



# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level  
In Arabic (WAA01)  
Paper 01: Understanding and Written Response

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Publications Code WAA01\_01\_2306\_ER

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## Introduction

This is the 6th exam of the WAA01 after the disruption in the series before. The paper is fair and comparable to previous exam of this specification. Passages were set to be current and of interest to candidates. All passages were from authentic Arabic sources and were chosen to suit candidates of all levels of demands.

It was clear that students are more familiar with this type of exam and their exam techniques improved noticeably. But there is evidence that some students are still affected by the disturbance to teaching during the pandemic.

Quality of language on the higher end is much better than previous seasons, and so is their performance generally. The students seem to benefit from accessing past papers and the SAM. We noticed that there is a gap between the high end of the performance and the lower one is bigger this year due to many of the entries who left most questions unanswered.

Generally, most candidates coped well. The most common mistakes are related to spelling, verb conjugation, and the lack of knowledge of basic Arabic grammar and spelling rules.

### Section A: Reading.

Students need to understand, retrieve, and convey information from a short series of different Arabic-language texts. They will be required to provide a mix of non-verbal and Arabic-language responses. A maximum of 30 marks will be available in accordance with the assessment-specific mark scheme.

### Q3

In this question students are required to read the passage with 10 gaps to be filled from the 20 words provided in the box, 10 of them are distractors. 5 of these are low demand and the other five are of medium demand. The words used should be appropriate linguistically and context wise.

The text (الوظائف المطلوبة في العالم اليوم) is about jobs, which is one of the Spec. topics. Almost all students attempted answering this question managed to get most of it right and some got the full mark. Yet some candidates seemed not to understand the meaning of the given words because they used words to fill the gaps which did not make any sense.

Performance in Q3d was the best; almost all students who answered this question got it right. It worked well as it targets low grade. In contrast Q3j most students failed to give the correct answer though it is an easy word.

In parts of the question, some students often selected words that had the opposite meaning of what should have been the correct answer, which does not fit in the context of the text though it is grammatically correct; for example (القطاعات instead of المؤسسات). This also happen to a

lesser extent in 3i. The reason could be because it required knowing the meaning of the key word. So, we advise centres to ensure that students are familiar with the vocabulary used in the topics of the specification.

Q3b, a good number used (لمضاعفة) instead of (مثل). That might be due to not reading the full sentence. Another common mistake was using the word (غَدًا) in 3j. because the student thought that the future verb in the sentence goes well with (غَدًا), where they should pay attention to the context.

Weak students chose the correct words but used them in the wrong space. Others used the same word twice.

We advise that they read the whole text after fillings all the gaps to check whether the chosen words make sense.

#### **Q4**

Text 4 (ربوت لتوصيل الطعام) is a longer and more complex text was used for both Q4 & Q5. It is from the topic Youth Matters, subtopic, technology.

This question is designed to identify the skills and knowledge of candidates on how to read thoroughly, analyse and apply critical thinking.

Performance in Q4 was very good even though it is targeting high grade. Generally, students done well this year scoring in average 7 marks. This might be because the students are familiar with the topic and used to this type of testing.

Q4c, 4d & 4e worked very well. Most students got them correct.

Q4a, some students used information about the robot from the 1st paragraph to describe it, not pay attention to the specific part that asked about what the designer said.

Q4b, was the most challenging. Most student scored one mark or zero. Only a few mention that the designers were inspired by the science fiction films.

#### **Q5**

In this applied grammar exercise, candidates were required to use specified words to rewrite Ten sentences without altering the meaning while maintaining grammatical accuracy. This question is a high demand question and it discriminate well, showing the skills and knowledge of the strong candidates. Hence, it is highly challenging, demanding intense concentration from the candidates during the exam.

Some students managed to make grammatically correct changes but failed to convey the intended meaning or complete the sentences, while others struggled to make any correct modifications at all.

The most common mistakes were as follows:

- 5a, some students used the noun (استخدام) instead of the verb (يستخدم) without changing anything in the sentence structure.
- 5c, some student changed the verb (نشر) which means publish to the verb (انتشر) which has a different meaning though it is from the same root.
- 5d, a common mistake among students in this sentence was using the verb without a subject.
- 5e, a lot of the students inserted the word (ذات) without adding (ال) to (حجم صغير) which affected the meaning of the sentence.
- 5f, some students were confused about the word (غير) showing a little understanding of its meaning.
- 5g, very common mistake in this sentence was adding the word (لم) without changing anything in the sentence which led to an opposite meaning.
- 5j, a common mistake in this sentence was adding the letter (ف) to the word (على).

It appears that some students do not know that they should not add any letter to the given word or change the form. Centres and teachers are advised to work on the students' grammatical skill especially applied grammar.

## Q6

In this question candidates had to apply diacritical marks (علامات التشكيل) on the underlined words. However, the common mistake observed in such questions is that candidates often draw the regular vowels (Harakah) (كسرة، فتحة، ضمة) instead of using (همزة الوصل). Also, a significant number of candidates tend to overlook the (Shuddha). A handful of candidates did not vocalise all the words, and some candidates did not attempt this question or would miss out letters in the words in addition to those who put more than one vowel on the letter.

## Q8

In this question, candidates had to write an article about talent shows (المواهب مسابقات). Candidates had to give their opinion about these programs, mention the benefits of the programs to society and the participants, give the downside especially to children, and finally they had to suggest ways to improve these programs. Candidates had to make sure that they had covered all the bullet points mentioned in the question to attain the highest possible marks in this question.

The choice of topic for Q8 about popular television programmes like Arab Idol inspired students to write voluminously. Many opinions were expressed, and the bullet points helped students formulate their opinions. A good number of the students wrote well about the positives and negatives of the programmes. But some students struggled to provide

suggestions about how these programmes could be improved. Furthermore, a significant number of candidates misunderstood the task of improving the programs and instead suggested solutions for parents and participants, rather than addressing the program managers. This misunderstanding negatively impacted their marks. They may have been used to the pattern of Q8 in past exam papers and were wrongfooted. The students should have been prepared better to think outside the box.

A common mistake observed by examiners was the candidates' failure to separate the justification of their opinions from the positives. Bullet point two was not fully answered where only the benefits for participants were mentioned and not benefits for Arab societies. Some candidates understood the benefits as financial benefits only.

Some candidates had problems with grammar and structure of sentences and spelling which were all reasons for a candidate losing marks in the Quality of Language.

## **SUMMARY**

Generally, performance was comparable to previous years. There were some excellent candidates. Across the paper performance varied.

Some candidates scored good marks for Communication continuous writing, but lost marks on Quality of Language, due to poor spelling, misuse of pronouns, and repetition.

In this series - unlike previous series - not many candidates made the mistake of writing above the required number of words (240-280). This for sure was an improvement from previous series.

We noticed that some candidates have illegible handwriting; joining the letters incorrectly or not using the right phonics of the letters to be able to write them right. So, we advise centres to work on students handwriting and spelling.

Basic grammatical knowledge by some students remains essential. This is evident in section C: Writing and it also helps to ensure unambiguous manipulation of sentences in Q5.

Students are advised to practice applied grammar, such as that in the past exam papers especially for Q5.

Centres are advised to use past papers and mark scheme as well as examiner's report.

