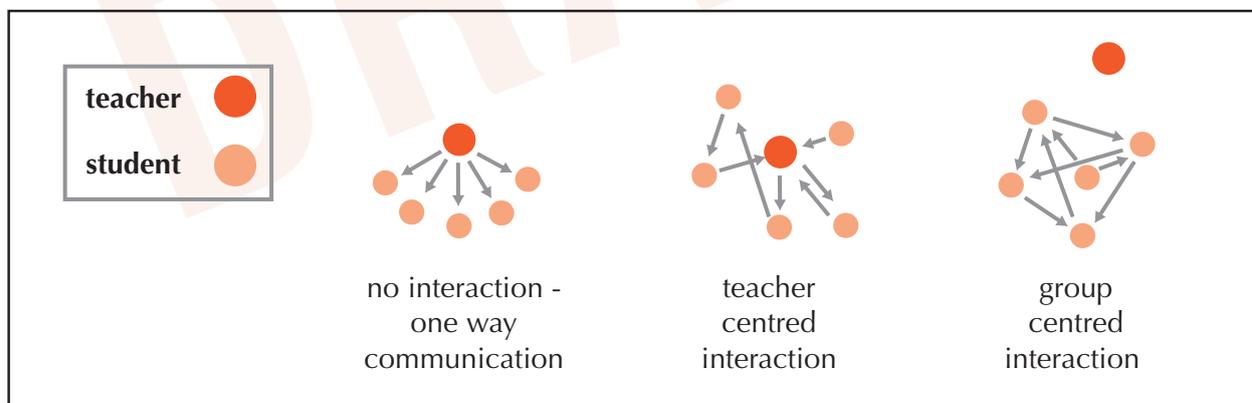
Madrasah teachers with understanding of students' preferred learning styles and intelligence may be able to prepare relevant material for students' learning that cater for their individual needs. Trying different methods of learning with the emphasis on hands-on learning, may prevent students from feeling frustrated and inadequate when they are not able to work up to their potential. It means that experimenting with different learning styles and environments may improve the students' accomplishments and improve their interest in madrasah classes.

11.2 TEACHING METHODOLOGIES FOR MADRASAH EDUCATION

Methods in the educational practice refer to activities that teachers engage in inside of the classroom. Specifically, they are procedures and techniques that are undertaken and primarily planned by the teacher to convey knowledge and/or to practice behaviour. Methods normally closely relate to the objectives a teacher wants his students to achieve. Therefore, one of the most used characterizations of methods is connected with Bloom's taxonomy.



It is easy to understand that if a teacher wants a student to learn how to perform Salāh, for example, he/she must let the student practice doing it. That sounds pretty simple. However, from a practical aspect, the decision about which method the teacher should use to achieve the given objective is not as straightforward as there are various teaching methods at the teacher's disposal. In order to get a clearer idea of how to choose the appropriate method, it is essential to look at three types of interaction between teacher and students:



Examples

- "no interaction": lecture
- "teacher centred interaction": interactive lecture
- "group centred interaction": group work

Commonly, most madaris may find it easier to use lecture method but there are other more effective ways of teaching which is essential if teacher aims to teach higher levels in Bloom's Taxonomy.



11.3 ASSESSMENT IN MADRASAH EDUCATION

Assessment is the process of collecting, analysing and recording information about students' progress towards achievement of syllabus outcomes. An important aspect of assessment is to design appropriate learning programs for all students.

The principles below underpin effective assessment in madrasah education:

- Ensure that distinction is made between the assessment of students' knowledge and understandings, skills, values and attitudes in madrasah education. Assessment of a student's knowledge of one aspect of subject matter, for example, should seek to identify and make judgements about what they know rather than their enthusiasm or interest in a topic.
- The focus for the assessment should be clear to the assessor and the student. If the purpose is to determine what a student understands about the Prophet Mohammad (s) rather than their use of English, for example, then the student's use of their home language may assist them in demonstrating what they understand. In this case, students should not be penalised for using less comprehensible English.
- Usually, the outcomes in the syllabus provide valuable descriptions of learning that assist teachers to monitor the progress of students.
- Judgements about achievement should not be based on one piece of evidence or performance in only one context. A student may indicate in a pen-and-paper test that they respect parents; however, the student's actions in front of parents or in other contexts may reveal a quite different attitude.

Forms of Assessment

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is the practice of building a cumulative profile of student achievement. In madrasah education, this means informal and systematic observation of students as they engage with the content addressed during class and madrasah activities. The syllabus outcomes mainly assist teachers to assess students' progress.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is the practice of making judgements about student achievement at certain relevant points in the learning program, such as at the end of module, or at the end of a term or year of madrasah schooling. Formal assessment activities such as tests, projects and assignments are generally used to make summative judgements. Such assessment tools may focus on a single outcome or on a number of outcomes.

Choosing Assessment Tasks and Strategies

The following table may assist madaris and teachers in selecting valid assessment tasks and



strategies. These strategies can be used singularly or in combination to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

AREA OF ASSESSMENT	SOME EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT TASKS AND STRATEGIES
Knowledge and Understandings	quizzes; multiple-choice or true/false tests; blanks in matrices; matching questions with answers; labelling a diagram, picture or model; written and spoken texts
Skills: acquiring information	data collection; graphing; developing concept maps; completing timelines; interpreting various text types; assignments
using an inquiry process	research projects; problem-solving; critical dialogue (student–teacher; student–student)
social and community participation	debating; creating posters; performances; letter-writing
Values and Attitudes	actions; written, spoken and visual texts

Evaluation

Evaluation is an ongoing process. Information for use in evaluation may be gathered through a range of sources, including:

- student assessment;
- teachers' own reflections on their teaching practices;
- written records such as questionnaires, logs and diaries, submissions or records of meetings;
- discussion with general staff members, teaching staff, parents and community members.

