

ISB Campus Foundational Course
Classical to Contemporary – Muslim & British

Topic One: Grasping the Essence of Islam

Presentation 1.1: Defining Islam; Islam's priorities - our 'Ten Commandments'

What is the purpose of religion? What is 'Islam'? How does it differ from 'iman'?

What are the different ways to define Islam and why is that important?

Are there verses in the Qur'an that emphasise the core commandments? How do these compare with the Biblical ten commandments? How do the Quranic core commandments relate to the totality of Islamic teachings?

Can a person be a good Muslim but a bad person? How can it be fair to get to paradise by just doing the five pillars?

If we see Islamic values outside the religion, what would we call them?

Presentation 1.2: The purposes behind Islam's teachings (maqasid ash-shari'ah)

The preservation of intellect in Islamic teachings; freedom of thought vs. the law of apostasy

History of the maqasid; understanding the maqasid

How are the maqasid met in Britain today? Do we have shari'ah in Britain today? Should Muslims want "shari'ah in Britain"? What should we want for Britain?

What is an ideal country inspired by Islamic teachings?

Should we drop the term 'shari'ah'?

Presentation 1.3: Loving the Prophet (PBUH)

"A mercy to the worlds" - Appreciating the character that we should be emulating

The Prophet's love for us

A life of determination and compassion

Presentation 1.4: Reframing Islam – how do we present Islam meaningfully?

How do other religions convey the essence of their teachings?

How do we typically convey Islam's key teachings? What impact does our approach have?

Was this approach endorsed by the Prophet (PBUH)? How did the companions convey Islam?

How do we make the message meaningful to the wider public?

Topic Two: Islam and the West – *Who are We?*

Presentation 2.1: Islamic history in a nutshell

Seerah, Khilafah Rashida, empires, the spread of Islam, the decline and catastrophic events; medieval empires; how do you summarise Islamic history? Should any history really just be about the story of wars, tyrannical kings and the flux of borders?

Presentation 2.2: The height of Islamic civilisation

Key personalities from the 'Islamic Golden Age'; key features of Islamic civilisation; what was unique about it? Islamic Spain – its rise, its zenith

Presentation 2.3: Intolerance

Muslim minorities in Christian Spain; the fall of Muslim Spain; the sack of Jerusalem; the Armenian genocide; ethnic cleansing in Pakistan; pure nations, pogroms and ethnic cleansing; what did we do to Homo Neanderthalensis? Cultural genocide today

Presentation 2.4: Christianity

The historical Yeshu (Jesus), Paul and Christology

The rise and decline of British Christianity; fostering Christian-Muslim relations

Presentation 2.5: The growth of Western Civilisation

Renaissance, reformation, enlightenment, scientific revolution, industrial revolution, trade and conquest, transformative philosophies, institutions (political, cultural, philanthropic, etc.), women's rights, liberal democracy

Presentation 2.6: Colonialism and Muslim reactions

19th Century colonialism and Muslim reactions – the Sanussis, traditionalists, Jamal ud-Din Al Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and anti-colonial movements

The Muslim search for root causes

Presentation 2.7: To which civilisation do we belong?

What happened to Islamic Civilisation? Do we belong to it?

Surah Rum; Inter-civilisational exchanges – 16th-19th centuries

What happened to Western Civilisation? Clash of civilisations – myth or reality?

Topic Three: Classical to Contemporary – a Journey Yet to Make

Presentation 3.1: Tajdid - the dynamic tradition of analysing and adapting

Example: the story of the madhabs and the great imams; relevance of madhabs today

Presentation 3.2: Imam Bukhari and the challenge of Hadith

Can we trust hadith?

Introduction to the science of hadith; classification of hadith

Presentation 3.3: Contrasting historical contexts with our own

International law, universal human rights and multiculturalism; the contrast with Medieval Christendom and 'Islamdom' – perpetual war, slavery and inequality of minorities

Presentation 3.4: Classical to Contemporary

The need for an adaptation of our vision, priorities, attitudes, fiqh, culture and language

Benefits of using the 'Classical to Contemporary' framework

Topic Four: Translating our Vision

Presentation 4.1: Translating our vision: from a community of self-interest to a community of positive purpose

Love and gentleness in Islam

Presentation 4.2: Social Activism

What is activism? Should we be activists? Hilf Al Fudul – collective activism/ change-making in the sunnah

Consultation, team-working, enablement, leadership

Presentation 4.3: British Muslims: now and into the future

The Muslim community's achievements; the Muslim community's challenges

What is the future for Islam in Britain? Can we take precedent from Muslim minorities in other countries?

