

URDU

Paper 8686/02
Reading and Writing

Introduction

This paper is designed to test candidates' understanding of written Urdu, their ability to write accurate responses to text-based questions and their ability to write accurate and concise Urdu in response to given stimuli.

There are two passages of about three hundred and fifty words each on a related theme. The general theme this session was power usage and supply in Pakistan.

This session's paper was in line with previous sessions in terms of demand. The weak performance of a significant number of candidates on certain parts of **Question 3** was counterbalanced by the very good performance of nearly all candidates on **Question 4**.

The paper effectively differentiated between the candidates who misunderstood certain questions and/or sections of the paper and those who by careful reading and concentrating on responding to the set questions, managed to produce appropriate responses.

The overall written performance of candidates was satisfactory to good, with a proportion of excellent scripts. The challenge for most candidates is not writing in Urdu but answering the questions in accordance with the given rubric.

In this report, it is appropriate to go through the questions one by one in order to discuss any important points.

Question 1

This question required candidates to write their own sentences illustrating clearly the meanings of words taken from the first text. This was mostly well done, with most candidates scoring 4 out of 5 marks. Candidates were unable to achieve marks either if they copied a sentence directly from the text, such as:

'mwft byjli ka koi shosha nahyn'

which is almost identical to the sentence in the text,

or wrote a sentence like:

'ham ne samundari jehaz per safar kiya.'

which does not illustrate the meaning of the word '*samundari*'.

A sentence like:

'ham ne mauritius ke mukhtalyf jaziron ki seyr samundari jehaz par ki.'

does illustrate the meaning and therefore achieves the mark.

Question 2

This required candidates to find antonyms to the given words. This was generally adequately done. Some candidates wrote synonyms 'mwtaradyf alfaz' rather than antonyms, 'mwtazad alfaz'. The most difficult was 'akhrajat', the antonym of which is 'amdani.' Most candidates scored 3 or more marks.

Question 3

The five questions in this section were based on the given text in Passage A. The theme was Pakistan's energy crisis.

The quality of candidates' responses depended on their following the rubric. Candidates are expected to write concise answers as far as possible in their own words. Candidates must avoid lifting whole phrases from the text with minimal alteration and avoid writing more than is necessary. All these questions can be answered simply and relatively concisely.

Taking each question in turn:

Question 3

- (i) 'Why weren't the three friends worried by the power cut in the hospital?'
'hospital men byjli jane ki vajah se yeh tinon dost fikrmand kyon nahin the?'

Although a few candidates misread the question as a positive one, most candidates scored two out of three marks. They correctly wrote that they used their light on their phones or had the light from fireflies. A few candidates also wrote that they were used to power cuts.

- (ii) 'ek dost ne "khwda ka byjli ghar" ka fyqrah kyon istemal kiya?'
'Why did one friend use the phrase "God's power station?"'

Put simply, in English, the reply should be that fireflies are natural producers of light and that God made them.

This was well answered by most candidates.

- (iii) 'aap ke kheyal men kya mwsanyf ko wazir ke bayan par bharosa hai?'
'Do you think the author trusts the minister's statement?'

Here candidates needed to have understood that the author did not trust the minister or anything he said. Those who thought that the author trusted the minister could not score any marks. The author wrote that the minister had repeatedly stated that load-shedding would end but had not managed to put a stop to it.

- (iv) 'mwsanyf ne wazir ki khydmat men kya hal pesh kiya hai?'
'What solution did the author put forward to the minister?'

Most candidates answered this question well and scored three marks. A few, however, wrote about the fact that the author had reasons for doing this but failed to state the actual proposal, which is clearly ironic, that all shops, factories and offices should shut at 6pm to save electricity.

- (v) 'mwsanyf ke andaz-e-bayan kys had tak ws ke kheyalat ki akasi karta hai?'
'misalen dekar apna jawab wazeh kijiye.'
'To what extent does the author's style reflect his ideas?'
'Elaborate your answer with examples.'

There were very many answers which merely summarised what the author had written. Such answers should not be rewarded. Other answers started well, stating that the author's style reflects his opinion, but then went on to merely summarise the passage, and to state that the author had proffered a solution to the minister. These answers scored one mark.

There were some answers which stated that the author's intention was to be ironic and criticise the minister's statements and actions, that he used the story of the fireflies to illustrate his point that people were accustomed to load-shedding, that his proposal was ironic, not practical. They scored four marks.

