

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2010

GCSE

GCSE Urdu (5UR02) 2B

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Unit 2: Speaking in Urdu

General

This is the first series in which this unit, part of the new GCSE Urdu (2UR01) specification, has been available for assessment. For this series only, the new specification was offered at the same time as the legacy specification (1901). There were approximately 170 entries for unit 5UR02.

The requirements of this unit differ from the speaking unit on the legacy specification. Most centres successfully adapted to the new requirements. Where problems were noted, these were not concerned with the conduct of the examination. In such cases, moderators have concentrated on trying to assess the candidates' performances, with the proviso that candidates can only be judged upon the recorded evidence presented.

Format

Each candidate is required to perform two tasks, both of which are marked by the teacher-examiner, one of which is submitted to the Edexcel for moderation. The candidates will have previously chosen one of these tasks earlier in their course and will, at least in theory, have studied and practiced it in some way before recording it.

There were a number of stimuli available for use by centres on the Edexcel website but centres were free to adapt these to suit their purposes or to create their own. Centres also had the opportunity of submitting these tasks in advance to Edexcel for approval. Each task should last for four to five minutes.

Tasks

It is expected that the teacher-examiner will spend time with each of their candidates discussing and working on their chosen tasks. They should know their level of linguistic competence and ask appropriate questions. In the majority of cases the language used by teacher-examiners was pitched at the right level.

Pictured Based Task

The most commonly attempted task was the picture-based discussion. Here the candidate was free to bring in any picture of their choice and talk about it with the teacher examiner. Although the specification requires candidates to ask questions in order to get the highest marks, this particular task does not lend itself quite so easily to a candidate asking questions.

Presentation

The next most popular task was a Presentation which the candidate prepared and engaged in discussion. Common topic areas included 20-20 Cricket, or a Bollywood actor or film. These varied in quality. There was some concern to find large numbers of candidates from a single centre performing almost identical presentations.

Open interaction

This was less frequently attempted, and proved more suited to more able candidates. Candidates tended to follow the examples given as part of sample assessment materials issued by Edexcel, such as the scenario focusing on a Tourist Information office. Most were able to convey the visitor's questions and some were able to ask their own questions of the teacher-examiner.

Problems

Where problems arose, it must be noted that these only affected a small number of centres. Some problems arose where it was evident that some teacher-examiners had not fully understood the requirements of the new specification and did not prepare adequately. Where tests are not properly conducted the potential for each candidate is compromised. By considering the specification, using support materials available through the Edexcel website, and preparing suitable questions for their candidates, they will be better able to conduct a successful speaking test.

One of the key components of the speaking test is a discussion. 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 assessment criteria. They are also expected to ask questions.

Despite the problems mentioned above, the majority of the tests were conducted well by teacher-examiners and candidates who were both appropriately prepared.

Organisation of Material in Centres

Centres are reminded to send materials to moderators that is clearly labelled. When recording candidates, centres are requested to clearly state the candidate's name and number before starting each examination. While it is not realistic to expect only one candidate on each side of a tape, it is possible to use c60 cassettes that can comfortably fit two candidates on each side. The increasing use of CDs to record material is to be encouraged.

Grade Boundaries

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

Raw Mark boundaries

Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
60	50	44	38	32	26	21	16	11

Uniform Mark Scale boundaries

Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
90	81	72	63	54	45	36	27	18

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