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## Reasserting the *Maqāṣid* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge *Curricula*: The Experience of the Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies in IIUM

Khairil Husaini Bin Jamil, PhD \*

**Abstract:** Defining the characteristics of excellence for Islamic education institutions has proven to be one of the most challenging and highly debated issues in the modern time. On the one hand, ideals and visions derived from certain philosophical presuppositions or religious outlooks are competing to mould the shape of academic programme offered by the institutions. On the other, the official authority, whose directives an institution is subjected to abide by, often projects certain standards to measure the output of excellent production, mostly in relation to industrial demands. In the case of Islamic studies programme, or as it is named in the International Islamic University Malaysia, Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Heritage, there are notions of *maqāṣid* being gradually discussed by its scholars and proponents of Islamic education alike. This conception of *maqāṣid*, which can also be called *maqāṣid tarbawiyyah*, seems to correspond slightly to the theory of Outcome Based Education adopted by the Malaysian Qualification Agency – a body responsible for the assurance of quality education. However, it treats the aspects of purpose and objective in light of the Islamic scriptural thought and educational philosophy. This paper shares the experience of the Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies in IIUM in formulating its Programme Learning Outcome in accordance with OBE and multiple level educational agenda, i.e. global, national and university, whilst navigating through the growing discourse of *maqāṣid* of Qur'an and Sunnah studies. It speaks of the thoughts and efforts conveyed by the department to advance its ethos of “*traditional embracement, critical engagement, and spiritual enhancement*” through its curriculum design. The paper discusses amongst others the development of discourse pertaining to *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah* and key important elements of educational objectives according to the views of Muslim scholars in the field of Qur'an, Sunnah and Sīrah Studies. It ambitiously aims as an invitation to scholars to contribute to the narratives of *maqāṣid* in curricula management and policy making as well as the enhancement of Islamic philosophy of quality and educational excellence.

**Keywords and phrases:** Islamic education, *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah*, Outcome Based Education, Islamic philosophy of quality, curriculum design.

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## Preface

As Mr. Shibr roamed the internet searching for the possible disease that explains the symptoms his body has been exhibiting for a couple of days, several lines on a website struck panic through him. It was the moment that made him dash to the general practitioner, Dr. Rasikh who, despite decently reproaching him for self-diagnosing himself erroneously, managed calmly and confidently to identify the issue and prescribe the right treatment. That simple and short visit has purged all those anxiety, overwhelming fear and occasional frustration and despair that have been haunting him for the past several wasted days. This fictional anecdote portrays the difference between a layman who luckily had access to a glimpse of information and an expert who devoted an adequate part of his life weathering the storm of mastership in a specific field of knowledge. As a matter of fact, the state of expertise does not only alleviate potential unstable psychological conditions that may pose manifold threats and dangers to the society, it is indeed the most crucial foundation to the advancement of a society, its institutions, and its civilisational agenda.

In the anecdote above, the Arabic word *shibr*, which denotes a hand-based unit measurement known as the great span, was used to metaphorically depict amateurishness, whilst the Arabic *rasikh* connotes erudition. It was also meant to reflect the message of the Malay proverb which says, '*kalau kail panjang sejengkal, lautan dalam jangan diduga* (if your fishhook is the span of a thumb and finger, do not plumb the ocean's depths).' The aim is to conjure the relation between fear and lack of experience. In the context of this paper, it seeks to convey the notion that psychological instability that seems to result from religious devotion is usually a product of ignorance, tampered information, or worst, half-baked knowledge. To a certain extent, many cases of religious extremism and radicalisation stem from manipulation of fear and desperate hope for salvation. Although it is unwise to generalise this observation, it can still be maintained that expertness, regardless of whatsoever conceptual definition of it and diverse forms of its measurement, is indeed the key to a true and real achievement of man in any of his undertakings.

Having said the above, it is fundamental here to subscribe that the modern idea of expertise has always been associated with the outcome of educational endeavours, particularly the academia. Modification and changes in the music of educational philosophy or policy would normally set an authoritative tone to the theoretical underpinnings and operational scheme of any ventures to rear genuine experts with envisioned meaningful performance. To offer an educational programme implies the ability to not only form the institution, prepare the syllabus, train the teachers, design the study plan, and register the students, but also to grapple with current trends and constant changes in the societal psyche and political compass locally and globally. In this regard, contemporary Islamic thought has supplied the related discourse with the theory of *maqāsid*, by the extension of which, any dynamics of the Muslim education system can be appreciated and governed progressively. Given this background, one may wonder on the practical philosophy and method to design an academic programme that would affect the mind and life of hundreds of students whilst preserving the classical heritage, upholding the traditional paradigm, and embracing the modern mechanics of education. This paper aims to share the perspective and experience of

the Department of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies at the International Islamic University Malaysia in fashioning its curriculum design and maintaining the “Quranic comprehensiveness” in its rendition of expertness.

### The *Maqāṣid* of Qur'ān and Sunnah in the Classical Sources

Before delving into the current practice of the department in nurturing expertise, it is worth venturing into the idea of *maqāṣid* as it has been epitomised in the writings of early scholars who devoted their lives to these two areas of Islamic scholarship. The aim is to briefly compare between the narrative of *maqāṣid* and the modern concept of learning outcome. Moreover, during a recent talk delivered by the renowned scholar of *maqāṣid*, Aḥmad al-Raysūnī whose title translated *Unlocking the Maqasid of Islamic Revealed Knowledge: Why and How?*, the speaker's proposition was questioned by a number of punctilious Muslim academics since the original Arabic that reads *taqṣīd al-ʿulūm al-sharʿiyyah* seems to imply a new discovery and that early scholars were not aware of the objectives of teaching and learning of Islamic scriptural sciences.<sup>1</sup> This is certainly not the case in the eyes of the Muslims. However, the speaker's omission of examples from past experiences has rendered the effort to redefine the *maqāṣid* of Islamic sciences futile or unconvincing. Nevertheless, the term *maqṣad*, and particularly *maqṣad sharʿī*, as they have been used by researchers in the modern time are indeed a new coinage. One will rarely find the use of *maqṣūd* or *maqṣad* for a field of study in the works of early scholars especially of the medieval time.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the intricacies with which the modern discourse of *maqāṣid* has been associated are nowhere to be found in its present form within the sheets of the classical oeuvres.<sup>3</sup> It is true then that the particular concept of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah* is both old and new. It is old in the sense that scholars of these areas must have outlined the objectives of teaching and learning the sciences of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. It is new, however, if the categories and complexities of *maqāṣid* discourse are to be brought into the picture.

The question that concerns the present discussion: where can we locate the precedents of *maqāṣidic* narratives in the early works of Quranic and Sunnah studies? Let us try to find the first lead in the noted application of *al-muqaddimāt al-ʿasharah* or *al-mabādīʾ al-ʿasharah*, literally translated as the ten points of departure or the ten principles.<sup>4</sup> It refers to a guiding strategy which was referenced by numerous traditional pedagogues to establish an area of scholarship. The principles are preserved in multiple versions of Arabic didactic rhythmic poems. One example translated as follows:

*For every science, there are truly ten principles as its roots:  
its defining limits, structured contents, and its mastery's fruits,*

<sup>1</sup> The talk was delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at the International Islamic University Malaysia. See: FINTERRA, “Unlocking the Maqasid of Islamic Revealed Knowledge: Why & How? - Shaykh Dr. Ahmad Al Raysuni.”

<sup>2</sup> With the exception of al-Ghazālī and al-Mahā'imī (835/1431). See: al-Ghazālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, 23-24 and al-Mahā'imī, *Tabṣīr al-Raḥmān*, 2:62.

<sup>3</sup> Raissouni, Aḥmad. “Daqīqah Maqāṣidiyyah: Ghāyatī Taqṣīd al-ʿUlūm al-Sharʿiyyah” Raissouni.net, June 30, 2020. <http://raissouni.net/2019/10/11/دقيقة-مقاصدية-غايية-تقصيد-العلوم-الشر>

<sup>4</sup> al-Ṣabbān, *Ḥāshiyah ʿala Sharḥ al-Sullam*, 35.

