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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary In Arabic (WAA01)

Paper 01: Understanding and Written Response

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Introduction

This WAA01 is the the10th series of examinations and the 5th of the January exams. The paper is fair and comparable to the previous exam of this specification. It was clear that candidates were now more familiar with this type of exam, and their exam techniques improved noticeably. The quality of language is comparable to the previous season, and performance is slightly better on the lower end. The candidates seem to benefit from accessing past papers and the SAM.

Generally, a majority of candidates coped well. Passages were set to be current and of interest to candidates. All passages were from authentic Arabic sources and were chosen to suit candidates of all levels of demand.

Examiners think that there was some evidence of improvement in the standard of candidates' answers, and there were candidates who coped better in question 8. But We still find practices that we have previously reminded centres and candidates about in previous reports, for example, writing on blank pages or crossing and writing the answer somewhere without mentioning that.

Section A: Reading.

Candidates need to understand, retrieve, and convey information from a short series of different Arabic-language texts. They will be required to provide a mix of non-verbal and Arabic-language responses. A maximum of 30 marks will be available in accordance with the assessment-specific mark scheme.

Q03

In this question, candidates are required to read the passage with ten gaps to be filled from the 20 words provided in the box; 10 of them are distractors. Five of these are low demand, and the other five are medium demand. The words used should be appropriate linguistically and context-wise.

The text is chosen from an authentic source, current and related to candidates' study of GTA (environment)

Though the performance was generally good, a noticeable number of candidates were not able to answer questions 3c, 3f, and 3i correctly. When candidates use a word that should be used in another place, they end up having two wrongs. For example, in question 3c, instead of putting (قلّة) they used (كثرة), which changed the meaning, and for 3f, instead of putting (تجرف) they used (تقتل) and 3i, instead of writing (تراجع) they answered (زيادة).

Candidates seem not to realize that the chosen word should make sense in the context of the whole text. We advise candidates to read the whole text after fillings all the gaps to check whether the chosen words make sense.

Q4

Passage 4, (المنتجعات الصحية) is a longer and more complex text. It is from the GTA (Health & lifestyle). This text is used for question 4 and question 5 in the grammar section.

This is a comprehension question where candidates read a text and answer short questions. All parts of question 4 are of higher demand and need the candidates to have a good understanding of the text and think before answering.

Question 4b we found that a good number of candidates instead of writing (الجمع بين الإقامة في) wrote half the answer in 4i, (الإقامة في الفندق) and the other in 4ii, (للاستفادة من برامج معينة في المنتجع). However, they are two different questions as question 4bii, is about why did the hotels resort to package policy (لماذا لجأت إليها الفنادق؟). Because of that, they lost two marks. A majority of candidates were not able to write the correct answer to the second part 4bii, (حتى يجذب الزبائن).

Q4d, A majority of candidates were not able to understand the question correctly; they seemed to confuse the hotel resorts with the trademark, (العلامة التجارية) which led them to answer about the hotel rather than the trademark.

All the above shows that candidates do not read the questions carefully and try to understand them, which leads to losing marks unnecessarily, though the text was clear, and questions were to the point.

A noticeable number of the candidates were not able to spell the word (المنتج) correctly. They spelled it as (المجتمع أو المنتج). This reflects a lack of vocabulary or ability to link topics.

Section B: Grammar

Q5

Question 5 is linked to passage four. Candidates will need to demonstrate their understanding of grammar by manipulating ten sentences in a previous exercise and reforming each sentence around a given word. Each question carries one mark.

Candidates had to re-write sentences in a correct grammatical form without changing the meaning of the sentence using the word given between brackets. A majority of candidates had problems with grammar and how-to re-word the sentence without losing its original meaning. Generally, in a majority of cases, candidates had problems in the conjugation of certain verbs and the structure of the sentence.

Where a majority of candidates couped well in parts of this question, we found that they struggled in others, e.g.

Q5b, the common mistake in this question was the use of the verb (يشهد) incorrectly. A majority of candidates were not able to use the preposition في correctly, and a majority of made mistakes regarding اسم كان, they wrote (تركيزاً) instead of (تركيزاً).

Q5c, Common mistake in this sentence is to add a letter to the given word. Also, lots of candidates changed the meaning of the sentence.

Q5e, candidates found this question challenging, as the candidates had to use negation with the exception. Only some of them could use this combination correctly. Candidates use were not able to use (إلا) correctly, as it should have been preceded by a negative particle to keep the meaning.

Q5g, the common mistake in this sentence was using the wrong expression (بين أذهان الناس) instead of (بين الناس)

Q5h, a limited number of candidates were able to use) (هناك) in the sentence without affecting the meaning.

It seems that some grammatical structures are not taught, so the candidates are not familiar with them. Centres should cover all the grammar lists for this level and work on improving candidates' understanding of Arabic grammar and the application of language.

Q6

Passage 5 was used for vocalization. Candidates need to vocalize the whole underlined word correctly.

The question is mainly testing the candidates' knowledge of grammar and pronunciation. This question carries ten marks.

Question 6 provided a good challenge for different abilities. Some candidates were able to achieve the full mark.

Some candidates were not able to vocalise all the words, and some were still confused between /همزة الوصل و همزة القطع أين تكون الشدة. A majority of candidates scored between 3 and full marks. Some were not able to vocalise the full word, which led to them losing some marks.

Section C: Continuous writing

Q8

A short passage is used as a stimulus for question 8, which is continuous writing. Candidates had to write an article about life in the city and the countryside. They had to mention the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city and the countryside, providing solutions for any disadvantages.

Candidates had to make sure that they had covered all the bullet points mentioned in the question to attain the highest possible marks in this question. A majority of candidates covered all or most of the needed information explaining the advantages and disadvantages of living in either one of them. However, unfortunately, some only covered a few of the required information or tackled the topic superficially. But candidates were a bit confused about the similarities between cities and villages, and only a some of them could figure out the similarities between these two worlds. Some suggested solutions were exceptionally good and creative, and some tend to give advice rather than solutions.

Some candidates copied the stimulus and considered it as an introduction; others memorised irrelevant sentences and used them in the introductions and the conclusions.

However, we still see the reoccurring problem where candidates lost marks on Quality of Language through poor spelling, misuse of pronouns, and repetition of vocabulary.

Recommendations to centres

- Candidates must be advised that when they cross out a word or a sentence, no mark will be awarded even if they were correct.
- Please ask the candidates to indicate if they use a continuation page.
- candidates should be encouraged to widen their reading scope to include different topics to acquire a wealth of new Arabic vocabulary and knowledge of different styles and sentence structures.
- Candidates are to practice grammar, such as past exam papers, especially for Q5.
- Candidates should be taught to include all points in the prompt question in their writing to achieve more marks. They should practice writing different types of writing to improve their skill.

