# Examiners' Report Summer 2009

# GCSE Urdu (1901)

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# Contents

# Paper 1 (Foundation) Listening and Responding

The paper was tackled very well by most candidates and differentiated well between candidates of varying abilities. Candidates' performances were of a higher level than last year and demonstrated more advanced listening skills.

This paper tests listening skill appropriate to grades C- G. The paper required minimal writing of the target language and candidates had to answer one question by writing 4 to 5 words in Urdu. These answers were marked for communication of the required points from the listening text only, irrespective of spelling mistakes and grammatical errors.

## Question 1- 6
Most candidates scored well on these question. With the majority of candidates responding to them without any difficulty. On question 6 some candidates confused 27 and 72 as they did not understand the word 'sattaees' in Urdu.

## Question 7
In this question candidates were asked to match the gift item with the person. Candidates are familiar with this topic and many scored full marks.

## Question 8
This question targeted C grade students. A large number of candidates struggled to write the words 'one week' 'brown colour' and 'number' in Urdu. A large number of candidates could not spell 'ek hafta' 'uska number' and 'bhoora' correctly. However, there were some candidates who wrote all the key words in Urdu indicating their good command on Urdu spelling and core vocabulary.

## Question 9
This question targeted D grade students. Although no writing was involved in this question, a large number of candidates could not get the correct sequencing and either got it partially right or totally wrong and lost marks. It goes without saying that candidates are not being prepared thoroughly to tackle these types of questions.

## Question 10

Also targeted at C grade, this question was about 'personal opinion'. Quite a large number of candidates answered this question correctly. However, few got it partially or totally wrong.

## Questions 11 - 13

These questions were well within the capabilities of most candidates. Words like 'chemist and hand bag' are very similar in Urdu and therefore the majority of the candidates scored full marks.

## Questions 14 -17

These questions were about describing people. The candidates were required to put a 'x' against the correct icon. The majority of the candidates managed these questions very well. However, there was confusion between the picture in options B and C. Both answers were marked as correct in order not disadvantage any candidates.

## Questions 18 – 21

Candidates responded well to these question as they were familiar with the topics. A large number of candidates scored full marks.

## Questions 22 - 25

This crossover question proved relatively accessible to many candidates. Candidates coped well with this accessible question and large number of students scored full marks.

## Question 26

The topic was 'My favourite animal' and candidates were required to complete an answer grid in English by writing the name of their favourite animal and give their opinion about it. The animals mentioned were peacocks, cats, rabbits and dogs. A large number of candidates had no problems in identifying the right animal. However, some failed to recognise the Urdu words for rabbit and dog (both words in Urdu are commonly known and have been used in the past papers). Some candidates lost marks because of their poor English vocabulary and translated the animal names as chickens, tigers, eagles, puppies and ducks.

Teachers should advise those candidates who either fail to understand the importance of extracting the right information from the listening text or those that pick key words, writing anything which they think is relevant. The performance of most candidates for this question was much better than the last year.

## Paper 1 (Higher) Listening and Responding

The tasks and the topics in this paper were set in accordance with the specification. The paper was tackled very well by most candidates and differentiated well between candidates of varying abilities. Candidates' performances were of a higher level than last year and demonstrated more advanced listening skills.

The overall performance for this paper was slightly better than last year.

The paper proved to be balanced and responses reflected the appropriate levels for which it was set. As mentioned in the last Examiners' Report, some candidates are still being disadvantaged by being entered for the wrong tiers.

### Questions 1- 4
This crossover question proved very accessible for Higher tier candidates, many scoring full marks.

### Question 5
This crossover question proved to be accessible to most candidates.

### Question 6
Also an overlap from the Foundation tier and targeted at C grade students. Candidates should be familiar with words such as *bhoora* (brown) and *hafta* (week). Colour and days of the week are in the core vocabulary and are common in everyday life.