Five marks were available in **Question 3** for overall linguistic standard. Most candidates scored four, and a few were awarded full marks. Where candidates score zero on a question, the language mark is reduced (see mark scheme). Candidates should be reminded, that in order to score high marks for language, they must not rely heavily on sentences copied from the text, but instead use their own language wherever possible.

Question 4

Here candidates had to write responses to five questions based on Passage B. This passage was particularly focused on coal.

- (i) *'iran awr maghribi mwmalyk ke ta'lwqat koele ki ahmiyat par keyse asar andaz hote heyn?'*
'How do the relations between Iran and the west affect the importance of coal?'

A concise response was: *'When relations are bad and the supply of oil and gas is curtailed, then coal becomes more important and more people want it.'*

Most candidates scored full marks for this question.

- (ii) *'koele ke istemal ke sylsyle men cin awr amrika ka kya kyrdar hai?'*
'What is the role of China and America in coal use?'

This question was also well answered. *'They are the world's two biggest consumers of coal and use it to produce a lot of their power.'*

- (iii) *'tisre paragraph men 'manfi kheyalat' se mwsanyf ki kya murad?'*
'What was intended by 'negative ideas' in the third paragraph?'

The negative ideas were not the fact that coal causes pollution, but the fact that international oil companies were spreading negative propaganda about coal in developing countries. This did not seem to be understood by all candidates.

- (iv) *'Pakistan men koele ki san'at ko kyn mwshkylat ka saman hai?'*
'What problems does Pakistan's coal industry face?'

This was reasonably well answered by most candidates. They needed to mention four points concerning the problems facing Pakistan's coal industry. There were a number to choose from, including *'kam ahmiyat'*, *'meyar accha nahin'*, *'ziyada akhrajat'* and *'geyr mulki sarmaya vapas'*.

- (v) *'Pakistan men koele ke ziyada istemal se kawn se favaid hasyl ho sekte hain?'*
'What benefits can Pakistan using more coal bring?'

The majority of candidates answered correctly.

- (vi) *'Pakistan men tavanai ke hawale se mwstaqbyl men kya tawaqw'at vabasta ki ja sekti hain, awr kyon?'*
'In respect of energy in Pakistan what expectations can be attached in the future?'

Again, the majority of candidates answered correctly. In order to achieve full marks, it was necessary to give a reason.

As in **Question 3**, five marks were available for linguistic standard. Most candidates scored 3 or more.

Question 5

This last question required candidates to write a response to a question referring to both texts and their opinion on a question arising from the texts, but not directly so. While a few responses were excellent and a very few very weak, the majority of candidates performed at least adequately in these tasks.

- (a) The first task was to use information from both texts to comment on the production and use of energy in Pakistan. This is a matter of writing brief sentences on the major points of the passage. Quoting large chunks of text and discussing the author's suggestion for saving energy did not gain any marks.

It was not necessary to go into too much detail, because there were only about 100 words to write. Candidates who went into too specific details were not able to achieve high marks.

- (b) The second task was to give practical suggestions on what they can do to save energy at home.

This was usually better attempted than **Question 5(a)**. Candidates should avoid vague responses, such as 'we must save energy by saving energy' and 'use less energy to save energy', which cannot be awarded marks. Practical suggestions, which were rewarded, included switching off unnecessary items, using energy saver bulbs, using solar or wind power.

The candidates clearly understood the tasks in most cases and most were able to write an appropriate response. Candidates should be reminded to follow the rubric carefully. A number of candidates wrote well over the specified 140 words and were therefore not able to score the highest marks.

Conclusion

The overall performance was good, and in a few cases, excellent, with many candidates displaying good comprehension skills and good writing skills.

As with previous sessions, candidates are advised to follow the rubrics carefully, particularly in relation to using their own language and adhering to prescribed word limits in order to achieve higher marks.

URDU

Paper 8686/03

Essay

GENERAL:

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to write a composition in Urdu on one of a range of five topics, selected as being relevant to their countries of origin. Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. The problem for most candidates is not writing accurate Urdu but responding to the stimulus topics in an organised and well-structured way

There were **five** given topics, on which candidates were expected to write between 250 and 400 words.

The topics this year were:

"insani ta'luqat" "Human relations"

1 gheyron par apnon ko tarjih dena ansan ki fytrat hai'

"It's human nature to prefer one's own to strangers."

"shehri awr dehi zindagi" "Urban and rural life"

2 "berhte hue shehron ka dehaton par asar"

"The effect of expanding cities on the countryside"

"sahyt awr tandurusti" "health and fitness"

3 "jadeed tarz-e-zindagi tandurwsti ki rah men sab se bari rwkavat"

'A modern lifestyle is the biggest obstacle to health.'

