

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Bengali (4BE0) Paper 01
Written Paper

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Publications Code UG042997*

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4BEO - 01 IGCSE BENGALI – CHIEF EXAMINER’S REPORT – January 2016

General comments

1071 students were entered for the International GCSE Bengali in the January 1601 examination, and all were from the overseas centres. A large proportion of students were entered from the centre 90320. A good proportion of students performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is generally comparable with the January 2015 paper. Overall in the 1601 series, the student performances were comparable to last year. This was evident from marking students' samples, back reading and monitoring qualities of marking and the markers' report.

Students had every opportunity to produce good and proper translations. Some key words and phrases helped to differentiate between the 'good' and 'adequate' candidates. There were also a number of outstanding pieces of translation, and some excellent pieces of continuous writing.

Question 1

Almost all students were able to translate at least 5 sentences without any difficulty, and scored good marks. These questions were designed to test specific grammar points. Less able students often struggled to transmit plural nouns (in 1a), **articles** and **nouns** (in 1e), often **omitted speech marks**. They also found it difficult to translate **probable conditionals** (1c). However, more able students generally performed well with their appropriate knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. The average mark recorded on this question was **12**.

Question 2

This question was about road accidents in Bangladesh. Generally, the transmission of this passage by the majority of candidates was good throughout. However, a small number of candidates struggled with the Bengali meanings of words such as '**alarming rise**', '**past decade**', '**urbanisation**', '**crucial role**' and '**pedestrians**' and used either inappropriate meanings or their transliterations instead. Nevertheless, the stronger candidates performed well and scored good marks. The average mark recorded was **17**.

Question 3

This question was about a shop selling antiques. Most candidates performed better at transmitting this passage in this question than in question 2. However, a small number of candidates had struggled to translate the passage correctly and fully. In cases where the candidates were unable to put the correct meanings of Bengali words such as '**oboshor**', '**soukhin samogri**', '**murti**', '**oitij-japurna**', '**natoker mohra**', and '**lal tip**', they used either their transliterations or inappropriate words. The average mark recorded was **18**.

Question 4

Questions 4(a) and 4(c) were responded to well by most candidates. However, the candidates who attempted questions 4(b) and 4(d) performed comparatively better, scoring better marks. The more able students put their viewpoints, feelings and thoughts across coherently and sequentially, giving their justifications followed by displaying facts and information. Hence, they scored good marks. Only a small number of students wrote essays less than the required number of words. For these essays, the reduced quality and lack of relevant information resulted them in scoring lower marks. This question required the inclusion of facts, good flow, analysis of points of view and opinion/s. Unfortunately, these were not evident amongst candidates in general.

On average, the responses were mainly descriptive. Also not very many candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases or expressions. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. The use of syntax and the wrong use of verb forms, mismatching of verb endings gave the impression as if it was the second language for a number of candidates, so they scored less than expected. On the other hand, candidates who fulfilled these criteria and displayed a coherent piece of writing scored marks in the top range. The average mark recorded for Q4 was **26**.

Conclusion

On the whole, this paper appeared to be fair, accessible and well balanced. The overall performances of able students showed that the standard of literacy, including the transmission skills to and from the target language, has improved on several occasions. This could be due to the fact that a number of centres have embedded appropriate exam techniques required for this examination. However, less able students' performances on average were not as good as expected. It was due to their lack of good grasp of the grammatical knowledge in both English and in the target language, their inability to display a range of structures and phrases, manipulation of tense concepts / time frames and common spelling errors. Also, a wide display of transliterated words / phrases were evident in the students' performances across the board.

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