

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- give two pieces of information for each bullet point in **Question 1**
- stay within the prescribed word limits for all questions
- avoid using English words and phrases in **Question 3**.

General comments

As usual, the overall performance of the candidates was very good, with the majority of them producing excellent performances. The vast majority of candidates coped with the differing requirements of the different questions, the only limitations being that of:

- (a) the candidates linguistic ability, and
- (b) their ability to understand and respond appropriately to the questions.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

This question required candidates to write a short essay of about 150 words on the topic of: *Shuhrat*, 'Fame.'

Very few candidates misunderstood the task and it seems that it was accessible to nearly every candidate. Only a handful incorrectly interpreted *shuhrat* 'fame' as something to do with *shahr* 'city'.

6 marks were available for content and 9 for language, giving a total mark of 15 available marks for the question.

Three main bullet points were given in the stimulus, namely:

- **Mashhur hone ke fawaid**
The benefits of being famous
- **Mashhur hone ke nuqsanat**
The disadvantages of being famous
- **Aap ki pasandida shakhsyat awr us ki shuhrat ki wajah**
Your favourite personality and the reasons for their fame

Two marks were awarded for each bullet point, depending on whether they had given two facts and how much detail was given. Most candidates scored well on two bullet points, quite a few did not score on at least one of the bullet points.

Most candidates scored two marks on the first bullet point. The most frequently mentioned points were: 'that everyone knows you', 'everyone wants to help you', 'you get opportunities for work', 'you get invitations to shows/parties, etc.'

The second bullet point was also generally well answered. Relevant points made included: 'you have no privacy', 'everyone knows your business', 'you are the target of insane people' etc.

The third point was reasonably well attempted, although a number of candidates did not score any marks at all. The range of personalities was very wide, ranging from the Prophet Mohammed through M A Jinnah and Presidents to film stars such as Shahrukh Khan, and even parents (which were accepted.) Imran Khan and Abdul Sattar Edhi were both well represented but by far the most popular personality was the cricketer Shahid Afridi.

The third point was sometimes missed out or could not be marked because the candidate had overrun the prescribed word limit. This meant that candidates could not be rewarded marks for content here because whatever points they had made after the 200 word limit could not be taken into consideration.

It is very important to follow the rubrics for each question if high marks are to be achieved. That being said, it seems that this year there were fewer candidates than in previous years who wrote more than the prescribed word limit.

Nine marks were available to reward the candidates' linguistic performance. Most candidates scored between 7 and 9 marks on this task. Very few candidates were unable to score more than 5.

Part 2

Question 2 provided candidates with a choice of task:

(a) Write a SPEECH

Apne skul ki assembly ke liye 'sahytmand zindagi ki ahmiyat' par ek taqirir likhiye

This year the task was attempted by nearly one third of the candidates and most of them performed well. They wrote well-structured speeches, introducing the topic before giving sensible advice and suggestions for living a healthy lifestyle.

Most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks out of 5 for content, and most scored between 9 and 12 out of 15 for language. Weaker responses were characterised by a lack of language appropriate to speech making.

(b) Write a LETTER

gwzashta chwtion men aap apne dost ke ghar men thehre hue the - wn ke valyden ke naam khat lykh kar wn ka shwkriah ada kijiye

About two thirds of the candidates attempted this task and many scored very well on it.

In order to achieve high content marks, it is important to adhere to the key point of the task – thanking the parents for their hospitality and kindness. The examining team felt that overall this task was well completed.

It is worth noting that addressing the letter to *Ahmed ke mwhteram valyden* 'Dear Ahmed's parents', was not accepted by examiners. In the context of Urdu speaking society, using the parent's names or the title *unkl awr aanti*, 'Uncle and Auntie' was accepted as correct.

For each task, candidates were instructed to write about two hundred words, with an exhortation to keep to the recommended length. As in previous sessions, candidates need to be reminded to stick to the word limit. Parts of responses that go beyond the word limit cannot be rewarded.

That being said, most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks out of 5 for content, while most scored between 9 and 13 out of 15 for language.

Part 3

This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu. The topic of the passage was parking.

