

URDU LANGUAGE

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key message

In order to do well in this paper:

- Candidates should take care to understand the full demands of the question before attempting to answer.
- In Question 5, candidates should avoid repetition of ideas.

General Comments

The standard, quality and overall linguistic demand of this paper was similar to previous years and appropriate to the level of this examination. The topic chosen was interesting and informative for most candidates. Both text passages in **Section 1** and **2** were very accessible. In order to do well, candidates needed to grasp precisely what was being asked in the comprehension questions. It was the understanding of the demands of the question which provided discrimination between good and average performances.

The Urdu text passage in **Section 1** was an example of extreme limits of risk involved in keeping and dealing with nuclear weapons that can effect almost every country in this modern world. Most candidates understood the passage very well and answered the given questions fairly accurately.

The text in **Section 2** was about the attitudes different countries might have towards the possible use of such weapons. The responses required candidates to pick relevant information from the given passage. In **Question 5**, a comparison was made of opinions given in both passages along with asking candidates to give their own opinions on imposing any restrictions. Good candidates produced high quality answers while average candidates sometimes struggled to respond accurately.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

In **Question 1**, the words *bar-tari*, *mehdood* and *qiadat* proved difficult for some candidates to convey their meanings in complete sentences.

Question 2

In **Question 2** the phrases *chaya raha*, *barbaad kerne waley* and *kuch logon ke pass* were not fully understood by some candidates. In completing this task, some candidates attempted to use these phrases in their own sentences which was not what was asked for in the rubric. Candidates should be reminded that the synonyms they use must be exactly those given in the passage.

Question 3

A was straightforward and did not cause any difficulty for the majority of the candidates.

B was well answered by the majority of the candidates. Although it was straightforward to answer, some candidates did not cover all three points required for a complete response.

C was a little more difficult but the majority of candidates tackled it very well.

D was straightforward and most candidates answered it fairly accurately.

E was again fairly straightforward and most candidates tackled it well with three to four points required from the text passage. Only a few candidates attempted to write their own version.

F was straightforward again and most candidates answered it fairly accurately.

Question 4

A was difficult for candidates who did not understand the nature of fear which most people and countries have regarding the destruction which might be caused by a nuclear explosion. Three points were required for full marks.

B was well answered by the majority of the candidates. Most candidates adequately covered all four points for a complete response.

C was again easy to answer from the given passage. Two points were required for a complete answer.

D was a little more demanding, requiring at least two points. Some candidates could not achieve full marks for this question as they did not provide a minimum of two points. A few candidates gave their own opinion rather than from the information given in the text. Again, this could not be rewarded.

E required thought before tackling this question. It required three straightforward points but the fourth point needed to be extracted from the information as a whole within the text passage. Some candidates missed this out.

Question 5a and b

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

Candidates were also expected to write a comparison of the theories given in both passages 'against' and 'in favour' of the given topic. Most candidates covered this very well. A few candidates did not cover both aspects leaving their responses rather thirsty and not really well done.

In the case of **Question 5b** the majority of candidates found it easy to answer. A variety of different writing styles appeared in response to this question. Most candidates felt that it makes a country more secure if they have nuclear weapons as it acts as a deterrent. It helps them to feel secure from any foreign threat which means they can get on with development work. Some candidates justified that a total ban on such weapons would make this world more secure and happier.

Some candidates repeated the same information in response to both questions. This meant that they could not be awarded higher marks. Candidates should take care to give appropriate different responses to each question.

URDU LANGUAGE

Paper 9686/03
Essay

Key messages

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

- plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- write a composition on the essay title, not the general topic heading
- stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to write a composition in Urdu on one of a range of five topics. Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. The challenge for most candidates is not writing accurate Urdu but responding to the stimulus topics in an organised and well-structured way. It is the second part of the assessment criteria, on content, planning and organisation, where candidates tend to not do so well.

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 concluding paragraph. Linguistically, they were almost error free, with a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences, and containing dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and where appropriate relevant quotations.

While the overall performance was good, many essays would have been much improved by stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the prescribed word limits. The rubric requires candidates to be able to write concisely on their particular topic. Failure to contain the essay within the prescribed word-limit reduces marks for content. We set a range of between 250 and 400 words for the composition and the Examiners' guidelines state that we should read up to about 10% above this figure and ignore anything over 500 words. This means that candidates who write too much cannot be awarded high marks 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.