Teachers need to gather, organise and interpret information in order to make judgements about the effectiveness and appropriateness of:

- plans for the teaching of specific module;
- teaching programs;
- teaching strategies and practices;
- assessment strategies;
- resources;
- staff development programs.



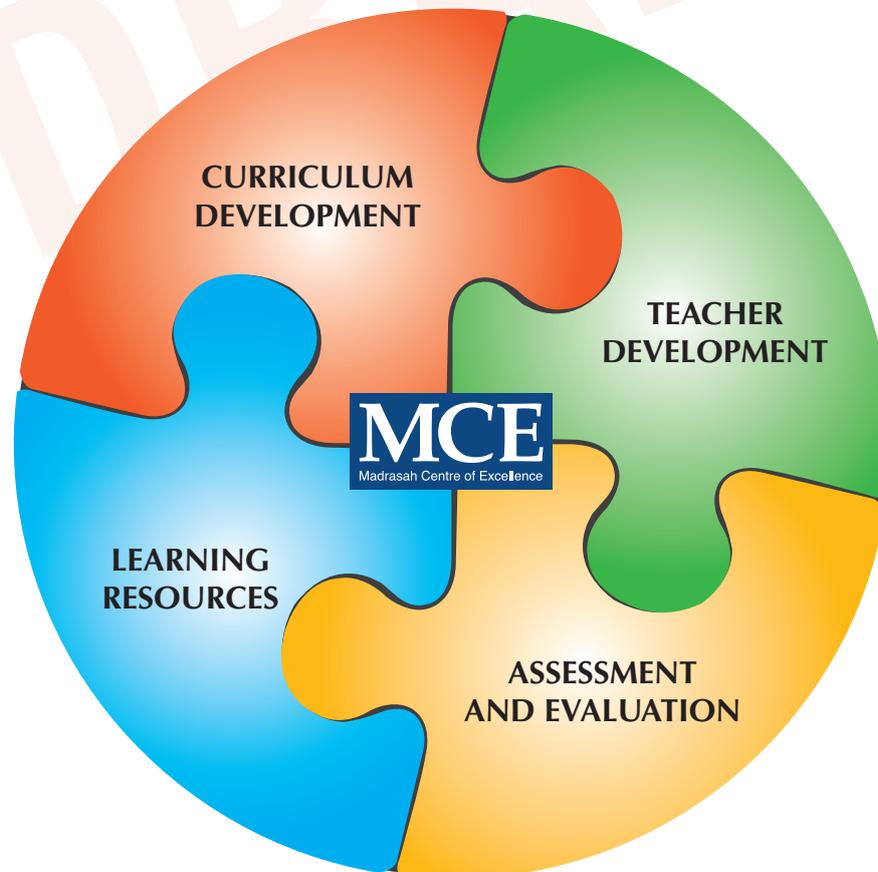
12. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CURRICULUM SUPPORT MATERIAL

Professional development and curriculum support materials for teachers and madaris are considered to be essential for this Curriculum Framework concept to work.

The Curriculum Development Team will create textbooks for students based on the new curriculum. The team will also work closely with other teams within the MCE to ensure that madaris, teachers, parents and students are supported fully in implementing the curriculum.

The Teacher Development team will facilitate the provision of training to meet the needs of the madrasah teachers; and will also create a body that represents madrasah teachers globally, providing support and a forum for teachers to interact, share valuable experiences and learn.

The Learning Resources team will create a comprehensive resource centre for teachers, parents and students where resources can be shared globally encouraging development of new ideas and innovation. It will also reach out to community members who would not otherwise have access to a madrasah education.





13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There are three distinct phases to the monitoring and evaluation of the MCE framework. The first and crucial phase involves the pilot where evaluation must be on going, in depth and rigorous. The second is the longer term where all madrasahs should be encouraged to feedback on the implementation of the new framework against a given agreed regular framework. At the end of this, the framework, syllabus and lesson plans should be finalised. The final phase is the less rigorous but nonetheless important because it entails on-going self-review, keeps the managers up to speed with how the madaris worldwide are using the materials and in the light of this, what if any, modifications are called for.

Firstly, however, clarity of definition is required so that participants are very clear as to the intended outcomes of both processes. Monitoring is simply the collection and analysis of information against a given criteria. For example, you would want to monitor the take-up of the curriculum, by age groups, and by modules. Analysis of data, depending of course on the questions posed, might determine if there are areas of the curriculum which teachers and learners struggle with. Analysis might also reveal those areas which learners like the most; or those which particularly lend themselves to SOLE (Self-organised learning environments). Judgements will be called for once sufficient data has been amassed and analysed.

Evaluation, however, is all about making judgments. It should involve all stakeholders in commenting on the successes and failures of the framework, of the syllabus and most importantly of all, of the lessons themselves. There are two dominant types of evaluation: externally imposed and internally integrated self-evaluation. The externally imposed involves an outside or supra organisation setting, posting and implementing an agenda against a set of criteria. Self-evaluation however involves the institution and its stakeholders collecting data, observing outcomes and outputs and coming to judgements about how effective a curriculum and its teaching and learning are. The most efficient model is probably supported self-evaluation where an institution undertakes the monitoring and evaluation supported, advised and moderated by an external critical friend.

There are a number of tools madaris can deploy:

- i. *Observation*** – this is particularly valuable in the early stages of implementing a course but should be carried out separately from observations of teacher performance. The teaching and learning process can be observed in a variety of settings and forms can be used to record the information in a standardised way. Training is required for those undertaking observation because it helps remove bias and provides observers and observed with a clear set of criteria.
- ii. *Student lesson evaluation forms*** – crucial for teacher feedback and for course content and process comment. It is, for example, particularly useful at the end of each lesson for students to be asked, ‘what have you learnt as good Muslims in this lesson?’ Students should also be able to text their responses or feed them into a Twitter feed.