### Question 7
This question tested the candidates' ability to understand the spoken Urdu and fill in the gaps with appropriate Urdu words. A large number of candidates scored some or even full marks, however less able candidates failed complete the sentence correctly and therefore did not score any marks at all. It was disappointing to note that some candidates sitting at the Higher Tier paper could not spell words such as 'girls', 'three', and 'help' in Urdu.

## Question 8

This question tested the candidates' ability to place a sequence of events in order. Only a few candidates were able to follow the conversation sequence and answered the question correctly. A large number of candidates either did not read or misunderstood the instructions and lost marks.

## Question 9

This is a crossover question from Foundation and is targeting C grade candidates. Candidates with excellent Urdu vocabulary scored full marks but others lost marks because of limited vocabulary. All the vocabulary is in the core vocabulary and the majority of candidates did score marks.

## Question 10

This question was about five radio programs and proved challenging. Some candidates answered correctly but put numbers in all six boxes losing one mark as a consequence of infringering of rubrics. It is imperative that candidates entered for the Higher Tier should be able to read and understand the target language instructions.

## Question 11

This question was about listening to different opinions about London and selecting the correct statement against each name. This question was answered well by the majority of candidates and posed no problems.

## Question 12

This was another crossover question, about fast food. There was a mixed response but the majority of the candidates scored some marks.

## Question 13

This question involved 5 target language sub -questions and answers about travelling in an aeroplane. A few candidates managed to write the key word and scored some marks, while others with a good writing ability did very well. It was again disappointing to note that quite a large number of candidates either spelled incorrectly or could not write the Urdu words for 'Islamabad', 'window', 'woman' or 'a lady and a child'. Some candidates were unable to write 'three hours' in Urdu and lost valuable marks.

As the candidates did not get penalised for poor spelling, they managed to score marks, but if these candidates are to be entered for GCE Urdu they must work hard to improve their grammar and spelling.

## Question 14

The question was about two friends talking about Future Plans and required the candidates to answer in English. The answer to (a) was 'to go to Dubai' and most candidates gave the right answer but could not write the correct spelling of 'Dubai'. Question (c) was clear and specific, and many again nearly all candidates knew the answer. However, instead of writing 'younger brother' used words like 'little', 'small' or just 'brother'. There was some confusion with questions (d )and (e) as candidates lifted the whole paragraph from the listening extract rather than the specific details. The answer to (f) was 'delayed' or 'postponed' or 'cancelled'. Again, candidates came up with options like 'divorce', 'break up' or 'separated'.

Teachers are requested to note these comments and prepare candidates according to the required task for this question.

# Paper 2 (Foundation and Higher) Speaking

## General

The Examining and Moderating Team have reported a few significant problems in the conduct of the oral examinations.

Experience informs us that when the tests are well conducted the candidates score well, within their individual expertise. However, if the tests are not properly conducted the ability of the candidates concerned to maximise their potential is compromised. In such cases, the experienced team of Examiners and Moderators are well equipped to deal with them and to concentrate on giving a fair mark to the candidates' performances. The general impression this year has been that the performance of the candidates is not noticeably different to last year.

## Foundation Paper 2F

As is usual for this subject, only a small minority of Urdu candidates (approximately 15%) were entered at Foundation level. This pattern is quite normal for Urdu as it reflects the ability and the familiarity of the candidature with the language examined.

This Paper is designed to test candidates in the C-G grade range and can be said to have discriminated successfully between these ends of the range. In fact, very few candidates failed to score enough marks to qualify for an F on this component.

## Key Point

Once again, it is disappointing to state that about a fifth of Foundation Level candidates scored very highly and it would have been much better for them to have been entered for the Higher Tier, so that they have a chance of reaching a higher grade. It is vital to do justice to candidates and ensure that their abilities in each of the four skill areas is taken into consideration to make entries accordingly. It seems that some centres blanket enter some candidates for Foundation tier in all four components of the exam, presumably on the basis of their lack of written skills.

At this Level, candidates have to perform one A and one B Rôle-Play and take part in a conversation on two topics, one of their choice, presumably prepared, and one chosen from the specification by the teacher examiner. In general, the Foundation Level Rôle-Plays were well performed and there were no significant problems.

