

URDU

Paper 8686/02
Reading and Writing

The overall linguistic demand, standard and quality of this paper was similar to previous years and appropriate to the level of this examination, with an interesting and relevant topic. Both text passages in **Sections 1** and **2** proved to be accessible. Stronger candidates grasped exactly what was being asked, and took care to fully understand the subject content before attempting to answer the given questions. Average and weaker candidates showed less ability to do this.

The Urdu text passage in **Section 1** was on the theme of present day issues affecting almost every developing country. Many candidates understood the passage very well and answered the given questions well.

The text in **Section 2** on the topic of giving opinions was demanding in terms of comprehension and weaker candidates generally struggled to respond accurately here.

Question 1

Here, conveying the meanings of the words 'ta'ayan' and 'jaazbiat' in sentences proved to be the most challenging aspect.

Question 2

In this question, the phrase 'samney Nahin Ayengey' meaning 'not appearing' and 'doosrey mulkoun mein chaley jatey hein' meaning 'migrate to other countries' was not properly understood by many candidates.

Question 3

3.1 did not cause any difficulty for the majority of the candidates.

3.2 was well answered by most candidates, although a large number did not adequately cover all three points required for a complete response.

3.3 was more challenging but tackled well by most candidates.

In **3.4** a number of candidates presented their own opinion rather than the information provided in the text and therefore lost marks.

3.5 was tackled well by most candidates, who provided the four points required from the text. However, some candidates wrote their own version of the text, without focusing on the points and therefore did not adequately cover all the points.

Question 4

4.1 required candidates to understand the exact difference between 'hunermant' meaning 'skilled' and 'ta'aleem yaftah' meaning 'educated'. Two points were required for full marks.

4.2 was well answered by the majority of the candidates, although some did not adequately cover both points to provide a complete response.

4.3 was relatively challenging but the majority of candidates tackled it very well. The response required was from the passage. Three points were required for a complete answer.

4.4 again, in this question, many candidates gave their own opinion rather than the information given in the text, which meant they could not be awarded full marks.

4.5 required two points from the text and was tackled well by most candidates. Again, however, some candidates simply wrote out their own version of the text and did not cover both points required.

4.6 was tackled well by many candidates who gave all four required points from the text. Some candidates misunderstood the keyword 'safaratkhaney' meaning 'Embassies' with 'sifarishkhaney' which meant 'getting a job through contacts and favour'.

Questions 5a and b

The majority of candidates responded to **Question 5a** with confidence. Their comparisons included differences and similarities from both national and personal points of view on the issue.

Some candidates omitted to write about their attitudes towards their personal benefits and link them with overall national gains and loss due to their migration, which meant they could not be awarded full marks.

The majority of candidates answered **Question 5b** well. A variety of different writing styles appeared in response to this question. Some candidates justified the practice of migration, while the majority of candidates wanted to stay in their country and go abroad only for higher education and training with a view to coming back and serving their own country. Other candidates decided not to argue too much either way and remained neutral in their response.

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Essay

GENERAL:

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to write a composition in Urdu on one of a range of five topics selected as being relevant to their countries of origin. Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. Where candidates lost marks, it was usually due to lack of organisation and structure in their responses rather than accuracy of language.

Candidates are expected to write between 250 and 400 words. The topics this year were:

1 '*insani ta'luqat*' 'Human relations'

'dushman mumalik ke 'awam ko ek dusre se milne awr bat kerne ka mauq'a dia jana cahiyeh'
'The people of enemy countries should be given the chance to meet and talk with each other.'

2 '*shehri awr dehi zindagi*' 'Urban and rural life'

'shehr ke rehne walon ko dehati zindagi pur kashish nazar ati hai'
'To urban dwellers rural life appears very attractive.'

3 '*sahyt awr tandurusti*' 'Health and fitness'

'motapa dur-e-jadid ka ek sangin masla'
'Obesity is a serious problem of the modern age.'

4 '*musawi muwaq'e*' 'Equal opportunities'

'taraqi ke musawi muwaq'e ka husuul har fard ke liye keyse mumkin banaya ja sekta hai'
'How can equal opportunities for advancement be obtained for everyone.'