- iii. Feedback questionnaires** – questionnaires can be used to collect information from staff, students, parents and external people or groups involved with the course. Information can be sought about all aspects of a course. Questionnaires are useful to collect a large amount of information and, if both open and closed questions are used, can be a rich source of data. Again, on-line completion and retrieval accelerates the process and hopefully increases the take-up.
- iv. Focus groups/meetings/forums/interviews** – structured or semi-structured meetings (with individuals or groups) and focus groups can be another useful source of detailed information about a programme. These are time consuming and therefore are best used to probe into areas of concern or to follow up issues which have been identified through other means eg. Questionnaires. It is good practice to set up regular meetings with student representatives aimed specifically at reviewing the course or elements of it. Curriculum committees can also be useful sources of information about the course and help to increase ownership of the curriculum. The results from such meetings must be fed back into the overall quality assurance mechanisms so that appropriate action can be taken.
- v. Student assessment results** – Results from both formative and summative assessments should be analysed regularly in order to evaluate whether individual assessments are performing reliably and validly and also whether minimum set standards are being achieved. The reports from external examiners are also a very useful source of external information about the course.
- vi. Reports** – reports which the institution has to provide for internal use especially if related to supported self-evaluation can be a useful evaluative tool.



14. ADAPTATION AND REVIEW

The MCE Curriculum Framework is a long-term educational reform for madaris KSI worldwide. As teachers and students work with the Framework, they will find that adjustments are made to their learning and teaching programs.

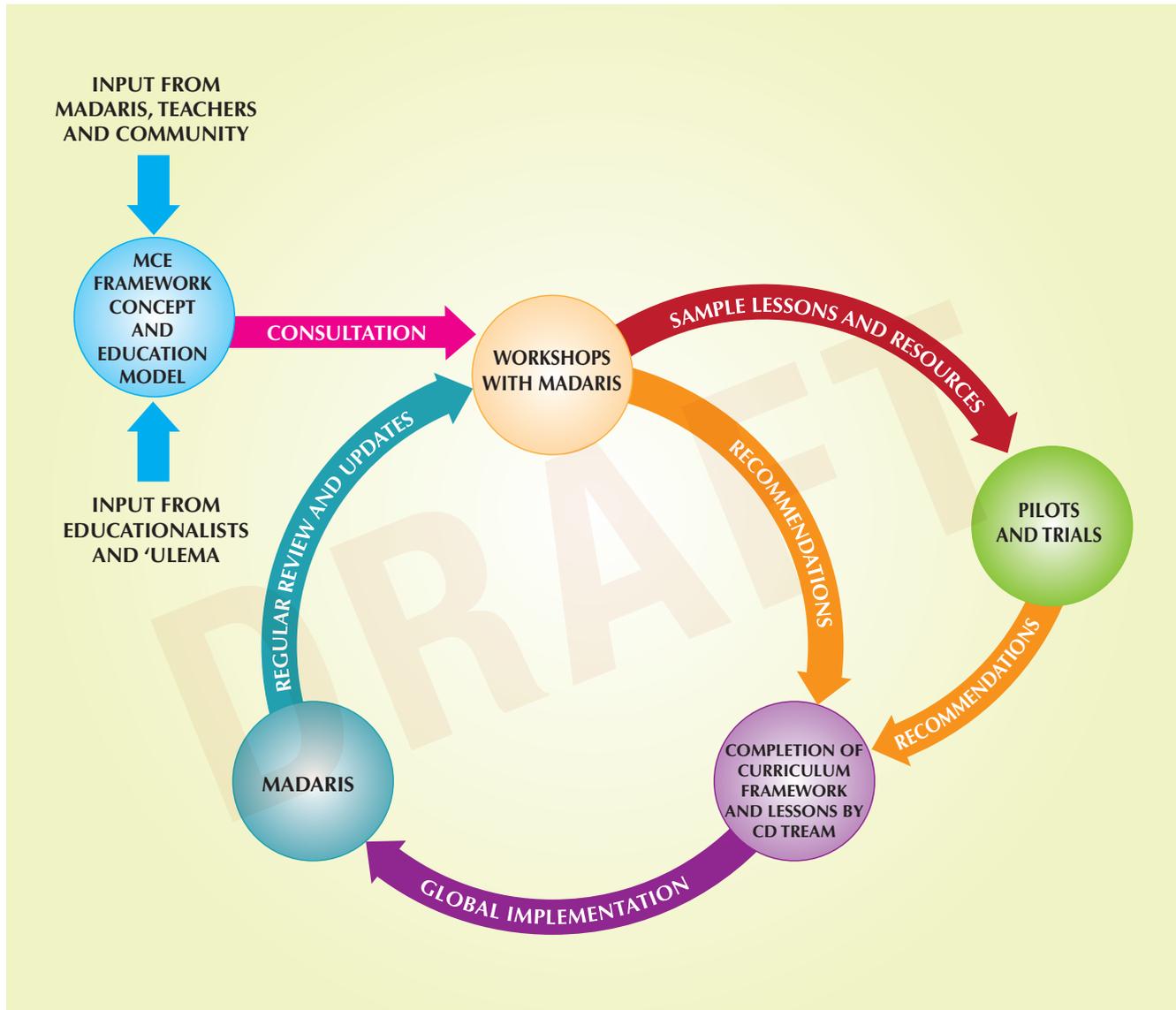
Similarly, the MCE will make adjustments to the Curriculum Framework to take account of issues arising from the experience of implementation. The Framework will be modified to take account of regional and educational trends and changing community expectations.