*its relation to others, its virtues, and its original framer,  
its name, its sources, and its status according to the Lawgiver,  
lastly, its issues and some will reckon only part of these,  
but whosoever knows them all has attained the highest of degrees.<sup>5</sup>*

These ten principles are usually expounded during the introductory remark for a specific course. It has been adopted in various courses of Islamic sciences, namely, *aqīdah* (theology),<sup>6</sup> *fiqh* (jurisprudence),<sup>7</sup> *taṣawwuf* (spirituality),<sup>8</sup> *naḥw* (Arabic grammar),<sup>9</sup> *ṣarf* (morphology),<sup>10</sup> etc.<sup>11</sup> Whilst the term *maqṣad* is evidently absent from the list, the sense of purpose and objectivity can still be appreciated from the mention of a subject ‘mastery’s fruits’ which indicates the result of its teaching and learning. Thus, one can expect to find a number of modern instructors projecting that the result of learning *‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* is the understanding of the Qur’ān itself.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the result of learning *‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* is the recognition of sound ḥadīth.<sup>13</sup> This is helpful as far as a specific subject is concerned. However, it is difficult to see the links between courses when all other subjects pertaining to the same field, i.e. Quranic and Sunnah studies, such as *tafsīr*, memorisation of the Qur’ān, *sharḥ al-ḥadīth*, etc, are brought together particularly for an academic programme. Although the ten principles included the discussion on the relation between one science to another, it still treats every subject in an isolated way. In other words, the mechanism of *al-mabādi’ al-‘asharah* may help us in defining the *maqṣad* of learning a particular subject in Quranic studies, but not the *maqṣad* of the Quranic studies per se.

In addition to this, the *mabādi’* was a recent construct and early scholars did not present their teachings using the language of this scheme. Therefore, there is still a need for a thorough research on the *maqṣidic* narratives in the expressions of early masters of the Qur’ān and ḥadīth. We will inspect here, for the sake of citing a few examples, some works of the notables of ḥadīth. Firstly, al-Suyūṭī (d.911AH) in his *Alfiyat al-Ḥadīth (The Thousand Poetic Lines on Ḥadīth Sciences)* stated:

علم الحديث ذو قوانين تحدُّ      يُدرى بها أحوال متن وسند  
فذلك الموضوع، والمقصود      أن يُعرف المقبول والمردود

<sup>5</sup> Newlon, “The Ten Essentials: A Poem by Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī al-Ṣabbān (d. 1206/1791),” with slight modifications.

<sup>6</sup> See for instance: al-‘Asri, “al-Mabādi’ al-‘Asharah Li ‘Ilm al-‘Aqīdah.”

<sup>7</sup> al-Hindī, “al-Mabādi’ al-‘Asharah Li Fann al-Fiqh.”

<sup>8</sup> al-Yaqoubi, “The Basics of Tasawwuf.”

<sup>9</sup> al-Kūfī, “al-Mabādi’ al-‘Asharah Li ‘Ilm al-Naḥwi.”

<sup>10</sup> al-Bīḍānī, *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf Sharḥ Binā’ al-Af’āl Fī ‘Ilm al-Ṣarf*.

<sup>11</sup> al-Mālikī, *Risālat Taḥqīq Mabādi’ al-‘Ulūm al-Iḥdā’ Ashar*.

<sup>12</sup> al-‘Asri, “al-Mabādi’ al-‘Asharah Li ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān,” and Adam, “Mabādi’ ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān al-‘Asharah.” Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Khuḍayrī adds: 1) to defend the Qur’ān against specious arguments 2) to know the history of the Qur’ān and its maṣāḥif, and 3) to appreciate the contributions of past generations in serving the Qur’ān. See: al-Khuḍayrī, *al-Mabādi’ al-‘Ashr Allatī Yaḥtājūhā Ṭālib al-‘Ilmi - ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān (01)*.

<sup>13</sup> al-‘Asri, “al-Mabādi’ al-‘Asharah Li ‘Ilm al-Ḥadīth.”

The focus here is on the use of *al-maqṣūd* as referring to the objective of learning *ḥadīth* sciences. The *maqṣūd* of this science according to al-Suyūṭī is the ability to distinguish authentic and fake narrations.<sup>14</sup> It suggests that the purpose of learning *ḥadīth* has been reduced in the 10<sup>th</sup> Hijrī century to the “authenticity question.”<sup>15</sup> Prior to al-Suyūṭī, al-Nawawī of the 7<sup>th</sup> Hijrī century lamented events of misunderstandings amongst the students of *ḥadīth* in attending the subject. He emphasised that,

“the objectives of learning *ḥadīth* sciences are to verify the meaning of *ḥadīth* texts and to master the sciences of *sanad* (chain of narration) and complex defective narrations (*mu‘alla*) ... and it should not be the main intention of the students of this science to obtain the *ijāzah* of *ḥadīth* audition (*samā*), or to be able to narrate to others (*ismā*) or to produce a *ḥadīth* compilation (*kitābah*). The main concern should be on verification of *ḥadīth*, understanding the complex meanings, contemplating upon its consequences, constant care of the knowledge, consultation with the experts, recording the valuable lessons, and so on and so forth.”<sup>16</sup>

al-Nawawī then continued to elaborate on memorisation, taking care of notes, and engaging in intellectual discourses concerning *ḥadīth*. We see here that the aims of learning *ḥadīth* were outlined in response to the mishaps and undesirable attitudes demonstrated by some participants in *ḥadīth* activities. Since al-Nawawī and by extension, al-Suyūṭī advanced from the earlier tradition of Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, to inspect the latter’s magnum-opus and *ḥadīth* epitome, *A Prolegomena to Ḥadīth Sciences*, would be promisingly worthwhile. Unfortunately, Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ did not award us with any treatments on the purpose of learning the sciences per se, rather he was tempted to chart the relation between *ḥadīth* and *fiqh*. He argues that the science of *ḥadīth*:

“... is one of the sciences with the greatest relevance to the various other sciences, especially substantive law (*fiqh*), which is the central science. For that reason, the errors of those writers on applied law who are unfamiliar with the science of *ḥadīth* are numerous and the imperfections in the remarks of those scholars who forsake it are plain.”<sup>17</sup>

This connection between *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* is undoubtedly procured from his favoured references, particularly the works<sup>18</sup> of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī who once said:

“Know that the magnified accumulation of *ḥadīth* does not turn a person into a *faqīh*, for the real *fiqh* is attained through the excavation of in-depth meanings (*istinbāt al-ma‘ānī*) and a committed thinking (*in‘ām al-tafakkur*) on them.”<sup>19</sup>

al-Khaṭīb’s commitment to the intertwinement between the two sciences was further emphasised in his confident statement:

“Know that all sciences are seeds for *fiqh* (*al-‘ulūm kulluhā abāzīr li’l-fiqh*). There is no science below the *fiqh* except that the seeker of that science requires what is lesser

<sup>14</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *Alfiyat al-Suyūṭī fi ‘Ilm al-Ḥadīth*, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Brown, *Hadīth: Muhammad’s Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*.

<sup>16</sup> al-Nawawī, *al-Minhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Ibn al-Ḥajjāj*, 1:9.

<sup>17</sup> al-Shahrazūrī, *An Introduction to the Science of the Ḥadīth: Kitāb Ma‘rifat Anwā’ ‘Ilm al-Ḥadīth*, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Hussain, “The Nuzḥah of Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (852/1449).”

