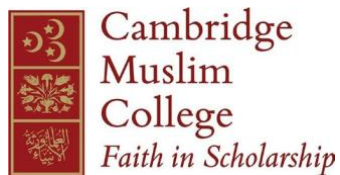
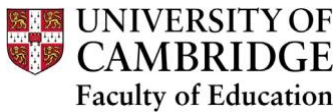


Roadmap to Renewal

Islamic Educational Theory into Practice

White Paper on the Cambridge Dialogues
Concluding Conference December 11-12, 2023

Organised by:



Acknowledgements

We begin with gratitude to God for the opportunity to serve, collaborate, and connect with hearts and minds from across the world dedicated to the field of Islamic Schooling. We thank all our colleagues who attended for pushing our collective thinking. We thank our three organising partners (University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education; Centre for Islamic Thought and Education at the University of South Australia, and Cambridge Muslim College) for their support, both financial and in-kind, to make this work possible.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The “Roadmap to Renewal” Conference held December 11-12, 2023 at the University of Cambridge, UK was part of the culminating symposium for the Cambridge Dialogues project (2021- 2023). The conference sought to:

1. Capture “vantage points” and intersections of perspectives from school-leaders, academics, and theologians on a roadmap for renewal that draws on Islamic conceptualisations of education
2. Build an international network of multiple institutional partners, mapping future potentialities and a plan for ongoing sustained collaboration through a dialogic practice loop

The workshop involved a small select group of 20 people who attended by invite only (approximately 6 representing each vantage point).

Urgency

The impetus for this dialogue between theologians, educators, and academics supporting Islamic schools was meant to:

- Provide clarity on priorities for the field of Islamic schooling
- Foster stronger collaborations between key stakeholders in the field of Islamic schooling
- Substantiate where philanthropic funding is needed

Key Takeaways

The following is a summary of some of the overarching reflections from across the dialogues:

1. Vantage points intersect – a shared language is needed as labels can be inaccurate
2. Curriculum initiatives are blossoming and yet Islamically grounded models are needed
3. Academics need to make the benefit of research for schools more explicit
4. Reading through educational orientations fosters stronger coherence in Islamic schools
5. Undervaluing of Islamic Studies teachers/scholars must be contested
6. Fostering an Islamic personhood is a collective responsibility
7. Need to get our education model right: Cognitive dissonance in Islamic schools is real
8. Getting the model “right” must begin with getting the purpose of education right
9. Cannot forget the needs of Muslim students in public schools
10. Diversity offers richness in our school cultures and enables critical thinking

The following are what each sector sees as their contribution to the field:

Educators offer pragmatic and deep understandings of schools including education policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, school improvement, school operations, needs of learners, parents, and families.

Academics see themselves as “the bridge” - as “translating” or making deep theorisations of education in the Islamic tradition accessible, relevant and practical to contemporary Islamic schooling contexts.

Theologians offer an understanding of the Islamic vision of truth and reality (commonly termed Islamic Worldview) and its implications and potential for the field of Islamic schooling.

The two-day dialogue ended in the following concrete considerations forward:

- To “unlearn” conventional teacher education and move toward Islamically grounded teacher development
- Real collaborative partnerships between educators, academics, and theologians - not simply pre-packaged “solutions,” self-serving research, or one-and-done professional development

Way Forward

A list of guiding questions that were left unanswered are provided and intended to stimulate on-going dialogues across Islamic schooling contexts and conferences globally.

PROGRAM

Overview of Cambridge Dialogues

‘Cambridge Dialogues: Rethinking Islamic Education for the 21st Century’ is an innovative international network in an emerging field of Islamic schooling. It draws together twenty Muslim academics who work at the cutting edge of ‘close to practice research’ in Islamic schools and education settings across the world. Initiated by academics who have a track record within Muslim teacher networks, this project applies a much-needed critical lens to the aims, philosophy, pedagogy and practice of Islamic schooling. The project seeks to update and innovate within the field of Islamic schooling, which in many cases is still using transmission-based teaching methodologies. The project is led by Dr Farah Ahmed and is housed within the ‘Cultural, religious and philosophical traditions in educational dialogue’ research strand of the Cambridge Educational Dialogue Research Group (CEDiR).

For more information about the Cambridge Dialogues, its aims, research outputs and participating members, please visit the website at the [link here](#).

