



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel Advanced Level

In Arabic (9AA0/03)

Paper 3: Listening, reading and writing in Arabic

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Examiners' Report on Paper 9AA03 – Autumn 2021

General comments

This report relates to paper 9AA03, which tests students' ability; to listen and respond to spoken Arabic, to read and respond to written Arabic and to demonstrate their ability to respond critically to written and spoken material in Arabic.

The evidence from marking in this session indicates that the paper was effective in differentiating between students of different abilities and that all the questions worked as anticipated.

The published mark scheme provides extensive guidance with regard to the overarching approach to marking, as well as the range of correct, acceptable and rejected responses as they relate to Section A and Section B, as well as indicative content for Section C. Centers should note, however, that the mark scheme is not designed in such a way that every possible answer is included. Examiners look at each answer on merit to allocate marks. The approach to marking is positive, so examiners always seek to reward what students' produce.

It is helpful for centers to distinguish clearly between the assessment objectives stated in the specification. These are: A01- listening and responding in Arabic; A02 – reading and responding in Arabic; A03 – grammar and vocabulary of Arabic; A04 Knowledge and understanding of the countries and communities where Arabic is spoken. In this paper A01 is assessed in Sections A and B; A02 and A03 are assessed in Sections B and C.

There was varied evidence of how well students were prepared for this assessment, but there was some evidence of rubric infringement; this is where students either failed to follow the instructions, for example answering in the wrong language, or ticked more than the required number of boxes in the objective tasks.

Comments on each question

Section A, Listening comprehension

This section tests students' ability to respond in writing to spoken language. Comprehension is tested via both objective and free response items. The question types follow a similar design to those in paper 1, section B and similar guidance applies. This section carries 30 marks. The listening passages are of varying length and complexity to test students across all grades.

Question 1

This year Question 1 related to the theme of **Work and citizenship in the Arab world**, the subtheme: **Responsibility to the environment** and the content was focused on the aspect of **general trends of Arab society towards pollution**.

This is a multiple-choice task with four parts and four options for each part. Centers can usefully note that incorrect options may include an element of distraction in the form of a word or idea from the text. Students, therefore, need to be careful to listen fully and carefully, rather than rely on spotting isolated words. This question targets grades C to E.

Most successfully answered was: 1iii

Least successfully answered was: 1i. This may be due to the inability of the students to recognise that the text mentions two objectives; the first one is the protection of the environment in general, and the

other the protection of the plantation. The requirement of the question is the protection of the plantation so answer C is the correct one.

Question 2

This question related to the theme of **Changes in Arab Society**, the subtheme: **Media** and the content was focused on the aspect of **the influence of media on Arab society**.

This is again a multiple-choice task with four parts and four options for each part and the same guidance give above in relation to Question 1 would apply. This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered was: iv

Least successfully answered was: 2ii. Perhaps this is due to the lack of identifying synonyms of certain words. Training students on expanding their vocabulary is a good skill that centers should develop.

Question 3

This is a two-part question related to the theme of **3 Work and citizenship in the Arab world**, the subtheme: **Life and work** and the content was focused on the aspect of **the attitude of equal opportunities at work**.

Question 3(a)

Students are required to respond in Arabic but there is no requirement to answer in full sentences and there are no marks for the quality of students' written language, so as long as what students had written was comprehensible, and answered the questions correctly, marks were awarded, even where there were errors in the language used. This part question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered were: 3a (iii) and (iv).

Least successfully answered were:

- 3a(i) as some candidates did not realise that they should provide two pieces of information that the speaker used as a definition of the concept of 'Equal opportunities at work'.
- 3a(ii) the question was about the benefits that workers enjoy when the concept of equality applied. A good number of candidates repeated the same answer to the previous question.

Question 3 (b)

Students are required to listen to the second part of the recording and to summarise what they hear, giving just one detail for each of the points. Where students gave more than one detail examiners consider only the first viable response. Some students lifted and transcribed extended parts of the recording in an indiscriminate manner and, because their responses became ambiguous, lost marks. This part question targets grades A to C.

Most successfully answered was: 3b(i) and 3b(ii)

Least successfully answered was:

- The first idea in 3b(iii) about the bases of women's participation. Some students did not understand that the question is about women's ability rather than the fact that they constitute half the work force. Students should be trained to understand the gist of the idea and expresses it in their own words.

Question 4

This question related to the theme of **Artistic culture in the Arab world**, the subtheme: **Arabesque**, and the content was focused on the aspect of **Technical and craft skills from generation to generation**.