Grammatical and spelling errors are accepted as long as the errors do not interfere with communicating the meaning. The vast majority of candidates scored well on this question because their Urdu was good enough to transfer the meaning of the English passage sufficiently accurately.

As in previous sessions the most significant reason for not gaining marks was connected with using English words. These words need to be translated into Urdu as they have common Urdu equivalents: examples are 'block roads', 'accidents', 'banned', and 'messages' which can be translated as *sarak band karna*, *hadyse*, *pabandi*, and *peygham*.

'Unique' was another word that candidates seemed to find difficult. Few candidates correctly translated this word as *anokha* or *manfard*. Even if a candidate does not know the right word, a phrase such as *bahut khas*, 'very special' would be acceptable.

A number of candidates left words or phrases out completely. It is always better to attempt to write some plausible translation rather than not to write anything at all. The whole translation should be attempted in order to have the highest chance of gaining marks.

By and large, most candidates managed to convey the gist of the passage as a whole. The vast majority scored between 15 and 19 marks.

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/02
Language Usage, Summary
and Comprehension

Key messages

Part 1: Language Usage requires candidates to be familiar with common everyday idioms. In **Part 2: Summary** two points need to be mentioned for each of the five stimuli given. Giving more than two points per stimuli will not benefit candidates and may mean that their summary exceeds the limit of a hundred words. In **Part 3: Comprehension** the number of points required for each question is indicated by the marks allocated to that question, for example, 4 marks requires four points and 3 marks requires three points.

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was satisfactory. There were a few candidates whose limited linguistic ability meant they were unable to understand the question or give an appropriate response. Candidates are required to use their own words when answering questions to demonstrate their understanding and so should avoid lifting sentences directly from the passage and using them as their answer. It is important that candidates' work is legible and answers are clearly indicated on the question paper. It is also important that candidates write their answers in the correct spaces and is advisable to always attempt an answer rather than leaving a blank space.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1: Language Usage

Vocabulary

Questions 1–5

This section requires candidates to compose five sentences using the five idioms given. A large proportion of candidates gave five fully correct sentences. Candidates need to take care to produce sentences that demonstrate the meaning of the proverb rather than sentence that just 'include' the proverb. Marks cannot be awarded where it is not clear that the proverb has been understood.

Sentence Transformation

Questions 6–10

Candidates were required to change the tenses in each of the five sentences. The majority of candidates manipulated the verbs correctly. In **Question 8** some candidates failed to change both verbs and could not therefore be awarded the mark for that question.

Cloze Passage

Questions 11–15

Most candidates performed well on this task.

Part 2: Summary

Question 16

Most candidates performed well on this task, giving two points for each of the stimuli and covering each point clearly and concisely which kept them within the word limit. Two points must be made for each stimulus and the word limit must be adhered to. Any points made beyond the word limit of a hundred words are not credited.

Part 3: Comprehension

PASSAGE A

The majority of candidates gave correct responses to most of the questions in this passage. Exceptions to this were:

Question 17 asked about the Taj Mahal. A good number of candidates wrote instead the name of the King, Shah Jahan, and could therefore not be rewarded here.

Question 19 was worth 3 marks. Many candidates scored just 2 marks on this question since they neglected to answer the last part of the question, asking where she died. These candidates did not give a location. It is important that candidates read and ensure they answer every part of each question.

Question 20 was worth 4 marks. Again, a good number of candidates could not be awarded full marks since they did not provide all of the information asked for in the question. A number of candidates omitted to mention the second of the King's promises: that he would go to her tomb and pray for her.

PASSAGE B

This passage was understood and the questions well answered by the majority of candidates. In some cases fewer responses were given than required, and could therefore not be awarded full marks. Questions where a number of candidates were not awarded full marks were:

Question 23 asked why Florence wanted to join the nursing profession. A number of candidates answered incorrectly that she liked to help patients. The correct answer was that it was a spiritual instruction from God.

Questions 25 and 26

A number of candidates gave the answer 'Germany' to both questions. This was the correct answer to **Question 26**. The correct answer to **Question 25** was 'through her hard work and from different sources'.