

Mark Scheme with Examiners' Report

GCE O Level Urdu (7648)

January 2006

delivered locally, recognised globally

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BENGALI 7606 JANUARY 2006, MARK SCHEME

The table below shows how marks are distributed throughout the paper.

Question	Transmission Communication/Content	Quality of Language	Total for Question
1	15%	10%	25%
2	15%	10%	25%
3	10%	5%	15%
4	20%	15%	35%

Assessment criteria and mark scheme

Assessment criteria reflect the standard expected at GCE O level. It will therefore not be necessary for candidates to perform 'perfectly' in order to attract the highest marks available in each grid. References to 'standard' should be interpreted in this context.

Minor errors include, for example, the occasional omission of accents, incorrect gender, article, slight spelling errors.

Major errors include, for example, the consistent mismatching of subject and verb forms, use of inappropriate tenses and/or incorrect vocabulary.

Marks are awarded positively using the following assessment grids. The mark awarded reflects the extent to which the task as a whole has been successfully communicated and completed. To determine if a candidate should gain the upper or lower number of marks in the box it is important to refer to the boxes above and below. If the candidate's performance borders more on the performance of the box below than the box above, then the lower mark is allocated. On certain occasions, a candidate performance may require a 'best fit' mark.

Question 1 and Question 2: Translation

	Transmission
13-15	Excellent transmission skills with clear grasp of detail. Excellent transfer of inference, nuance and idiom. Pleasant to read.
10-12	A generally very competent rendering of the original text with grasp of most detail, nuance and idiom. Some passages, usually more complex, misinterpreted. Some successful attempts at rephrasing. The style is generally pleasing.
7-9	The main points, usually narrative and concrete, are conveyed successfully for the most part, although problems are encountered with more complex language. Inference, nuance and idiom transmitted successfully on occasions. Some passages misunderstood and attempts at rephrasing only partially successful. The style is not always coherent.
4-6	Only the more straightforward concrete points are transmitted successfully. Very little or no awareness of nuance and/or idiom. Several sections totally misunderstood. The style is incoherent with communication impaired at times.
1-3	Only the very basic points are transmitted successfully with some very straightforward sections totally misunderstood. The style is often incomprehensible. Communication is frequently impaired.
0	No language worthy of credit.

	Quality of Language
9-10	A very high level of accuracy with only minor errors. Confident use of a wide range of lexis and structures appropriate to the task. Excellent grasp of tense use. Very pleasant to read overall, although not necessarily flawless.
7-8	A high level of accuracy overall with however occasional basic errors, usually in more complex language. Uses a wide range of lexis and structures appropriate to the task with occasional lapses. Grasp of tense concept/time sequence generally secure although occasional lapses are evident. Pleasant to read for the most part.
5-6	Largely accurate when using simple, short phrases: incidence of error increases in more complex language. Lexis and structures appropriate to the task tend to be adequate with several items unknown. Problems at times with tense use. Some use of given adjectives and/or adverbial phrases with some degree of success. About half of what is written should be free of major errors. Not always easy to read.
3-4	Some inaccuracies in basic grammar although narrative sections, usually short and straightforward, are in general correct. Lexis and structures appropriate to the task restricted with some often quite basic items unknown. At times some fairly basic problems with tense concept/time sequence. Use of given adjectives, and/or adverbial phrases occasionally evident, though these are likely to be only partially successful. Often quite difficult to follow.
1-2	A very high incidence of basic error in all aspects of grammar, syntax and morphology. Basic lexis and structures appropriate to the task unknown. No awareness of tense concept/time sequence. Large sections totally misunderstood. Communication impaired. Very little of credit.
0	No language worthy of credit.

Question 3 - Practical application of grammar

Five sentences each worth 2 marks, plus a global mark for Quality of Language.
Marks are awarded for **Communication** as well as for **Quality of Language**.
Please refer to the following grids:

Communication	
2	Fully communicated in the target language although with some ambiguity in the expression.
1	At least half the sentence is correctly communicated in the target language.
0	No relevant communication.

The Quality of Language grid is applied **GLOBALLY** to all five sentences.

Quality of language	
5	High level of accuracy with only minor errors.
4	Level of accuracy generally secure but incidence of error increases in more complex language.
3	Accuracy variable with some basic errors.
2	High incidence of error which impedes communication at times. Inconsistent.
1	Frequent basic error with only isolated examples of accurate language.
0	No language worthy of credit.

