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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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In Bengali (4BE0_01) Paper 1

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4BEO - 01 IGCSE BENGALI – PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT – January 2019

General comments

About 1, 385 students were entered for the IGCSE Bengali in January 2019. A good proportion of students performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is generally comparable with the January 2018 paper. It was evident from marking students' samples, back reading and monitoring marking, and the markers' report. However, it is also evident from the statistics and the Awarding Broadsheet that the Mean Mark this season is gone down by 2.5 percent whereas the standard deviation is gone up by 1.95.

Students had every opportunity to produce good and proper translations. Some key words and phrases helped to discriminate between good and adequate performance of the candidates. Also a number of outstanding pieces of translations including examples of continuous pieces of writings were evident from a number of responses.

Question 1

Q1 Able candidates generally performed well in translating all 5 sentences without any difficulty and scored good marks. However, less able candidates struggled due to the lack of appropriate syntactical and grammatical knowledge in transmitting ideas which was evidenced in 1(b) and 1(e) in particular. The average mark recorded was **12**.

Question 2

This question was about the famous Bengal fabric **muslin**. Generally, the transmission of this passage by the majority of candidates was well responded except that a small number of candidates struggled to transmit the Bengali meaning of words, such as ***'pre-colonial***, ***'Bengal textile', 'local skills', 'manufactures'***, **'patronage'**, **'provincial'**, **'prominent',** and used either inappropriate meaning or transliterations. Nevertheless, the stronger candidates performed well and scored good marks. The average mark recorded was **16**.

Question 3

This question was about a about 'shaon' who had different nature from her sister and aspired to become a dancer. As compared to Q2, most candidates performed this question well in transmitting the passage. In cases where the candidates were unable to put the correct meanings of Bengali words and phrases such as **'ostadji' 'ucchango nritto', 'parodorshi', 'shissho'** and 'naakoch', they instead used either their transliterations or inappropriate words. However, the average mark recorded was **17**

Question 4

The essay options **4b** and **4d** were popular and responded by most students. However, **4a** and **4c** were well responded by stronger students. There was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis of points of view and opinion/s. Unfortunately, it was not evident amongst average students in general. The quite a few occasions, responses were mainly descriptive. Also, not very many students used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases or expressions. The manipulation of languages was often very basic. The use of syntax and wrong use of verb forms, mismatching of verb endings gave the amount of common spelling errors highlighted as if it was the second language for a number of students, so they scored less than expected. On the other hand, students who fulfilled these criteria and displayed a coherent piece of writing displaying a variety of structures, a range of vocabulary, obviously scored the top range marks. The average mark recorded for Q4 was **24**.

Conclusion

On the whole, this paper appeared to be fairly accessible and well balanced. The overall performances of able students showed that the standard of literacy including the transmission skills to and from the target language has improved on several occasions. It was due to the fact that a number of centres have embedded appropriate exam techniques required for this examination. However, less able students' performances on average were not as good as expected. It was due to their lack of good grasp of the grammatical knowledge in both English and in the target language, inabilities to display a range of structures and phrases, manipulation of tense concepts / time frames and common spelling errors. Also, a wide display of transliterated words / phrases were evident in the students' performances across the board.

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