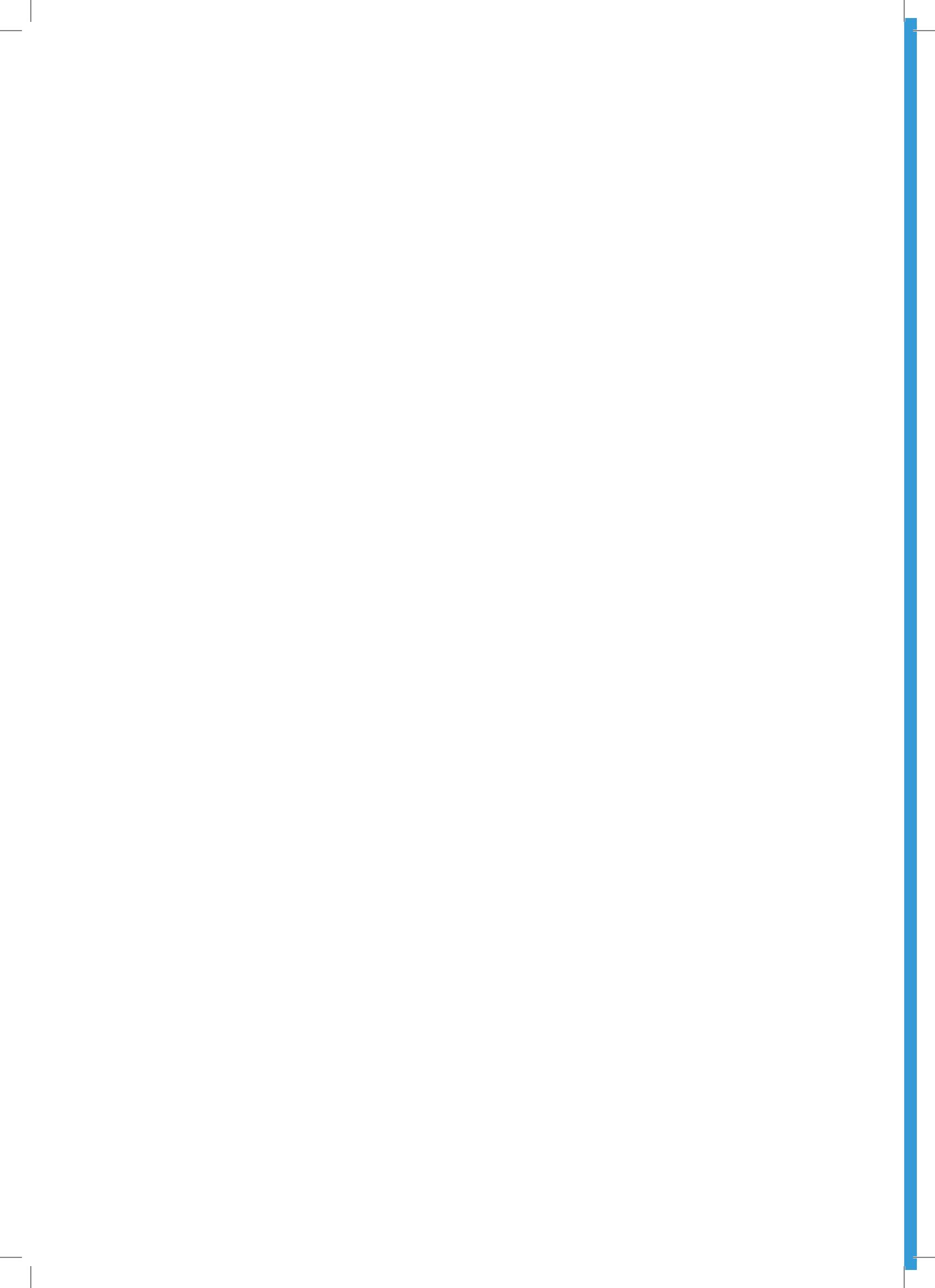
Further development, review and revision of the Curriculum Framework will be subject to collaborative and consultative processes before being incorporated into the Curriculum Framework.

DRAFT



15. AN OVERVIEW OF THE MCE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS





A large, light green circular frame with a double-line border is centered on the page. It is adorned with intricate white floral and scrollwork flourishes at the top, bottom, left, and right. The word "DRAFT" is faintly visible in the background within the circle.

SECTION C
APPENDICES



1. COMMON TEACHING METHODS

The most popular methods of teaching are briefly discussed in the appendices section. Note that this list is not complete. It should help teachers to choose, as well as motivate them to their teaching activities.

LECTURE / PRESENTATIONS	
Description	Primarily didactic presentation of information, usually to a large group and often with the use of audio-visual aids to transmit information.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be an effective means of providing new information and clarifying existing information to a large heterogeneous group in a short period of time • Is useful for covering underlying concepts, principles, and systems • Can be a good means to set the stage and lay the necessary groundwork and parameters for a subsequent activity • May stimulate learner interest in future study • May be recorded for future use
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places the burden of promoting learning fully on the teacher, unless it is integrated with other techniques (is a passive versus learning activity) • Establishes a "tell me" mind-set in learners • May be presented at the teacher's level of understanding rather than at the learners' • Offers limited opportunities for assessment and feedback • Can become a crutch for teachers who do not really know the material thoroughly • Provides little opportunity for learner independent thinking • Can lead to boredom • Have very limited effectiveness in teaching anything other than knowledge
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify which learning objectives are partially or fully best achieved by this method (generally those at the lower level of thinking, such as knowing or understanding as opposed to applying, synthesizing, or evaluating) • Avoid the temptation to overload; limit objectives to 3-5 for a 1 hour time frame • Develop a solid introduction, body, and closure • Develop concrete examples of major principles • Use sign posts (e.g., "there are three main points," "this is a key finding," "the most important thing to remember is," "in conclusion," etc.) and transitions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize periodically and in the conclusion • Spice it up with analogies, stories, quotes, startling statistics, vivid language, etc. • Develop quality supporting audio-visual aids and know how to use them and any needed equipment; avoid overloading slides with information and talking to a screen rather than to learners • Be aware of and demonstrate effective presentational skills, including gestures, posture, tone of voice, talking with rather than at, making eye contact, avoiding distracting behaviours, etc. • Integrate lecture with other more interactive techniques in the session, varying the pace every 10-15 minutes to avoid exceeding attention spans • Manage time to allow for questions and then the planned conclusion
Examples	Our regular majalis in the Imambargah



