

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCE Urdu (6UR01) Paper 1A

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General Introduction

This is the fourth year in which candidates have been examined for this unit based upon the new GCE A/S level (8UR01) syllabus. It is pleasing to be able to report that the majority of centres conducted the examination without any issues.

Experience informs us that when the tests are well conducted the candidates are able to maximize their marks, within their individual expertise. Therefore, it is important that teacher examiners follow the procedures for conducting the exam in order to avoid disadvantaging candidates.

The Format

Each candidate is given one of two written stimuli based on their chosen Topic Area. They are given 15 minutes to look at it and make notes and then the exam commences.

There were two stimuli for each of the four Topic Areas: Lifestyle, Health & Fitness, The World Around Us, Youth Culture & Concerns and Education & Employment. The candidates will have previously chosen one of these general topic areas earlier in their course and will, have studied it in some depth.

Part 1. 4 Set Questions

The teacher examiner starts by asking 4 questions set by Edexcel on the stimulus. These questions should **not** be rephrased.

The teacher examiner starts by asking the 4 set questions. Where this has been done most of the candidates can score 4 marks. The candidates are expected to respond, in depth where appropriate, basing their answers mainly on the stimulus text, although expanded responses will score well under the Response heading on the mark grid. This section should not take more than 1-2 minutes.

Part 2. Expanded discussion

In the second part, the teacher examiner has to spend about 6-8 minutes using questions they have prepared to broaden out the discussion. There are two key points that must be covered:

1. the teacher examiner must prepare a range of questions on the candidates chosen topic area
2. candidates need to respond at length to the teacher examiner questions on their chosen topic.

It is expected the teacher examiner has spent time with their candidates discussing and working on their chosen topic areas and should prepare questions according to a candidate's interests and linguistic ability.

The key importance is the candidate's understanding of their particular topic area. It is very gratifying to note that the great majority of teacher examiners have done this more than adequately, and, in some cases, very skillfully.

Comments on the performances in Section A

Teacher examiners must ensure that the correct questions from the stimulus cards are asked. Topics should not be mixed and questions should be read out fully. A small number of centres sent in recordings that consisted of candidates answering only the four set questions on the stimulus and nothing else. Centres must ensure that teacher examiners are fully prepared for the conduct of the exam.

Comments on the performances in Section B

Teacher examiners must also prepare appropriately challenging questions for their candidates in order to allow them to demonstrate both their understanding of the topic area and their linguistic ability. Simple questions do not elicit extensive responses or require great understanding of the topic; neither do ones that do not broaden out the scope of the discussion.

This component of the examination is meant to be a two-way dialogue. It is **not a monologue** or a speech and should not be prepared or delivered as such. Candidates who did so were not able to score highly in the Response grid on the mark scheme.

Teacher examiners must prepare themselves as well as their candidates if they are to achieve their full potential. Information on the exam and content can be found in the Oral Training Guide on the Edexcel website and further information can be found in the specification. Preparing suitable questions for candidates, can ensure a more successful oral examination.

It must, however, be emphasized that the vast majority of teacher examiners performed their task professionally and with great preparedness.

Administration

The administration part of the exam is an important area and must not be overlooked. There are two main points which require close attention.

- Paperwork
Please can centres make sure that the correct oral forms have been used and that they have been signed by the candidate. This can save the centres being chased by examiners to rectify the situation.
- Recordings
These should be clearly and correctly labeled. At the start of the recording teacher examiners should clearly state the candidate's name and number before starting each examination. CDs and USBs are to be highly recommended, but it is very important that teacher

examiners check them before sending them off, as sometimes empty or unplayable CDs have had to be returned.

Conclusion

Despite the above, which, it must be stressed, affected only a small minority of centres, the overwhelming majority of the tests were very well conducted by well prepared teacher examiners and candidates. It is pleasing to note the successful delivery of the new examination format. It is very pleasing to record another successful session of this new exam.

Grade Boundaries

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