Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Urdu (1UR0) Paper 4H: Writing in Urdu

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Introduction

This was 2nd year of this examination for the new specification. After the last year's examination students this year appeared to be more familiar with the demands and format of the paper. This was reflected by the overall performance of students as well as by the high marks they obtained. Students are needed to communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts; to write short texts, using simple sentences and familiar language accurately to convey meaning and exchange information; to produce clear and coherent text of extended length to present facts and express ideas and opinions appropriately for different purposes and in different settings; to make accurate use of a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures. They are also required to translate short texts from English into target language to convey key messages accurately and to apply grammatical knowledge of language and structures in context. The assessment was out of 60 marks and each question was set in a context drawn from the five GCSE Urdu themes and subtopics. Word counts were specified for each question; however, students were not penalized for writing more or fewer words than recommended word count for each question. There was very little evidence of students being unable to finish the required tasks. The translation into target language was reached a higher standard and a majority of candidates achieved either full or top marks.

Comments on individual question

Question 1 (a)

This is an overlap question based on the theme of identity and culture and the topic of birthday celebrations. The question was consisted of four tasks within the context of an email to a friend. Students were required to write 80-90 words of Urdu all three timeframes (Present, Past and future). This question was more popular than Q1 (b). A majority of candidates found this question accessible due to the link with their personal experience of celebrating birthday or attending birthday parties. A majority of candidates successfully coped with all four tasks and obtained high marks. Most successful students adhere to the recommended word count probably knowing that exceeding word limit often increase the scope for error, ambiguity and irrelevance. Overall, however, there was a generally good appreciation of tense differences, and a majority of candidates addressed all bullet points with relevance and expansion.

Question 1 (b)
This question addressed the theme of school and the topic of school trips. Some candidates chose to attempt this question. Level of difficulty and demand was similar to 1(a). The bullet points were generally well understood. A vast majority of candidates tackled all four bullet points very well and achieved high marks. Point four which required candidates to write their response in future tense was often answered well, with appropriate reference to future events. Some candidates were inclined to use exclusively Foundation tier vocabulary and structures, with little attempt at complexity. Other candidates developed their ideas more convincingly, using a wide variety of structures and vocabulary.

Question 2 (a)
This question addressed the theme of Identity and culture and the topic of social media and technology. The question proved to be quite popular as majority of candidates opted for this and they showed an excellent linguistic ability.

Candidates were required to answer four bullet points. Candidates had to write 130-150 words in Urdu using past, present and future time frames. It was evident that vast majority of candidates had clearly prepared themselves well for the examination. They seemed to know what was expected of them and they showed a great deal of linguistic accuracy and knowledge of complex vocabulary which was reflected both in their vocabulary and sentence structures.

Question 2 (b)
This question addressed the theme of Future aspirations, study and work and the topic of jobs, career and professions. Once again the level of difficulty and challenge were identical to that of Q2 (a). Some candidates opted for this question and they tackled the given tasks with great enthusiasm and there was a little evidence that they felt disadvantaged by any lack of understanding of the task.
Candidates showed a pleasing ability to write their response and showing improved technique and a greater grasp of how to meet the demands of the question.

Question 3
This question addressed the theme of Identity and culture, and the topic of Who am I? Candidates had to translate a paragraph from English to Urdu.This was a new question type, and a majority of candidates found it quite accessible. A majority of candidates pleasingly achieved marks in the top category. The meaning of the passage was fully communicated, and the language and structures were consistently accurate, with few minor errors not hindering clarity.

Conclusion
In comparison with the previous year,the overall standard was maintained. The format of the paper gave candidates of all abilities to achieve their full potential. Based on candidate's performance, teachers and candidates are offered the following advice and it is hoped they will take notice of it in order to enhance candidate's performance in future examinations
1) Always adhere to the recommended length of task.
2) Beware of use of required time frame/s.
3) Try to write a separate paragraph for each bullet point.
4) Use variety of vocabulary and avoid repetition.
5) Write your response on the correct page on the answer sheet.