



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Urdu

46453

(Specification 4645)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This year saw the introduction of the new specification for the Urdu GCSE test which provided the students' first opportunity for the new GCSE specification Controlled Assessment in Speaking.

Although it will take some time to comprehend the changes in order to cope with new demands, the new specification appeared to be much more student friendly. Where there were role plays previously, now the Speaking Test is more authentic, and much more geared towards the style of everyday conversation.

It was clear that students were better prepared to handle the demands of the new assessment and less able students performed more confidently.

However, there was some confusion and misunderstanding in the conduct of the test mainly due to being unfamiliar with the new format. This delayed the despatching of the required documentation by the schools/colleges. At the same time, the hard work and effort demonstrated by the schools/colleges teacher-examiners and moderators are to be applauded.

The communication was generally appropriate within the time parameters and the recordings were clear and audible. The correct questions were put forward by most teacher-examiners and the students' responses in general were relevant and well delivered.

The areas for improvement include the speed with which the material is delivered to the moderators by the schools/colleges as well as lack of communication between schools/colleges and the moderators. Schools/colleges need to know that they must provide the required documentation promptly in order to avoid a delay in their students' results.

The majority of students seemed well aware of what was expected of them in the oral examination. The information contained in the new specification, teacher support meetings as well as the help and guidance given by AQA had obviously been most beneficial in eliminating many areas of uncertainty.

Moderators were impressed by the level of performance as well as the achievement of the students entered.

Several of the teacher-examiners observed good practice and listened carefully to their students, building on what they said.

This created interesting and varied conversations, helping to gently challenge their students to reach their full linguistic potential. Open, rather than closed questioning technique used by most teacher-examiners gave the students the opportunity to produce detailed, imaginative responses. Also, more complex questions and time frames helped the students to demonstrate their competence over a variety of tenses and structures.

Teachers are to be congratulated on managing the process so effectively and clearly putting their students at ease during the test.

Many schools/colleges provided the required documentation correctly but, a number of them failed to do so which caused a great deal of inconvenience for the moderators. As a result, moderators could not meet the deadline to submit their marking to AQA. While the conduct of the Speaking Test was to be applauded their administration was very poor. Moderators had to remind schools/colleges many times and eventually AQA had to intervene. Teacher-

examiners and Examinations Officers in charge need to know that without the necessary documents moderators cannot moderate and students often suffer.

It was pleasing to note that a greater number of schools/colleges submitted recordings on CDs or memory stick. The quality of recording is much better and clearer on these formats compared to audio cassettes.

Many schools/colleges chose to prepare tasks related to topics suggested by AQA. Some schools/colleges expected all their students, regardless of their ability, to attempt the same tasks and while the task set stretched the most able, the less able students were disadvantaged by having to attempt a task way beyond their ability.

It is important to ensure that the tasks chosen are appropriate for the abilities of each individual student.

Most of the tests were accurately marked by teacher-examiners and the clarity of the marking grid makes it easy to follow. It was clear from the consistency of the marking that a process of internal standardisation had been successfully carried out when two or more teachers had been involved with the conduct of the test and assessment. There were few schools/colleges whose marks were out of tolerance and needed some adjustment.

Looking ahead, schools/colleges should be aware that moderators will stop moderating after six minutes to ensure an even playing field for all students. In this case students will be penalised for missing bullet points as teacher-examiners have not adhered to the recommended time.

Teachers should be reminded that the minimum duration of 4 minutes for the test should be adhered to. Anything less than this will be considered short and there will be an automatic deduction of 1 mark for Communication. Schools/colleges should consider this guidance when awarding marks themselves.

It was pleasing to note that the students in general were more comfortable with the new examination, had prepared well and showed much more confidence. The tests were conducted in an encouraging and sympathetic manner giving the students plenty of opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic competence over a wide range of vocabulary, tenses and structures.

Despite the new format of the test the majority of students handled the tasks very well although some groups of students often had not been given enough practice and seemed to be unsure of the format. Teachers should ensure that their students are familiar with all aspects of the test. Similarly, students' varied performances showed that some schools/colleges prepared their students better than others. It goes without saying that students must constantly practise Urdu if they are to achieve good marks.

Teacher-examiners need to know that topics based on students' personal experiences and knowledge work better.

