



## Oral Component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The general performance of the students in the oral component of the examination was satisfactory. The local students presented face to face, while interstate students attended by telephone hook-up.

Areas of strength:

- spontaneous participation in conversation
- effective exchange of ideas
- ability to build on assessors' probes
- expression of good, culturally-specific vocabulary.

Areas of weakness:

- incorrect use of tenses
- anglicised sentence structures
- unnecessary dependence on prepared materials
- inability to correct mistakes.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – Conversation

The students were well prepared and presented clearly throughout the conversation. They felt comfortable talking about family, friends, education, hobbies and personal goals. Students had varying accents, which was expected and is not a cause for concern; however, some of them used incorrect sentence structure and tenses. These areas need improvement. Assessors are aware that the relation-specific vocabulary varies for people from differing religions/regions (for example, *mashi* or *khala*), so students do not need to worry about this.

The use of English words by some students was noticeable. While this should be avoided as much as possible, occasional use is acceptable as long as the sentence structure is not anglicised. Also, there are some words in English whose strict Bengali equivalents are seldom used or understood. For example, 'holiday' and 'breakfast' should not be used, as the Bengali terms *chhuti*, and *nashta* or *shokaler khabar* are well understood; on the other hand 'chair' and 'cinema' can be used, as the Bengali equivalent words *kedara* and *choloচিতra* are rarely used in conversation.

#### Section 2 – Discussion

Some students did not seem to be clear about the structure of this section of the oral examination, and they did not prepare a specific detailed topic for discussion. This was awkward for both the assessors and students. Those who did prepare a topic appeared to have done some research. Students should refer to the study design for advice on selecting their topic and preparing for the discussion.

Some students had obviously prepared their topics in detail beforehand and were keen to narrate what they had prepared, even if it did not flow smoothly as part of the discussion. This should be avoided. The inability of some students to correct mistakes made in sentence structure or vocabulary was also noticeable.

The use of aids (for example, pictures) this year was minimal.

## Written Component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The general performance of the students who sat the examination was satisfactory. Most of them attempted all questions and appeared to understand the questions well.

Areas of strength included:

- good comprehension of spoken Bengali texts



- good ability to read Bengali texts
- correct answering of point form questions.

Areas of weakness included:

- incorrect use of tense and sentence structure
- inability to analyse information from spoken/written texts
- spelling mistakes and ineffective use of dictionaries
- time management – some students appeared to rush their final answers.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section 1 – Listening and responding

This section had questions based on five texts of various length and type. Students' performance in this section was satisfactory. They understood the points from the spoken texts well, and answered correctly. Some weakness was observed in Question 1, where the responses required some analysis and inference to be made from the conversation. Students need to be aware that the listening questions may require **identification** as well as **analysis** of information. Students who took notes in the margin often fared better with both types of question.

### Section 2 – Reading and responding

This section had three Bengali texts that students had to read and answer questions about. Short answers in English were required for Questions 6 and 7, while Question 8 required an answer in the form of a formal letter in Bengali. The short answers were well done, except for Question 6b where the students had to identify that the text type was 'informative'.

In Question 8, some students failed to follow the structure of a formal letter. A name and address must be given to complete the structure correctly; however, students must not identify themselves as the writer or give their own address.

### Section 3 – Writing in Bengali

Students had to select a style of writing from four options. The imaginative topic, where students were asked to write a story based on a given picture, was the most popular choice. The scenarios that were created varied widely and were mostly narrated in the first person.

Most students' responses flowed smoothly; however, spelling mistakes and incorrect tenses and sentence structures were noticed. Some students did not seem to make good use of their dictionaries.

When preparing for this section of the examination, students should practise writing in different texts types.