Detailed consideration of Rôle-Plays are given below:

## Rôle-Play A

The A Rôle-Plays are designed to test the performance of the lower end E-G grade of the ability range. The candidates have to perform simple transactions, mostly involving shopping. Some required candidates to buy two items from the six pictures provided as stimulus. The candidate had to greet the examiner, buy two items selected from the pictures, ask the price, and say thank you and goodbye. Others required them to buy one item and then state size, colour, etc. The teacher-examiner needs to ensure that candidates do **all** the tasks, including greetings, thanks and goodbye.

Where marks are lost is, more often than not, candidates' use of English words, as in A1, 'apples', whose Urdu equivalent '*seb*' is part of any basic vocabulary.   The reality is that the nature of Urdu in Britain is becoming at the level most of these candidates operate, a very fluid mixture of Urdu, Punjabi and English.

A1:     No problems – except use of English words - for 'apple'
A2:     No problems
A3:     No problems
A4:     No problems – except use of E words
A5:     No problems – except use of E words
A6:     No problems – except use of E words – for 'envelope'

All the words included in the A Rôle-Plays are Common Core vocabulary items included in the specification and, in an exam situation, candidates are expected to use the Urdu words. If the candidate uses an English word it is entirely legitimate for the Teacher Examiner to ask the candidate '*Urdu meñ apple ko kya kehte heyñ*?' Although candidates cannot get the maximum marks according to the mark grid, they can get 7 or 8 marks instead of perhaps only 5 or 6 if they were not prompted.

Teacher-examiners have, in most cases conducted these Rôle-Plays well, and only a very small minority of candidates who entered the exam at Foundation Level scored less than 7 marks on the A Rôle-Plays.

**Rôle-Play B**

These Rôle-Plays are designed to test the mid-range of candidates and are overlap tasks, taken by both Foundation and Higher tier candidates. These Rôle-Plays are based on symbols but there are statements in English telling the candidate what to do. The majority of candidates clearly knew what the symbols meant and knew what to do even if, in some cases, their lack of Urdu did not enable them to complete the tasks successfully.

Most of these Rôle-Plays caused no significant problems either for candidates or for teacher-examiners. In the B Rôle-Plays the main difficulty for weaker candidates was not in interpreting the symbols, which caused little confusion, but having sufficient Urdu to cope and the use of English words for which there are simple everyday Urdu equivalents.

As far as English words are concerned, Key Vocabulary words are often words deliberately tested, such as days of the week, times and numbers, especially 1½ and 2½, colours, etc. Several of the B Rôle-Plays contained these vocabulary items.

It may be of use to centres to discuss one or two of the B Rôle-Plays that did produce some difficulties for some candidates:

B1    This caused a few problems because some candidates did not realise that they were meant to ask a question in the first response.  Some teachers asked the question to the candidates and that did confuse them.

B2    No problems of note. A few weaker candidates found it hard to "Ask the passer-by to say it again."

B3    This Rôle-Play caused some problems, mainly due to the fact that weaker candidates were unclear about response 1, asking "how much cloth was needed to make a shalwar qameez.".

B4    In this Rôle-Play candidates had to order samosas. The first point, required them to order 250 samosas. This did a lot of candidates to say "do saw pachaas" instead of "dhai saw."

B5    This is another example where the Teacher-examiner could help weaker candidates get a better mark by asking for clarification. In the second utterance the candidate has to say what sort of film they want to watch. Many said 'horror' or 'love'. When candidates have used the English words the Teacher-examiner should have asked something like '*Urdu meñ* horror *ko kya kehte heyñ*?'. Again, the candidate could have gained some marks.

B6    No problems of note.

B7    Problems for weaker candidates with the last point, involving times – 1.30 2.30 etc.

B8    Again no problems of note.

## Higher Paper 2H

At this level candidates perform one B Rôle-Play and one C Rôle-Play, and then hold a conversation on two topics as in Foundation but with questions involving greater complexity.