<sup>19</sup> al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Ḥadīth*, 37.



than what is required by a *faqīh*, for the *faqīh* needs to cling himself to a portion of knowledge from every matter of this world and the hereafter.”<sup>20</sup>

The above few quotations call our attention to some further inspections. Firstly, the application of *ḥadīth* sciences was somehow bounded to the field of substantive law. There has been little attention dedicated to the role of *ḥadīth* in the spiritual enhancement of the self although the previous scholars themselves had written treatises on spiritual matters. al-Khaṭīb, for instance, wrote a treatise on asceticism titled *al-Zuhd wa al-Raqā'iq* and cited scores of *ḥadīths* as references and textual evidences.<sup>21</sup> However, he dedicated only few words on the use of *ḥadīth* as a guidance on the spiritual path in his work *al-Kifāyah fī Uṣūl 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*.<sup>22</sup> Despite his complaint of the lack of *ādāb* (decorum) amongst the students of *ḥadīth* in *al-Jāmi' li Akhlāq al-Rāwī*, his treatment of spiritual aspects whilst discussing the purpose of learning *ḥadīth* is rather supplementary.<sup>23</sup>

Due to the absence of rumination and elaboration on certain aspects of the scholarship, it seems unfeasible to unearth a total comprehensive discourse of *maqāṣid al-Sunnah* from the works of the past. How do we then ensure that a plan for an academic programme in Sunnah Studies, for instance, manage to at least maintain the Quranic comprehensiveness as the core philosophy of the programme? The fundamentals of the discipline must not meander in the maze of philosophical inclinations of the managers or pursue the current trends of society or education policy makers. Suggestion of some to follow in the footsteps of past *ḥadīth* institutions such as Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyyah, Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyyah, etc, provides only little help since neither a complete manual of the curriculum adopted in those centres remains nor the remnants of the extant one satisfies the demand of comprehensiveness.<sup>24</sup> The same case also applies to Quranic studies in medieval times, except that the notion of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* has enjoyed more attention from the scholars.

With the advancement of discourse on the *maqāṣid* of *sharī'ah* in the modern time, modern scholars began to probe into the possibility of establishing the concept of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* and *maqāṣid al-Sunnah*. They have simultaneously warned that the intention lies not in splitting between the objectives of *sharī'ah* and its scriptures, rather it is an attempt to construct an integrated framework that assigns to every part its significant role. After all, it was the father of *maqāṣid*, al-Shāṭibī, who in his exordium of *al-Muwāfaqāt*, described his venturesome effort of espousing *maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* as a manifest elaboration of the *maqāṣid* of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. In relation to this, the modern bifurcation of Islamic jurisprudence into *nuṣūṣ*-based and *maqāṣid*-based should be revised. The hope of scholars is to construct the framework of *maqāṣid* discourse that can be a referential guideline for any Islamic projects be it in the political, financial, social, or educational domain.

<sup>20</sup> al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Faqīh wa al-Mutafaqqih*, 2:333.

<sup>21</sup> Ṣabrī, *al-Muntakhab Min al-Zuhd wa'l-Raqā'iq*.

<sup>22</sup> al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Kifāyah fī Uṣūl 'Ilm al-Riwāyah*.

<sup>23</sup> al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *al-Jāmi' Li Akhlāq al-Rāwī Wa Ādāb al-Sāmi'*.

<sup>24</sup> Ḥāfiẓ, *al-Mahāsīn al-Ṣultāniyyah fī Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Nūriyyah* and *Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyyah Bi-Dimashq: Dirāsah Tārīkhiyyah Tawthīqiyyah*.

The contemporary attempts in defining the *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* were chronologically and thematically traced by Abdulrahman Helali in his article titled *Muqārabāt Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān al-Karīm: Dirāsah Tārīkhiyyah*. Helali highlighted works such as *Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*, published by Muḥammad al-Ṣāliḥ al-Ṣiddīq al-Jazā'irī in 1955, *Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān min Tashrī al-Aḥkām* by 'Abd al-Karīm Ḥamidī, *Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* by Ḥanān al-Laḥḥām, *Ummahāt Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* by 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Sa'd al-Jazā'irī, the famous *Maqāṣid al-Maqāṣid* by Aḥmad al-Raysūnī, and *al-Maqāṣid al-Kulliyyah li'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm fī al-Ḥayāh* by al-Ṭayyib Barghūth.<sup>25</sup> Apart from Helali, other writers such as Massoud Boudoukha and Aissa Bouakkez have also delineated the contributions of scholars to the conception of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*.<sup>26</sup> From these writers, we come to learn that the notion has been theoretically treated since the time of al-Ghazālī. Scholars after him, namely, Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī, al-Rāzī, al-Baiḍāwī, Ibn Juzay al-Gharnāṭī, Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, al-Zarkashī, Majd al-Dīn al-Fayrūz'ābādī, al-Naysābūrī, al-Biqā'ī, al-Kūrānī, al-Suyūṭī and al-Alūsī, did forward their opinions on the intentions from the revelation of the Qur'ān. The concept of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* was later extensively explored by modern luminaries such Rashīd Riḍā, al-Zurqānī, Maḥmūd Shaltūt, Ibn 'Ashūr, Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, and Ṭāha Jābir al-'Ulwānī.

Nevertheless, these works did not manage to clearly outline the boundaries of the concept. Some have treated *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* as *ghāyāt inzāl al-Qur'ān* (the purpose of revelation). Others have blended it with *maqāṣid al-aḥkām* (the reason of laws). Some have turned it into a synonym for *mawḍū'āt al-Qur'ān* (themes of the Qur'an). Some have combined them both and others have moulded it in accordance with the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*.<sup>27</sup> Taking this into consideration, the plan to design the curriculum for an academic programme in Quranic studies based on the vision of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* as the philosophy of its programme learning outcome would require a more assiduous fundamental research.

Compared to the treatments of *maqāṣid* in the field of Quranic studies, dedicated discourse on *maqāṣid al-ḥadīth* or *maqāṣid al-Sunnah* is rather uneventful. From an unpublished survey for the subject of *Tārīkh al-Dirāsāt al-Ḥadīthiyyah* at the present Department in which the topic of *maqāṣid al-Sunnah* has been discussed, it is learned that only few writings on the internet dealt with the topic. Some of these alluded to the subject in an extremely brief and elementary style. Some paid more attention to the role of *maqāṣid* in understanding *ḥadīth* adducing the crucial significance of *sabab wurūd al-ḥadīth* (literally: the reason of utterances). Unfortunately, there have been no academic studies that treat the topic elaborately. The most comprehensive exploration on the subject would be a section in the book of al-Raysūnī, *Maqāṣid al-Maqāṣid*. Raysūnī begins his work with a section detailing the concept of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān* and starts the second section by accentuating that the *maqāṣid al-Sunnah* is generally similar. This is highlighted prior to the mention of the general and the theoretical objectives of the Sunnah. Furthermore, the two main objectives of *maqāṣid juz'iyyah taṭbīqīyyah* (specific and practical objectives) of the Sunnah according to

<sup>25</sup> Ḥellalī, "Muqārabāt Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān al-Karīm: Dirāsah Tārīkhiyyah."

<sup>26</sup> Boudoukha, "Juhūd al-'Ulamā' Fī Istīnbat Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān al-Karīm," and Bouakkez, "Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān al-Karīm Wa Maḥāwiruhu 'inda al-Mutaqaddimīn Wa al-Muta'akhhirīn."

<sup>27</sup> Ḥellalī, "Muqārabāt."

him are: (i) to be able to identify the right place for each tradition that corresponds at the same time to the *maqāṣid* of *sharīʿah*, and (ii) to avoid misinterpretations and misapplications of the Sunnah that contradicts the *maqāṣid* of *sharīʿah*. He continues to remind the readers about the importance of apprehending the situation of the Prophet during the utterance of a *ḥadīth* and the socio-historical background of the *ḥadīth*.

These are some attempts at defining the *maqāṣid* of Qurʾān and Sunnah in the modern time. This quick tour has shown that the establishment of a comprehensive science of *maqāṣid* at large can still be regarded as a work in progress. This is more undeniable when the aspects of *maqāṣid al-Qurʾān wa al-Sunnah* in particular are brought into discussion. To add to the previous observation that many of these studies are not targeting the formation of Qurʾān and Sunnah studies per se, these writings were not also situated within the context of curriculum design and the educational administration philosophy. Hence, it does not significantly help to provide a full-fledge philosophy of educational outcomes regardless of its organisational levels, viz. course learning outcome, programme learning outcome, and programme educational outcome. These levels will be further explained in the following sections.