DISCUSSION/ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	
Description	Employs the art of seeking information and stimulating thinking and elaboration at all levels of human reasoning to achieve a given objective
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts the burden of learning on the student and increases learner involvement • Provides both learner and teacher immediate feedback • Is useful for guiding learners to higher levels of thinking and inquiry • Provides valuable clues about learner motivation and how to best facilitate learning • Helps students identify and build on pre-existing knowledge
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time-consuming • Relies on learner preparation and willingness to participate • Can lead to a dominant few controlling the floor to the exclusion of fuller participation • Cannot ensure full participation within a large group
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop questions related to learning objectives designed to stimulate thinking and move learners to the next level • Use open-ended questions with more than one right answer that ask learners to think critically rather than recite facts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a clear question sequence • Develop group facilitation skills to manage the interactions, time, and process effectively, paying attention to both task and group interaction functions
Examples	Discussion about the proper ways to wear hijab or about the ways to socialise among non-Muslims

DEMONSTRATION	
Description	Performing an activity so that learners can observe how it is done in order to help prepare learner to transfer theory to practical application
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps people who learn well by modelling others. • Promotes self-confidence • Provides opportunity for targeted questions and answers. • Allows attention to be focused on specific details rather than general theories.
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time-consuming • Relies on learner preparation and willingness to participate • Can lead to a dominant few controlling the floor to the exclusion of fuller participation • Cannot ensure full participation within a large group
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to do well what you want to demonstrate. • Carefully plan the demonstration. • Keep the demonstration simple and the explanation thorough enough to meet your objectives. • Augment the demonstration with other visual aids. • Give learners an opportunity to practice what has been demonstrated.
Examples	Demonstrating how to perform Wudhu, namaz, eham.



GROUP WORK (CASE-BASED OR PROBLEM BASED LEARNING)	
Description	Small groups of 5-10 address case-based tasks, exchanging points of view while working through a problem-solving process. In Problem-Based Learning, the problem comes first and learners work through the problem through progressive disclosure by making hypotheses, exploring mechanisms, developing and researching learning issues, and applying new information to the case.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involves participants and stimulates peer group learning Helps participants explore pre-existing knowledge and build on what they know Facilitates exchange of ideas and awareness of mutual concerns Promotes development of critical thinking skills Develops leadership, teamwork, communication, and collaboration skills Promotes higher levels of thinking (application, synthesis, evaluation) versus simple memorization
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can potentially degenerate into off-task or social conversations Can be a challenge to ensure participation by all, especially in larger groups Can be frustrating for participants when they are at significantly different levels of knowledge and skill Can be unpredictable in terms of outcomes Increases potential for inter- personal conflicts Can be time-consuming
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use carefully crafted cases that are prototypical of content objectives Use trained faculty or student facilitators to effectively manage group dynamics Help the group address conflict in constructive ways Ensure seating arrangement that facilitates discussion Create safe environment for learners to participate, ask questions, and make mistakes without sanctions For groups meeting regularly over a period of time, establish ground rules
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding information from a book and worksheet Each group work on different shuhada of Karbala or Imams or Panjetan and then in the second round they go to other group to give them information about the personality they studied

ROLE PLAY	
Description	One or more participants adopt a specified role and try to behave in ways characteristic of a person in that role. In medical education, often revolves around a specified clinical scenario
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involves participants Adds variety, reality, and specificity to the learning experience Develops problem-solving and verbal expression skills Provides practice to build skills before real-world application and when "real" experiences are not readily available Enables learners to experiment in a safe environment with behaviours which strike them as potentially useful and to identify behaviours which are not Can provide an entirely new perspective on a situation and develop insights about feelings and relationships Provides teacher immediate feedback about the learner's understanding and ability to apply concepts Improves the likelihood of transfer of learning from the classroom to the real world



Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts pressure on learner to perform, which can create embarrassment and even resistance • Depends heavily on learner's imagination and willingness to participate • Can engender strong emotions related to past experiences, empathy, etc. • Can lack focus unless well-planned, orchestrated, and monitored • Can reinforce ineffective behaviours/strategies if performance is not observed by knowledgeable person who provides appropriate feedback • Can be unpredictable in terms of outcomes • Can be time-consuming
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a safe environment for learner to experiment and make mistakes without sanction • Use realistic situations that relate to learning objectives • Use only when learners have adequate knowledge and skills to perform what is requested • Provide clear directions and specific time limits • Observe performance (for multiple groups, rotate through them) • Conduct a feedback/debriefing session after the role plays
Examples	In Akhlaq lesson students are asked to do improvised short drama to show their understanding of the topic under study such as greed, backbiting

BRAIN STORMING	
Description	A process for generating multiple ideas/options in which judgment is suspended until a maximum number of ideas has been generated. Following generation of ideas, options are typically analysed, a best solution identified, and a plan of action developed.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively involves learners in higher levels of thinking • Promotes peer learning and creates synergy • Promotes critical thinking • Helps groups reach consensus
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires that learners discipline their inputs to the discussion (generate ideas without making judgments) May not be effective with large groups • Can lead to "group think"
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use to stimulate thinking, creativity, inquiry, and consensus • Do not use the method when there is only one or a few possible "correct" responses • Provide clear instructions for how the process works • Ensure that participants adhere to the rules
Examples	