There were five given topics, on which candidates were expected to write between 250 and 400 words. The topics this year were:

'*Khandan*' 'Family'

1 '*khushgawar khandani mahawl ke liyr ghar ke har fard ko ek dusre ke jazbat ka ahtaram karna chahiye*'

'For a happy family environment everyone should respect each other's feelings'

'*Qanun*' 'Law'

2 '*mulk ki taraqi ka inhisar qanun ki baladasti par hai*'

'A country's progress is dependent upon the superiority of the law'

'*Khel*' 'Sport'

3 *'gharib nawjawanon ke liye khel qhurbat se nyjat pane ka rasta hai'*

'For poor young people sport is a way out of poverty'

'Rozgar awr berozgar' 'Employment and unemployment'

4 *'berozgari ka zimmedar aakhyr kawn hai? Hukumat ya hwd berozgar?'*

'Who, in the end is responsible for unemployment? The government or the unemployed themselves?'

'Technology' 'Technology'

5 *'Technology ne insane ko kahyl ban diya hai.'*

'Technology has made humans lazy'

The wide range of topics allowed candidates the opportunity to choose one that interested them and through which they could 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 organise and structure their work, present an argument where appropriate and do so in an engaging and persuasive way.

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

Comments on specific questions

One question attracted far more responses, approximately two-thirds of the candidature, than the rest. This was **Question 4**. 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, frequently giving valid and appropriate suggestions for the government to adopt. Points made included the technological revolution, inadequate education and technical training, lack of jobs provided by the Government, young people who thought they deserved a comfortable sitting-down job and who refused any other job as it was 'beneath their dignity'.

Other compositions were passionately and sometimes very well written but devoted almost all the essay to one point of view, which made an unbalanced impression on the reader.

The second most popular title was **Question 1**, which was generally well answered. The candidates were clearly well informed and often opinionated about the subject, and many of their compositions were interesting to read. What distinguished the very good from the good was the ability to explore the issues and express points of view which were at least in part original or at least not stereotypical points about what does and what does not constitute a good family set-up.

The third most popular topic was **Question 5**. Generally speaking, while being reasonably well attempted by most of the candidates, there was little discussion of anything beyond the direct effects on human habits of computers, travel and transport and television. Most of those who decided to write on this topic came down firmly in agreement with the title and gave merely cursory attention to the opposing point of view. At this level, broader discussion is expected, perhaps including social, economic and cultural implications if candidates are to achieve the highest grades.

The fourth most popular topic was **Question 3**. While this topic was not as popular as expected it was satisfactorily answered by most of those who attempted it. Some wrote too much on the results of achieving fame and wealth rather than on the way to get there. Candidates who did best were the ones who concentrated on the opportunities available to poor young people and suggested that those who had the talent and the drive (and the luck) were the ones to succeed.

Very few candidates attempted **Question 2**, on the law's superiority, but most of these responses were very well argued.

URDU

Paper 9686/04

Texts

Key message

A few candidates did not understand the focus of the question they were attempting to answer. Candidates are advised to spend time making sure they understand the focus of the question fully before answering. They should constantly refer back to the question while writing their responses to ensure that every part of the essay is relevant.

General comments

Overall, the paper was of a similar standard to previous years. The candidates had a good choice of questions and they made good use of this choice. In general, candidates did well on this paper.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) A small number of candidates attempted this question. They generally gave a good explanation of the ghazal. Some candidates did not do justice to part 2 of this question, and could therefore not be awarded valuable marks as a result.
- (b) Some very good answers were seen in response to this question. Candidates discussed Ghalib in detail with appropriate examples of his poetry.

Question 2

- (a) This was the most popular question in the poetry section. Many candidates attempted it and scored good marks. Some candidates however, repeated the explanation of the poem in answer to part ii, falling short of top marks.
- (b) This question was attempted by many candidates and there were some very good answers. Some candidates simply wrote an essay on Nazir explaining all his poems from the syllabus rather than answering the given question. Such candidates could not be awarded high marks.

Question 3

- (a) The first part of this question was answered well by almost all candidates who attempted it. It was evident that some candidates did not fully appreciate the focus of part ii.
- (b) Many candidates discussed this question very well. Some candidates repeated the short story with the quotation from the question at the end. This meant that high marks could not be awarded, as such answers did not fully relate to the question.

Question 4

- (a) Few candidates attempted this question. Of those who did, it was generally not answered well as the focus of the question was misunderstood.
- (b) This was one of the most popular questions from **Section 2**. Most candidates provided a good comparison of the two characters.

Question 5

- (a) Some candidates answered this question well, while others described the character of *Baray chacha* without discussing the focus of the question.
- (b) The candidates who attempted this question discussed Alia's life and problems in detail and scored good marks.

Question 6

- (a) A few candidates chose this question and submitted good answers.
- (b) Many candidates attempted this question but some did not focus on what it asked. Others wrote the entire story of Anarkali and could therefore not be awarded high marks.