

Mark Scheme with Examiners' Report GCE O Level Urdu (7648)

January 2005

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Mark Scheme with Examiners' Report

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URDU 7648, MARK SCHEME

Question 1

Translation from Urdu into English

This part of the paper carries thirty marks.

Question (a) is marked out of $8 + 8 + 4 = 20$ Marks

Question (b) is marked out of $8 + 2 = 10$ Marks

Marks are distributed in the following way:

- In both questions (a) and b) up to 24 marks ($8 + 8 + 8$) are available for correct decoding → encoding and clarity of expression (the process whereby students understand the language of the original text and use the most appropriate words in their translation)
- The remaining $4 + 2 = 6$ marks are available for elegance/fluidity of expression, use of appropriate vocabulary.

Deductions should be made out of $(8 + 8)$ for (a) and out of 8 marks for (b) as follows:

- 1 mark deducted for each serious error or omission (repeated errors are not penalised)
- 1/2 mark deducted for each minor error or omission (repeated errors are not penalised)
- Up to 2 marks deducted for a phrase or part of a sentence which distorts the meaning of the message in the sentence
- Up to 4 marks deducted for spelling mistakes (repeated errors are not penalised)

Question 2

Translation from English into Urdu

This part of the paper carries twenty-five marks.

Question (a) is marked out of $6 + 6 + 3 = 15$ Marks

Question (b) is marked out of $8 + 2 = 10$ Marks

Marks are distributed in the following way:

Question 2(a)

- Up to $(6 + 6) = 12$ marks are available for correct encoding → decoding and clarity of expression for (a)
- Up to $1 + 1 = 2$ marks available for cohesion/fluidity of expression
- Up to 3 marks available for linguistic accuracy

Question 2(b)

- Up to 6 marks are available for correct encoding → decoding and clarity of expression for (b)
- Up to 2 marks available for cohesion/fluidity of expression
- Up to 2 marks available for linguistic accuracy

Deductions should be made out of (6 + 6) for (a) and out of 6 marks for (b) in the following manner:

- 1 mark deducted for each serious error or omission (repeated errors are not penalised)
- 1/2 mark deducted for each minor error or omission (repeated errors are not penalised)
- Up to 2 marks deducted for a phrase or a part of the sentence which distorts the meaning of the message in the sentence

Question 3

Sentences testing grammatical knowledge

This part of the paper carries fifteen marks. There are five sentences.

- 1/2 mark deducted for each minor error (repeated errors are not penalised)
- 1 mark deducted for missing out key word/phrase within the sentence.

Question 4

Short essay/letter

This part of the paper carries thirty marks. Marks are distributed in the following way:

- Up to 12 marks available for relevant content/argument and style and subject to deduction of errors as in question 2 but less vigorously
- Up to 10 marks available for the quality of language
- Up to 8 marks available for linguistic accuracy

URDU 7648, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General Comments

The standards of response and the demands of this paper were broadly similar to previous years. In question 1, two unconnected Urdu passages given for translation into English were generally within the range of candidates' experiences and the level of examination. The passages were of average length. Candidates had ample opportunity to make the correct translations. Key words helped to differentiate between the stronger and weaker candidates and a number of outstanding translations were seen from some centres.

However, translation passages in questions 1(a) and 2(a) were broader and more demanding. These passages contained some difficult words which helped differentiate between the stronger and weaker candidates. The majority of the candidates understood translation passages well with the exception of a few marginally more difficult words in questions 1(a) and 2(a). The overall standard and quality of Urdu has improved, as indicated in question 4. Comparatively, only a few scripts were found with inaccurate Urdu. However, in many instances words and phrases were left out of translations altogether, which led to the deduction of marks. Some candidates continued to lose marks for simple mistakes and incorrect spellings of reasonably straightforward words that candidates are expected to know at this level of examination.

In questions 1, 2 and 3 the continuing tendency to translate vaguely or miss out difficult words and phrases altogether was still evident. During marking, all answers in each script were read carefully and mistakes highlighted in red before awarding marks.

Translations made without leaving out any key words was essential to convey the message within the context of the passage, and as such scored high marks. Translations that consist of complete sentences that keep within the context of the passage and avoid literal translation or transliteration of commonly known words and phrases are considered the best possible translations of either language.

A few candidates appeared to be insufficiently prepared for the examination, and left too many gaps in their translations or were unable to understand and follow the rubrics appropriately. In one or two cases candidates did not attempt all of the questions.

Question 1 - Translation from Urdu to English

(a) This passage was about '*Lakes in Neelam Valley*'. The general message of the text was adequately conveyed by most candidates and was well translated. It was disappointing to note that some candidates missed or mistranslated some obvious words, eg for 'thirteen and half thousand' the translation for 'thousand' was left out by many candidates. Some candidates came up with inappropriate words in their translations, eg 'lakes' translated as 'valleys', 'streams', 'rivers', 'jheel' etc. This demonstrates the impracticality of predicting what candidates will understand and write.

(b) This was a short passage about the '*Role of women in our economy*'. Most candidates attempted it very well. Only a few words were incorrectly translated, eg cotton was translated as crop, wheat, kapas, etc. Candidates should be reminded that it is essential to remember that proper idiomatic translations are required without missing out any key words so that the essence of the message within the context of the passage is conveyed.

Question 2 - Translation from English to Urdu

- (a) The first passage was about 'The Olympic Games'. It had a similar level of difficulty as question 1(a). There were a few 'key phrases' in the text to differentiate between an adequate and a good performance, eg 'cultures and civilisations', 'athletes'. Many simple words and phrases were mistranslated. In some instances, Urdu numbers were written in opposite order, which made it meaningless. Candidates are advised not to write numbers in Urdu unless they are 100% sure. Writing numbers and dates in English is sufficient. There was evidence that some candidates did not read the passage closely before translating. Candidates should be reminded that ignoring or loosely translating phrases will not earn full marks.
- (b) The second passage was a shorter one about 'Onions'. Candidates often mistranslated such words as 'layers', 'succulent', 'membrane', and 'vapours', and as a result lost marks. Many candidates made basic spelling errors. Simple Urdu words should not be misspelled at this level of examination.

Question 3 - Grammatical Sentences

This section was similar in standard to previous years. In some instances however, candidates who performed well made errors with simple words.

- (a) Candidates struggled with the phrase 'well-being'.
- (b) This was well attempted by the majority of the candidates, though some left out the phrase 'can you'.
- (c) In this sentence, the key words 'us and them' proved tricky for some candidates.
- (d) Many candidates ignored the context of the word 'from'.
- (e) Some candidates only vaguely translated the phrase 'we get' in Urdu.

Question 4 - Essay or Letter

There was a choice of three topics for the essays and one topic for the letter in this question. The most popular choice among the candidates was (d), 'writing a letter to their mother telling her what qualities she should look for...' A large number of high quality personal writing was witnessed in response to this question. The high level of achievement of many of the candidates and their command of good idiomatic personal writing in Urdu was clear here. The second most popular topic was (c), 'I like honest people'. It was very well attempted by the majority of candidates. The third most popular choice was (b), 'My highest achievement'. Again, some good pieces of essay writing were evident here. The least popular choice was (a), 'My future plan'. There were a few essays indicating that they liked their country and its people, and want to live and work there. The majority of the candidates demonstrated the ability to plan and present a balanced essay with an introduction, argument and conclusion, as well as a good command of the language. It is always useful to maintain a realistic approach and focus on the topic at this point.

URDU 7648, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	72	62	53	48	40

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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