Over three quarters of the candidates were entered for Higher Tier and the performance was, generally, very good. Urdu is in the fortunate position of having speakers maintaining strong family links and spoken contact via the internet. Watching Urdu channels on Satellite TV helps to keep the spoken language alive.

## Rôle-Play C:

These are designed to test the more able candidates aiming for Grade C and above and are taken only by candidates entered for the Higher Tier. Candidates have to negotiate unpredictable situations using appropriate and accurate language. There are two marking criteria, one for communication and one for accuracy.

The main point in these Rôle-Plays is that candidates need to glean information from the Urdu stimulus. Underneath are 5 bullet points in Urdu, two of which are marked with a symbol '!' which indicates to the candidate that they have to respond to an unpredictable question from the Teacher-examiner. **Those who cannot read Urdu cannot know what predictable points they are expected to communicate.**

The C Rôle-Plays have been well handled by both Teacher-examiners and candidates this year. The key to success is Teacher-examiners taking the trouble of reading the handbook, doing some preparation and reading out the introduction given to get the Rôle-play going.

Once again, apart from being unable to read Urdu, a common problem was incomplete performance. It is clearly stated in the guidance notes that the teacher-examiner must **not** rephrase unpredictable questions and must not give away key vocabulary in what they say to the candidates.

On the other hand if a candidate merely says the words given in the bullet point they are not going to achieve full marks. For a start, they have not demonstrated understanding of what they have said, and secondly, they have not elaborated or expanded their responses. An example of this is in C3, point 4 '*nawkri ki tafsilat*', and in C8, point 5 '*show ki tafsilat*'. Just saying the words given in the bullet points is not enough, it is just repeating what is on the card. An appropriate response would be '*mujhe roz kytne ghante kam karna hoga awr kytne peyse mylenge?*'

Another Rôle-Play illustrates the importance of a Teacher-examiner's active role in maximising the candidate's performance. In C8, based on entering a talent show, one of the predictable responses, point 3, required the candidate to respond to the teacher's question '*aap ne yyh fan kab awr keyse sikha?*' '*When and how did you learn this?*' This is of course a very straight forward question but when a candidate simply says something like "at school", this is clearly inadequate and the Teacher-examiner should encourage the candidate to say more.

The point that needs to be made is that, at this level, candidates are expected to give more than one word or one-phrase answers to most of the questions in order to achieve full marks. **The assessment criteria clearly states that the candidate must produce extended replies in order to achieve high marks.** The guidance notes

provided were sufficiently detailed to enable the teacher-examiner to play his or her part successfully; the fact that many did get it right indicates that it can be done.

## NOTE

In role play C5 our attention was drawn by some centres to a potential difficulty. There was an overlap between Responses 1 and 2, which asked the same question. "What is the reason for being late?" Most candidates had no problem with this and either merely repeated or elaborated on what they had said the first time, or said, usually politely, "I've already told you Sir."

## Conversation

In this element of the Oral examination candidates are expected to prepare one topic instead of two. The second topic is now selected by the teacher-examiner from two alternatives supplied by Edexcel which are written in the handbook following the B Rôle-Play performed by the candidate. Unfortunately, some centres did not follow this instruction.

The Foundation and Higher conversations were, generally, well conducted. Most difficulties arose when the types of questions did not let the candidates show their ability. It is vitally important that even the weakest candidates be given questions that test their ability to express Past, Present and Future tenses. This is vital if they are to achieve a C grade. The handbook does contain suitable questions for each topic at both levels but these are not intended to be a list of questions to be worked through from beginning to end. Questions should be tailored to suit the interests and abilities of the candidates and also teachers should pay attention to the candidates' responses and adapt their questions accordingly.

It is recommended that at Foundation Level candidates should be gently eased into their topic with very simple straightforward questions to get them going and that Higher Level candidates should be started off with a few Foundation Level questions to warm them up, rather than going straight in with difficult questions.
Please note that nearly all the questions given in the handbook are open-ended questions, not those requiring yes/no answers, which tell us nothing about the candidates' linguistic ability.