GAMES/ COMPETITIONS	
Description	Used to bring competition, participation, drills, and feedback into the learning experience as a motivator and opportunity for application of principles
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively involves learners • Can add or regenerate motivation • Promotes team learning and collaborative skills • Provides a challenge that can lead to confidence in knowing and expressing the material • Provides feedback • Can create a “fun” learning environment
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can create in-group/out-group feelings • Can de-motivate those who are not competitive by nature • Can create feelings of inadequacy in those not as skilled or forceful • Can discourage creativity if the format is very rigid and the focus is strongly on winning
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose relevant games at an appropriate level that can be reasonably expected to achieve the learning objectives • Introduce the game and make the objectives clear • Give clear and thorough directions • Create a friendly versus cut-throat mentality; do not put down losers or allow others to do so • Do not take sides or show partiality • Keep a handle on things
Examples	e.g. quiz competitions, art competitions, competitions to make students realise why gambling is haram.

INDEPENDENT STUDY	
Description	Designed to enhance and support other instructional activities. Learning activity is typically done entirely by the individual learner (or group of learners) using resource materials. May be done using computer/web- based technology.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fosters independent learning skills • Allows learners to progress at their own rate • Enhances other learning experiences • Provides opportunity for learner to obtain prerequisite knowledge • Allows for flexible, individual schedules and self-pacing
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be disconnected from immediate objectives • May be difficult to identify/access appropriate materials • Computer-based materials are time-consuming and expensive to develop and may lack complexity needed for more advanced learners
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose activities carefully to ensure relevance and connectivity • Provide guidance about resources and how to locate and access them
Examples	Write an autobiography of any Prophet or Imams



SELF – ASSESSMENT	
Description	Provide insight into how the learner thinks, acts, reacts, or “scores” regarding a particular topic
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides personal relevance to the learner• Provides a change of pace that creates a high degree of interest• Can facilitate individual insights into the need to make personal improvements
Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can reduce morale if participants don’t like what they learn about themselves• May create dead time while waiting for everyone in the group to finish• May create embarrassment and discomfort if learners do not know whether results must be shared and/or if learners are forced to share and compare
Keys to success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose instruments with demonstrated validity and reliability• Tie the concepts measured clearly to learning objectives• Provide adequate instructions and time for completion• Furnish an interpretation from which each learner can analyze his/her own results• Don’t force people to share their results• Avoid judgments and psycho-analyzing
Examples	Students write about their own feelings about their stealing or any other topic like hijab, alcohol drinking

There may be many other methodologies teachers can practice in their classes. However, it is essential that teacher does not restrict teaching with one preferred methodology but try to incorporate different strategies according to the desired outcomes and objectives of the lesson. The combination of different methodologies will also provide an opportunity to develop multiple levels of interactions and will also satisfy different learning styles.



2. EXAMPLES OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Every lesson will have a corresponding table of learning outcomes, detailing the various levels of learning that can be achieved by students of varying abilities. This table is an example of how the learning outcomes will be presented.

MODULE 1 BAND A Lesson 2				
L.I. Allah (swt) has the most beautiful names				
	MUST	SHOULD	COULD	Assessment for learning
Values and Attitudes	ALL children will be able to appreciate qualities of Allah swt especially his kindness, mercy and provision of sustenance	MOST children will recognise that Allah swt is worthy of these names	SOME children will demonstrate a sense of awe towards Allah swt for all the names used to describe Him	Why does Allah swt have all these beautiful names?
Knowledge and Understanding	ALL children will acquire a familiarity with some of Allah's names in particular Rahman, Rahim and Raziq	MOST children will understand some of the attributes within the names of Allah swt	SOME children will be able to give examples of how some of the names of Allah swt are manifested in His creation	How many names does Allah swt have? Which ones can you remember? What does Rahman mean? What does Rahim mean? What does Raziq mean? Why does Allah swt have this name?
Skills and Processes	ALL children will be able to recognise some of the names of Allah swt when they hear them in different contexts, for e.g. Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem	MOST children will be able to refer to Allah swt using His different names	SOME children will be able to refer to different names of Allah swt in different situations	Where have you heard some of these names of Allah swt mentioned before? Which name of Allah swt do you like most and why?



3. SAMPLE LESSONS

1 Lesson 7: Cleanliness is part of faith



- Why does Islam place a lot of emphasis on cleanliness?
- What does the Qur'an say about those who keep themselves pure and clean?
- What does Rasulullah (s) say about cleanliness?
- How do we make ourselves clean and pure?

Cleanliness is part of faith. Being clean is very important in Islam. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'an that He loves those who are clean. We should always wear clean clothes and keep our room clean.

Rasulullah (s) said:

- 'Cleanliness is part of faith'
- 'Allāh is pure and He loves the pure. He is clean and He loves the clean.'
- 'Be clean in every way you can because Allāh built Islam on cleanliness and only the clean will enter Jannah'

It is said that cleanliness is next to Godliness. This is because Allah is pure, and He loves everything that is pure. Therefore, if we want to be close to Allah, we must purify ourselves both physically and spiritually.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“Truly Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.” ” (2:222)



Rasulullāh (s) also taught us to keep our houses clean and free of cobwebs, dust and dirt because these bring poverty and are the houses of shaytan. He also said:

“Be clean in every way you can because Allāh built Islam on cleanliness and only the clean will enter Jannah.”

Imām Ali ar-Rida (a) has said:

“cleanliness is the akhlāq of prophets.”

As good Muslims, we must always make sure our bodies and clothes are clean and so are our homes, the spaces we study and work in and especially our bedrooms. Dirt causes sickness and disease and makes it hard for us to keep our thoughts clean.