Background to “Roadmap to Renewal” Conference

The “Roadmap to Renewal” Conference held December 11-12, 2023 at the University of Cambridge, UK was part of the culminating symposium for the Cambridge Dialogues project (2021-2023). The conference rationale acknowledged that the field of K-12 Islamic schooling has undoubtedly made significant strides over the past decades yet, internally, there remains a looming angst over the absence of an educational model we can call our own. As Islamic schools increasingly grapple with how to center the ‘Islamic’ more deeply and authentically, many are embarking on a process of renewal (*tajdid*). In the spirit of *tajdid*, the conference brought three groups into dialogue: educators, academics, and theologians - each contributing with constructive insights from complementary vantage points toward a “roadmap to renewal.”

Outcomes

The conference sought to:

- Capture “vantage points” and intersections of perspectives from school-leaders, academics, and theologians on a roadmap for renewal that draws on Islamic conceptualisations of education
- Build an international network of multiple institutional partners, mapping future potentialities and a plan for ongoing sustained collaboration through a dialogic theory practice loop

The workshop involved a small select group of 20 people who attended by invite only (approximately 6 representing each vantage point). The dialogues were intended to be deep and purposeful explorations of each of the three vantage points with ample time for discussion, deliberation, and forward thinking.

Day One

Day 1 consisted of three 2-hour dialogues facilitated by each of the three groups. Each dialogue was an opportunity to respond to the following prompts:

- I. What are the key aspirations for Islamic schooling from your vantage point?
- II. What specialist knowledge does your vantage point offer the other two?
- III. Why is this knowledge important for the vantage points to work collaboratively?
- IV. Which projects/initiatives reflect the direction you envision?
- V. What is the roadmap to achieving the direction you envision?

Day Two

Day 2 consisted of three 2-hour dialogues on deliberating over intersections and fostering collaborations across vantage points. Each dialogue focused on one vantage point in relation to the others using the following prompts:

- A. Schools:** How might academics and theologians support schools?
- B. Seminaries:** How might educators and academics support seminaries?
- C. Academics:** How might educators and theologians support academics?

Attendees

1. Dr. Farah Ahmed, University of Cambridge (UK)
2. Sr. Esra Albayrak, Nun School, Istanbul (Turkey)
3. Dr. Claire Alkouatli, Cambridge Muslim College (UK)
4. Br. Waquas Ali, Ilm2Aml (UK)
5. Dr. Rehneuma Asmi, Shenandoah University (USA)
6. Dr. Talal Azem, Cambridge Muslim College (UK)
7. Sr. Someera Butt, Al-Noor School (UK)
8. Dr. Safaruk Chowdhury, Cambridge Muslim College (UK)
9. Br. Dylan Chown, University of South Australia (AUS)
10. Sr. Ipek Coskun, Institut Sosyal (Turkey)
11. Dr. Amaarah DeCuir, American University (USA)
12. Sr. Fatima D'Oyen, Education Consultant (UK)
13. Sr. Sanel Haskic, APEX Schools (UK)
14. Dr. Nadeem Memon, University of South Australia (AUS)
15. Br. Babar Mirza, Nida Trust (UK)
16. Dr. Fella Lahmar, Open University (UK)
17. Dr. Omar Qureshi, Cambridge Muslim College (UK)
18. Sr. Humaira Saleem, Iqra Primary School (UK)
19. Dr. Haroon Sidat, Islamic-UK Centre, Cardiff University (UK)
20. Sh. Mustafa Styer, LIFE Curriculum (UK)

Organised by

The conference was organised by Dr Farah Ahmed, Senior Research Associate, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge and Dr Nadeem Memon, Associate Professor, Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE), University of South Australia with the support of Dr. Talal Al-Azem, Academic Director, Cambridge Muslim College. The administrative staff of all three institutions including graduate students (notably Usama Mirza and Arwa Al-Qassim) in the case of University of Cambridge, played a significant role in making this conference a success for which the organisers are indebted.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The discussions over the two days were deep, insightful and rich - all of which we could not do justice to in a summary document. However, we have organised key takeaways from the dialogues around three key headings:

1. Challenges and Aspirations:

Overarching Reflections from Across Vantage Points

2. Sector Contributions:

What Each Vantage Point Offers the Field

3. Roadmap to Renewal:

Concrete Considerations Forward

CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS:

Overarching Reflections from Across Vantage Points

The following is a summary of some of the overarching reflections from across the dialogues:

Vantage points intersect: A shared language is needed as labels can be Inaccurate

Among the first contentions that were raised during the conference was the very framing of vantage points. “Theologians” did not agree with the label insisting they are in most cases academics of Islamic Studies or in some cases religious studies teachers but far from theologians in the full sense of the term. “Academics” in many cases held previous positions or experience as educators and/or school leaders and in some cases also as religious studies teachers or scholars. Similarly, many of the “Educators” also held roles and responsibilities that intersected the artificial groupings offered. Some argued that divisions across sectors or vantage points are actually fictional lines where our work in and for Islamic schools is far more fluid. A key takeaway from these contentions is the need for such dialogues to consider the intersections and complexities of the roles and vantage points that each brings to the dialogue.

