

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Bangladesh Studies (4BN0/01)

Paper 1: The History and Culture of
Bangladesh

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Publications Code UG040897*

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General comments

There was an increased entry figure this year compared to 2014 which was very pleasing. The standard of work presented this year by candidates was comparable to that of last year. All the candidates answered the required three questions and few if any displayed signs of problems relating to time or rubric infringement.

As with last year, most candidates tended to write about or describe the topics/characters/events listed in the question rather than focussing on the question posed. It appears that candidates know their history of Bangladesh and can describe what happened but are unable to explain and comment on the importance of individuals or events. This pattern was reflected in most answers. The content suggested in the question is merely there to guide candidates rather than be prescriptive and few candidates used their other material. The most popular questions were 1, 2 and 3.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

There were a few good attempts at question 1 in which candidates could explain the ways in which Bengal developed under the Bengal Sultanate. Most answers tended to be descriptive with little emphasis in the way of **explanation** of how territorial changes, administration and religion contributed to the development of Bengal. As a result few candidates were able to score more than half marks.

Question 2

Question 2 was a popular question that attracted mainly narrative responses. The question required candidates to explain why Dhaka developed as an important city. Aspects suggested in the question included the role of European traders, muslin and the Mughal administration. Most candidates were to describe most of these aspects well but there was little explanation of these or other aspects of their knowledge of the period.

Question 3

This was also a popular question on the work of Robert Clive. The facts relating to him were well known but most responses were descriptive of the factors involved in his attempts to gain control of Bengal rather than addressing the reasons for his success. As a result few candidates were able to score more than half marks.

Question 4

This was a rarely answered question on the reasons why the Pakistan Movement developed in the 1930s and 1940s. Although the detail of the role of the Government of India Act, the role of Jinnah and the Lahore Resolution were well known, attempts in relating these factors to the reasons for the development of the Movement were less good.

Question 5

There were a few good attempts at this question. Many candidates were able to describe the factors that included the post of Governor-General, the powers of the Constituent Assembly and disagreements over a state language but few were able to explain how these difficult factors in creating a constitution for Pakistan in 1947.

Question 6

The role of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was well known with a good level of detail being displayed in candidates' description of this. However few candidates were able to relate the given factors of National Assembly elections, negotiations with Yahya Khan and the Bangladesh Constitution to an explanation of their effect on his role in creating Bangladesh.

Question 7

There were few or no attempts at question 7, which was concerned with the role that Bangladesh has played in international affairs since 1975.

Question 8

Several candidates answered question 8 on the importance of Rabindranath Tagore in the development of Bangladeshi culture. All the candidates who answered this question had a detailed knowledge of his life and work. However very few were able to explain his importance in the development of Bangladeshi culture and therefore no more than half marks were scored for such answers.

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