### The Department between Global, National, and the University's Agenda

Since the Department is an academic unit within the International Islamic University Malaysia, it is necessary for it to operate in line with the university's philosophy, vision, and mission. Firstly, IIUM is a member of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW). The federation was formed under the umbrella of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) upon the recommendation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation.<sup>28</sup> The objectives of FUIW as stated on its website include: (1) Enhancing the level of scientific researches in all fields, exchanging their findings, and linking them with the developmental and civilizational requirements of the Islamic Ummah; (2) Upgrading and developing higher education to address the needs of Muslim societies and benefit by the scientific and technological new developments in line with the Islamic Ummah's civilizational constants; (3) Furthering cooperation in such a way as to enhance the exchange of experiences, studies, programmes and visits in the fields of education, science, culture and technology; (4) Encouraging the teaching of the language of the Holy Quran and the Islamic culture in Member Universities; (5) Stepping up the efforts of higher education institutions to address the current issues and entrench the values of understanding, coexistence and peace among the peoples of the Islamic Ummah and the world as a whole; (6) Upgrading Member Universities' knowledge and human capacities; and (7) Caring for the Islamic heritage by publicising, translating and authenticating it, and shedding light on the contribution of its scholars to human civilizational building.<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, ISESCO lists its objectives as follows: (1) Building the elites of the Islamic world; (2) Developing capacities, skills and expertise related to sustainable development; (3)

<sup>28</sup> "Setting up – FUIW."

<sup>29</sup> "Objectives – FUIW."

Anchoring the culture of excellence and developing the quality approach; (4) Promoting research, innovation, and entrepreneurship; (5) Promoting initiatives, exchanging successful experiences and institutionalising good practices; (6) Develop scientific, academic, professional and institutional networking; (7) Promote universal human principles and fundamental rights; (8) Promote intercultural and inter-civilisational dialogue and anchor values of moderation and cohabitation; (9) Use soft power to make known the real image of Islam and its civilizational contribution to humanity; (10) Produce and disseminate knowledge and accompany global transformations and paradigm shifts; and (11) Strengthen collective action and win-win partnerships.<sup>30</sup> From the objectives of both institutions, several keywords can be underscored: civilisation, entrepreneurship, exchange and cooperation, heritage, human capacity, innovation, knowledge and practice, peace and coexistence, publication, scientific research, skills and expertise, societal needs, and sustainability.

In relation to sustainability, IIUM has also geared several initiatives to meet its commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are grouped by IIUM into five categories symbolised by Five Ps which stands for Peace, People, Planet, Partnership, Prosperity, and which was also made to correspond to the five principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, respectively: Faith, Life, Intellect, Lineage, and Wealth. The university believes that in this way, all the SDG goals can be covered simultaneously with the fulfilment of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* although SDG4 that addresses the quality and inclusive education is given more emphasis.<sup>31</sup> With regard to its broader educational vision, the university has realigned its formulation of the five wisdom of the National Education Philosophy with UNESCO's five pillars of Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Be, Learning to Live Together, and Learning to Become – the latter being recently introduced.<sup>32</sup> The approach to put together all the above enterprises and execute them in decisive ways was branded as the Whole Institution Transformation (WIT).<sup>33</sup> Finally, to maintain its long-established vision of becoming the leading international centre of educational excellence, the university integrates into the map its four supreme missions, namely, Islamisation, Integration, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence and forward a new SDG on spirituality which will be represented by the concept of *Sejahtera*.<sup>34</sup> Under the gamut of *Sejahtera*, four principles are underscored namely *Khalīfah*, *Amānah*, *Iqra'* and *Raḥmatan Lil 'Ālamīn*. Although the rector once stated that all these ventures are fairly distributed throughout the university involving all sectors - academics, administrators and students, including the local and indigenous communities around the university, it is of the upmost priority for the Department to fashion its education programme with all the above etched in the fabric of its curriculum design.

Needless to say, the academic programme at the Department must also abide by certain regulations set by the national authority. In this regard, the Malaysian Qualifications Agency has provided at least two important documents that specifically are of relevance to

<sup>30</sup> "Vision, Mission & Objectives – ICESCO-En."

<sup>31</sup> International Islamic University Malaysia, "IIUM Roadmap 2019 - 2020."

<sup>32</sup> Delors, *Learning: The Treasure within*.

<sup>33</sup> Razak, "Creating a Conscious Global Community."

<sup>34</sup> "Vision & Mission," and Syaukat, "Awareness on Sustainable Development Goals Programme (SDG)."

the Department. The first of these is the Malaysian Qualification Framework that outlines the Academic Learning Outcomes or the Learning Outcome Domains. As per the first edition of the framework, eight domains are listed for Higher Education Providers to ensure that their academic programme would cover them thoroughly. These are: LOD1 - Knowledge; LOD2 - Practical Skills; LOD3 - Social Skills and Responsibilities; LOD4 - Values, Attitudes and Professionalism; LOD5 - Communication, Leadership and Team Skills; LOD6 - Problem Solving and Scientific Skills; LOD7 - Information Management and Lifelong Skills; and LOD8 - Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills.<sup>35</sup> The second edition of the MQF was later issued in 2019.<sup>36</sup> However, the context of this paper does not permit a full exploration of the document. Subsequently, the previous LODs would be located on the bigger framework that involves a meticulous formulation of Programme Educational Outcome (PEO), Programme Objectives or Programme Learning Outcome (PLO), Course Learning Outcome (CLO) and the most minute one, Task Learning Outcome (TLO).<sup>37</sup> Put together, the resultant framework is expected to be able to effectuate one of the strategies for quality assurance devised by the MQA that is Outcome Based Education (OBE). The ultimate aim involves the attainment of a global level of quality assurance, the internationalisation particularly in the benchmarking exercise, and the industrial benefit indicated by a high graduate employability scale. It is worth noting that the spirit of this strategy is often concluded in the expressions “*from curricula, resources and processes towards outcomes and objectives*,” and “*curricula and teaching are means, not ends. If they do not do the job, they are rethought*.”<sup>38</sup>

The second document that was formulated by MQA is the Islamic Studies Programme Standard.<sup>39</sup> The document is meant to enhance the development of educational programmes in Islamic studies and to maintain the quality of graduates. Compared to the earlier standard produced by Quality Assurance Division of the Ministry of Higher Education in 2017 that addressed only the bachelor level, this MQA programme standard covers programmes from certificate to doctorate levels. The present paper is concerned only with the bachelor's degree. As mentioned in the document, the general programme aims for bachelor's level are to produce graduates who: (1) have advanced and specialized knowledge in the field including the ability to understand related classical sources (*turāth*); (2) have satisfactory Arabic proficiency in terms of writing and speaking; (3) are able to apply Islamic principles in dealing with contemporary circumstances, problems and issues; (4) possess relevant knowledge, skills and aptitude to meet job specifications, especially in managerial capacities; (5) have critical, analytical and problem-solving skills in order to deal with issues at hand; (6) possess effective interpersonal and communication skills, including a working knowledge of English; (7) are able to carry out supervisory role in teamwork and are aware of their social and ethical responsibilities; and (8) possess skills for getting knowledge and information from reliable sources for research, lifelong learning and career development.<sup>40</sup> This is later

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<sup>35</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency, “Guidelines to Good Practices: Curriculum Design and Delivery.”

<sup>36</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) 2nd Edition*.

<sup>37</sup> Talib, “Understanding and Implementing OBE”, 26.

<sup>38</sup> See for instance: Talib, “Understanding”, 13-14.

<sup>39</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Programme Standards: Islamic Studies*.

<sup>40</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Programme Standards*, 17.

appropriated for the document's guideline on preparing the general learning outcomes.<sup>41</sup> Apart from this, there are also specific programme aims that must be catered by the academic programme provider.