Question 4 - Writing

This question attracts marks for **Communication and content** and **Quality of Language**. Please see the following grids:

	Communication and content
17-20	Responds fully and appropriately to the stimulus with excellent and relevant expansion. Gives detailed descriptions, expresses and justifies opinions as appropriate to the task. The time sequence is clear and unambiguous. A coherent piece of writing which is pleasant to read.
13-16	Responds to nearly all of the task although there may be some omissions. Some relevant expansion at times. Provides evidence of description, narration and opinion as appropriate to the task. Time sequence generally sound with occasional lapses. A generally well structured piece of writing. A sound attempt overall to link the piece into a coherent whole with, however, some lapses. May be a little pedestrian and predictable or somewhat over-ambitious at times.
9-12	Majority of task completed with, however, some significant omissions. There may be some irrelevance. Goes beyond a minimal response with some expansion of ideas and straightforward opinion relevant to the task. Time sequences show a degree of ambiguity at times. Comprehensible overall with some attempt to link the piece into a coherent whole. Ambiguous in places especially in more ambitious language. Tends to be somewhat predictable.
5-8	Main points of the task understood but some points totally misunderstood. Some major omissions with a degree of irrelevance and/or repetition. Level of response fairly limited with little opinion and justification appropriate to the task. Functions predominantly in simple, concrete sentences for the most part. Some evidence of correct time sequences but mostly inconsistent and insecure. Just about comprehensible overall with, however, a marked degree of ambiguity. Not easy to read.
1-4	Task generally misunderstood with little relevant information conveyed. Much ambiguity, confusion and omission. Level of response minimal with only a few relevant phrases. Communication largely impaired. Time sequences rarely correct. Largely incomprehensible with the exception of isolated items. Very difficult to read.
0	No language worthy of credit.

	Quality of Language
13-15	Predominantly accurate: free of all but minor errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. Uses a wide range of vocabulary, idiom and structure appropriate to the task with very little or no repetition. Excellent use of tense concept/time referents. Excellent examples of subordination and appropriate use of more complex structures. Clear ability to manipulate language with a high degree of accuracy to suit the purpose. Very pleasant to read, though not necessarily faultless.
10-12	Generally accurate and secure in grammar, syntax and morphology with some lapses. Accuracy less secure when more complex language is attempted. Uses a good range of vocabulary, idiom and structure, which are for the most part appropriate to the task. Attempts at more ambitious structures not always successful. Generally a secure grasp of tense concept/time referents. Manipulates language to suit the task at hand with, however, some errors. A wide range of vocabulary, idiom and structure may compensate for a lower level of accuracy. Generally easy to read despite the errors.
7-9	Fairly accurate in simple language however tends to be inconsistent in application of grammar, syntax and morphology when attempting more complex language. Range of vocabulary, idiom and structure standard and somewhat predictable. Some inconsistency in use of tense concept/time referents. Some attempts at subordination and sentence linking which are only partially successful. Attempts enhancement of fact with adjectives and/or adverbial phrases with moderate success. About half of what is written should be free of major errors. Despite inaccuracies the basic message is conveyed.
4-6	Accuracy is inconsistent with frequent basic errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. Simple, short sentences are sometimes correct but very little beyond. Range of vocabulary and structure very limited. Use of tense concept/time referents limited and often inappropriate. Limited success in attempts at enhancement of fact with adjectives, and/or adverbial phrases. Not easy to read.
1-3	A high level of inaccuracy with very frequent and basic errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. There may be the occasional correct phrase. No awareness of tense concept/time referents. Vocabulary very basic with little or no evidence of correct use of basic structures. Communication is severely impaired overall. Extremely difficult to read.
0	No language worthy of credit.

URDU 7648, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General Comments

January 2006

General Comments

The standard and the demand of this paper were broadly similar to the previous years. In question 1, two unconnected Urdu passages given for translation into English were within the range of the candidates' experiences and the level of the examination.

Candidates had every opportunity to produce good and proper translations. Some key words helped to differentiate between good and adequate performance of the candidates and a number of outstanding pieces of translations were seen from some centres.

