

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3247/1
Reading and Writing

Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Question I, answer the question set rather than summarise the two passages
- in Part II, respond to the task as set
- in Parts I and II, stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

The standard format of this paper, designed to test the abilities of first-language candidates, is to include two passages of about 350 words each, on a linked theme of, this year, the decline and revival of cricket, following which there are two questions, one directly based upon the texts and the second on a topic leading naturally from it, but which does not depend on it.

Candidates were asked to read these passages and then answer two questions, both of which required extended responses. Marks were awarded for content, language and organisation/structure on a scale of 10, 10 and 5, giving a total mark of 25 for each question. There was equal weighting to each question giving a total for the paper of 50 marks.

The performance of the majority of the candidates was satisfactory, with many of them producing good performances.

This paper is aimed at first-language Urdu speakers so a high standard of accuracy is required to gain top marks. There were very few candidates whose written Urdu was not up to the task.

Candidates should take care to present their work clearly and neatly so that everything the candidate has written can be rewarded.

The length of many of the responses was problematical. The rubric states very clearly that answers should be about 250 words. The length of some scripts was well over double that; these will have lost some marks for content. Examiners are instructed to read the whole piece but to penalise overlong essays by reducing the content band down by one band. For example if a candidate was to have been given 8 for content, only 6 would be awarded to an overlong response.

It is very important to follow rubrics if high marks are to be achieved.

That being said, overall the majority of candidates wrote relevant, interesting and linguistically accurate responses to both questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

“Cricket ke ‘urooj awr zavaal se mwta’lyq apne tasuraat qalamband kijiye” donoN ybaratoN ki roshni men is bayan par apne kheyalat ka yzhar kijiye.

In connection with the rise and decline of cricket write your impressions. In the light of both texts, express your ideas on this statement.

This question required candidates to write their response to this question using the facts and comments featured in the texts.

Candidates were, as in previous sessions, expected to:

- (i) Make comments making direct reference to these texts
- (ii) Use, as far as possible, their own words.

As in previous sessions, it was a combination of the above two points which provided the Examiners with the opportunity to discriminate between and reward varying levels of performance.

This year, the key part of the question is *apne tasuraat*, 'your impressions'. This means that candidates are required to record *their own* reaction to the material presented in both of the texts.

This question was satisfactorily rather than well answered by most candidates. The best answers were those that were able to extract the main points of each passage and present them, along with their own comments on the material, using accurate and idiomatic Urdu, employing a range of vocabulary and structures.

Although candidates are required to mention points from each text, for example, the long time taken to complete a five-day match, the weather, the revived popularity of one-day matches, etc., they should take care not to copy word-for-word from the texts. In this session, many candidates copied large chunks of text almost verbatim, concentrating, for example, a hundred words or so on trivial points such as Hitler's and Roosevelt's reactions. Such responses scored lower marks for language because the language used was copied from the text and was not the candidate's own.

As in previous sessions, the best responses were those that gave the candidate's own response to the question and used different facts and points of view expressed in the two passages. The most significant problem this year was that far too many candidates simply wrote two lengthy paragraphs, the first paraphrasing Passage A and the second summarising Passage B. Indeed, some even wrote the Urdu word for summary, *khwlaasa*, at the beginning of their responses.

This year the better responses contained points raised in each passage and included the candidates' own opinions and ideas and comments on them. In simple terms, they answered the question set. They did not merely paraphrase the two passages without comment.

Question 2

The main difference between this question and the first one is that, although based on the main theme of the texts, its purpose is to provide a stimulus for more creative and imaginative writing on a topic deriving its theme from the texts, but not directly so. This time the candidates were asked to write a composition on the following theme:

aap apne college ke riyale ke liye cricket ke fawaid awr nuqsanat par ek mazmun likhiye.

'Write an essay on the advantages and disadvantages of cricket for your college magazine.'

This gave candidates an ideal opportunity to demonstrate their ability to write Urdu. The better candidates produced well-constructed and often thought provoking compositions on the subject.

