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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Arabic (1AA0)
Paper 1H Listening (Higher Tier)

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Introduction

This Higher Tier Listening and Understanding in Arabic exam paper is made up of 10 questions with a total mark of 50.

This exam for this Higher Tier is 40 minutes long with 5 minutes reading time. The paper draws on vocabulary and structures across all themes and topics covered in this qualification specification.

Candidates are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken Arabic by one or more speakers in a range of public and social settings. Candidates will respond to multiple choice response and open response questions based on a recording featuring male and female Arabic speakers.

The paper is divided into two sections: Section A consists of two questions with instructions and texts set in Arabic and candidates in this section are required to respond in Arabic. Section B consists of 8 questions all set in English and candidates in this section are required to respond in English.

The paper is based on five themes as per first teaching 2017 specification: (1) Identity and culture (2) Local area, holiday, travel (3) School (4) Future aspirations, study and work and (5) International and global dimension.

All themes and topics must be studied in the context of both the candidates' home country and that of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken. The vocabulary list must be studied extensively to enable candidates to understand and express themselves with themes, reading and listening to authentic material. Teachers should present and exploit a range of vocabulary relevant to the themes and topics in the specification.

This year glossaries have been added to the paper. These glossaries have been advised by Ofqual during the times of Covid.

This higher tier question paper targets grades 4 to 9 and questions are in this order: - questions 1, 2, 3, 4 target grades 4 and 5; - questions 5, 6, 7,8, and 9 target the higher grades 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Below is a summary of how candidates performed per each question:

Section A

Q01 (5 marks): This is a target language question in which candidates are asked to choose the correct words from the cloud to complete the sentences below.

The most frequent correct answers given were in question (A,E and C) . The average score in this question was between 3/4 with some scoring the full available mark.

However, Some candidates' response to (b) was (الحلوى)(Sweets) or (كعك) (cakes), instead of (المساعدات) (donations/aid).

It is important for candidates to read the sentence after selecting the word from the 'cloud' and check if the sentence makes sense and tallies with what was said in the

recording. Centres should give candidates the opportunity to practice and be familiar with such questions.

Q02 (5 marks): As Q1, this is a target language question where candidates have to select the correct words from the list above to complete the sentences. Although a number of candidates scored the full 5 available marks, others selected the words randomly from the list to fill in the blanks and ended up with either a very low scores (1 or 2) or a score of 0. The most prominent error was observed in point B, where candidates frequently selected "مضايقات" incorrectly. It appears that some candidates assumed they needed to choose options in the same order as provided in the list. This misunderstanding should be addressed to ensure candidates understand that the order of options does not correspond with the order of answers.

There was also a common incorrect answer to (c), where many candidates gave the answer as (ترك) when the correct answer is (السيطرة) failing to recognise the fact that this word doesn't grammatically fit in this sentence.

Many candidates did not rely on the listening skill and rather, tried to fit the most logical answer to them, for example in Q2b, saying 'mixing' instead of 'bullying'. There were also many blank answers, with several candidates not even making guesses. Teachers should encourage candidates to make guesses and never leave blanks after exhausting all options as they might get some right.

Q03 (4 marks): This is a multiple-choice question. Candidates need to listen to the recording and complete the sentences by crossing in the correct box for each question. Many candidates scored the full available 4 marks. This performance proves that the combination of the multiple-choice question and the familiarity of the topic affect the performance of candidates positively.

Q04 (3 marks): Similar to Q3, it is a multiple-choice question in which many candidates achieved the full score of 3 marks. Few candidates scored 2 or less marks. However, some lost marks for crossing more than the required number of choices.

Q05 (4 marks): This is another multiple-choice question in which most candidates scored at least 3 marks out of 4. The most incorrect answers occurred in Q5(iiii).

Q06 (5 marks): In this open response question, the candidates' performance varied from one part to another. For example, in (a) and (c), most candidates gave the right answer. While (b-2-mark question) candidates scored only 1 mark despite the fact that they could choose 2 out of 3 options provided by the text. Q6b: most candidates answered at least one correct choice.

Q07 (5 marks): This is a comprehension question in which few candidates scored 4 or 5. Some failed to answer part © correctly because they didn't know the meaning the word (مخمل)(velvet). They used different words like: polyester, thick material, wool, leather, fur, special fabric, and thick cotton or silk. The word (مخمل)(velvet) is a standard Arabic word, and it is in the vocabulary list. In Q7b most candidates answered the first part correctly (comfortable) but missed the second part using: (Eid parties, wedding, all the time, summertime, for fun, holidays, culture and religion) rather than (suitable for all seasons).

Q08 (6 marks): Candidates in this multiple-choice question, must listen to Adam talking about his voluntary work in a charity for children with special needs. Many candidates managed to score the full mark in both part (a) and part (b). Few failed to answer part biii correctly as candidates seemed unfamiliar with the Arabic phrase (أعياد الميلاد) meaning (Christmas celebration).

Q09 (10 marks): This is an open response question which is divided into two parts (a) and (b).

Q09a: Most candidates scored 3 marks and above in this part of the question. The most correct answers occurred in 9ai, 9aii and 9aiii. However, two words that candidates seemed unfamiliar with were (encourage and journalism) which are both in the VL.

Q09b: In this part of the question, candidates' scores ranged between 1- 3 with very few getting more than 3. The most frequent incorrect answers occurred in 9biii and 9biv. In the latter, candidates misread the question: instead of (Where did Ali ...) they read it as (What did Ali) and consequently giving incorrect answers.

Q10 (4 marks): This is a multiple-choice question which is divided into two sections (i) and (ii) with 2 marks for each. Most candidates scored at least one mark in each section with an average score of 2-3 in total. Some answers gained the full 4 marks.

Conclusion and advice:

- As mentioned in the introduction, the exam paper covers all topics, and this means it is very important to give candidates the opportunity/time to familiarise themselves with all topics and themes as they are preparing for the exams.
- Candidates should be very familiar with the vocabulary list as all questions would contain some of these words in them, sometimes one word act as the 'key word' from which the student will be able to answer the question correctly.
- As expected, candidates performed better in multiple questions compared to open response questions. More emphasis should be put on practising and familiarising candidates on how to manage open response type of questions.
- To avoid losing marks, candidates should be made aware of the techniques of answering the multiple-choice questions, i.e. cross only the number of answers they were asked to give and not to cross neither less nor more than mentioned in the instructions.
- It is important for candidates to make notes while listening to the recording while referring to the question paper at the same time. Also, candidates should be strongly advised to make use of the time when the recording is playing for the second time.
- Advise candidates to use the reading time available to think about the question title and the key words they are likely to hear.

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