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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Bangla (4BA0) Paper 01: Reading, Writing and Translation

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General comments

About 1,809 students were entered for the new IGCSE Bangla in June 2019. A good proportion of students performed very well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper cannot be compared with the previous years as this is a totally new specification comprising the new setting criteria where a variety of question styles were provided. These question styles were set to comply with the different levels of demand. The new assessment criteria appropriately matched with the new grading system (1- 9) with appropriate differentiation and challenges. The paper comprises three main sections: Section A is mainly reading and responding to a variety of tasks. Section 2 comprises the guided writing tasks to a variety of topics. The last section C is a short translation task from English into Bengali.

Students had every opportunity to respond to a variety of tasks in each section. Some key words and phrases helped to discriminate between good and adequate performance of the students. Also, several outstanding pieces of translations including examples of continuous pieces of writings were evident from a good number of responses.

Section 1 Reading and responding (Q1 – Q4)

Question 1

Question type: Multiple choice word drop question.

This text was about *the search for the 'Bangladesh's Best Teenage Chef 2019*. Students were provided with twelve words in a box plus one example. They were asked to drop the correct letter from that box into the answer grid below to indicate which word would fit in the gap in the statement. Distractor were provided to fit more than one option. It was very pleasing to see that students answered successfully all 6 gaps to a greater extent. The average score for this question was **6**.

Question 2

Question type: Multiple choice matching question.

The text was about *the holiday planning of three youngsters*: The students were asked to match the statements to the correct named person(s) by marking the appropriate match the statements to the correct named person(s) by marking the appropriate boxes with an [X]. It was pleasing to see that most frequent correct answers given were A, C, E, F and G. However, less successful students struggled to differentiate *swimming in the river* in B with the *river trip* D and so scored less marks. The average score for this question was **5**

Question 3

Question type: Note taking question.

The text was about a young university student about her education, work and dreams. The students are required to complete the sentences 3 (a-i) with correct words or phrases. Many students achieved maximum marks in these questions. However, a number of less successful students failed to answer Q03 (c) and Q03 (d) as they struggled to distinguish between the *type of job* and the *workplace* and so mixed up the answer of 3(c) with the answer of 3(d) which resulted them to score 0 mark in both 3(c) and 3(d) failed to score marks there. Quite a few less successful students also struggled to grasp the idea of *apprenticeship or vocational course* in Bengali in 3(f), and so scored 0 marks there. The average score for this question was **10**.

Question 4(a)

Question type: Open response questions.

Text: Literary text

The text was about the writer's childhood experiences at school followed by a set questionnaire 4(a)(i-vii). For Q04(a), many students achieved good marks for this question although a vast majority of students could not answer Q04a(vi) due to unclear stimulus followed by a single word printing error in the text. This was escalated before the online standardisation meeting and remedial measure was taken to mark this part of Q04(a) out of 9, rather than out of 10. It was pleasing to see that the most frequently correct answers given were 4(a)(i-v). A good number of students succeeded to score mark on these questions. However, several less successful students struggled to distinguish between *underachievement* and *truanting* in Q4(a)(vi) and *consequences of truanting* in Q4(a)(vii) and so scored less. The average score recorded for this question was 8.

Question 4(b)

Question type: Summary question

The text was a follow up of the content of the text in 4(a). The text comprises a discussion between two friends about school with reference to the literary text and a way forward. The students were asked to read, understand the outcomes of the discussion and summarise the main points of the discussion. The most frequently correct inference answers given in response to the 1st part of 4(b)(i), 4(b)(iii). However, less successful students struggled to summarise the idea of school rules and how to improve on. In fact, they copied literally the answer from the text and so scored 0 on that particular point. The average score recorded on Q4b was **3**.

Section B: Writing

Question 5

Question type: Shorter writing task – open response

The question was about writing a paragraph on weekends. Many students performed well and were able to use the 4 words or phrases given in the task and scored good marks both in the *communication* as well as in the *quality of language*. Only a number of less successful students struggled to produce a continuous piece of writing due to lack of skills to display grammatically appropriate structures and coherence in context; some students even struggled to grasp the idea of social activities and messed it with the chores and so scored less marks. The average score recorded on this question was 12.

Question 6(a, b, c)

Question type: Longer writing task – open response

The students had a choice of one response from three for this question. Although the tasks were longer narratives followed by certain guided points provided, Q6b was a narrative in response to an email stimulus. These narrative writing tasks were on different contents and topics. Q6a was on *Home and local area*; Q6b was on *family celebrations* and Q6c was on the advantages and disadvantages of *Social media*. The students successfully narrated their chosen task with a range of vocabulary and structures. A good number of students used straightforward language with extended well-linked sentences, referencing to past, present and future events. Successful students made good efforts to combine facts with opinion/s and so scored high marks. However, there were instances when less successful students struggled to display these criteria in their written pieces and so scored less marks

Amongst the three options, Q6b was the most popular and answered by many students which was evident in the statistics. Less successful students struggled to grasp the concept of 'facilities for the youngsters' and therefore failed to score good marks in Q6a. Similarly, the less successful students struggled in response to the third bullet point in Q6c where they were expected to describe possible ways of improving social media networking in the future in Bengali. This has resulted them in scoring lower marks.

For Q6a, the average score recorded was **23**; for Q6b, the average score was also **23**. However, for Q6c, the average score recorded was **20**.

Section C: Translation

Question 7

The task was translating a short English passage into Bangla about a popular film actor in Bangladesh. Many students achieved good marks in this question although less successful students struggled to translate as a continuous piece due to their unfamiliarity of Bangla vocabulary of the English terminology used in the text. For example, 'appearance', 'breakthrough', 'starred', 'box office hit' etc. The spelling errors also often hindered their transmission. However, the average marks scored was **16**.