The translation passage in question 1(a) appears to have been more accessible and straightforward for candidates, while question 2(a) responses suggest that candidates found it more demanding. This provided a good overall balance in the paper and allowed for differentiation. The more able candidates were able to show their skills very well here. The majority of the candidates understood translation passages well. Questions 2(a) and 2(b) contained a few more difficult words, so were slightly more challenging. The overall standard and quality of Urdu has improved this year, as evident from question 4 responses. However, it seems that the standard of English is improving faster than the standard of Urdu. The good practice discussed during 2003 and 2004 training workshops in Dubai and Pakistan can now be seen in the performance of many candidates from most large centres. Improvement in performance is also evident among C and D grade candidates. As a result, only a few scripts could be seen with less accurate Urdu. In questions 2 and 3 the tendency to gloss over difficult words and phrases - or even miss out these altogether - was still evident, but at a much lesser scale. However, a few candidates continued to lose marks for simple mistakes and incorrect spellings of reasonably straightforward words. At this level of examination, examiners do not expect to see such errors.

Translations produced without missing out any key words (which were essential to convey the message within the context of the passage) scored high marks. It is important to remember that proper idiomatic translations are required. Key words must be included so that the real essence of the message, within the context of the passage, is not lost.

Translations done as complete sentences, keeping within the context and avoiding literal translation or transliteration of commonly known words and phrases, are considered to be the best translations in either language.

One or two candidates appeared to be insufficiently prepared for this standard of examination, leaving out parts of the question in translations and not being able to understand and follow the rubrics appropriately. In one or two cases, candidates failed to attempt all questions.

QUESTION 1: Translation from Urdu to English

- (a) This passage was about *'Muhtarima Fatima Jinnah'*. The general message of the text was adequately conveyed by most candidates and well translated. A few candidates came up with a literal translation for the word *'Aap'* as *'you'*, not *'he'*.
- (b) This was a short passage about *'Worldly life'*. Most candidates performed well on this part of the question. Only a few words were wrongly translated e.g. *'Amal'* as *'action'* instead of *'deeds'*; *'Akherat'* as *'the end'* rather than *'hereafter'*.

QUESTION 2: Translation from English to Urdu

- (a) The first passage was about *'The story of teak'*. It had a slightly higher level of difficulty for translation into Urdu when compared with Q 1(a). There were a few key phrases in the passage to differentiate between adequate and good performance e.g. *'natural materials'*, *'logs'*, *'float'*, *'river'*, *'bullock carts'*, *'timber yards'* and *'floors'*. There was some evidence of superficial reading before translating. Other problems included glossing over phrases.
- (b) The second passage was about the *'The Tower of London'*. Candidates used a variety of wild guesses to translate *'by the river'*, *'on the orders of the Kings'*, *'castle'*, *'palace'*, *'prison'*, *'Royal Family'*, *'Crown Jewels'*, *'Koh-i-Noor diamond'* and *'tourists'* and as a result lost marks. In some instances, Urdu numbers were written in the 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 writing would be sufficient to gain marks. Some candidates continued to make 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 even candidates with fairly good performance made errors in simple words.

- (a) Candidates made a variety of guesses for the word *'Italy'*, while writing in Urdu.
- (b) This was well attempted by the majority of candidates, although many transliterated *'uncle'* in Urdu.
- (c) In this sentence, the word *'fluttering'* proved a little tricky for some candidates.
- (d) Many candidates ignored the proper translation of the words *'strong'* and *'garden'*.
- (e) Most candidates were confused by the phrase *'washed up on the golden sand'* while translating into Urdu.

QUESTION 4: Essay or Letter

There was a choice of either an essay (one of three) or a letter in this question. The most popular choice among the candidates was (c) *'Do I practise the teachings of my faith properly?'* High quality personal writing was witnessed in response to this question. This provided some evidence of many candidates' level and command of good idiomatic personal writing in Urdu.

The second most popular topic was (d) *'Write a letter to your sister explaining to her the steps that you took to ensure that you did well in your exams'*. Due to a variation in the Urdu and English versions of the rubric, candidates responded either to English or Urdu versions. Such candidates were not penalized for their individual response made either in present or past tense. However, a few candidates responded differently by advising their sister what to do in her exam. This was not asked for in the rubric. Overall, this letter was well attempted by the majority of the candidates. The third most popular choice was (a) *'The best thing I did for my parents'*. Again, some good pieces of essay writing were seen here. The last choice was (b) *'My moment of truth!'* A number brilliantly written essays were produced by the candidates, which indicated that they understood exactly what they were talking about. This title was the most challenging.

The majority of the candidates showed the ability to plan and present a balanced essay, with an introduction, argument and a conclusion, as well as displaying a good command of the language. It is always useful to maintain a realistic approach and focus on the topic in such writings.

URDU 7648, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	73	64	56	51	43

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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