Allah Loves Those Who Are Clean

A man who once entered the masjid of Rasulullāh (s) while he was **very dirty** and shabbily dressed. When Rasulullāh (s) saw the man, he came near him. He saw the man had dust and sand all over his face, his hair was **untidy** and **dirty** and his hands were **not washed**. His mouth was **stinking** and his clothes were **not neat**. Rasulullāh (s) got upset because of the way the man looked. He said to him, ‘why do you live like this? Don’t you know that **cleanliness is a part of religion**? Don’t you know **Allāh (s.w.t.) loves those who are clean**? A Muslim must be **clean** and make use of Allāh’s blessings. Since there is water, make use of it and **wash** yourself and keep yourself **clean** and **tidy**.’

Islām teaches us to take **good care** of our bodies and not neglect them. However, Islam also condemns excessive attention to physical beauty while forgetting to improve our **inner beauty** (i.e. our character). Constantly worrying about our looks not only wastes a lot of our time and money but also keeps us busy with the world and what people think of us. It makes us forget Allāh and the hereafter. We should instead consider spending more of our free time gaining knowledge and thinking of what we can do for Islām and humanity.



3

Key Points

- Islam places a lot of importance on cleanliness.
- Cleanliness is part of faith and it is next to Godliness.
- The Qur'an teaches us that Allah loves those who are clean and pure.
- Allah has made water for us to keep ourselves clean and pure.

DID YOU KNOW?

“The reward of a two rak'ah salāh after brushing the teeth is more than 70 rak'āt without brushing.” Imam al-Baqir (a)

Test Yourself

1. Why does Islam place so much importance on cleanliness?
2. Why is it important to keep ourselves and our surroundings clean?
3. What does the Qur'an say about cleanliness?
4. What does Rasulullah (s) say about cleanliness?



1 Lesson 2: The period of Jahiliyyah



- What does Ayyam al-Jahiliyyah mean?
- Why was the period before Islam known as the age of ignorance in Arabia?
- How did some Arabs behave during the period of Jahiliyyah?

Before Islam, Arabia was in a period of Jāhiliyya. The Arabs worshipped idols and fought for petty reasons. Often their wars would go on for generations. They did not have law and order. Stronger tribes would rob and kill the weaker ones.

All the idols they worshipped were kept in and around the Ka'bah and people would come from far and wide just to worship these stone idols.

Women were treated very badly. Fathers used to be ashamed of their baby girls and would often bury them alive.



In Surah an-Nahl Allāh describes the feelings of some of the Arabs when a daughter was born to them:

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾
يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ
أَيْمَسِكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ
أَلَّا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

“When he gets the news that a baby girl is born, his face becomes dark and he chokes with suppressed agony. He hides from the people out of distress at this news: shall he keep his daughter in humiliation, or bury it in the ground! Look! Evil is the judgement that they make.” (16:58-59)

Many Arabs before Islam were very superstitious. Sometimes they would enter their homes from behind or from the windows just to drive bad spirits away. When a person died, they would keep a camel near his grave and cut its legs until it died as well. They believed the person who died would ride the camel in the next world. When they entered a village, they would bray like a donkey ten times to chase away evil spirits. Some of them did tawāf of the Ka’bah completely naked. When a man died, his son would marry all his wives (who were his mother and stepmothers).

This came to be known as the period of Jāhiliyya, which means ‘The Age of Ignorance’.



3

Did You Know?

During the period of Jāhiliyyah, the Arabs also had some good qualities:

- They never broke a promise
- They had great skill in horsemanship and archery.
- They were brave
- They were very good in the art of poetry and had sharp memories that enabled them to remember long verses and speeches by heart.

TEST YOURSELF

1

What does Ayyam al-Jahiliyyah mean?

2

How did some Arabs behave during the period of Jahiliyyah?

3

What were some of the good qualities of the Arabs?

Key Points

1. Before Islam, Arabia was in a period known as Ayyam al-Jāhiliyyah (Age of Ignorance).
2. This is because many Arabs worshipped idols, fought for petty reasons, treated their women badly, buried their daughters alive and were superstitious.
3. However, the Arabs had some good qualities as well. They always kept their promise, were brave and very good in poetry, horsemanship and archery.



Tawassul

Learning Objectives

- What is the meaning of tawassul?
- What does a wasila mean?
- What does the Qur'an say about seeking a wasila?
- What do the Ma'sumeen teach us about tawassul?
- What are some of the common misconceptions about tawassul?

Tawassul means to pray to Allah and ask Him through His chosen servants instead of asking Allāh directly. The chosen servants through whom a person prays to Allāh must be authorized by Allāh as a 'wasila' (intermediary or 'means').

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah instructs us to seek nearness to Him through a wasila in the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ

“O you who have faith! Be conscious of Allāh, and seek a means of nearness to Him...” (5:35)

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

Your guardian is only Allāh, His Messenger, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakāh while bowing down.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

Whoever takes for his guardians Allāh, His Messenger and the faithful [should know that] the party of Allāh are indeed the victorious. (5:55-56)



Those Muslims who are against tawassul, notably the Salafi school of thought, also quote verses from the Qur'an to prove that tawassul is not permissible. For example, Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

They worship besides Allāh that which neither causes them any harm, nor brings them any benefit, and they say, 'These are our intercessors with Allāh' (10:18)

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِن قِطْمِيرٍ. إِن تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا
اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ

As for those whom you call besides Him, they do not control so much as the husk of a date stone. If you call them they will not hear your supplication, and even if they heard they cannot respond to you... (35:13-14)

Do these verses contradict the previous verses which teach us to seek a wasila? The main problem occurs when verses of the Qur'an are read in isolation and taken literally, without understanding the entire picture. If we read these verses together with the previous verses, what will become very clear is that

what is harām is to set up one's own wasila, such as an idol or a saint, and then to pray to Allāh by bowing before the idol or asking through the saint who is not authorized by Allāh to be a wasila.

