



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Urdu (1UR0)
Papers 2F & 2H: Speaking in Urdu

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General Comments

The GCSE Urdu 2025 examination series (1UR0_2H and 2F) was a resounding success, with the majority of centres conducting the speaking tests effectively and in accordance with Pearson Edexcel guidelines. Students generally produced work of a high standard, and many examiners reported excellent performances that reflected both thorough preparation and increasing confidence in the oral component. Imaginative and engaging responses were particularly notable this year, especially in the higher tier.

A broad range of ability was evident at both tiers, with varied performances across all three parts of the speaking examination—roleplay, picture-based task, and general conversation. Most students met the demands of the specification confidently, responding well to the length and complexity of the tasks.

Centres demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements, having clearly prepared their pupils thoroughly across the breadth of topics. Many pupils expressed opinions fluently and with ease, providing well-developed justifications. In doing so, they demonstrated strong communication skills, sound linguistic knowledge, and commendable levels of accuracy in vocabulary, grammar, and tense usage.

Most teacher-examiners posed a good variety of relevant and probing questions. Students were generally able to respond with a good level of grammatical accuracy, using a range of tenses and sentence structures effectively. Registers and recordings were submitted in good time by the majority of centres, and the overall administrative process was handled competently.

Nonetheless, a small number of centres submitted incomplete documentation, notably missing editable CS2 forms on the LWA portal or uploading the PDF version of CS2 forms. These oversights, although limited, must be addressed to ensure consistency and compliance.

To ensure the continued success of the qualification, it is crucial that centres receive detailed and constructive feedback on both the conduct of the examination and the quality of student performance. This enables centres to identify training needs, refine practices, and support teacher-examiners in delivering examinations that allow all candidates to perform at their best. While higher-tier performances remained generally strong, there was considerable variability in the quality of work submitted at the foundation tier. In some instances, this appeared to stem from teacher-examiners not fully adhering to examination criteria, particularly during role-plays and picture-based questioning.

The quality of audio recordings was generally clear. However, in a few cases, background noise such as school bells or hallway activity disrupted the clarity of student speech. It is essential that the recording equipment is positioned closer to the student and in a quiet room, to ensure a fair assessment of spoken performance.

Role-plays

Role-plays require concise and accurate responses. Students who focused on the bullet points and gave brief, relevant answers tended to score highly. Overextended responses frequently resulted in unclear communication, introducing information that was unnecessary and sometimes irrelevant, leading to partial or lost marks.

Successful candidates had clearly practised listening and responding carefully to the scenario. They understood the task, adapted their register appropriately, and handled unpredictable questions with confidence. In contrast, weaker performances often stemmed from a lack of understanding of the task or the use of prepared answers that did not fit the context. In some cases, poor intonation or the delivery of questions as statements weakened communication and affected the natural flow of the task.

Teacher-examiners must adhere strictly to the exact wording and register outlined in the Teacher's Role. The use of informal classroom language or altered scripts invalidates standardisation and may lead to lost marks for the student. Furthermore, students must be reminded to ask a question where required—this remains a consistent area for improvement.

Picture-based Task

This task is designed to assess students' ability to develop their answers beyond one-word responses, but not into full monologues. Successful candidates responded to each prompt with extended but concise language, offering description, narration, and clear opinions.

At the higher tier, successful responses included well-structured answers that linked present, past, and future tenses effectively, while incorporating a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures. These students also gave and justified opinions confidently, demonstrating a high level of preparedness and comprehension.

However, many responses at both tiers suffered from overextension, which sometimes introduced ambiguity and undermined clarity. Long-winded answers did not necessarily contribute to better communication and, in some cases, caused examiners to run out of time, skipping the final question—thus affecting the balance of the task.

Centres must train students to provide well-paced, relevant responses. Students should avoid reading from a pre-prepared script. The most fluent and natural-sounding performances were clearly those where students had noted bullet points but spoke freely.

Teacher-examiners should avoid adding additional questions or altering the set prompts. Doing so can confuse students or prevent them from using their prepared content effectively. In several cases, reworded questions denied students the opportunity to access higher mark bands, despite knowing the material.

Conversation

The general conversation section was, on the whole, well conducted. Many teacher-examiners demonstrated excellent practice, allowing students to reach their full potential through skilful questioning and well-paced discussions.

In the most successful cases, presentations (up to one minute) were used as effective springboards for further discussion. These were then followed by a smooth transition into the second theme. Teacher-examiners allowed spontaneous conversation to develop, exploring students' ideas with depth and genuine interest.

Less successful conversations were often marked by a rigid question-and-answer approach, with rehearsed or predictable questions dominating the discussion. This lacked spontaneity and limited the opportunity for students to display extended, independent language use. In such cases, interaction felt unnatural, and students struggled to develop their answers meaningfully.

In some centres, an imbalance was noted between the time spent on the student-chosen theme and the Pearson-chosen theme. Overemphasis on the first topic, at the expense of the second, can negatively impact the overall assessment as the conversation is marked holistically.

To reach the higher mark bands for Communication and Content, students must be encouraged to speak creatively, elaborate on ideas, and use a rich variety of vocabulary and structures. Teacher-examiners should respond to what the student says, rather than sticking rigidly to a script. Allowing thinking time, rather than rephrasing too quickly, helps students demonstrate their ability.

Areas for Improvement

To ensure fairness and consistency, some centres must prioritise additional training for staff conducting speaking exams. The following areas require particular attention:

Conducting exams in line with Pearson's expectations, with correct introductions and instructions.

Adhering to prescribed scripts and question phrasing, especially in role-plays and picture-based discussions.

Avoiding the use of English words or phrases during the examination.
Encouraging candidates to take the initiative and respond independently.
Ensuring no additional questions are asked in the picture-based task.
Discouraging unnecessary elaboration that affects clarity.

Providing clear introductions on recordings and indicating task transitions.
Placing recording equipment closer to students to capture their responses clearly and avoid external distractions.

Suggestions and Advice

Role-play:

Stick strictly to the Teacher's Role script. Any deviation may invalidate student responses and lead to marks of 0 for Communication.

If a student gives an incorrect answer and follows with the correct one, only the first (incorrect) answer will be marked.

Always prompt the student to ask a question, for example: "Do you have a question?"

Picture-based Task:

All five questions from the Teacher's Booklet must be asked without deviation or additions.

Monitor time carefully. If a student's responses are long, consider moving on promptly to ensure all questions are covered within the 3-minute limit.

General Conversation:

Encourage students to use a range of vocabulary and structures, particularly at higher tiers.

Train students to justify opinions naturally, with spontaneous use of language.

Base questions on student interests where possible, rather than using the same questions across the cohort.

Follow up on student responses to build authentic interaction and increase opportunities to demonstrate spontaneity and independent language use.