

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key Messages

- Read the questions carefully.
- In **Question 1** use the word exactly as it is given in the question.
- Keep to the word limit in **Question 5**

General Comments

The overall standard, quality and linguistic demand of this paper was similar to previous years and very appropriate to the level of this examination. The topic chosen seemed to be of interest to candidates. Both text passages were accessible and candidates had no trouble understanding them. However, candidates need to make sure they understand exactly what is being asked in the comprehension questions and to respond precisely and appropriately. Candidates are advised to think about the question and the answer and write their response with care.

The passage in **Section 1** was about the effects single sex education institutions have on children and some benefits of co-educational institutions. This was a very topical subject for many candidates and therefore they could relate well to the text. Most candidates understood the passage very well and answered the comprehension questions accurately.

The passage in the **Section 2** was about the benefits and drawbacks of single sex education institutions and about how co-educational institutions affect the future of children. In question 5 the specific requirement was to compare the effects on children of attending single sex education institutions vs. co-educational institutions. Many candidates wrote successfully on this topic while some struggled to stick to the specific information required by the question and offered irrelevant material in their response.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

In response to writing sentences for the given words, the words 'wasaail' (وسائل) and 'mua'awan' (معاون) proved tricky for many candidates to convey their meanings in complete sentences. Some candidates confused the first with 'Masaail' (مسائل) which was not being asked. Similarly, some candidates did not know the meanings of 'mua'awan' (معاون) and ended up exactly lifting it from the text passage as their own sentence, hence lost mark.

Question 2

The phrase 'hasb-e-zarurat' (حسب ضرورت), 'waqif nahin hotey' (واقف نہیں ہوتے) and 'dikhati hein' (دکھاتی ہیں) were not properly understood by a number of candidates. Some candidates ended up in using these phrases in their own sentences, which was not what the rubric asked.

Unfortunately a few candidates still misunderstand the rubric for **Question 2** and end up writing sentences for the given phrases instead of finding their exact equivalent phrase from the text passage in **Section 1**.

Question 3

Question (a), was straightforward and did not cause any difficulties for the majority of the candidates.

Question (b) however, proved to be somewhat challenging to some candidates, who gave their own opinion instead of giving the information contained in the text. A number of candidates missed 'small class size' in their answer. Still, a good many candidates answered in full and could score all three marks.

Questions (c) and (d) were fairly straightforward and most candidates answered them accurately, even though there were some who mixed in answers for later questions here.

Question (e) was again handled well by most candidates although a fair number missed one of the points and therefore could only score two of the three available marks.

Question (f) only caused problems to candidates who mixed their answer with answers from earlier questions. All in all, this question was also answered well by the majority of candidates.

Section 2

Question 4

Question (a), was straightforward for most candidates, but some answers only consisted of definitions for both types of institutions.

Question (b) and (c) were answered accurately by the majority of the candidates by adequately covering all three points for a complete response.

Question (d) proved to be a little more demanding. Many candidates did not answer it adequately to cover the first two points about 'larkay apney hum ummar larkon kay saath' (لڑکے اپنے ہم عمر لڑکوں کے ساتھ) and 'larkian apni hum ummar larkion kay saath' (لڑکیاں اپنی ہم عمر لڑکیوں کے ساتھ). A few candidates used their own opinions rather than information given in the passage.

Question (e) required for two fairly straightforward points to be extracted from the text. A number of candidates missed this and went on to writing their own versions.

Question (f) was successfully answered by most candidates based on the information provided in the passage.

Question 5 (a) and (b)

The majority of the candidates responded to **Question 5(a)** with confidence. Candidates were expected to write a comparison between the effects of single sex education versus those of co-education on children. A few candidates did not cover both aspects adequately, leaving their responses rather one-sided and incomplete.

Question 5(b) presented no problem for the majority of the candidates. A variety of opinions were voiced in response to this question. Most candidates felt that co-education is the answer for a successful future, while others felt and justified that single sex education is the best option.

URDU

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 an essay 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 problem for a lot of candidates is not with writing accurate Urdu but with responding to the stimulus topics in an organised and well-structured way

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

“khana awr pina” “Food and Drink”

1 “ghar ka bana hua khana bazar ke khane se hamesha bather hota hai”

“Home cooked food is always better than bazar food.”

“taraqqi pazir dunya” “The Developing World”

2 “aap ke mulk ki taraqqi men sab se bari rwkavat”

“The biggest obstacle to progress in your country”

“seyr o siahat” “Travel and Tourism”

3 “mwqami logon par seyr o siahat hamesha munfi asraat hote hayn – bahs kijiye”

“Tourism always has a negative effect on local people – discuss”

“nasli khalaa” “The generation gap”

4 “dawr e hazyr nawjavanon ka dawr hai”

“The current era is the era of youth.”

“musawi mwvaq'e” “Equal Opportunities”

5 “aap ke mulk men musawi mwvaq'e keyse faraham kiye ja sakte hain?”

“How can equal opportunities be implemented in your country?”

The wide range of topics allowed candidates the opportunity to choose one they could relate to and demonstrate their linguistic skills in Urdu. Of course, at this Advanced Level, not only is a high standard of

written Urdu expected but also an ability to organise and structure the essay, present an argument where appropriate and do so in an interesting 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 INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

The two most popular questions – answered by about two-thirds of the candidature, were

Question 1

“ghar ka bana hua khana bazar ke khane se hamesha bather hota hai”

“Home cooked food is always better than bazar food.”

and Question 2:

“aap ke mulk ki taraqqi men sab se baRi rwkavat”

“The biggest obstacle to progress in your country.”