As for the curriculum design, the document calls for attention to the ultimate aim of Islamic education, that is to nurture learners to become committed Muslims who practise Islam as the true way of life, observing not only its rituals but also its code of moral conduct and spiritual piety. Hence, there are five fundamental elements of Islamic education that should be observed: (1) the transmission of true life principles and values, (2) the inculcation of mastery of subjects and skills, (3) the transmission of true and real knowledge, (4) the effective enhancement of human personality and character, and (5) the inculcation of the sense of propriety in life and work.<sup>42</sup> The document then dictates that for a major programme, a programme manager must offer a minimum of 30 credit hours of Islamic Studies Fundamental Courses and 42 credit hours of Major Core Courses. Another minimum of 18 credit hours are allocated for elective courses which are related to one's Major. The list for subjects deemed fundamental is listed in *Appendix 1* of the document. To mention few examples, *ʿaqīdah*, *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān or uṣūl al-tafsīr*, *ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*, Arabic language, *fiqh*, *akhlāq* and *taṣawwuf*, Quranic recitation and memorisation, *sīrah*, and *daʿwah*.<sup>43</sup> It is also important to note that industrial training or internship can be counted within the total credits allocated for Majoring.<sup>44</sup> The document continues to provide guidelines and information for assessment, student selection, academic staff, educational resources, programme monitoring and review, leadership, governance and administration, and continual quality improvement.

Ultimately, all the MQA documents legally affect the Department's and University's implementation of the Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA) and the Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation (COPPA).<sup>45</sup> In the context of the Department, it is of the most challenging task to integrate the imperatives of all the aforementioned global, national and University's agenda with its core mission of realising the *maqāṣid* of Qurʾān and Sunnah studies. In other words, the Department must exert all efforts to push its ethos of "*traditional embracement, critical engagement, and spiritual enhancement*" through its curricula management.

### The Department's Programme Objectives or Programme Learning Outcomes

This section of this paper will present the Department's formulation of its Programme Objectives that are believed to have comprehensively addressed and covered the above-mentioned schemes and documents. However, there are several other issues that should be highlighted afore despite the limitative context of this paper that will not allow for its further elaboration. Firstly, the question of philosophical foundation. Although the previous sections

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>45</sup> Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Code of Practice for Institutional Audit*, Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation*.

of this paper have featured aspects of this matter, there is another question among the academic members concerning whose philosophy of quality should be observed. What defines an excellent education? Since the University claims to restore soul into excellence, how should the members of the PLO committee manifest the vocation in the collective act of formulation and execution? Are there specific criteria and *adāb* that should be observed by the chair of the committee? Since the discourse of *maqāṣid* calls for *ijtihād* at a very intricate level, to what extent the knowledge of scriptural *maqāṣid* and Islamic education management philosophy should be attained by committee members?

On the other hand, OBE has been challenged in most traditional institutions. The philosophy of OBE that seems to emphasise more on “producing graduates ready for industry practice” generates the perception that it stands in contrast to the *maqāṣid* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge education which gives more prominence to the *ta’dīb* and *tarbiyah* of the human soul. In addition to that, the close connection between OBE and Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives has brought with it the growing criticism levelled against the taxonomy. Although the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains that were proposed by Bloom’s Taxonomy correspond equivalently to the concepts of *‘ilm*, *‘amal* and *ādāb* in Islamic education, there remain significant differences between the two frameworks and their worldviews. Evidently, Bloom’s Taxonomy was not constructed with consideration and instrumentalisation of religious ideals such as spiritual goal, scriptural memorisation, interfaith commitment, etc. Bloom argues for educational-logical-psychological classification system and neutrality with respect to educational orientations which has become a later point of contention.<sup>46</sup> Issues such as measurableness, standardisation, rigidity, etc, are still being debated especially when many aspects of the curriculum involve contents and researches which are qualitative in nature. As accentuated by many, most qualitative researchers are quite adamant in their rejection of standardisation.<sup>47</sup> These are few fundamental issues which are still being debated among policy makers particularly in theologically driven educational institutions. Nonetheless, the Department must take these issues into consideration in its effort to design its curriculum structure and formulate its programme objectives. As an important note for the presentation, all the PLO statements shall be read with the clause “*By the end of the programme, the students should be able to*” placed before them.

### Programme Learning Outcome 1

“comprehend and engage in intellectual discourse related to the field of Qur’ān, Sunnah and Sīrah Studies based on the acquired *thaqāfah*, *‘ilm* and *ma’rifah* that encapsulate all aspects of *riwāyah*, *dirāyah* and *ḥikmah*.”

The three keywords intended here are *thaqāfah*, *‘ilm* and *ma’rifah*. They are references to the concept of levels of knowledge adopted by scholars in the field. The keyword *thaqāfah* which indicates being well-informed with the essential aspects of the discipline shows the awareness of the Department of the reality of academic programmes

<sup>46</sup> Bloom, *The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1*, 6-7.

<sup>47</sup> Tesch, *Qualitative Research: Analysis Types and Software Tools*, 4.

where not all students will graduate with the same level of proficiency.<sup>48</sup> The materialist outcome approach may stand in opposition to this stance. However, the Department believes that as far as Qur'ān and Sunnah studies are concerned, the current structure in academia will only manage to familiarise the students with essential keys for the attainment of *ilm* and even *ma'rifah*. Most of these will require a journey of a lifetime. Nevertheless, these three keywords should have covered the vertical hierarchy of the knowledge dimension according to the Islamic worldview. The distinction between *ilm* and *ma'rifah* is a well-known narrative among its experts and speaks a better language than the cognitive levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in the eyes of scholars in the field.<sup>49</sup> In addition to this, the first PLO also includes three other keywords which are *riwāyah*, *dirāyah*, and *hikmah*.<sup>50</sup> Since knowledge is the main domain that should be given emphasis by the Department, the use of six keywords is rather justified. Moreover, the latter represents the horizontal coverage of the knowledge dimension in the field. *Riwāyah* treats all transmission and authentication related topics, *dirāyah* represents not only all interpretation related issues in *ḥadīth* studies, but also in Quranic studies including *tafsīr* and *tawjīh al-qirā'at*, and *hikmah* alludes to the wise application and manifestation of knowledge which also dictates the relative beneficialness of knowledge creation, instead of the absoluteness implied by Bloom's Taxonomy.

### Programme Learning Outcome 2

“to create, design, or apply appropriate techniques, resources, or modern tools for the advancement of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies in light of the principles of exquisite *adā'*, *amal* and *mahārah*.”

The second PLO corresponds to the second MQF domain which targets practical skills. Although the field of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies is often thought as theoretical in nature, there are actually numerous practical skills involved in the mastery of the scriptures.<sup>51</sup> This includes the ability to consult classical scholarly works and manage scriptural libraries. With the advancement of educational technology, Quranic and *ḥadīth* software of various forms have been invented and produced. Besides, basic skills such as Quranic recitation, *ḥadīth* reading skills, and performance of socio-religious duties are considered important parts of the field. All these and many more are represented by the three keywords: *adā'* (performance), *amal* (action) and *mahārah* (skills). The keyword *adā'* is derived from the phrase “*wa'addāhā kamā sami'ahā*” in the most significant *ḥadīth* that defines Sunnah studies.<sup>52</sup> Although the meaning of *adā'* is typically confined to the oral transmission of tradition, the concept of *ta'diyah* has a far broader connotation and encompasses physical acts as well. The concept of *amal* is undoubtedly indispensable when knowledge is discussed in Islam. Knowledge

<sup>48</sup> Ṣaqr, “Man Huwa al-Muthaqqaf?”

<sup>49</sup> Khan, “The Concept of Knowledge in the Qur'ān.”

<sup>50</sup> See: al-Ghumārī, *Tawjīh al-Ḥadīth li Ta'rif Ilm al-Ḥadīth Riwayah wa Dirāyah* and Shawwāt, *Ilm al-Ḥadīth Riwayah wa Ilm al-Ḥadīth Dirāyah*.

