



# Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2024

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

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## Introduction

This series of examination of the WAA01 paper is fair and comparable to previous examinations of this specification. It was clear that students are more familiar with this type of assessment and their exam techniques improved noticeably. The quality of language was much better than previous seasons, and so was the performance generally. The students seem to benefit from accessing past papers and the SAM.

In general candidates did better in the 2401 series than in the 2023 summer exam. The most common mistakes are related to verb conjugation and the lack of knowledge of basic Arabic grammar.

## Section A: Reading

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

### Q3

This is a gap filling question. Candidates were given a text with gaps to be filled using words from the words provided. The text (بيوت من سعف النخيل) is from the topic of lifestyle, which is one of the topics in the specification. This is a low to medium demand question, set to the same standard as previous years, yet the performance was not as we expected.

Where most of the low demand like Q3a were answered correctly, most of the medium demand parts were confused to some extent. For example, in Q3d, a sizable number of students got this part wrong, they used (خلالها instead of بها)

Students were also confused in filling some gaps, like 3c (متميزًا - حديثًا) & 3i (لها - لكليهما).

Several candidates seemed to have issues understanding the vocabulary used in the question, and many common mistakes were found on question 3 d and 3i mainly, as well as 3e.

We also noticed that when the students did not understand the sentence, they often selected words that had a close meaning. For example, in 3e, instead of writing (يخيل) they would write (يظن). In 3h, they would write (اشكال instead of الوان).

Some students had difficulty in distinguishing between masculine and feminine, so for example in 3b, they would write (الذي instead of التي).

Some students used a word that should be used in another place, ended up having two wrongs.

The students should consider the meaning when answering this question. I would advise that they read the whole text after filling all the gaps to check whether the chosen words make sense.

#### Q4

Text 4 (السياحة في موريتانيا) is a longer and more complex text used for both Q4 & Q5. It is from the topic Environment and travel: subtopic, tourism.

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

The performance in this question generally is very similar to previous years.

This is a high demand question, so candidates who are not strong struggled especially in parts where they need to give reasons or deduct like in Q4e.

(كيف انتفع سكان مدينة شنقيط من تراثهم؟)

Q4a most students confused location with geography. So, most candidates gained one mark, however they failed to achieve the other mark as they did not mention the sentence ( كانت محطة رئيسية على طريق القوافل التجارية في العصور الوسطى ) Students who took this sentence exactly from the passage picked up both marks.

Q4b with its 2 parts, performance varied where some wrote the answer in part one or part 2, others missed part of the answer and lost both marks.

Q4c & 4d and to some worked very well. Most students got them correct.

4e Many students mentioned the mosque is one of the ancient things the people benefited from, whereas it is a landmark in the country.

Though there are marks for quality of language in this question, but poor language let some students down, as they fail to give a clear answer or copied an incomplete sentence.

#### Section B: Grammar

#### Q5

As last year as well as previous series this grammar question is most challenging in this paper. But it seems that by accessing more past papers, students started to get better in this question.

We still find the same mistakes where some of them forget to use the given word and others use it but fail to retain the meaning of the original sentence.

In Q5d a noticeable number of students used (من instead of عن). The same happened with 5g where they used (ل instead of إلى) which shows a gap in students' knowledge regarding the use of prepositions.

In Q5a, many students copied the same sentence and added (هناك) at the beginning.

5b students did not put the word (هو) after the phrase (مايتميز به البلد/مايتميز البلد).

5c was possibly the best answered, but some students use (التي) in a way that changed the meaning, (من المدن السياحية التي عُرِفَت المدينة قديماً ببوابة الصحراء مدينة ولاتة).

5f Many students incorrectly added the word (كما) at the beginning of the sentence.

5h Many students did not delete the word (حسب) when adding the word (ذكر) required in the question.

5g Some students used the verb (تحولت) without changing anything in the sentence.

5j A high proportion of students incorrectly answered 5j as they forgot to put (,) before the word (هي) or the letter (واو)

On the positive side we noticed that more students got 10/10 this time.

#### **Q6**

This is a vocalization question. Students generally performed well, where the average mark obtained was 3-4 out of 5. Marks were mostly lost because sometimes the vowel was not put in the correct position. Some candidates did not vocalise all the words and a lot were still confused about the placement of the (الشدة). Some put 2 vowels on the letter.

It should also be noted that students must make their signs clear, as sometimes it was hard to differentiate between the (fatha) and (dama).

#### **Section C: Continuous Writing**

#### **Q8**

Question 8, the essay question is by its nature good in discriminating. This question was a longer written response, 240- 280 words, worth 30 marks, asking students to write an article about the text given to them as a stimulus. This text was about sport at school.

Students responded to this question very well. They had covered all the bullet points showing good understanding of the topic and very good ability to express opinions about school sport. Almost all students managed to write about the topic as it is a topic they can relate to. High performing students gave substantial information, their answers were well structured, and their grammar and their quality of language was very good. Students wrote well about the benefits of school sports. They also, gave good reasons as to why their chosen sport is good

and they gave many benefits regarding it. But some of them were let down by the quality of language.

The final point was not covered very well by weak students, as some gave one undeveloped idea on how to develop sports in school, but most of them missed or misunderstood this bullet point about improving sports and lost points. For example, they spoke about the importance of sports generally and gave lots of advice on how to keep it going.

The biggest mistake that the students made was that they did not write detailed enough responses for each point, or instead of covering the required four points per question they only wrote about two or three points, leaving their answers incomplete. Some students copied the stimulus and used it as an introduction, or they would write their points in the introduction, leading them to repeat their answers throughout their response, which deprived them from obtaining high marks.

In general, students must be trained more on how to respond to the question, in terms of structure and developing ideas as well as giving opinion in relation to this type of question.

**Advice to centres:**

- Centres are reminded to use past papers, mark schemes and examiners' reports.
- Students must be informed that when they cross a word or a sentence, no mark will be awarded even if they were correct.
- Please ask the students to indicate if they use a continuation page.
- 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.
- Students are to practice grammar, such as past exam papers especially for Q5.
- Students are to be encouraged to widen their reading scope to include different topics to acquire a wealth of new Arabic vocabulary and knowledge of different styles and sentence structure.
- Students should be taught to include all points in the prompt question in their writing to gain more marks. They should practise writing different types and styles of writing to improve their skills.