"musawi muwaq'e" "Equal opportunities"

4 "har shakhs ke liye hwsul-e-ta'lim ke yeksan muwaq'e"

'Equal opportunities for everyone in acquiring education.'

"Mahauliat" "Environment"

5 'aap khwd apne mwhale ko keyse behter bana sakte hain'

"What you can do yourself to improve your neighbourhood."

The wide range of topics allowed candidates the opportunity to choose one that that was appropriate for them and demonstrate their linguistic skills in Urdu. Of course, at this advanced level, not only is a high standard of written Urdu expected but it is equally important that candidates also need to be able to organise and structure their work, and present an argument where appropriate.

This component is marked out of 40: 24 are awarded for quality of language and 16 for content, structure and organisation.

The most popular topic was:

“berhte hue shehron ka dehaton par asar”

“The effect of expanding cities on the countryside”

There were some very good essays on this title. Many weaker candidates wrote very general compositions about the positive and negative aspects of rural and urban life. This misunderstanding of the title could not gain more than half marks, at best, for content. Candidates are advised to practise reading the question carefully and then tailoring their essay to the specific title, not the general topic area.

The point to this essay title was that modern cities are expanding rapidly and encroaching on rural areas, tempting villagers to leave their villages and seek better or easier jobs in the cities, leading to rural depopulation, but also bringing urban facilities nearer to the rural areas. There were some essays that contained a balanced discussion of both sides of the argument and concluded with an opinion. These were suitably rewarded.

The second most popular topic was:

‘aap khwd apne mwhale ko keyse behter bana sakte hain’

“What you can do yourself to improve your neighbourhood.”

This title, on controlling pollution, was generally well answered where candidates concentrated on the specific question. Some candidates dedicated over half of their essay to the causes and effects of pollution, which was written about in great detail. Such responses were not relevant to the title and could not be awarded many marks for content because although many candidates were clearly well informed about the subject, their compositions were severely unbalanced. It was only in the closing sections that these candidates addressed the specifics of the question. Stronger candidate responses included suggestions for rubbish collection, planting flowers and trees and other directly practical activities. Some took a less direct view of the topic and discussed facilities for young people, night security patrols, etc.

The third most popular topic was:

“jadeed terz-e-zindagi tandurwsti ki rah men sab se bari rwkavat”

‘A modern lifestyle is the biggest obstacle to health.’

The responses to this topic were, in some cases, very well written. It was reasonably well attempted by most candidates, with discussion of how, and to what extent, lifestyle has effects on health. Most candidates mentioned fast food. Other relevant points included the pace of life, lack of exercise, shortage of time to relax, households where the man and woman are working, etc. At this level Examiners expect a broad discussion, perhaps including social, economic and cultural implications in these compositions if candidates are to achieve the highest grades.

The remaining two topics were less popular:

gheyron par apnon ko tarjih dena ansan ki fytrat hai’

“It’s human nature to prefer one’s own to strangers.”

While this topic was not very popular it was well answered by most of those who attempted it. Most candidates took the approach that, in the words of the English idiom ‘*blood is thicker than water.*’ Naturally this was an appropriate point of view to take but the best essays included some contrary ideas and discussed such points as those from families that do not get on well may be better off being with ‘outsiders’ than fighting with family members.

“har shakhs ke liye hwsul-e-ta'lim ke yeksan muvaq'e”

“Equal opportunities for everyone in acquiring education.”

As might be expected, the most frequently covered points on this topic were related to opportunities, or lack of them for rich and poor and men and women. There were some very heartfelt pleas for fairness and justice for the poor and disadvantaged in the candidate's country. The best essays concluded that the country is doing itself a disservice by not giving opportunities to the brightest and the best, whatever their social or economic background and whatever their gender.

Some of the best essays of this session were on these topics two topics.

CONCLUSION

The strongest essays in any of the topic areas were those which produced a considered and appropriately structured response to the title, with an introduction, followed by several cogent points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph.

Linguistically, they were almost error free, with a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentences, containing dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and, where appropriate, relevant quotations.

Many candidates could much improve their performance through stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the prescribed word limits.

It is the second part of the assessment criteria, on content, planning and organisation, where candidates tend to lose marks. Failure to contain the essay within the prescribed word-limit means that candidates cannot score very highly for content. Examiners cannot take into account any parts of an essay that are a long way over the limit. This means that candidates who write too much cannot be awarded high scores for content and planning because they are unlikely to have reached a concluding paragraph. That being said, very many candidates wrote well-planned and interesting essays in excellent Urdu.