5 '*Mahauliat*' 'Environment'

'aap apne 'elaqeh men aaludagi kam kern eke liye kya ker sekte hain'
'What you can do to reduce pollution in your area.'

The wide range of topics allowed candidates the opportunity to choose one and demonstrate their linguistic skills in Urdu. At this Advanced Level, not only is a high standard of written Urdu expected but it is equally important that candidates also need to be able to organise and structure their work, present an argument where appropriate and do so in an engaging way.

This component is marked out of 40: up to 24 marks are awarded for quality of language and up to 16 for content, structure and organisation.

The most popular topic was:

'shehr ke rehne walon ko dehati zindagi pur kashish nazar ati hai'
'To urban dwellers rural life appears very attractive'

This topic has always been highly pertinent to the lives of many candidates and is one reason why so many candidates attempted it. While there were some very good compositions on this topic which contained a balanced discussion of both sides of the argument and concluded with an opinion, there were far too many essays which rather simplistically wrote lyrically about the delights of country life and the evils of city life, for example, lack of pollution, simple life, clean air, pure food, friendliness, etc. and the rush, dirt, selfishness

and other unpleasantnesses of city life. What many essays lacked was a critical view of the topic. It is a common mind that nearly all the candidates will be city dwellers who would greatly miss the amenities of city life if they were to live in a village. On the other hand, there were some outstanding essays on this topic which were well-structured and balanced and read well.

'aap apne 'elaq' men aaludagi kam kern eke liye kya ker sekte hain'
'What you can do to reduce pollution in your area.'

This was second most popular title but was generally not so well answered because although many candidates were clearly well-informed about the subject, their compositions were severely unbalanced; in some cases three-quarters of the essay was taken up in giving great detail about the causes and effects of pollution. It was only in the closing sections that candidates focused on describing what they could do to reduce pollution in their area. Although it was relevant to spend some time discussing pollution and its effects, that should merely be the starting point for the main part of the essay. In addition to this many candidates were unrealistically ambitious in thinking that they could remove factories from the populated areas or build drainage systems. Such essays could not receive high marks for content.

The third most popular topic was:

'motapa dur-e-jadid ka ek sangin masla'
'Obesity is a serious problem of the modern age.'

The responses to this topic were generally more than satisfactory. While being reasonably well attempted by most of the candidates, once again it is necessary to note that at this level it is expected that candidates produce more than an essay on people eating too much. Highest grades are achieved through more thoughtful discussion, perhaps including social, economic and cultural factors.

The remaining two topics, on human relations and on equal opportunities, were less popular.

'dushman mumalik ke 'awam ko ek dusre se milne awr bat kerne ka mauq'a dia jana cahiye'
'The people of enemy countries should be given the chance to meet and talk with each other.'

This topic was well-answered by most of those who attempted it. Candidates wrote about what they knew and that was mainly concerning relations between Pakistan and India and for the most part, the premise that if ordinary people were given the chance to get together then many of the problems politicians do not have the will or ability to solve could be eased, if not solved.

The final essay topic was:

'taraqi ke musawi muwaq'e ka husuul har fard ke liye keyse mumkin banaya ja sekta hai'
'How can equal opportunities for advancement be obtained for everyone.'

Again, most responses to this topic were of a reasonably high standard.

CONCLUSION

The best essays in any topic area were those which produced a structured and considered response to the title, with an introduction, several cogent points relating to the title and a conclusion. Linguistically, they were almost error free, with a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences containing dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and, where appropriate, relevant quotations.

It is the second part of the assessment criteria, on content, planning and organisation, where candidates tend to lose marks.

While the overall performance was good, with most candidates displaying very good writing skills, many essays would have been much improved by stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the prescribed word limits. Failure to contain the essay within the prescribed word-limit reduces marks for content. A range of between 250-400 words is set for the composition. Examiners read up to about 10% above this figure and ignore anything over 500 words. This means that candidates who write too much are penalised for content and planning because they are unlikely to have reached a concluding paragraph. That being said, very many candidates wrote well-planned and interesting essays in excellent Urdu.