Some students however, showed how little effort they had put in. The most apparent weakness of these students was in the use of vocabulary, sentence structure and verb order: their verb endings and pronouns, too, were far from standard Urdu. Many students also used a large number of English, Hindi and Panjabi words and phrases; students must avoid this tendency.

However these were only minor concerns that detracted little from the overall impression of a challenging new format well attempted by everyone.

Generally, the experience of moderating was very enjoyable as the majority of students including those brought up in Britain from childhood, were able to communicate so satisfactorily and effectively.

Schools/colleges are requested to note the following points for future series:

Administration

- Errors in additions on Candidate Record Forms were noted at times and total marks also need to be copied onto Centre Mark Forms correctly.
- Centre Declaration Forms were often correctly enclosed with samples but occasionally had to be requested.
- Centres are reminded that task sheets **must** be provided to the moderator. Moderation cannot take place without the task sheet.

Tasks

Centres are reminded that each centre has a Controlled Assessment Adviser who will be able to advise and comment on centre-devised tasks and any other issues not covered in the FAQ document relating to Controlled Assessment on AQA's website. Centres can use the mfl@aqg.org.uk mailbox for the details of their adviser to be sent.

The last bullet point on the task sheet is an exclamation mark and this signifies that the teacher will ask a question for which the student has not been able to prepare an answer. Teachers are advised not to make the unpredictable bullet point too complicated since this proved to disadvantage many, in particular the less able students. Students should always be made aware of the fact that although short answers here are quite acceptable, there needs to be a verb. Centres also need to be reminded that they must cover all of the bullets on the task sheet, including the unpredictable question in the allotted time if students are to have access to the top mark for Communication (see paras 3 and 4 on pages 7 and 8 of this report).

Recordings

Recordings need to be labelled appropriately as specified in the 'Instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations' booklet available in the Secure Key Materials section of e-AQA. Teachers should announce all students in the correct manner at the beginning of the test as specified in the 'Instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations' mentioned above.

Centres are reminded that sound files must be in MP3 format. WAV or AUP files will not be accepted.

Task Planning Forms

These need to be scrutinised more carefully by teachers and edited prior to the test. It was often the case that conjugated verbs appeared on the form or had not always been obliterated or had been crossed out but were still visible. Teachers are reminded that no credit can be given for any utterances where these verbs are used in the task itself.

Terminology – a glossary

Task Sheet	The sheet containing the bullet points in English which forms the task.
Unpredictable Question	The last question asked by the teacher, which the student has not prepared in advance. Shown as ! on the Task Sheet.
Task Planning Form	Downloadable from the AQA website, this is the form that a student uses as a prompt during the task. It is not compulsory.
Centre Mark Form	There are 2 of these, one for the recorded task and another for the unrecorded task. There are 3 copies, white, yellow and pink. Before May 7 in the year of entry, the marks for all students are entered on the form. The white copy goes to AQA and the other two go to the centre's moderator, who will then select a sample.
Recorded Task	The recording of this task is sent to the moderator. Only one task is sent for moderation.
Unrecorded Task	This is the second task (which may in fact have been recorded) but only the marks for this task are sent to the moderator, not the recording.
Candidate Record Form	This form is available on the AQA website and must be filled in for all students. It includes the breakdown of marks for the recorded and unrecorded tasks.
Centre Declaration Sheet	This is also available on the AQA website and is a declaration by the centre that the work is that of the students and has been carried out in line with the regulations.

The moderation process – a quick guide

1. Before 7 May, complete the Centre Mark Forms (SR for recorded task and SU for unrecorded task) and send the appropriate copies of both forms to AQA (top copy) and to your moderator (pink and yellow copies).
2. Receive the Centre Mark Form from your moderator highlighting the students whose recorded tasks are needed for the moderation sample, indicated by the letter S alongside the candidate name.

If your centre has 20 students or fewer, you should send the recorded tasks of all students to the moderator with the pink and yellow copies of the Centre Mark Forms.

The top copy should be sent to AQA.

