Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0) Paper 1F: Listening and
Understanding in Arabic

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Introduction

This is a full scale exam series paper since 2019 summer series after the unusual circumstances caused by COVID which resulted in special exams series in 2020 and 2021.

This Foundation Tier exam paper is made up of 14 questions with a total marks of 50.

This exam for this Foundation Tier is 30 minutes long with 5 minutes reading time.

The paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all themes and topics covered in this qualification specification. Candidates are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken Arabic by one or more speakers in a range of public and social settings. Candidates will respond to multiple choice response and open response questions based on a recording featuring male and female Arabic speakers.

The paper is divided into two sections A and B. Section A consists of 12 questions, all set in English and candidates in this section are required to respond in English. Section B consists of two questions with instructions and texts set in Arabic. Candidates in this section are required to respond in Arabic.

The paper is based on five themes as per first teaching 2017 specification: (1) Identity and culture (2) Local area, holiday, travel (3) School (4) Future aspirations, study and work and (5) International and global dimension.

All themes and related topics must be studied in the context of both the students' home country and that of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken.

The vocabulary list must be studied extensively to enable candidates to understand and express themselves with themes, reading and listening to authentic material. Teachers should present and exploit a range of vocabulary relevant to the themes and topics in the specification.

Note: in this series Non-Vocabulary words were NOT used in the question papers.

This foundation tier paper targets grades 1 to 5, and questions are in this order:

- questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 target lower grades 1-3,

- questions 6, 7 and 8 the mid grade 3 and 9 to 14 target the higher grades 4 and 5.

Questions 9, 11, 13 and 14 are crossover questions with the higher tier question paper.

Below is a summary of how this cohort performed per each question:

<u>Section A</u>

<u>Q01(6 marks)</u>: Generally candidates responses to this multiple choice question were good and rarely a candidate from this cohort didn't manage to get at least one or two marks. There were few who selected either 'visiting the library' or 'riding a motorbike'. The latter is expected as candidates could confuse ' دراجة هوائية' (bicycle) with 'دراجة نارية' (Motorbike). This proves the importance of making sure the candidates have extensively familiarised themselves with the vocabulary list (reading and pronunciation), a message which applies to the overall candidates' responses in this paper.

<u>Q02 (3 marks)</u>: In this multiple choice question many candidates were awarded the full 3 marks. However, some guessed the answers, especially in Q02ii (C: very short). Improving the listening skills and making notes during the allocated reading time and during listening to the recording would be very useful to candidates in the listening exams.

<u>Q03 (3 marks)</u>: This is another multiple choice question. On one hand, there was a noticeable number of candidates crossed the correct 3 statements (A, C, F) and were awarded the full mark. However, on the other hand, there was a situation when candidates didn't fully understand the conversation and gave random answers (example giving E: live in Iraq as an answer, etc.). There was also a noticeable number of candidates who crossed all boxes which resulted in a 0 score. It is strongly advisable to discourage candidates from doing this. Also, some candidates crossed boxes for the same speaker, in some cases all crosses belonged to the same speaker. This will also lead to losing marks.

<u>Q04 (3 marks)</u>: Although the overall candidates performance in this multiple choice question is better than the previous one, there were similarities such as

crossing all the boxes which resulted in a 0 score, or candidates crossing three boxes randomly.

Important Note regarding Q03 and Q04*: Candidates are expected to cross **ONLY three** boxes in each of these two questions and each cross is against a **different** one of the three speakers.*

Q05 (4 marks): There was a noticeable good candidates' performance in this question, especially in parts (a), (b) and (c). However, part (d) proved to be challenging to many candidates, when they had to give the full answer 'to go to the market' and not only 'to go' or 'let us go', which many candidates gave as the answer.

It is important for candidates to give the full answer, for example, mentioning the 'destination' i.e. 'market' in their answer.

Q06 (3 marks): The best candidates' performance in this question paper was in this question! The majority of candidates answered all 3 parts of the question correctly with a small minority scoring one or two marks. The topic and theme are familiar to the candidates, a factor could have influenced the candidates' performance.

Working on making themselves more familiar with the topics, candidates could improve their performance.