This is a free response task, where students are required to answer in Arabic. There was some evidence that some students did not always read the questions carefully or produced answers which, although correctly locating the information in the text, were not precise answers to the question that was asked or relied on indiscriminate or untargeted lifting from the text.

Centers are reminded that, in free-response questions, examiners apply a strict order of elements and mark only the first viable answer that a student produces. For example, where the required answer is 'dog' a candidate who writes 'dog and cat' will receive a mark, but a student who writes 'cat and dog' will not, because only the student's first viable answer to the question is considered for a mark. This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered were: 4a, d, e and f.

Least successfully answered were:

- 4b many candidates got one idea correctly (craftsmen were not able to return home) but did not mention the fact that these craftsmen were brought to Istanbul by force.
- 4c: Many candidates were not able to deduct the effect of Islamic culture on the way the art is presented; where it avoids the depiction of humans' and animals' shapes and uses carving and decorative styles instead of drawing and statues for example.

Section B, Listening, reading and writing task

Question 5(a) and 5(b)

This question related to the theme of **Political culture in the Arab World**, the subtheme: **Political conditions in 21st century**, and the content was focused on the aspect of **Political systems**.

This section requires students to identify and write down 4 of the 6 opinions expressed by the speaker for 5(a) and the writer for 5(b). The speaker and writer take broadly contrary stances on the topic concerned. Students who were most successful in these tasks had correctly identified the markers of opinion and point of view ('I think' / 'it seems to me' etcetera) and had distinguished well between fact and opinion. There are no marks of the quality of the students' written language but some responses were ambiguous owing to the use of language, and so marks could not be awarded. The best answers were clear and concisely expressed. Centers should remind students in future

sessions that only one answer should be written on each writing line, and that only four answers are required in total.

In 5(a)

Most successfully answered were:

- the democratic system in Tunisia was a fake façade.
- the positive economic performance and the spread of secular values made Tunisia the least probable Arab country to witness an uprising.
- the election was the first free fair election.

Least successfully answered were:

- 5(a) The uprising brought and unprecedented breakthrough in political freedoms.

In 5(b)

Most successfully answered were:

- The Tunisian revolution succeeded at first.
- the youth were the most enthusiastic group
- the country groaning under a worsening economic reality

Least successfully answered was:

- the counter-revolution forces united to thwart the transition
- increased unemployment puts the country on the verge of a new revolution

Section C

This section tests students' ability to critically evaluate the points made by the speaker and writer from 5(a) and 5(b). They need to decide with whom they agree and express relevant and substantiated judgements and reach convincing conclusions about the issues raised. They are also assessed here on their ability to write in Arabic

Centers' attention is drawn to the sample responses in the sample assessment material on the Pearson website and the example response in the mark scheme. Examiners use this example as a guide to the kind of response a student might produce but will always credit any worthy response which approaches the issues from a different angle.

The highest scoring students had successfully expressed judgements on the spoken and written sources that were well expressed and clearly argued, in each case adding their personal, academic response. They had also drawn conclusions that were consistent with their own viewpoints. For example, one backed the opinion of Mrs Al Wakel in the written response by defending her idea that people value their freedom but they value the good standard of living and stability even more.

High scoring students also showed a wide variety of structures and vocabulary appropriate to the issues they were discussing; they wrote accurately and showed that they had proofread their own work.

Centers are reminded that the mark scheme contains indicative content, but this is not intended to be definitive answer to the statement. Examiners use a levels-based mark scheme and reward all relevant response produced by the student, accepting that each student may approach the task in a different way.

Guidance for centers for future sessions

1. Ensure that all students are familiar with the format of the paper and what they need to do in each section and question.
2. In section A, in the objective tasks, it can be a useful exercise to focus students not only on finding the correct answers, but also looking at why the incorrect options are wrong. This encourages a careful reading of the questions and develops metacognition in terms of how the questions work.
3. In section A free response questions teach students about the 'order of elements' rule and apply it during teaching, so that students learn to produce clear and concise answers.
4. In section B teach students to be guided by the number of marks and the space allowed for writing. This can help them give enough detail and avoid indiscriminate lifts.
5. In section C, ensure that students understand the task and give them practice in linking the spoken and written passages.
6. In section C, ensure students are equipped with a good range of topic specific, academic vocabulary to be able to ensure that the written response is correct in terms of register and not overly colloquial in tone.
7. In section C, give students practice in proof-reading their own work and that of others, looking to correct common errors and develop the habit of writing accurately.