Curriculum initiatives blossoming and yet Islamically grounded models are needed

Through the dialogues it became apparent that many of the religious studies scholars attending are actively involved in supporting the development of Islamic Studies curriculum or whole-school curriculum models. It was heartening to learn about the number of curriculum projects emerging and this was just a very small segment of voices. We learned about attempts at developing GCSE Islamic Studies, Islam and Science curriculum, and classification of the sciences initiatives to name a few. Among educators it was noted that despite the numerous curriculum initiatives the aspiration of a fully integrated or Islamised or Islamically grounded curriculum model has yet to come to fruition. Additionally, in relation to teacher preparation, educators felt a model that educates teachers on an Islamically grounded approach to teaching and learning is needed. To address both of these priorities (curriculum and teacher education), educators felt there remains a need to have access to a body of research on education that is rooted in the Islamic tradition.

Academics need to make the benefit of research for schools more explicit

A key challenge academics discussed is how do academics empower Islamic schools to engage with, benefit from, and adapt academic research for their own school contexts. Involving educators in Islamic schools in practitioner or inquiry-based action research was one way forward that was discussed. But academics also discussed that for educators to benefit from the value of academic research the following is needed: a) language used must be practitioner focused and not overly theoretical and b) educators need to be taken on a conceptual journey related to Islamic educational thought. An educator should not simply use a “halaqa,” for example, as a pedagogical tool in the absence of other foundational Islamic educational concepts (e.g. *fitrah*, *tarbiya*, *ihsan*) that provide a holistic view of the child and of learning.

Reading through educational orientations fosters stronger coherence in Islamic schools

The need to recognise that not all educators or academics or theologians for that matter come from the same positions or leanings or orientations was also discussed. Take educators for instance - some lean toward positivist research using quantitative methods to draw generalisable conclusions on “best practices” and “evidence-based teaching strategies” where others lean toward critical approaches and rely on qualitative methods yielding contextual insights that reveal complexities, intersections, and dilemmas. Two very different orientations and the same could be said for the other two vantage points. Some felt one key contribution of academics is to help educators in Islamic schools read through these leanings in order to develop coherence in their vision of Islamic education. Some educators emphasised that for the field of Islamic schooling to blossom we need to collectively move away from the global, conventional obsessions with testing, measurement, and efficiency. We undoubtedly want high intellectual rigor and academic excellence for Muslim learners but we need to re-center our focus on preparing the Muslim learner for the *akhira* which will in its essence have implications for how we do what we do in Islamic schools. Others emphasised the need to acknowledge we will have diverse enactments of Islamic schooling – i.e. that we will not (and should not) have one single model. Some schools will continue to emphasise exams and testing and others will lean toward play and forest pedagogies. The collective discuss was around wanting schools to be visionary in the “Islamic” as they claim they are but not assume all be the same.

Undervaluing of Islamic Studies teachers/scholars must be contested

Another challenge raised is how do we get people with these vantage points in the same space for such a dialogue? We collectively discussed that every context is unique. Some participants emphasised that in some Muslim majority contexts (e.g. Turkey), many Imams have gone through both university education and a traditional Islamic education so they strongly intersect two vantage points. In other contexts (e.g. UK) many Imams have immigrated and need to understand the socio-political context. There are also power dynamics between the three vantage points that also vary from one context to another. In some contexts, Islamic Studies scholars or Imams are undervalued for what they bring to Islamic schools and in other contexts educators are viewed as solely those who impart curriculum but not shape it. These power dynamics need to be contested when such dialogues are facilitated.