<sup>51</sup> See the new publication by Markaz Iḥsān li Dirāsāt al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah titled *Damj Mahārāt al-Tafkīr fī Tadrīs 'Ulum al-Ḥadīth*. The work promises helpful guidance to incorporating 19 cognitive skills in the teaching of *'ulūm al-ḥadīth*. I thank Dr. Zunaidah Mohd. Marzuki from the Department of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies, IUM for prompting me to look at this work.

<sup>52</sup> al-'Abbād, *Dirāsāt Ḥadīth Naḍdara Allah 'Mra'an Sami'a Maqālatī*.



without action is like a tree without fruit, as the saying goes.<sup>53</sup> The third keyword *mahārah* is an extension of the notion of *al-māhir bi'l-Qur'ān* as reported in a *ḥadīth*.<sup>54</sup> Similar to the case of the first term, the scope of *mahārah* in the context of this formulation is extended to cover all forms of pertinent skills. Most importantly, the exquisiteness of actions, performance and skills reflect the mission of Muslim individuals to be included amongst the righteous servants here and in the Hereafter.

### Programme Learning Outcome 3

“to exercise the qualities of *al-'aql al-tamyīzī*, *al-'aql al-takyīfī* and *al-'aql al-takawthurī* to advance the discourse of Scriptural Studies.”

The third MQF domain addresses Problem Solving and Scientific Skills. In this regard, numerous writings have related problem solving with distinctive mindset.<sup>55</sup> In Arabic, the word *tamayyuz* is the most suitable translation for distinctive. Interestingly, *tamayyuz* is somehow connected to the notion of *tamyīz*, the ability to distinguish between certain things. The Qur'ān also speaks of *tamyīz* between *al-khabīth* and *al-ṭayyib*.<sup>56</sup> For this reason, this “distinctive mindset” must be nurtured in order to enhance problem-solving skills. The second keyword introduces the *takyīf* mind which simultaneously expresses the notion of curiosity and operationality. Although the term *al-takyīf al-fiqhī* is used in the field of Islamic legal methodology to refer to the method of solving modern cases based on traditional precedents, it is adopted here to embrace the wisdom of that strategy and furthermore, the Quranic imperative of making the right judgement.<sup>57</sup> This can be appreciated from the Quranic phrase “*kayfa taḥkumūn*.”<sup>58</sup> One must not forget as well that curiosity and meticulous thought on operationality are amongst the most essential ingredients for a scientific mind. The third keyword, thus, is borrowed from a modern Muslim philosophy that argues for *takawthur* instead of *takāthur* (i.e. production).<sup>59</sup> It denotes the scientific skill that works closely but cautiously with the growth and diversification of knowledge. Nevertheless, *takawthur* demands three principles: *‘āqilah* (an act of mind), *qāṣidah* (with intention) and *nāfi‘ah* (beneficial).<sup>60</sup> These philosophical apparatuses are crucial in understanding the Islamic perspective of science and scientific skills.

### Programme Learning Outcome 4

“to organise, evaluate, and utilise prodigious resources and information to facilitate lifelong learning journey while embracing the paradigms of *manāzil*, *sulūk* and *istiqāmah*.”

<sup>53</sup> al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Iqtidā' al-‘Ilm al-‘Amal*.

<sup>54</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (798a).

<sup>55</sup> See for instance: Cobb, *The Project Manager's Guide to Mastering Agile: Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach*, Conn and McLean, *Bulletproof Problem Solving: The One Skill That Changes Everything*, Frank, *Microeconomics and Behavior*.

<sup>56</sup> al-Qur'ān, al-Anfāl 8:37, Āl 'Imrān 3:179, Yāsīn 36:59 al-Mulk 67:8.

<sup>57</sup> Shabīr, *al-Takyīf al-Fiqhī Li al-Waqā'ī' al-Mustajiddah wa Taḥbīqātuhu al-Fiqhiyyah*.

<sup>58</sup> al-Qur'ān, al-Qalam 68:36.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *al-Lisān Wa al-Mīzān aw al-Takawthur al-‘Aqlī*.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥman, *al-Lisān*, 21-23.

Information Management and Lifelong Learning Skills makes up the fourth MQF domain. It demonstrates the commitment of MQA to boost lifelong learning amongst Malaysian citizens. By including this domain, it will enable individuals “to progress in higher education through transfer of credits and recognition of prior learning, acquired from formal, non-formal and informal learning without taking into account the time and place in the context of lifelong learning.” The three keywords selected by the Department provide the philosophical foundation for lifelong learning education according to the Islamic worldview. Life is a journey across *manāzil* (stations) towards God and the attainment of the highest *darajāt* in the Hereafter.<sup>61</sup> The notion of *sulūk* prevails as a frequent reference for the act of continuous seeking of knowledge.<sup>62</sup> It binds between the professional effort of man and the purification of his heart. Lifelong learning in Islam must progress towards *al-sirāt al-mustaqīm* and it is only achievable by observing *istiqāmah*.<sup>63</sup> All these concepts are derived from verses of the Qur’ān and the texts of *ḥadīth*.

The above four Programme Learning Outcomes are deemed by the Department as contributing to the attainment of the SDG4 which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

#### Programme Learning Outcome 5

“to appreciate and apply the ethical principles of *ādāb*, *iḥsān* and *ri’āyah* in all aspects of professional endeavours and daily life.”

This PLO is specifically formulated to address both the Sejahtera mission of the University - the quest for an additional SDG to address the spiritual aspects of life - and the MQF domain of Values, Attitudes and Professionalism. The three keywords mentioned here are *ādāb*, *iḥsān* and *ri’āyah*. *Ādāb* does not only reflect the affective dimension of the educational taxonomy, it also conveys the essence of recognising the place of self in the scheme of existence.<sup>64</sup> The concept carries richer significance compared to the notion of value. It has been appreciated in the long tradition of Islamic education as the most effective mechanism for the inculcation of attitudes. Needless to say, the heart’s recognition of the position of God places a person on the plateau of *iḥsān*. It will be reflected in the person’s *ri’āyah* or professionalism in his official and personal affairs. More importantly, the concept of *ri’āyah* denotes the dual role of man in his life; he is a master and a servant at the same time as can be discerned from the *ḥadīth* “*kullukum rā’īn*.”<sup>65</sup> Hence, every *ra’yat* is a *rā’ī* and vice versa, and every servant of God should be given the freedom and ability to become a master, at least of himself. It is only through these underpinnings that the true understanding of values, attitudes and professionalism can be appreciated.

#### Programme Learning Outcome 6

<sup>61</sup> Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-Arabi’s Metaphysics of Imagination*.

<sup>62</sup> See for instance: Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (2699a).

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Ranks of the Divine Seekers: A Translation of Madārīj al-Sālikīn Bayna Manāzil Iyyāka Na’budu Wa-Iyyāka Nasta’īn by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 750/1351): A Parallel English-Arabic Text. Volume 1*.

<sup>64</sup> Zarkasyi et al., “Reading al-Attas’ Ta’dīb as Purpose of Islamic University.”

<sup>65</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (1829a).

“to convey the practical qualities of *bayān al-awāmir*, *shūra fī al-umūr* and trusteeship in *al-imārah* independently or collectively.”

