Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0) Paper 1H: 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 Higher Tier Listening and Understanding in Arabic exam paper is made up of 10 questions with a total marks of 50.

This exam for this Higher Tier is 40 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: Section A consists of two questions with instructions and texts set in Arabic and candidates in this section are required to respond in Arabic. Section B consists of 8 questions all set in English and candidates in this section are required to respond in English.

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 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 higher tier question paper targets grades 4 to 9 and questions are in this order:

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

- questions 5, 6, 7,8, and 9   target the higher grades 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 are crossover questions with the Foundation Tier question paper.

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

<u>Section A</u>

<u>Q01-crossover with 1F (5 marks)</u>: This is a target language question, which showed a good performance by a large number of candidates of this cohort with many scoring the full 5 available marks and others scoring 4 or 3 marks. It was observed that some candidates' response to (b) was 'مشغولة' (busy) or 'موجودة' (present), instead of 'منتبهة' (aware), which totally changes the meaning intended according to the recording.

This observation applies to candidates' response to (e), when candidates selected various words from the 'cloud' instead of the word 'موجودة' (present), rendering the sentence incorrectly structured.

It is important for candidates to read the sentence after selecting the word from the 'cloud' and checking if the sentence makes sense and tallies with what was said in the recording.

<u>Q02-crossover with 1F (5 marks)</u>: This is a target language question too and candidates performance clearly behaved in a different way to that in question 1 in this paper. Although a number of candidates scored the full 5 available marks, there was a noticeable number of candidates who selected the words randomly from the list to fill the blanks and ended up with either a very low scores (1 or 2) or a score of 0.

There was also a common incorrect answer to (c), where many candidates gave the answer as 'المساعدات' (aid) when the correct answer is 'المياه' (water). **The word 'المساعدات' was not mentioned in the recording, a point, candidates should be thinking of when giving their answers**.

The topic (environment) perhaps doesn't get the right level of focus in preparing candidates for the exam, and taking this into consideration by teachers and, generally, giving more focus on less common themes/ topics will assist candidates in performing better.

<u>Q03-crossover with 1F (4 marks)</u>: This is a multiple choice question. The majority of the candidates did very well in this question, with a noticeable number of candidates scoring the full available 4 marks.

This performance proves that the combination of the multiple choice question and the familiarity of the topic affect the candidates performance positively. This emphasises the point we made in the previous question about the importance of giving more attention on unfamiliar topics/themes.

<u>Q04-crossover with 1F (3 marks)</u>: The overall candidates' performance in this multiple choice question is good and a large number of candidates achieved the full score of 3 marks. However, a noticeable number of candidates scored 2 out of the 3 available marks due to confusion about whether the group knew each other before they started the voluntary project or not, and candidates crossed the incorrect boxes (either A or B).

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>Q05 (4 marks)</u>: This is another multiple choice question which have seen a very good performance by the majority of candidates. The only exception was a small number of candidates incorrectly crossed (B) to answer Q05ii, when the correct answer is (D).

It is very important for candidates not to assume or answer what they think is the answer and only give answers based on the contents of the recording.

<u>Q06 (5 marks)</u>: In this open response question, candidates performance varied from one part to another. For example, in (a) and (c), the majority of candidates gave the right answer. While (b) was challenging for the candidates as the correct answer is: because newspapers are published at certain times. Unfortunately, many candidates didn't get that. This applied to a lesser extent to part (d), when many candidates managed to get one out of the two required points (first source of information/fastest/fast/includes all types of media: radio, TV, newspapers).

Overall, candidates performance in this question was satisfactory.

Q07 (5 marks): This open response question has seen a good candidates' performance with a large number of candidates scoring the full available 5 marks or 4 marks.

There is an observation regarding part (b), when a small number of candidates got confused about the sequence of the conversation and their answer was related to the question in part (c). This is a skill that requires practice to follow the sequence of events in the recorded conversation.

Q08 (6 marks): In this question multiple choice question, a good number of candidates managed to score the full mark in both part (a) and part (b).

However, two of the questions appeared to be challenging to many candidates: Part (a)ii, and Part (b)iii. In Part (a)ii, candidates gave A as their chosen answer when the correct answer is (C). The key word that makes A an incorrect answer is 'teaching' as in the recording there was no mention of teaching in other foreign languages and (A) states: 'uses Arabic and other foreign languages for teaching'.

Also, in Part (b)iii, some candidates answer to the question on where: 'Shoukri might choose to work' as (C) مدرسة دينية (faith school) when the correct answer is (B) مدرسة خاصة (private school).

Familiarising students with vocabulary list is very important.

Q09 (10 marks): This is an open response question divided into two parts (a) and (b).

Q09a:The candidates performed very well in Q09ai, Q09aiii and Q09aiv with a large number giving the correct answers for the three questions. Regarding Q09aii, some candidates seemed to have struggled with giving the right answer- any two of the following: long beaches/coasts - desert scenery/nature/attractions - ancient ruins/buildings) and gave answers mostly not included in the recording (old villages, hotel, museums, etc.).

Q09b: Most candidates performed well in Q09biii and Q09biv. However a number of candidates struggled with Q09bi and Q09bii. It seems that Q09bi was one of most challenging questions in this paper as candidates needed to mention these two points: (1) 'more than two thousand types of plants' (2) 'trees hundreds of years old'. However, candidates mentioned 'trees/different trees' on its own or 'flowers'.

Regarding Q09bii, many candidates didn't know the four cardinal directions (الاتجاهات الأربعة), hence they didn't know (الغرب) meant 'west' . Also, candidates didn't identify the Mediterranean Sea, and answered as 'ocean', 'pacific ocean'.

This highlights the importance of extensive familiarisation of candidates with the vocabulary list.

Q10 (4 marks): This is a multiple choice question divided into two sections (i) and (ii).

The general cohort performance in this question was good with many scoring either the full 4 marks or 3 marks. .

It was noticeable that candidates performed better in section(i) than in section (ii) and a large number of candidates scored the full 2 available in section (i). In section (ii) a number of candidates gave an incorrect answer by choosing A (She decided to spend her time travelling) when the correct answer is B (She studied Arab heritage after her teachers' encouragement). It seems those candidates interpreted Hanaa's movement from one country to another as 'spent her time travelling'. Candidates need to think if the statement was mentioned in the recording or not.

It is important for candidates not to assume and focus on what the question is asking and choose the answer based on what was said in the recording.

Also, some candidates crossed one box in each section. It is important for candidates to be trained on the technicalities of answering this type of questions, especially reading the instructions, in this case it was: 'Put a cross in each of the **two** correct boxes for each question.'.

Conclusion and advice:

- As mentioned in the introduction, the exam paper will cover all topics and this means it is very important to give candidates the opportunity/time to familiarise themselves with all topics in readiness for the exam.

- Candidates should be very familiar with the vocabulary list as all questions would contain some of these words in them, sometimes one word act as the 'key word' from which the candidate will be able to answer the question correctly.

- As expected, candidates performed better in multiple questions compared to open response questions. More emphasis should be put on practising and familiarising candidates on how to manage open response type of questions.

- To avoid losing marks, candidates should be made aware of the techniques of answering the multiple choice questions, i.e. cross only the number of answers they were asked to give and not to cross neither less nor more than mentioned in the instructions.

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