Dealing with **Question 1** first, it was no surprise to anyone that this title was the most popular: it is certainly central to the life experience of the candidates, which is, of course, one reason why so many candidates attempted it. There were some very good essays on this topic which contained a balanced discussion of both sides of the argument and concluded with an opinion, almost exclusively agreeing with the title.

On the whole, however, many responses to this topic were somewhat disappointing, with too many essays which reeling out the standard clichés about home cooking being good and healthy and fast food being bad for you. There were some standout essays however, which did go beyond agreement with the title and presented a well-balanced argument about the topic.

On the other hand, the second most popular question (**Question 2**) produced some outstanding essays. By and large, this title was very well answered. This title lent itself to a review of the many obstacles facing the country and then a focus on one or two of them, with the essay often ending with some suggestions as to how the situation might be improved.

The political awareness and maturity demonstrated by many candidates was highly impressive, as was the ability of many to express them in powerful and appropriate language. Many of the compositions were delightful to read. What distinguished the very good from the good, in terms of content, was the ability not only to express opinions, but also to structure the arguments into a coherent essay.

The third most popular question was **Question 4**:

“nasli khalaa” *“The generation gap”*

“dawr e hazyr nawjavanon ka dawr hai”

“The current era is the era of youth.”

The best essays on this topic were very impressive. They included a very mature discussion of reasons why in the current era it is the younger generation’s time to stand up and lead their country into a better place.

While being reasonably well attempted by most of the candidates, unfortunately rather too many essays tended to be general ones on the topic of the generation gap, which had a paragraph or two inserted in an attempt to show the Examiner that they really were addressing the set title!

Examiners are aware that many candidates write essays on the general topic areas as part of their preparation for this examination, but they should bear in mind that it is not sufficient just to reproduce a general essay and merely add a sentence here and there to try and make it relevant to the title. Such essays are not going to score high marks for content.

The fourth most popular question was on **Question 3** on tourism:

“mwqami logon par seyr o siahat hamesha munfi asraat hote hayn – bahs kijiye”

“Tourism always has a negative effect on local people – discuss.”

This topic was not as popular as expected, and many of the essays were not very well written. However, there were a few excellent essays and it most of those who attempted it achieved at least a satisfactory standard. For a few the problem seemed to be a misunderstanding of the title, especially the word “munfi” – ‘negative’. For some it was the general essay on the benefits of tourism with little or no attempt to address the specific title. The best essays did discuss the positive and negative effects and then come to a considered conclusion, usually that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages.

Question 5 was least frequently attempted one:

“aap ke mulk men musawi mwvaq’e keyse faraham kiye ja sakte hain?”

“How can equal opportunities be implemented in your country?”

Few candidates attempted this topic, but those who did, tended to produce outstanding essays, which not only had a mature view of the subject but were expressed in excellent Urdu.

CONCLUSION

The best essays in any topic area were those that demonstrated a structured and considered response to the title, with an introduction, several cogent points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph.

Linguistically, these essays 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.

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.

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

Part of this is in conforming to the rubric, which requires candidates to be able to write concisely on any particular topic. This means that candidates who write too much are penalised for content and planning because they are unlikely to have reached a concluding paragraph within the word limit. That being said, a great number of candidates wrote well-planned and interesting essays in excellent Urdu.

URDU

Paper 9686/04

Texts

Key messages

- Before answering the question, candidates must take due care to ensure they understand the focus of the question.
- If answering **Questions 1(a), 2(a) or 3(a)** it is important to provide detailed answers to both parts of the question
- In **Question 2(b) and 6(b)** candidates are required to demonstrate their skill of comparison between the poems and the characters.

General comments

The paper has two sections (poetry and prose) and it was of a similar standard to the previous years. The candidates made good use of the choice of questions. As a whole, candidates did well in the paper and scored good marks. However, in some cases candidates did not take enough care to read and understand the focus of each question.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates gave a good explanation of the *ghazal*. Some candidates could not expand on part (ii) which required them to give their opinion with reasons as to why this *ghazal* is regarded as one of the most popular ones by *Aatish*.
- (b) Many good answers were seen in response to this question where candidates discussed *Mir* in detailed answers with examples of his poetry. However, some candidates simply quoted a few verses by *Mir* and explained them in their own words.

Question 2

- (a) This was a quite popular question in the poetry section. Many candidates attempted it successfully, but there were some who repeated the explanation of the poem in answer to part (ii) instead of discussing whether or not they agreed with the poet.
- (b) This question was attempted by many candidates. Some candidates didn't compare the poem mentioned in the question with the other two poems by *Sahir* from the syllabus, instead commenting on all three of *Sahir's* poems in general. Only those candidates who demonstrated their ability to compare scored high marks.

Question 3

- (a) Few candidates attempted this question. Of those who did, most simply explained the extract from the poem in detail. Some candidates didn't cover the whole poem even though this is what was required by the question. Some candidates thought that the extract was written by *Rashid*.
- (b) *There were too few answers on this question to make comment possible.*

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates chose this option and submitted good answers with many pertinent details.
- (b) Some of those who attempted this question did not fully understand the focus of the question and could not score high marks. Candidates are advised to spend some time to read the question and try to understand the focus of the question before they begin their answer. Many candidates merely described the male characters of the novel.

Question 5

- (a) This question asked candidates to submit reasons for why the author chose to place this story in a lunatic asylum. Many of those who answered this question simply reproduced the story of *Toba Tek Singh* and didn't expand on the reasons behind the story.
- (b) Many candidates chose this question, successfully discussing the problems of poverty and other issues in the story and scored good marks.

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates chose this question submitting a lot of information regarding Dilaram. The successful essays were able to discuss the good points of her character as well as the bad ones.
- (b) In this question candidates were asked to compare the characters of *Akbar* and *Rani*. Some candidates simply described the two characters. Only those who focused on their comparison achieved higher marks.