The MQF domain number six spotlights the importance of Communication, Leadership and Team Skills. The Department’s keywords for its PLO in this regard revolve interestingly around the Arabic radical *alif-mīm-rā’*. First of all, communications are ultimately imperatives whose Arabic is *al-‘amr* and whose plural is *al-awāmir*. The concept of *bayān* is invoked here to recall the earliest contribution in the classical Islamic legal methodology discourse and to encapsulate various forms of communication.<sup>66</sup> It also refers to the source of *bayān* as stated in *sūrah al-Raḥmān* and the obligation to observe responsible communication.<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, the keyword *al-‘umūr* alludes to the multiple levels of *al-‘amr* namely *‘amr Allāh* (as in the Qur’ān)<sup>68</sup>, *‘amr Rasūl Allāh* (as in the *ḥadīth* “*man aḥdatha fī amrinā*”)<sup>69</sup> and *‘amr al-nās*. The latter is derived from the Quranic verse “*wa-‘amruhum shūrā baynahum*” which also serves as the principle of teamship in Islam.<sup>70</sup> Teamship, thus, not only warrants the success of any collective task, but also invites *barakah* from Allah. This view augurs well with the concept of leadership in Islam that emphasises the principle of *amānah*. Leadership without *amānah* is nothing but a remorse and regret in the Hereafter.<sup>71</sup> By bringing together *al-awāmir*, *al-‘umūr* and *al-imārah*, the PLO seems to offer a comprehensive expression of leadership, teamship and communication that is relatively easy for recollection.

These two Programme Learning Outcomes will enable the Department to contribute to the attainment of SDG11 which reads “to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.”<sup>72</sup>

### Programme Learning Outcome 7

“to communicate the social dimensions of *al-jiwār*, *al-ijtimā’iyyah* and *al-umamiyyah*, and illustrate their applications in relevant societal domains.”

In addressing its concern for social harmony and advancement, The MQF seventh domain is allocated for Social Skills and Responsibilities. The PLO of the Department agrees with this concern and lists its keywords *al-jiwār*, *al-ijtimā’iyyah* and *al-umamiyyah*, which can be translated respectively as neighbourship, sociality and ummatic. The Quranic concepts of *al-ukhuwwah* and *al-birr* are referenced in this regard<sup>73</sup>. In the context of co-existence, Muslims support the cause of “love thy God, love thy neighbour” as it is also a fundamental principle in Islam.<sup>74</sup> Muslims have also elaborated on the concept of *farḍ kifā’ī* to invigorate the fulfilment of social or collective responsibilities. Social concerns of Islam are also apparent in the observation of *Jum‘ah* and *jamā‘ah* (congregational prayers).

<sup>66</sup> Lowry, *Early Islamic Legal Theory: The Risala of Muhammad Ibn Idris al-Shafi’i*.

<sup>67</sup> al-Qur’ān, al-Raḥmān 55:4.

<sup>68</sup> al-Qur’ān, al-A’rāf 7:54.

<sup>69</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (1718a).

<sup>70</sup> al-Qur’ān, al-Shūrā 42:38.

<sup>71</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (1825).

<sup>72</sup> United Nations, “Goal 4.”

<sup>73</sup> al-Qur’ān, al-Ḥujurāt 49:10 and al-Mumtaḥanah 60:8.

<sup>74</sup> “The ACW Letter.”

Ultimately, the concept of *ummah*, either in its exclusive appropriation or its inclusive original meaning, invites Muslims to care for the global community. Since social dimension should not be limited to the local community, the derivation of these keywords from Quranic verses and *ḥadīth* texts is believed to have addressed this domain comprehensively at multiple levels.

### Programme Learning Outcome 8

“to cultivate the qualities of *tadbīr*, *iktisāb* and *qiwāmah*, and integrate them with theoretical acumen in the field of Qur’ān and Sunnah Studies.”

All the three keywords namely *tadbīr*, *iktisāb* and *qiwāmah* originated from the verses of the Quran and the texts of *ḥadīth*. They correspond to Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills which is the final domain of the MQF. The keyword *tadbīr* reminds the managers that they must subject their management to the *tadbīr* of Allah. The word *iktisāb* is taken from the *ḥadīth* where the Prophet was asked, “What type of *al-kasb* (earning) is best?” He replied, “A man’s work with his hand and every transaction which is free from cheating or deception.”<sup>75</sup> It is also used here to represent the extensive discourse on earnings and transactions in Islamic substantive laws and legal tradition. The aim of *tadbīr* and *iktisāb*, moreover, is linked to *qiwāmah* which reflects the ability to sustain livelihood and economic growth, by the assistance of Allah *Qayyim al-Samāwāt wa al-’Arḍ* and *al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm*. The Department believes that these three concepts make a perfect combination for the expression of an Islamic managerial and entrepreneurial philosophy that suits the academic programme of the Department.

These two Programme Learning Outcomes are seen as the perfect mechanism for SDG16 that is to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.<sup>76</sup>

### Programme Learning Outcome 9

“to relevantise the knowledge in Scriptural Sciences with continuous advancement of human enterprises in light of IIUM IIICE philosophy.”

This is an additional PLO constructed to dedicatedly support the mission of IIUM that is often remembered by the acronym IIICE or the designation Triple I’CE. The acronym stands for Integration, Islamisation, Internationalisation and Comprehensive Excellence. The philosophy of the University is widely available and accessible on its website and publications.<sup>77</sup> The use of the word ‘relevantise’ is intended as a reflection of the Relevantisation project forwarded by the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences. The term relevantisation was coined by Emeritus Professor Mohd Kamal Hassan who was the former rector of the University and who argues that it is a convenient single term to embrace several imperatives for reform of Islamic religious disciplines

<sup>75</sup> al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, 2:13 (2211).

<sup>76</sup> United Nations, “Goal 16.”

<sup>77</sup> International Islamic University Malaysia, “About-IIUM | Vision and Mission.”

indicated by the Arabic words *tajdīd*, *iṣlāh*, *ijtihād*, *taṣhīh*, *iḥyā'*, *i'ādat al-nazar*, *binā' jadīd*, etc.<sup>78</sup> It is also used to avoid misunderstanding that arose from the use of the term Islamisation in the context of Islamic Revealed Knowledge. The question that was often asked: How is it possible to '*islamise*' the Islamic religious sciences or '*ulūm al-millah*? Thus, the act of relevantisation, when understood in light of the above-mentioned Arabic terms, more conveniently suits Islamic Studies in general and the field of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies in particular, and should be embraced as one of the most important objectives for its academic endeavours.

Although the spirit of this last Programme Learning Outcome was derived very much from the University's philosophy, it is also hoped that the fulfilment of this exercise can contribute to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development, which constitutes SDG17.<sup>79</sup>

The discussion of this section is summarised and presented in the following table:

No.	Programme Learning Outcomes	Department's Keywords	Learning Outcome Domain	Sustainable Development Goals
1	comprehend and engage in intellectual discourse related to the field of Qur'ān, Sunnah, and Sīrah Studies based on the acquired <i>thaqāfah</i> , <i>ilm</i> , and <i>ma'rifah</i> that encapsulate all aspects of <i>riwāyah</i> , <i>dirāyah</i> , and <i>hikmah</i> .	<i>thaqāfah</i> <i>ilm</i> <i>ma'rifah</i>  <i>riwāyah</i> <i>dirāyah</i> <i>hikmah</i>	Knowledge	SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
2	create, design, or apply appropriate techniques, resources, or modern tools for the advancement of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies in the light of the principles of exquisite <i>adā'</i> , <i>'amal</i> , and <i>mahārah</i> .	<i>adā'</i> <i>'amal</i> <i>Mahārah</i>	Practical Skills	
3	exercise the qualities of <i>al-'aql al-tamyīzī</i> , <i>al-'aql al-takyīfī</i> , and <i>al-'aql al-takawthurī</i> to advance the discourse of Scriptural Studies.	<i>al-tamyīzī</i> , <i>al-takyīfī</i> <i>al-takawthurī</i>	Problem Solving and Scientific Skills	
4	organise, evaluate, and utilise prodigious resources and information to facilitate lifelong learning journey while embracing	<i>manāzil</i> <i>sulūk</i> <i>istiqāmah</i>	Information Management and Lifelong Learning Skills	

<sup>78</sup> Hassan, "The Necessity of Relevantisation (Islah, Tajdid, Ijtihad, Ihya', Tashih, 'iadat al-Nazar, Bina' Jadid) of Islamic Revealed Knowledge Disciplines."