Allāh Himself has asked us to go to Him through a wasila, but only through those whom He has authorized.

Allāh also uses wasila to carry out certain functions. He created us through the 'wasila' of our parents and He feeds us through the 'wasila' of another human being (an employer). From duas and hadith we know that Allāh uses angels for everything: to control the weather, to bring or remove blessings, to cause life and death and so on. Allāh also sent us guidance through the 'wasila' of prophets.

It is not that we cannot ask Allāh directly. We certainly can. But Allāh has also shown us the more respectful and faster way to reach Him is through His wasila. By going through Rasulullāh (s) and the Aimmah (a) we also get to know Allāh better because they teach us how to pray to Allāh and how to call upon Him.

Rasulullāh (s) said:

'My Ahl al-Bayt is like the Ark of Nuh.

Whoever boards it will be saved and whoever turns away from them will perish.'

Did you know?



After the brothers of Nabi Yusuf (a) threw him in the well, they realised they had done something very wrong and wanted to ask Allah for forgiveness. They went to their father Nabi Ya'qub (a) and asked him to pray to Allah on their behalf.

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ
قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ

They said, 'Father! Plead with Allāh] for forgiveness of our sins! We have indeed been at fault.' He said, 'I shall plead with my Lord to forgive you; indeed He is the All-forgiving, the All-merciful.'
(12:97-98)



Some Common Misconceptions about Tawassul and the Shi'ah

MISCONCEPTION Number 1

Some Muslims accuse the Shi'ah of 'worshipping' their Imams and praying towards their graves and prostrating themselves before the graves of their Imams.

It is not true that the Shi'ah worship their Imams or even believe the Imams have any power independent of Allah. The Shi'ah firmly believe in the Qur'an's teaching:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You [alone] do we worship, and to You [alone] do we turn for help. (1: 5)

Seeking wasila is not worshipping. We do not ask the Imams with the thinking that they are the source of the blessing. We either ask Allah "for the sake of Muhammad and Aali Muhammad", or ask Rasulullah (s) and his sacred Household (Ahl al-Bayt) to pray to Allah

on our behalf. When we do ask them directly, the intention is the same: that they should intercede for us before Allah and not that they are a replacement or alternative to Allah.

MISCONCEPTION Number 2

The Shi'ah call out to their Imāms for help with words like "Yā Ali", "Yā Husayn" and so on. Is this not shirk?

A person who is drowning may call out to a person on the shore, 'Help me!' It would be foolish to insist he should only ask Allah while he is drowning or that it is shirk to ask anyone besides Allah for help. This simple example teaches us that using a means to get help is not the same as believing the means to be the source of help.

We do not believe that the Aimmah are partners to Allah. We do not ask them for their sustenance or the forgiveness of their sins. We only ask Allah. However, we believe that the Imams are closer to Allah and His humble servants, and they are chosen by Allah to be teachers and guides for mankind. It is because of their high status that their du'as to Allah are never rejected.

**MISCONCEPTION***Number 3*

We can only seek the wasila of someone who is alive, not dead.

In the first instance, it is important to remember that Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

Do not suppose those who were slain in the way of Allah to be dead; rather they are living and provided for by their Lord (3:169)

This verse tells us that those who die in the way of Allah (including the Ma'sumeen) are not dead. They are living.

Secondly, there are numerous examples from history where Muslims have prayed to Allah through the wasila of Rasulullah (s). For example, a famous companion Bilāl b. al-Hārith al-Muzani narrates that a terrible drought occurred during the caliphate of 'Umar (the 2nd Caliph) and that year was known as 'The Dry Year' (Aam ar-Ramadah). The tribe of Bilāl b. al-Hārith (the Banu Muzaina) approached

the Caliph and complained of starvation. Some sheep were slaughtered for them but they were only bones and hardly any meat on them. Seeing this, Bilāl called out loudly, "Yā Muhammadah," in grief and concern. He was then blessed with seeing the Prophet (s) in his dream, who gave him the good news of the end of the drought very soon.

MISCONCEPTION*Number 4*

Some Muslims believe that only our faith and good actions can become our wasila. However, such thinking clearly contradicts verses 5:55-56. If asking help from anyone besides Allāh was shirk, then Allāh would not tell us that

along with Himself, 'His Messenger' and 'those who believe, those who keep up prayers and give alms in ruku' are also our guardians.



LESSON 11: TAWASSUL

6



KEY POINTS

Tawassul means to pray to Allah through a wasila.

A wasila is someone or something chosen by Allah, that is close to Him, and He has given us the permission to pray to Him through this wasila.

Examples of wasila are Rasulullah (s) and the Aimmah (a).

In the Qur'an, Allah instructs us to seek a wasila to enable us get closer to Him.

The Aimmah (a) have also taught us how to use a wasila to get closer to Allah.

TEST YOURSELF

- What do the terms tawassul and wasila mean?
- Why should we use a wasila to pray to Allah?
- What evidence do we have from the Qur'an and hadith which proves that tawassul is a valid concept?
- What are some of the common misconceptions about tawassul? How do we respond to them?



To keep this document concise, additional appendices and exhibits have been published in a separate document. These include:

1. Results and key points from the survey of madaris carried out in Feb 2012
2. Complete tabulation of all topics currently taught by KSI madaris across the world.
3. Papers presented at the Harben Retreat.

These documents are available on the MCE website www.madrasahonline.org

Should you wish to receive a hard copy of these documents, please e-mail mce@world-federation.org

DRAFT

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your comments, observations and feedback are very important to us, and will be most valuable in completing this draft document. For contact details, please see the MCE website www.madrasahonline.org



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