This year there were the usual two longstanding issues which need discussing once again.

## 1    Pre-learnt material.

While it is to be expected that candidates will practice their chosen topics, this component of the examination is a conversation. It is **not** a monologue or a speech and should not be prepared as such. Teacher-examiners are sometimes heard to say things such as "start your presentation now."  Edexcel does not specify a presentation, it specifies a conversation.

It is quite obvious when a candidate speaks without cease and without interruption for two or more minutes, and the teacher-examiner does not ask a single question, that the piece has been memorised. Sometimes the pauses occur at very odd moments, not at the end of sentence or phrase, as if they were the end of written lines, sounding as if a candidate has been reading from a script. This does not demonstrate understanding, nor the two-way interactive linguistic competence which is tested by a genuine conversation. Examiners are instructed to ignore such material and award marks only to genuine conversation.

## 2    Topic Coverage

The second problem is when teacher-examiners fail to cover more than one topic. In such cases, candidates cannot obtain more than half-marks (15/30). This occurred in a number of centres, in which all the candidates did the same topic, something which is not recommended.

It has already been noted that the teacher-examiner's performance is as important as the candidates in an oral examination. A sympathetic and friendly approach is always better than rigid formality. Taking an exam is a highly stressful business for both candidate and teacher-examiner and very step should be taken to make the candidate feel more relaxed.

As to candidates' performance, it is clear that there is a wide range of ability levels. That being said it is gratifying to note that, most candidates were entered for the higher level and assessment of their performance indicates that in the vast majority of cases, it was right to do so.

### Recording

There have been several incidents this year of candidates' performances not being recorded, and it is necessary to direct teachers' attention to some important points regarding recordings.

1   Before starting the exam, it is vital to make sure that the tape recorder is working properly.

2   If possible use a separate microphone rather than a built in one. The sound quality is so much better.

3   Point the microphone towards the candidate. It is more important to hear the candidate than the teacher-examiner.

4   After every recording wind back the tape for a few seconds and replay to ensure that the candidate's performance has been recorded and is audible.

5   If you use the pause button after recording introductions, candidate numbers, etc, or between candidates, <u>PLEASE MAKE SURE</u> that you switch **off** the pause button before conducting the next exam. If there is no candidate's voice on tape they cannot receive marks and the centre will have to apply for special consideration for the candidate.


### Organisation of Material in Centres

The main focus of the Assessment team is to assess and mark the candidates' performance and that requires intense concentration. When material arrives from centres with tapes that are un- or partially labeled, it is extremely time-consuming and wearisome to sort them out. Labels are given in the handbook and should be used and fully completed and on the cassette itself the centre number, tape number and Sides A and B clearly marked. Also, when recording candidates, clearly state the candidate's name and number before starting each examination. While it is clearly unrealistic to expect only one candidate on each side of a tape, it is possible to use c60 cassettes that can comfortably fit two candidates on each side.

# Paper 3 (Foundation) Reading and Responding

The current format of the Specification has been in practice for seven years. Over 2,600 candidates were entered for the examinations this year, of which just under 800 were entered for the Foundation Tier and the remainder for the Higher Tier.

Paper 3F is designed to test candidates in the C-G grade ability range. No lengthy written responses are required for this paper. Candidates are required to read the rubric in order to attempt the questions correctly.

Detailed consideration of individual questions is provided below:

### Questions 1 and 2
These questions required candidates to match pictures to individual words and put the appropriate letter against the correct word. The majority of candidates scored full marks for these questions, but a minority were unable to match the correct pictures to the given vocabulary.

### Question 3
This question required the candidates to tick five correct items they would choose to take with them for a school trip. About half the candidates scored full marks for this question while the rest either did not understand the rubric or, due to limited reading and understanding skills, could not work out the correct answers.