Although there was no defined format for the essay, most candidates structured their essays in one of two ways. The first wrote two separate paragraphs while others wrote on particular matters from both points of view. They were able to make their points using their own words within that framework, unlike weaker candidates who merely rambled from point to point in an unstructured way.

On the whole, this question was much better attempted than the first question and this is reflected in the marking.

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3247/02

Texts

Key message

To do well in this paper, candidates must make sure they understand all the demands of the question. They must produce a response which is entirely relevant to the question set and supported with appropriate examples from the text.

General comments

Overall, the performance of the candidates this year was very good. The candidates have shown good command of language as well as of the text. Most of them have demonstrated the ability to write very detailed responses and have shown confident use of complex sentences. Their answers were relevant and well illustrated. The majority of the candidates have followed the instructions and attempted both questions in the papers.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1: Poetry

Question 1

(a) This question was about a Ghazal written by Mir Taqee Mir.

There were two parts of this question and candidates were required to answer both parts. The Examiners observed that this question was one of the more popular questions.

Those who attempted this part answered very well and comprehensively. Very few candidates were unable to express themselves fully.

(b) This was a very straightforward question and almost all the candidates scored high marks. This part of the question was very well attempted. Candidates have shown that they know about Mir Taqee Mir and in their answers they have provided references and examples from his Ghazals.

Question 2

Momin Khan Momin

This question was a less popular question. Those who attempted this question have shown reasonable understanding of the topic. Most of the candidates have discussed what was required in the question. A few generally wrote on the features of Momin Khan's poetry scoring low marks.

Question 3

(a) For this question, answers on either Dar Safat e Qanaat or Qanaat or both were accepted. Examiners took into account that candidates did not have the Qanaat poem in front of them and extensive and thorough marking and post-marking checks were carried out to ensure that no candidates were disadvantaged. Marking statistics showed that this was a popular question and that candidates generally did well on this question.

- (b) The second part of the question was more general about the poet and again this part was attempted. The majority of the candidates scored high marks for this question. They have given useful quotations from his poetry to justify their answers.

Question 4

This was very straightforward and the most popular question for the candidates. The majority of the candidates have written very well and explained how the poet has criticised all those who have forgotten their Eastern values and have adopted Western values. Again those who supported their answers with quotations scored full marks.

Section 2: Prose

Question 5

- (a) This question was based on the passage and a good majority of the candidates answered this question very well, giving examples from the text. All those who attempted this question scored very good marks.
- (b) The part (b) of the question was very well attempted too and candidates gave their answers with reference to the essay. It was based on the characterisation and candidates were asked to compare two characters in the text. Those who scored full marks compared two characters and gave the reasons for the character being full of life.

Question 6

A high number of candidates attempted this question and those who answered gave references from the text and scored high marks. It was clear that those who have shown the ability to answer this question properly had studied this work very well.

Question 7

- (a) This question was less popular than other questions in the paper. The candidates who answered this part did well. Those who have included quotations and references from the text while answering this question scored high marks. Candidates who simply narrated the whole story could not score high marks.
- (b) Part (b) of the question was a comparison between two very important characters. The candidates were required to give examples from the text to prove their answer. Those who attempted this question answered this part of the question very well and scored high marks.

Question 8

A small number of candidates attempted this question and those who answered with references from the text scored high marks. The demand of the question was to prove "Mama Azmat" a negative character, who was involved not only in theft in the house but created misunderstandings between Asghari and her in-laws. A few candidates only wrote on the first part of the question and ignored the second part scoring fewer marks.

Question 9

- (a) This year **Question 9** was less popular than other questions. A small number of candidates attempted this question. Some candidates had prepared fully and answered with examples and illustrated with their own opinion. Others wrote very short responses without any reasoning. These candidates could not be awarded high marks.
- (b) Part (b) was a general type of question on a very important character. Those who attempted this question gave very good reasons for the importance of the character with reference to the novel and scored very good marks.

Question 10

This question was again not a popular one. A small number of candidates attempted this question; those who attempted it fulfilled the demand of the question. Candidates who did well supported their answers with quotations from the novel.