

# Examiners' Report Summer 2008

O Level

O Level Urdu (7648)



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## Paper 1

The examination paper, as a whole, was of comparable standard to those of previous years. In questions 1 and 2, the two unconnected Urdu passages for translation into English were within the range of candidates' knowledge. Outstanding pieces of accurate translations are on the increase from many centres.

Translation passage in question 1(a) appears to have been reasonably accessible for most candidates, while question 2(a) responses suggest that candidates found it more demanding due. This provided a good balance in the paper through differentiating between good and adequate performance of the candidates. The majority of candidates produced good and proper translations. The level of Urdu has shown slight decline in some centres comparing to previous years, and some candidates continued to lose marks for simple spelling mistakes.

Question 3 grammatical sentences were fairly accessible but most candidates were not careful during their translation and lost marks for inaccurate and out of context translation.

A tendency of using phonetic Urdu writing was on the increase, indicating that candidate understood the text, translated it well into Urdu but were unable to write it in their proper forms in Urdu.

Best pieces of translations are those where proper translations are done as complete sentences keeping within the context of the passage.

### QUESTION ONE: Translation from Urdu to English

- (a) This passage was about 'Paper Bridge' and carried 15 marks. The general information of the text was adequately conveyed by most candidates, and very well translated. Only the last part of this passage was more demanding and required careful reading before translation.

There were some candidates who struggled to produce a good and proper piece of translation. In previous reports candidates have been advised not to write Urdu numbers unless they are 100 percent sure of them. Writing numbers in English is sufficient and acceptable for this examination and does not cause any reduction in marks. Some simple words and phrases were mistranslated e.g. 'South France' was translated as South Africa etc, 'half kilometre' was translated as several or ninety kilometres and the word 'tourists' was translated as vehicles by many candidates.

- (b) This was a short passage about 'Pakistan Day celebration' and carried 10 marks. The passage contained average level of difficulty. The words and phrases which proved to be stumbling blocks were 'The Urdu Development Forum Birmingham' and '60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary' which was translated as 7<sup>th</sup> or 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### QUESTION 2: Translation from English to Urdu

- (a) This passage was about 'Global climate change' and carried 15 marks. The general topic of this passage was the latest effects of global warming on our planet. This passage was similar in the level of difficulty to the passage (2b). Most challenging words were three quarters, shrunk by 95 per cent, Dead Sea, fallen by 25 metres. There was also evidence of shallow reading before translating and glossing over certain words and phrases.

- (b) This passage was a short one and carried 10 marks. It was about the 'Harry Potter Books'. It was straightforward and easy to access for most candidates. Some candidates used a variety of wild guesses to translate 'in a blaze of publicity', 'seven books in total'. Many candidates continued to make basic errors in spellings of simple Urdu words.

### QUESTION 3: Translating grammatical sentences

This section was well attempted by most candidates and marks gained were average.

- (a) Many candidates made a variety of guesses about the phrase 'golden sunshine and falling on my face'.
- (b) In this sentence, the most difficulty was noticed around the phrases 'honestly don't think'.
- (c) Some candidates stumbled on properly translating 'honesty is the best policy'.
- (d) This was usually well attempted by most candidates except some struggled with 'taken over' and 'traditional phones'.
- (e) Mostly well done but a few candidates struggled with the phrase 'would have anticipated'.

### QUESTION 4: Essay or Letter

In this question, there was a choice of three topics for essays and one letter based on a given stimulus as usual and asking reasons for their choice.

- (4d) Writing 'a letter to your mother explaining that junk/fast food is very tempting to eat and whether you think it is bad for health or not? Justify your choice giving reasons' proved to be the most popular option for the majority of the candidates. Those candidates' who wrote letters responded very well to the task set. Most candidates' work used good arguments and reasoning in their writing and they appeared to have done homework in preparation for their examination.
- (4c) Who I need to please more - my family or friends? provided some good and interesting reading. The candidates seemed to be enjoying writing on this topic.
- (4b) The life of children with a disability'. Some really good pieces of balanced essay writing were seen here. Many candidates tackled this topic very sensitively and managed to produce a factual picture of their real understanding.

(4a) How can we raise our educational system to international standards?

There were good pieces of composition but a few lacked the sparkle on how to convey their vision and perceptions across the topic. Some candidates' lost marks due to making too many mistakes in translating and poor quality of written language.

The ability to plan and present a balanced essay, with an introduction, argument/reasoning and a conclusion as well as a good command of Urdu language and a coherent approach was evident in most cases. It helps to maintain a realistic, natural and systematic approach in essay and letter writing to avoid confusion and loss of focus on a specified topic.



# Statistics

## Paper 1

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Boundary mark	71	62	53	48	40

### Note:

**Boundary mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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