3. Send to the moderator the following:
 - Centre Mark Form (pink and yellow copies)
 - A recording of the Recorded Task for all students in the sample
 - A completed and signed Candidate Record Form for all students in the sample
 - The Centre Declaration Sheet (signed)
 - The Task Sheet for all tasks used by any candidate in the sample
 - A copy of the unpredictable questions for all tasks used in the sample
 - The Task Planning Form for each student (if used)

Please ensure that the recordings are clearly labelled (see Instructions for the June 2011 AQA Examinations – New GCSE Specification)

Extract from the published mark scheme

Marking Issues

1. Task Planning Forms (TPF)

If more than 40 words are used on the TPF, ignore when awarding a mark the parts of the student's response (i.e. the utterances) which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

If conjugated verbs appear on the TPF, ignore utterances where that verb is used when awarding a mark. The same applies to the use of codes, for example a drawing of a bell to represent the French word, *belle*. It is recommended that teachers check the TPF before the student is tested so that all conjugated verbs and/or codes can be deleted.

Visuals on TPFs are permitted for the last time in June 2011 and must not appear on TPFs in June 2012 and beyond.

2. Timings

Timing begins as soon as the teacher asks the first question relating to the first bullet point. From that point, the task should last between 4 and 6 minutes.

If the task lasts for less than 4 minutes (even 3' 59"), a student cannot get full marks for Communication. It would still be possible for this type of performance to achieve a mark of 9 for Communication. There is no impact on the other assessment criteria.

If the task lasts for over 6 minutes, marking stops at 6 minutes. If, at that point, the student is speaking, allow him/her to complete that sentence and then stop marking.

3. Coverage of main bullet points

In order to be able to score full marks for Communication, students must be able to give information on all main bullet points on the task sheet. If there are any sub-divisions within the main bullet points, these are **not** compulsory.

If one or more main bullet points are not covered by the student, for any reason*, this will affect the **maximum** mark available for Communication, as follows:

Total number of main bullet points in task	Number of main bullet points <u>not</u> covered	Maximum mark for Communication
2-3 + ! task	1	7
2-3 + ! task	2	5
4 + ! task	1	8
4 + ! task	2	7
4 + ! task	3	5
5 or more + ! task	1	9
5 or more + ! task	2	8
5 or more + ! task	3	7
5 or more + ! task	4+	5

*The reasons for a main bullet point not being covered are:

- i) The teacher fails to ask anything about that main bullet point within the allotted 6 minutes.

- ii) The main bullet point is mentioned by the teacher, but the student cannot answer.
- iii) The student gives an answer, but it is unintelligible or not relevant to the main bullet point.

4. The unpredictable question/bullet point

In order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point, the student must answer by using a verb. If that is not the case, then the bullet point is not covered and the table above must be used in order to arrive at a mark for Communication.

It is unlikely that the answer given in response to the unpredictable bullet point will be as well developed as the main bullet points. If a student has developed fully, answers to the main bullet points and gives a short answer, including any part of a verb (eg present participle, infinitive) to the unpredictable bullet point, he/she will still have access to full marks for Communication provided the response is complete.

If a teacher asks more than one unpredictable question, the first one that is asked is the one that should be considered when deciding whether it has been answered appropriately, using a verb. Two-part questions for the same unpredictable bullet point are acceptable practice, for example, 'Do you like...? Why (not)?' or 'Do you prefer x or y? Why?' Credit should be given for the language produced in both parts. If a teacher goes on to ask other unpredictable questions, probably to make the task last at least 4 minutes, these should be taken into account when awarding an overall mark.

Once the student gives an incorrect answer (either in Urdu, in English or in any other language) then no further rephrases are possible.

If the student gives a partially correct answer in Urdu, then the teacher can ask more questions to elicit further information so that the bullet point is fully covered.

If a student says, in Urdu, 'I don't understand' or 'Please repeat' (or equivalents) then this counts as a request for clarification and the teacher is allowed to repeat or rephrase. This does not count as an answer. (If this were said by the student in English or in any language other than the one being tested, then it would be an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed).

If the student says, either in Urdu, in English or in any other language, 'I don't know' (or equivalents) then this counts as an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed.

If the student says nothing in response to a question then the teacher can repeat or rephrase until the student does respond (or until the 6 minutes are up).

If the teacher asks as the unpredictable question a question which has already been asked as one of the student's main bullet points, then the student has not been asked an unpredictable bullet point and the table in Section 2 (coverage of bullet points) applies.