Q07 (3 marks): There is a good performance by a large number of candidates who scored 3 or 2 marks. There is an element of assumption by candidates who crossed A: 'the [TV] programme includes few adverts', which is incorrect in this case as there was no mention of any adverts in the recording.

Assumption is a typical scenario candidates should definitely avoid.

Q08 (3 marks): In this question a large number of candidates managed to answer part (a) correctly.

However, part (b) proved to be very challenging to the majority of the candidates, when these candidates 'misinterpreted' the question: What is his teacher better known as? The candidates interpreted the question as asking for the teacher's name. It should be emphasised to the candidates to read and process the question well before answering.

Candidates performance in part (c) was in the middle with mixed correct and incorrect candidates' responses. Some candidates' responses were based on assumption such as: 'he is on TV', 'his Lebanese accent', 'his personality' etc.

Q09 (4 marks): This was another multiple choice question when candidates performed well in. Few candidates gave an incorrect answer for (ii-C: 'makes life full of fun' when the right answer is ii-D: 'makes studying abroad easier'. It is essential for candidates to think/check if the statement was mentioned in the recording or not.

Q10 (4 marks):This question proved to be the most challenging for candidates. With few exceptions, hardly any of the candidates managed to score the full 4 available marks.

While part (a) is based on understanding the word: 'headteacher' to give the right answer, many candidates answers were such as: teacher, school, parents, students.

This proves the importance of the familiarising candidates with the vocabulary list and to spot the exact part of the recording when the target phrase was mentioned and to identify the key word according to the question.

Part (b) proved that there was a mixed performance with many candidates giving the right answer (parents approval) and many others applied the 'guess work' principle and gave answers such as: traffic, money, transport, language, etc.

Part (c) was challenging to most candidates with small number giving the right answer. Only few candidates gave the right answer (self confidence).

Q11 (3 marks): The candidates performance in this multiple choice question was very good with a large number scoring either 3 or 2 marks out of the 3 marks available. One common incorrect selection was for (B): 'they all came from the same part of Lebanon' when the correct answer is (C): 'the group met each other for the first time'.

It is important for candidates to adopt the practice to quickly check their answers. In the case of this question, candidates gave two contradicting answers by crossing A: 'The group members had been friends before volunteering' (incorrect answer), and C: The group met each other for the first time' (correct answer)!

<u>Q12 (4 marks):</u> This open response question, provides an example of the general performance of this cohort.

In parts (a) and (b), large number of candidates did well, scoring the available marks for each part. It seems that few candidates read the question for part (a) and perceived it as 'how many…' and not 'how may many..' and gave a 'number' as their answer.

Again, it is essential for candidates to process the question before starting to give their answer.

In part (c), it was clear that many candidates didn't get the relevant part in the recording, which states that 'parents could help their children in the summer holiday by finding a voluntary or paid job' and again there was a lot of guess work, such as: taking them on holiday, do activities, take them out, etc.

Despite the link between parts (c) and (d), candidates, the candidates' performance was better in part (d) and many candidates managed to give the correct answer to this part.

<u>Q13 and Q14 (5 marks each):</u> These target language crossover with Higher Tier questions are indicative of candidates' listening skills to a recording and answering a set of questions by selecting the right word to fill the blank.

The majority of candidates found these two questions very challenging, with only a very small number scoring the full mark. There were lots of total marks of 1 and 2 but also lots of 0 Scores.

Focusing on practising this type of questions (make up 20% of the total mark) is essential and taking the time to check whether the sentence makes sense is very important in the candidate's decision whether the chosen word/phrase fits the sentence or not.

It was observed that in Q14, candidates will select two words to fill in the blank with, when what is required is to select ONLY one word for each part of the question. Candidates should have more practice sessions on this type of questions.

Conclusion and advice:

- As mentioned in the introduction, the exam paper will cover all topics/themes and this means it is important for teachers to train students on the topics/themes, with more attention is given for the less familiar topics.

- Candidates should be made aware that answers to questions 1-12 in this paper are in English and the candidate will lose marks if they answer in Arabic.

- Candidates performed better in multiple questions compared to open response questions. More emphasis should be put on practising and familiarising candidates with working with various types of questions (Please see notes related to each question).

- It is important for candidates to make notes while listening to the recording while referring to the question paper at the same time. Candidates should be strongly advised to make use of the precious time when the recording is playing for the second time.