Fostering an Islamic personhood is a collective responsibility

Discussions also arose about the role of educators in Islamic schools toward fostering an Islamic personhood. There was consensus that the onus of nurturing Islam is a collective responsibility of every educator in an Islamic school - not just the Islamic Studies teacher or Imam or chaplain. A shared commitment to this then requires a shift in how educators see themselves in their roles within a school. It also places a collective responsibility on schools to empower every educator with the agency to lead change, to dialogue and collaborate toward shared aspirations and for schools to provide the necessary (and on-going) professional learning that supports conceptual and practical know-how on how to fulfill this responsibility. Currently, we cannot deny how pervasive the divide is in most Islamic schools - particularly in Muslim majority contexts - but arguably equally in the Muslim minority contexts - between those that teach religion and those that teach “core” curriculum. Academics can play a strategic role through facilitating in-service professional learning that challenges these divisions and fosters collaboration. Educators also discussed the need to engage parents and bring them on the journey. A curriculum for parents on how to educate, nurture, and align to the aspirations of Islamic schools is needed. Strong relationships between schools and parents and community are essential - a whole family / community approach.

Need to get our education model right: Cognitive dissonance in Islamic schools is real

There was ample discussion across multiple groups and small group dialogues that both educators and students in Islamic schools continue to operate in a bifurcated education system - secular state mandated “core curriculum” on the one hand and “religious” education on the other. The two still rarely intersect in deep and authentic ways. In the words of one participant (and supported by most others): “this is a disaster.” Another participant put it this way - “using the right model and doing it good is better than trying to perfect the wrong model.” The idea of a “right” and “wrong” model resulted in significant debate and deliberation. However, the point agreed upon is that there needs to be an acknowledgement that: a) a secular, neoliberal system of education in the postmodern world is not neutral - it is equally advancing a particular worldview that is at its core is anti-metaphysical and b) our schools must teach students to read the world and think as Muslims - essentially reading the world from the Islamic worldview. The example was given by one participant on how many Muslim economists contributed to the 2008 economic crash - a direct result, it was argued, of thinking from within a secular (and not Islamic) worldview. The role of Islamic schools is to nurture Muslim professionals who think from within the “Islamic vision of Truth and Reality.” This requires an education that goes beyond the *fard ‘ayn* (individual religious obligations) and toward an “extended *fard ‘ayn*” that teaches how to read, understand and critique the philosophical commitments of the postmodern world from the standpoint of the Islamic Worldview.

Getting the model “right” must begin with getting the purpose of education right

The “right” model from this perspective is one that begins with the core aim of education in the Islamic tradition - to know God. Education in the Islamic tradition is about drawing out *malakaat* (dispositions) reflective of perfect character with the never-ending aspiration of *insan al kamil* (perfect person). This requires challenging assumptions of modernity first before one can turn inward to the Islamic tradition because modern sciences (and by virtue contemporary secular school curriculum) has been developed in the absence of philosophy (wisdom) and ethics. The aspiration of education in the Islamic tradition is *dhawq’* (tasting) a deep spiritual awareness that has also been labeled by some scholars as *insan al salih*, or *musleh*, or *muhsin*. Our *tasawur* (conceptualisation or how we imagine ourselves as Islamic schools) matters, as one participant emphasised. Traditional madrassas did not just produce *ulema* (religious scholars), they produced whole human beings, cultivated human beings she argued. The same participant then provided the example of the concept of “*falah*” in the Islamic tradition that holds very distinct understanding of success from conventional conceptions of success in schools. The lens through which we approach education in Islamic schools (i.e. a post- modern worldview or a traditional Islamic worldview) matters.

Cannot forget the needs of Muslim students in public schools

It was emphasised that we cannot forget that the majority of Muslim students do not attend Islamic schools and as a result we need to think about integrating our support as best as we can so that we do not forget the majority of Muslim students in state schools. A very small percentage of school-aged Muslim students actually attend Islamic schools in the UK, US, Canada, Australia - as examples. The question was also raised as to why have Islamic schools not been able to convince (or support) more parents to consider Islamic schools and what can this collaboration between educators, theologians, and academics do to advance stronger conviction in the potential of Islamic schools. Lastly, the importance of parent and community education was also reiterated. To transform the student, we need to transform the teacher, the parent and system. Schools need to provide adult education because we assume our students come from stable homes - we need parent coaches, an academy for parents.

Diversity offers richness in our school cultures and enables critical thinking

An emphasis was placed on appreciating the geographical and cultural diversity of our tradition and by virtue what we can learn from educational initiatives from across the globe - past and present. Islamic Education develops in different contexts and so we also need to appreciate how Islamic civilization has thrived and formulate it in the curriculum among young Muslims. We need to understand the historical trajectory of the tradition. One way to achieve this, in the words of one theologian, is for every community Islamic school to have a *qutb* - a reference point. He explained, our ummah is about *suhba* (good companionship) and therefore, every Islamic school needs a *qutb* that they can go to and so we need to create a group of people who have an awareness of the Islamic sciences and appreciation of Islamicate cultures that can guide schools.

SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS: WHAT EACH VANTAGE POINT OFFERS THE FIELD

Educators

Educators offer practical, pragmatic, real and deep understanding of running a school - experiences of families, staffing, and needs of students and state regulations. Educators understand the significant challenges related to schooling: legal, financial, social, and educational. Educators expressed that academics and scholars need to reach out to school leaders to learn from them - not just to give solutions.

Academics

Academics see themselves as “the bridge” - as “translating” or making deep theorisations of Islamic education accessible and relevant to contemporary Islamic schooling contexts. Through teacher education programs and professional learning initiatives for schools, academics envision that the future graduates from B.Ed and M.Ed programs will have an integrated, coherent, and grounded understanding of education in the Islamic tradition and its relevance to teaching in Islamic schools. Academics feel this would empower theologians to engage more deeply with the Islamic school sector with further research on the field of classical Islamic education and it would empower educators to know that their work in schools is deeply grounded in tradition. Such a role of academics would also improve power dynamics within Islamic schools by bridging the gap between Islamic studies teachers and core curriculum teachers. Academics feel they are able to disseminate cutting edge initiatives in Islamic schools and the field of Islamic education broadly through research to amplify and disseminate information and shared across contexts.

Theologians

Theologians offer an understanding of the Islamic Worldview (or what Prof Attas calls Islamic vision of Truth and Reality) and its implications and potential for the field of Islamic education. Theologians are able to explain how knowledge is integrated in the Islamic worldview - each discipline of knowledge is studying God’s reality and therefore knowledge is one. It is for this reason that theologians commonly cringe when they hear Islamic knowledge and secular knowledge as two separate types of knowledge. Theologians participating in this dialogue reminded us that Islamic schools are not meant to be seminaries - the aim is not to prepare religious scholars - the aim is develop and nurture individuals of strong Islamic character and that is something that theologians can help develop curriculum around. For example, the cognitive dissonance that both students and teachers (and parents) are experiencing can be resolved by theologians weighing in with curriculum that extends beyond *fard ‘ayn* - not just obligatory knowledge for practice - but an expanded version of *fard ‘ayn* that is required to be Muslim in our unique professional and socio-political contexts. Theologians can also help academics with what it means to think Islamically. There are categories of thought, or of how we think as Muslims, including the terms we use that theologians can help educators and academics think through. For example, there are secular, liberal theories of curriculum and pedagogical models that are conventionally used in schools that theologians can help us think philosophically and theologically about by analysing the commitments they make and how to make them more aligned to the Islamic worldview. Theologians reminded us that if we do not critically analyse the educational models adopted in Islamic schools we are exacerbating the problem of bifurcation. Theologians can help educators and academics to think as Muslims.

ROADMAP TO RENEWAL: CONCRETE CONSIDERATIONS FORWARD

The two-day dialogue ended in the following concrete considerations forward:

1. To “unlearn” conventional teacher education and move toward Islamically grounded teacher development

Around teacher education, educators insisted they need training for their staff to “sow the seeds of *Imaan*” and train educators to be *murabbis* (nurturers of souls). Some stated, most educators in Islamic schools need Muslim academics to help them “unlearn” or at minimum challenge what they have learned in their teacher education programs about education. Educators need professional dialogue on what “education” means - philosophically, spiritually, conceptually. In an age of test-based schooling, what does it mean to “re-humanise education? But also, what is the reality that we live in, and what does it mean for education?

Transformative teacher development is needed - our teacher education programs need to focus on

- a) awareness of the sociological context;
- b) soul raising;
- c) character building,
- d) holistic ways of education.

Our teacher education needs to go beyond the professional roles and responsibilities of a teacher. A great teacher models *taqwa*, *rahma* and does so as a *risala* - we are missing the *ruh* of education in the Islamic tradition. Some educators retorted and felt that to assume that a Muslim educator has been “programmed” from their secular teacher training to not advance a holistic education is patronising. Muslim educators bring far more to an Islamic school than their secular teaching qualifications - we cannot discount the moral upbringing and on-going learning that every educator brings to the classroom.