<sup>79</sup> United Nations, "Goal 17."

	the paradigms of <i>manāzil</i> , <i>sulūk</i> and <i>istiqāmah</i> .			
5	appreciate and apply the ethical principles of <i>ādāb</i> , <i>iḥsān</i> and <i>ri'āyah</i> in all aspects of professional endeavours and daily life.	<i>ādāb</i> <i>iḥsān</i> <i>ri'āyah</i>	Values, Attitudes and Professionalism	SDG 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
6	convey the practical qualities of <i>bayān al-awāmir</i> , <i>shūra fī al-umūr</i> and trusteeship in <i>al-imārah</i> independently or collectively.	<i>bayān al-awāmir</i> <i>shūra fī al-umūr</i> <i>amānat al-imārah</i>	Communication, Leadership and Team Skills	
7	communicate the social dimensions of <i>al-jiwār</i> , <i>al-ijtima'iyah</i> , and <i>al-umamiyyah</i> , and illustrate their applications in relevant societal domains.	<i>al-jiwār</i> <i>al-ijtima'iyah</i> <i>al-umamiyyah</i>	Social Skills and Responsibilities	SDG 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
8	cultivate the qualities of <i>tadbīr</i> , <i>iktisāb</i> and <i>qiwāmah</i> , and integrate them with theoretical acumen in the field of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies.	<i>tadbīr</i> <i>iktisāb</i> <i>qiwāmah</i>	Managerial and Entrepreneurial Skills	
9	relevantise the knowledge in Scriptural Sciences with continuous advancement of human enterprises in the light of IIUM IIICE philosophy.	relevantise, IIICE	Islamicisation & Integration of Knowledge	SDG 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Table 1: PLO vs Keywords vs SDG

## Notes & Discussions

In this section, we will present issues faced by the Department and questions which are frequently asked with regard to the PLOs. The first question is: would it be right to say that these learning outcomes sound too idealistic and reflect the unrealistic notion of a perfect man? In responding to this, the Department asserts its confidence on the feasibility of its project given that the formulation of these learning outcomes has already taken into consideration the different levels of *ilm*, *amal* and *ādāb* amongst the addressee and different cognitive capacity amongst learners. Besides, the keywords highlighted in the PLOs reflect centuries of practice by scholars in the field and they are easier to be recalled by course instructors compared to the often-neglected statements of learning outcomes. It also bodes well with the message of the *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet says: “When you ask Allah for something, ask for *al-firdaws* which is the best and highest part of Paradise.”<sup>80</sup> Ultimately,

<sup>80</sup> al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (7423).

the attainment of PLO would become more manageable when it is exemplified at the level of Course Learning Outcome.

The above relates closely to the second issue that is the measurability of these learning outcomes. Given the previous answer that pointed out the role of Course Learning Outcome, it is also within the responsibility of the Department to provide the operational instruments for the assessment of CLO. Nevertheless, these assessment instruments must be subjected to the implementation of Islamic key concepts mentioned in the PLO. Since assessment practice may affect the mindset of learners, as frequently learned from debates pertaining to the issue of an exam-oriented education system, the exposition of the Islamic concept of educational assessment is vitally necessary. It is for this reason the umbrella concept of *maqāṣid* of Islamic education must be addressed deliberately and comprehensively.

To apprehend some possible issues related to assessment, several questions are worth contemplating on. Firstly, should the learning outcome for a programme in Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies stipulate the amount of memorisation required for one to be recognised as an expert in the field? If yes, should the student memorise the whole Qur'ān? Or should he memorise the six canonical compendia of *ḥadīth* or at least the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*? What about the *tafsīr* of the Quranic verses or the *fiqh* of *ḥadīth*? Should we assess the ability of the students to deliver the scriptures to various segments of the society? What about the spiritual progress of the learners? Should the learners also be familiarised with issues related to scientific theories and technological advancement? The list will continue and the responses to these questions will vary according to the religious thought and philosophical inclination of the respondents. To a certain extent, the formulation of PLOs can bring the practitioners, i.e. the course instructors, to a unified vision for the programme although we must be reminded to pay due regard to individual creativity and the dynamic nature of the study itself.

Most importantly, the concept of Quranic comprehensiveness must be observed in the formulation of institution aims or designing a curriculum framework. It reminds the planners and policy makers to not only have the right vision or plan, but the vision must also be inclusive of all possible aspects of mankind as addressed in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Visions which were deemed exceptional and even derived from the Qur'an and *ḥadīth* are not necessarily praiseworthy when this condition of comprehensiveness is not met. Some Muslims even argue by the Quranic verse that translates "What! Do you believe in part of the Book and defy another part?"<sup>81</sup> for the sake of this comprehensiveness. For them, to subscribe that God will punish the evildoers and ignore His attribute of All-forgiving is a perfect example of an incomprehensive mindset. Hence, the practice of policy making, and most crucially curriculum design, that will affect the deliverance of the right knowledge must involve a wide coverage of Islamic scriptures, i.e. Qur'an and *ḥadīth*, and scholarly traditions. Otherwise, the planning will remain an official routine disconnected from the lively tradition of *ijtihād*.

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<sup>81</sup> al-Qur'ān, al-Baqarah 2: 85.

Last but not least, modern educational institutions will have to grapple with the subject of employability of its graduates. Although this issue has been debated extensively amongst researchers and scholars across various fields of concentration, the Department must also look into this aspect in its formulation of Programme Objectives. As presented in the previous section, MQF's attention to managerial and entrepreneurial skills should have alerted institutions to cater to this growing demand, although the Department's concepts of *tadbīr*, *iktisāb* and *qiwāmah* seem to be more convincing considering its philosophical ground. After all, life does not always run on logic and numbers. Sometimes, it is useful to include some sort of "destandardisation" in the act of management, and by that we mean the reduction of obsession with standardisation and the willingness to leave people to the dynamics of life.

### Conclusion

The integration between the principles of *maqāṣid al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah* and the operational mechanics of Outcome Based Education proves to be extremely challenging especially when the modern expression of *maqāṣid* of Quranic and Sunnah studies is quite recently explored and OBE does not appear to be in total harmony with the ethos of the field. Nevertheless, the formulation of Programme Learning Outcomes may contribute significantly to unifying the vision of educators in carrying their responsibilities and nurturing future generations. The philosophy of this quality assurance exercise works best in a sort of condition where the discourse on progress and civilisation is heavily celebrated and where ideal facilities and ratio are available. In reality, lecturers in some Malaysian public universities are still grappling with strenuous administrative and clerical tasks, disproportionate teacher-student ratio, lack of facilities and equipment, etc. Most of the time, quality assessments seem to have shifted the role of educators from advocating "university for the society" to "university for the auditors." The Qur'an and Sunnah, on the other hand, provide practical guidance for the management of quality education including the education of self in times of crisis and in absence of ideal conditions. After all, the Qur'an itself has reminded its readers about *sunan al-tadāwul* or *al-tadāwul al-ḥaḍārī*.<sup>82</sup> The crucial focus of Islamic education, then, lies in the education of the self to internalise the principles of *ādāb* and *ijtihād*, by which the self can continue to progress regardless of whatever situation one encounters in life. *Ādāb* and *ijtihād*, in turn, reflect the two fundamental concepts in the Quran which are *īmān* and *'amal ṣāliḥ*. These are also the two important messages from the *ḥadīth* of post Prophetic *hijrah* that emphasises on *niyyah* and *jihād*.<sup>83</sup> The formulation of the PLOs by the Department as elaborated above seems to have attempted at epitomising these fundamentals of the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is ambitiously hoped that the apprehension and implementation of this project by lecturers and students will not only demonstrate the unique reconciliation of traditionality and versatility, but also attract the enthusiast scholars of Islamic education to further enhance the *maqāṣid* of Qur'an and Sunnah studies, and furthermore, unlock the *maqāṣid* of Islamic Revealed Knowledge.

<sup>82</sup> Referring to al-Qur'ān, Āl 'Imrān 3: 140. See: 'Allām, *al-Tadāwul al-Ḥaḍārī fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*.

<sup>83</sup> al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (3077), and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (1353c).



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