### Question 4
This question was about different rooms in a house and places around the house. Candidates had to match the word(s) with a short statement in the box. Most candidates scored full marks for this question but the weaker candidates had no idea what was done where as they put letters randomly as they pleased and did not gain any marks. Due to limited reading and/or understanding some candidates were eating in the garage or bathroom and bathing in the dining room.

## Question 5 (overlap)

Candidates had to read a short passage about rainfall and tick five correct statements from the ten given. This required careful reading of the text. Quite a few candidates scored good marks but the others ticked randomly, thus gaining a mark or two. It is good to report that the number of candidates who ticked more than five answers was extremely low this year.

## Question 6 (overlap)

This question was about future professions and candidates were required to match the correct job to each of the names by crossing the corresponding box. Most candidates scored full marks for this question but the weaker candidates lost some marks.

## Question 7 (overlap)

This question was based on a short text where candidates were required to read a short passage about the popularity of air travel and hence the expansion of airports. They were then required to match sentence halves based on the given information. Candidates who could read and understand the simple language performed well but a majority of candidates lost marks in this question as they put random letters in their attempt to join the sentences, hence losing marks.

## Question 8 (overlap)

This question was based on a short text about playing out with friends. Candidates had to read the text and do a gap filling exercise with the help of vocabulary given. While most chose the correct word, a minority of candidates had guessed the answers as they did not understand the demand of the question or had limited reading and understanding skills, losing marks as a result.

## Question 9 (English question)

This question was based on a short notice about a sale in a toy shop. It was an appropriate topic as most young people are interested in computer games and toys. Candidates were required to answer the questions in English based on the information given. A majority of candidates scored 4 or 5 marks but some were not able to transfer the meaning of the given short sentences demonstrating their ability in reading and understanding.

## Question 10 (English question)

This question was a notice about school being closed due to flooding. Most candidates scored full marks in this question. A small minority of candidates did not perform well as they were unable to respond appropriately.

# Paper 3 (Higher) Reading and Responding

The Higher Paper is designed to discriminate between candidates aiming for the A* to C grade range, although a D can be awarded to those not achieving a C. The paper consisted of eight questions, four of which (questions 1 to 4) were overlap questions. As expected the responses for these questions were far better at higher Level than those doing them at Foundation Level. Questions 5, 6, 7 and 8 were intended to differentiate between the A*, A & B grades.

### Question 1 (overlap)

Candidates had to read a short passage about rainfall and tick five correct statements from the ten given. This required careful reading of the text. Quite a few candidates scored good marks but the others ticked randomly, thus gaining a mark or two. It is good to report that the number of candidates who ticked more than five answers was extremely low this year.

### Question 2 (overlap)

This question was about future professions and candidates were required to match the correct job to each of the names by crossing the corresponding box. Most candidates scored full marks for this question but the weaker candidates lost some marks in this question.

### Question 3 (overlap)

This question was based on a short text where candidates were required to read a short passage about the popularity of air travel and hence the expansion of airports. They were then required to match sentence halves based on the given information. Candidates who could read and understand the simple language performed well but a majority of candidates lost marks in this question as they put random letters in their attempt to join the sentences, hence losing marks.

## Question 4 (overlap)

This question was based on a short text about playing out with friends. Candidates had to read the text and do a gap filling exercise with the help of vocabulary given. While most chose the correct word, a minority of candidates had guessed the answers as they did not understand the demand of the question or had limited reading and understanding skills, losing marks as a result.

## Question 5

This question required the candidates to read a text about listening to stories or the lack of it (most probably due to technology taking over and changing life styles of the younger generation). They were then required to match sentence halves to make sensible sentences based on the passage.  Most candidates scored full marks for this question while a few could not choose the correct ending and lost a mark or two. Generally, this question was very well attempted.

## Question 6

This question required the reading of a passage about the differences in the education of young people in England and Pakistan. The candidates then had to complete do a gap filling exercise with the help of the given vocabulary. A good majority of candidates scored very good marks but the weaker ones lost out by selecting inappropriate vocabulary.