If, however, the unpredictable question is different from a main bullet point, but elicits some repeat of information that has already been given in answer to one of the main bullet points, then any additional information can be credited. For example, the main bullet is 'Tell me about your family'. In a long answer, the student says that he/she doesn't get on well with his/her brother. The unpredictable question is 'Do you normally get on well with your family?' and the student says 'I get on well with my parents (new info) but not my brother (repeat)'. Although the unpredictable is connected to one of the main bullets, it is not the same question.

A student is not necessarily required to manipulate language in order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point.

5. The criteria for assessment

(a) Communication

All of the criteria should be considered when deciding on a mark, but the following guidelines may prove particularly useful.

Must the teacher ask extra questions for the student to gain the highest marks for Communication?

No. If the student develops fully his/her answers to each main bullet point there will be no need for extra questions to allow the student access to the highest marks for Communication.

Can students get a high mark even if there is little interaction with the teacher?

Yes. Interaction and fluency are a global concept. Students can have access to full marks with minimal teacher input as long as they have provided full and developed responses. This is still true even if there is little interaction with the teacher.

If a student answers a main bullet point eliciting reference to future events by using a present tense verb, will he/she be penalised under Communication?

No, not if the response successfully communicates what the main bullet point required. However if aiming for a high mark for Range and Accuracy, the student must make sure he/she uses at least two different tenses over the task as a whole.

Must a student give some information relevant to the actual question the teacher asks in order for the bullet point to be accomplished?

Yes. If a student gives an answer that provides information in relation to another bullet in his/her task but does not contain information relevant to the question the teacher has actually asked (eg because the teacher and student get out of sequence), the bullet cannot count as being accomplished. The teacher may ask the bullet again to give the student the chance to offer relevant information.

Can the answer still be considered to give some relevant information even if the tense is wrong?

Yes.

Examples: : مثالیں

What did you do last weekend? آپ نے پچھلے ہفتہ/ اتوار (ویک انڈ) کو کیا کیا تھا؟

The following answers would be regarded as having some relevant information and would be acceptable:

'Football' فٹ بال

'I play football'. میں نے فٹ بال کھیلا تھا۔

The following answer would be regarded as unacceptable on the basis that it was clearly not answering the question being asked: it is not only the tense formation that is wrong. There are other indications that the student is not answering the question being asked:

'Next week I will play football' (using a future tense verb). (نفل مستقبل کا استعمال کیا ہے)

If the student gives exactly the same response to more than one bullet point and that answer gives relevant information in each case, will the response count as having accomplished the bullet in each case?

Yes.

Example: مثالیں:

Bullet 3 – What did you do last weekend? آپ نے پچھلے ہفتے/اتوار (ویک انڈ) کو کیا کیا تھا؟

'I play football' میں فٹ بال کھیلتا/کھیلتی ہوں۔

Bullet 5 – What do you normally do at weekends? آپ ہفتے اتوار (ویک انڈ) کو عموماً کیا کرتے/کرتی ہیں؟

'I play football' میں فٹ بال کھیلتا/کھیلتی ہوں۔

Both bullets will be judged to have been accomplished.

9-10 marks

- Students can speak with confidence and narrate events where appropriate. In order to do this, they will have to develop their answers well.
- They will have to offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and be able to explain them.

7-8 marks

- The answers will be regularly developed, even though some of them may not be. However, for the award of a mark in this band, most answers will show some development.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

5-6 marks

- There will still be evidence of an ability to develop some answers.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

3-4 marks

- Few responses are developed, but for some questions you can expect replies to go beyond the minimal, even if this is in the form of lists or very simple sentences.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

1-2 marks

- Very few appropriate responses are developed, but therefore there has to be evidence of development, however basic, in at least one reply.

0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated, but a student could still give some very minimal replies and still score zero if there was no development at all.

(a) Range and Accuracy of Language

- For performances with a large amount of complex language but lots of errors the following should be noted: the Accuracy strand in Range and Accuracy has a

bearing on communication of intended messages. If communication is not taking place the marks awarded have to reflect this and a mark of 8 could not be awarded. If for, example, the Range strand warrants 10 marks and the Accuracy strand warrants 4 marks, then a maximum mark of 7 would be appropriate.