As a way forward it was mentioned by one participant that in-house professional development opportunities are needed. Even curriculum development can be considered teacher training because educators are being given opportunities to be reflexive and creative in aligning the school’s broader aspirations to what students actually need spiritually, ethically, and intellectually.

2. Real collaborative partnerships between educators, academics, and theologians - not simply pre-packaged “solutions,” self-serving research, or one-and-done professional development

Schools are busy places and educators are undoubtedly time-poor. What educators need from academics is to work *with* schools in the long term to identify and evaluate impact and improvement over time that feeds back recommendations and not just study schools to publish findings. Similarly, partnerships with theologians would help go beyond inspiring one-and-done visits to work with educator teams and co-develop approaches to deepening the “Islamic.” Educators noted that they can tell the difference between academics or theologians that reach out for their own benefit i.e. a research publication or offering a curriculum solution versus those that want to work with the school, engage with students, and support renewal.

Educators felt that academics need to know that teacher training is shifting away from formal university degrees to multi-academy in-service programs. This will push more innovative approaches for school partnerships and on-going professional learning. Academics in the teacher training space need to do more to learn from Catholic teacher education programs in teaching religious education. Greater understanding of how using faith-based philosophies to underpin modules in teacher education is a priority. There has been significant work in Islamic teacher education over the past few decades, but it is disconnected and happening only in pockets.

There is an assumption that academics and/or theologians are best to write curriculum for Islamic schools. They certainly offer insight, but we need to start thinking about partnerships more seriously that draws from the insights and deep contextual and professional knowledge that educators bring. Educators need support in delving into Islamic epistemology, pedagogy, and heritage. How might academics and theologians assist in bringing this knowledge and its practical implications to the forefront in our schools? We could have resident scholars in our schools, as an example, so that academics and theologians are not working from afar but fully embedded to the life of the school.

The biggest challenge expressed is finding suitable models that work. This will take time and a fair amount of thinking. Three concrete suggestions were made to foster strong partnerships:

1. Understand the “intellectual and professional assets” we bring to the table:

One participant questioned whether we’ve even done a market typology. All educators are not the same. Some are educator-theologians others are educator-academics. Same goes for theologians and academics. To collaborate well we first need to understand the learning assets our educators bring to the table and vice versa.

2. Allocate time for professional dialogue:

Another participant added that we also need schools to then allocate time for professional dialogue to happen in order for partnerships to work and remember that this time allotted for dialogue will have budget implications.

3. Commit to becoming a “knowledge producing site”:

Lastly, another participant emphasised the need for schools to be open to research and engage with academics to become knowledge producing sites for on-going professional inquiry. These are all paradigms shifts that will contribute to solid partnerships.

CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE: QUESTIONS REQUIRING FURTHER EXPLORATION

The following is a list of critical questions that were asked from one sector group to another on the second day of the conference. Many of the conversations began but were left hanging. These critical questions are excellent fodder for on-going dialogues at future Islamic schooling conferences:

Questions that educators asked academics:

If you are the “bridge” between scholars and educators...

- What does your “bridge” look like?
- How do you achieve your vision of being a “bridge”?
- Do you have the capacity to be a “bridge” for all schools?

Questions that educators asked theologians:

- What is the Islamic Worldview? In what ways can we think about education from the Islamic Worldview?
- How do we foster that in ourselves as educators / *murabbis*?
- How do we embed it in our curriculum?
- How do we foster it in our students?
- How do you “correct” an “incorrect” model?
- What does the Islamic worldview mean for our diverse Islamic schools and diverse Muslim perspectives?

Questions that theologians asked educators:

- What are your expectations of a resident scholar in your school?
- What regulatory constraints impact what a resident scholar can do to support students in an Islamic school?
- What are the “Islamic” needs and wants that community (i.e. Muslim parents) pose to you as educators?

Questions that theologians asked academics:

- What are the ways academics can help scholars understand (and interrogate) the historical and contemporary context of modern schooling?
- What do academics require from theologians to conduct this critical interrogation?

Questions that academics asked theologians:

- Can theologians participate in co-constructing a philosophy of Islamic education? Should that be unified for today's Ummah?
- What is needed to actualise Islamic education scholarship into everyday classroom / school practices?
- How do theologians feel they can contribute to the expansion of the field of Islamic Education? (curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, practice)?

Questions that academics asked educators:

- How can we establish fruitful trust when we work in higher education spaces in this socio-political context?
- What do you envision for a meaningful partnership?
- How can you contribute to the expansion of the field of Islamic Education?