## Question 7

This question was aimed at A* level and required answers to be written in Urdu. Candidates had to read the text about a famous personality, this personality was that of Abrar- ul – Haq, a well known and well liked singer. The answers required were not lengthy responses as short phrases would have sufficed. The majority of candidates' performance was very poor for this question. The candidates understood the passage quite well but in spite of last year's report, they did not refrain from the exercise of lifting answers from the text, hence losing marks. This question is aimed at A and A* candidates and they are required to manipulate the language and try their best to answer in their own words. They are not required to write long sentences either but copying pieces of texts that contain the answer results in the loss of marks.

## Question 8

This question is aimed at A-A* grades. This question consisted of a text about a very well known phenomena in any democratic country. The candidates were required to read a passage about elections in Pakistan and answer questions based on the text, in English. Most candidates scored good marks in this question but very few scored full marks as some candidates tried to answer from their own knowledge rather than from what was in the text. The other weakness that came to light was that some candidates did not write their answers against the corresponding question but wrote them against questions where it did not meet the demand of that particular question. Some candidates lost marks in these parts of the question.

# Paper 4 (Foundation) Writing

The papers were of the same level of difficulty and standard as in previous examination series and placed comparable demands on candidates. Generally all questions worked very well to assess candidates' ability.

Candidates at Foundation tier were able to write their best Urdu and scored well, many managing to attempt all four questions on the paper. There were some excellent paper 4F scripts gaining very high marks. These candidates may have been able to gain a higher grade on paper 4H.

Most candidates were appropriately entered for their selected tier of the examination. The papers proved accessible and appropriate for the vast majority of candidates. The overall performance of candidates was not significantly different from that of last year.

## Question 1
Many candidates answered this question successfully and managed to produce more than six different words in Urdu. However, the number of candidates who produced all ten words correctly was quite low. Marks were lost through the inclusion of the example word, English words and items other than food and drink.

## Question 2
Candidates were required to produce five verbs conjugated in the third person present tense and to interpret five pictures as nouns. Only a few candidates scored full marks for this question as most were unable to produce accurate verbs for male, female and elderly third person.

## Question 3
Candidates were required to write a short note to their friend in Pakistan and there were four bullet points to be covered. In general, this question was very well attempted. It was usual for candidates to score 4 or 5 marks for Communication despite spelling errors but a mark of 2 or 3 for Knowledge and Application of Language. However, weaker candidates also lost marks for Communication as they could not answer one or more bullet points.

## Questions 4(a) and 4(b) (Overlap)

Candidates were required to answer one of the two overlap questions. In both the questions they had to cover five bullet points. Both options proved to be equally popular and fairly accessible to most abilities at this level. At the Foundation Tier, this is the question that enables candidates to score marks in the C grade range.

Although the overlap questions enabled candidates to draw on familiar categories of vocabulary and structures, they proved quite challenging for foundation tier candidates. Most responses were short and simple, but conveyed the main points to some extent. The vast majority of candidates were unable to produce a range of tenses and to express ideas and justify points of view. Many lacked appropriate skill to produce longer sequences of writing.

Paper 4 (Higher) Writing

The papers were of the same level of difficulty and standard as in previous examination series and placed comparable demands on candidates. Generally all questions worked very well to assess candidates' ability.

There were many outstanding performances from candidates in paper 4H. Most candidates were appropriately entered for their selected tier of the examination. The paper proved accessible and appropriate for the vast majority of candidates. The overall performance of candidates was not significantly different from that of last year.

Candidates were required to answer one of the two overlap questions and also one of the two Higher Tier questions.

### Question 1 (a) and 1 (b) – Overlap questions
Both the questions worked very well for the Higher candidates and many candidates scored high marks. Candidates were well prepared for both the topics; in most cases vocabulary and structures were sound, candidates were familiar with the specific vocabulary and they were able to express ideas and give opinions.