- The immediate future (eg I am going to go) counts as future tense. A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg tomorrow I am going) does not.
- The present subjunctive does not count as a separate tense from the present indicative. A construction using the present tense to refer to the past counts as the present tense.

9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used. This means two or more. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect) but a greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used and most students getting marks in this band will probably use three or more tenses, unless the nature of the task does not allow it.
- There will be complex structures (e.g. after having/being + past participle, before + *the infinitive*, *in* + *present participle*), but remember that this is GCSE level and not higher. We will not necessarily be looking for the use of the subjunctive or similar grammatical structures. Complexity will often be achieved by variety of expression, for instance I decided to go or I started to do instead of I went, or I did.
- There needs to be a wide range of vocabulary. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use (e.g. using a variety of words which might express a similar or same idea- for/because/since or however).
- Errors usually appear in complex structures, or they may be minor errors, for instance of gender, which do not appear too often.

7-8 marks

- Two or more tenses must be used.
- Some complex structures will be used, but the note about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will apply here.
- There must be a range of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.
- Errors occur, but the message is clear, so that the type of mistake made will not prevent communication.

5-6 marks

- There is no need for students to use more than one tense to be awarded a mark in this band.
- Sentences are generally simple but occasionally more complex. There will be more repetition of simple constructions here, but sometimes a more unusual structure will be used.
- Errors are quite frequent, but the language used is **more accurate than inaccurate**. This should be apparent from the annotation used for marking.

3-4 marks

- The sentences are short and simple and probably there will be quite a lot of repetition of the more common verbs, such as to like, to be, to have.
- The vocabulary is very limited, so there will probably be quite a lot of repetition of the same words.
- Errors are very frequent and it will be more inaccurate than accurate, or there will be relatively little said, so the lack of evidence means we cannot go into a higher band.

1-2 marks

- There are only isolated words of vocabulary with the occasional short phrase. It may well be that there is quite a lot of silence.
- Errors often impede communication, or there is very little evidence to enable us to form an opinion.

(b) Pronunciation and Intonation

5 marks

- Consistently good accent and intonation are required. 'Accent' means 'pronunciation'.

4 marks

- Generally good. It may be that problems arise mainly with the sounds that students traditionally find more difficult, such as vowel sounds.

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3 marks

- Generally accurate, but there is some inconsistency. As well as the more common mispronunciations such as the pronunciation of the final s of words, there may be problems with some vowel sounds and anglicised words.

2 marks

- What is said is understandable, although comprehension is sometimes delayed. In other words there will be occasions where we have to listen very carefully to what is being said in order to get the intended meaning.

1 mark

- What is said is barely understandable and comprehension is difficult. There may well be very little to go on, because not much is said by the student.

(c) Interaction and Fluency

5 marks

- The student responds readily, without significant pause before answering the questions.
- There is initiative, as the student is able to fully develop answers to the questions.
- The conversation is sustained at a reasonable speed, but clearly not at native speaker pace.

4 marks

- The student will again have to answer without hesitation.
- The replies will go beyond the minimum, although there will not be as much development as in the top band.
- There is some flow of language, even if from time to time there is some pausing for thought.

3 marks

- There are ready responses, where the student can answer reasonably promptly most of the time.
- There is little if any initiative, so the student may not develop answers to any great extent.
- There is an ability to sustain a conversation, so that any hesitation does not break up the interchange of information too much.

2 marks

- There is some reaction to the teacher's questions, but the student is sometimes hesitant. In practice, there will be more sections of the test where the student is thinking what to say or cannot answer.
- There is little natural flow.

1 mark

- There is little reaction to what the teacher asks and the student is so hesitant that the conversation becomes disjointed. There will in all probability be lots of silence during the task.

(c) Limiting marks

- You cannot go more than **one band** higher than the band in which the Communication mark was given when awarding marks in the other categories. For instance, if you award 5 for Communication, the highest mark you can award for Range and Accuracy is 8, and for Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency the maximum mark would be 4.
- It is possible to give marks in lower bands for Range and Accuracy, Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency than the band in which the mark for Communication was given.
- If you give one mark or more for Communication, you must give at least one mark in all other categories.
- If you give zero for Communication, you must give zero for everything else.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.