Presentation 4.4: What is the change we'd like to see?

What should we be campaigning for? Who do we campaign with?

The role of ISB campus in the Muslim community's journey; how would you market ISB Campus – what are its USPs?

Topic Five: Translating our Priorities

Presentation 5.1: Our personal priorities – as taught by the Prophet (PBUH)

Resolving the apparent contradictions in what the Prophet (PBUH) prioritised

How will you choose your personal priorities in life? The greater sunnah of balance and prioritising by context

Presentation 5.2: Translating our priorities

Our community's current priorities; What should our community's priorities be?

Importance of separating personal priorities from a community's priorities

Is there a role for strategic planning in re-orientating our priorities?

Topic Six: Translating our Attitudes

Presentation 6.1: Attitudinal analysis

Cultural candour – why people might have negative attitudes towards us and vice versa

Self righteousness, victimhood, conspiracy theories

“Unrestrained, degenerate”? “Nothing to learn from them”?

Tribal white-washing; comparing one’s ideals with another’s realities

Can people be altruistic without religious faith? Finding Fitrah outside Islam

Benefits of suspending judgement

Presentation 6.2: Wisdom in da’wah

Who gets to heaven? Questioning assumptions

Analysing wisdom; Wisdom case study: treaty of Hudaibiah

The sunnah of winning hearts

Topic Seven: Translating our Fiqh

Presentation 7.1: Understanding the process of Fiqh

Sources of Islamic law; analysing Qur’an and hadith; the role of reason; critical thinking and contextualisation; debates on abrogation and particularisation

Presentation 7.2: Ijtihad and a British Fiqh

The established principle that verdicts should change with time, place, circumstances and cultures

Understanding and respecting differences of opinion in fiqh

Minority opinions for a minority context? What are the limits: when do you go ‘beyond the pale’?

From a Fiqh of Isolation to a Fiqh of Engagement

Presentation 7.3: Gender equality

Fatwa analysis: segregation and niqab? The primacy of intentions, adab and the khulwah rule; social media implications

Presentation 7.4: Fatwa analysis

Fatwa analysis: The *hijrah directive*?

Fatwa analysis: Friendship with Non-Muslims – *forbidden or recommended*?

Fatwa analysis: ‘*Do not vote*’; why participate in politics?

The fiqh of citizenship

Presentation 7.5: Finding our way in the ‘day to day’

Key maxims to help us navigate the challenges of daily life

Topic Eight: Translating our Culture

Presentation 8.1: Importance of culture in society and the sunnah

Culture's role in defining the norms of human interaction; role of culture on identity and psychology; fitrah in culture

Role of culture in society; role of the arts; institutions and organisations

Respecting cultures; the principle of focussing on the 'greater sunnahs'

What are British values? What is uniquely positive about our culture? What are the problems with British culture?

Presentation 8.2: Importance of culture in Islamic Law

The central maxim: "Culture shall have the weight of Law"; recognising the influence of cultural norms on the fiqh rulings of past scholars, e.g. gender bias

Culture and fatwa analysis: *eye contact; clapping; hand-shaking, clothing*

Presentation 8.3: Between a British Muslim culture and a collective British culture

Islamic cultures through space and time; impact of 'Islamic culture' today?

Naturalising our culture; Importance of cultural reference points

Making a collective British culture together

Holding multiple cultural identities

Topic Nine: Translating our Language

Presentation 9.1: God and His other beautiful names

Understanding why language is important; what's in a name? Expressing the Divine in different cultures; taking the *Hui precedent*?

Presentation 9.2: Translating our language

Need for self-evaluation of our cultural language

'The English/British'; 'Islam and the West'; 'Them and us' vs. 'My people'

The meaning of *kafir*; how do we label the 'other'?

Topic Ten: Negotiating a 'British Islam'

Presentation 10.1: Defining 'British Islam' with wisdom and nuance

Victorian & Edwardian Islam – a very different *British Islam!*

What do we mean by a *British Islam* today? What does it stand for? What does it stand against?
What does Islam say about freedom? What do we say about sanctioned violence, e.g. hudood laws?

Presentation 10.2: Caution: labels and limits

How do you label *British Islam* – is it watered down/ compromised/ liberal/ reformed Islam? Is it authentic and true to the Quran & Sunnah?

'Between extremism and abandon'; With what standards do we judge others? What standards do we set for ourselves? The abhorrence of takfir; pursuing a divergent opinion vs. maintaining unity