### Questions 2 (a) and 2 (b) – Higher Tier questions
Question 2(b) was the overwhelming majority choice, possibly because it enabled candidates to draw on their own experiences of shopping both in Pakistan and Great Britain. Naturally, candidates' responses varied in quality, but very few were awarded very low marks for Communication and Quality of Language. Overall, this question proved to be interesting to candidates of various abilities and they performed well.

Although relatively few candidates attempted question 2(a), many produced excellent scripts. Most candidates tackled this option (Favourite TV Programme) with success with many scoring very high marks. Some responses to this question were outstanding.

Those who chose any of the two questions communicated in a generally satisfactory way but many lost marks because of ambiguity in their responses, especially with

regard to spelling errors and poor verb endings. In several instances, candidates did not observe the rubric and instructions and, as a result, omitted one or more bullet points completely. Weaker candidates relied heavily on the vocabulary given in the stimulus. Some of them simply copied all five bullet points. Contray to this, many able candidates lost marks by producing good pieces of work only in response to the title, totally ignoring all the bullet points. However, most candidates produced coherent and well linked responses which addressed all the bullet points, developing them with opinions and reasons.

## Paper 4 (Coursework) Writing

The general standard of coursework was similar to previous years. In several instances, it again appeared that the centres chose the coursework option without considering the need to read and fulfil its requirements. A large number of candidates relied heavily either on the stimulus and reference material or Pakistani text books. As a result, they produced pieces of work which were too close to their source. Some pieces of work were literal translations from reference material in English. Centres need to be reminded that the more candidates copy from the stimulus or reference material, the lower the marks they attain. Similarly, the group of candidates who produce identical or near identical responses can not attain high marks. The same criteria applies to short and translated pieces of work.

Controlled conditions provide an effective way of verifying coursework authenticity, but many centres failed to ensure that these conditions were properly observed. It was therefore very difficult to assess whether the work submitted was candidate's own or completed with outside assistance.

As in previous years, the huge variation in stimulus material continued to cause many problems. Some centres provided far too much as stimulus material so that it became difficult to assess the extent of the candidates' own work and some provided too little or none at all. Some centres were unable to produce any stimulus material despite repeated requests from the moderator. There was an increase in the number of centres who stated that they simply gave candidates a title and asked them to write about it. Most centres failed to provide differentiated tasks for the full range of abilities.

Next year will be the last chance for centres to choose the coursework option for their candidates. It would be much appreciated if they can be diligent that they comply with the requirements of this option and their candidates do produce their own work.

# Statistics

### Paper 1F – Listening and Responding

| Grade | Max. Mark | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 38 | 33 | 29 | 25 | 21 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 59 | 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 |

### Paper 1H – Listening and Responding

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 43 | 38 | 33 | 28 | 20 | 16 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 | 50 | 40 | 35 |

### Paper 2F - Speaking

| Grade | Max. Mark | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 27 | 23 | 19 | 15 | 11 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 59 | 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 |

### Paper 2H - Speaking

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 150 | 140 | 134 | 128 | 123 | 117 | 114 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 | 50 | 40 | 35 |

### Paper 3F – Reading and Responding

| Grade | Max. Mark | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 33 | 29 | 26 | 23 | 20 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 59 | 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 |

## Paper 3H – Reading and Responding

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 43 | 35 | 27 | 20 | 17 | 15 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 | 50 | 40 | 35 |

## Paper 4F - Writing

| Grade | Max. Mark | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 35 | 32 | 29 | 26 | 23 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 59 | 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 |

## Paper 4H - Writing

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 50 | 37 | 33 | 29 | 26 | 20 | 17 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 | 50 | 40 | 35 |

## Paper 4C – Written Coursework

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raw Boundary Mark | 60 | 51 | 45 | 39 | 33 | 27 | 21 | 15 | 9 |
| Uniform Boundary Mark | 90 | 80 | 70 | 60 | 50 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 10 |

## Overall Subject Boundaries

| Grade | Max. Mark | A* | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Uniform Mark | 360 | 320 | 280 | 240 | 200 | 160 | 120 | 80 | 40 |

## Notes

**Boundary mark**: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.