



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Arabic (4AA1) Paper 02

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Introduction

This examination paper has been designed to accommodate a wide range of student profiles. The International GCSE qualification will be graded and certificated on a nine-grade scale from 9 to 1, using the total subject mark where 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. The paper consists of three writing tasks. They are asked to choose two questions out of a choice of the three and they are required to write a minimum of 300 words in each answer. Both tasks require writing in Arabic where candidates have one hour and 30 minutes to complete this paper. This paper carries a maximum of 50 marks.

The questions may relate to any of the following prescribed themes:

- Youth Matters
- Education
- Media
- Culture
- Sport & Leisure
- Travel & Tourism
- Business, work & Development
- Environment
- Health
- Technology

Each task is assessed for Content and Communication (15 marks) and Knowledge and Application of Language (10 marks) only. The maximum mark for this task is 25 for each question.

The questions in this examination paper were carefully selected to give candidates a wide choice of tasks, through which they can express their knowledge of the Arabic language. In general, the performance of the candidates was of a high standard. Most of the questions proved accessible for a considerable number of candidates.

Question 1

This question was the most popular answered by candidates. This was expected as it covers a theme that is very popular to teenagers. It asked candidates to discuss how social media programs have negatively and positively affected social relations. Most students were able to write about the pros and cons of the social media.

Candidates were capable of elaborating and writing about the importance of social media as an interactive activity in their lives. They also mentioned the positive impact of it on individuals and on the whole society. They discussed in detail the rapprochement that took place between the societies caused by social media. They listed the disadvantages of excessive use of these programs on human life.

There was an emphasis on the role of parents in controlling their children from an early age to use social media. Finally, they spoke about their personal experience of using these programs. Many responses were excellent in terms of content, language, and accuracy, scoring full marks or close to full marks.

Question 2

Many candidates who answered this question did very well. They went on to mention the details of the business they will be doing and the benefits that the people of their city will reap from this project.

Although the wording of the question was very clear, asking candidates to invest in a successful business project, around one third of the candidates discussed a charity work rather than a profitable project. This did not dramatically affect their mark unless there was clear evidence of ambiguity. Finally, they went on to elaborate about the advice they would give to those who wish to follow their example, from the younger generation.

In general Candidates wrote excellent essays about the topic in a very convincing manner. Some candidates were over-ambiguous in their response.

Question 3

In this question candidates were asked to give a speech about a project they developed, to achieve ecological stability. Then they were asked to describe this project in a speech to the people of their hometown, to convince them how it would create a better environment. They spoke about how to make investments in environmentally friendly products and how public parks could be improved and established in their areas.

Bullet points were given as a guideline to help candidates to write a good essay. Most candidates as usual used these bullet points as a point for them to focus on, so they covered all the bullet points resulting in many very good, focused essays. They were able to write in detail giving enough ideas about their environmental project. Several candidates however, missed out on designing the actual project. Instead, they addressed the residents of their area on how to preserve the environment. This did not dramatically affect their mark, unless there was clear evidence of ambiguity. Very few candidates were impeded from expressing their opinions which had minimal response and not easy to read.

Knowledge and accuracy of language:

Generally, there was an improvement in the accuracy of language in the essays marked this year.

Hamza (همزة) still an issue for many students. Other issues include:

- Wrong spelling of words with letters like (ث, س) , (ق, ك) , (ت, ط) , (س, ص)
- Conjugating verbs and choosing the correct tense to use.
- Very long sentences and lack of appropriate connectors.

But, most candidates used different writing styles, narrative, descriptive and conversational, which showed significantly good ability to use the right modern standard Arabic.

They were written in high modern standard Arabic language, where only few struggled with المفتوحة والمفتوحة همزة الوصل والقطع و عدم التفريق بين الهاء والة مثل التاء المربوطة

Conclusion:

In this paper many candidates provided the expected answers. They used the suggested bullet points in their introductory paragraphs, repeating them exactly as they are. Some responses were excellent in terms of content, language and accuracy scoring full marks or close to full marks.

In the three questions, very high percentage of candidates seemed not only to share the same ideas about the topics, but also followed almost identical stream of argument with similar choice of content and language.

Pre-learned clichés, phrases, clauses, or popular sayings were unnecessarily used by some less successful candidates, as they were in most cases redundant, random, and out of place. When the less successful candidates seemed to run out of ideas, they often resorted to repeat themselves, use irrelevant quotations from the Quran, or Arabic poetry.

Advice to centres:

Based on performance in this paper, candidates and teachers are offered the following advice:

- More effort should be done to train candidates to expect these questions, in line with similar questions.
- Some candidates had problems with grammar and structure of sentences and spelling, which were all reasons for candidates losing marks in the Quality of Language. In general Centres should be clearly informed that they should work on improving candidates understanding of Arabic grammar and application of language.
- Candidates are advised to sit the exam fully prepared in order to score good marks. They are advised to belong to any centre and must receive at least the guidelines and specifications a year ahead before the exam.
- Some questions in this year's examination paper were more popular than others and were consequently answered better than other topics, with better candidate results. Teachers need to make sure that all topics are covered. This will better prepare candidates and help to achieve grades that truly reflect their ability.
- Although bullet points help candidates to focus in answering the questions, centres should make sure that students are reminded to read well into the questions before answering, so that they do not lose any of the question requirement(s).
- The use of English words should be avoided. Candidates are advised to avoid writing English words or literal translations.

The essays that scored the highest marks were characterised by a clear and defined structure, clarity of thought, well supported ideas, good presentation, and use of an appropriate style. Centres are asked to prepare candidates to read more into the question requirement, before looking into the bullet points or using pre-learned clichés, phrases, clauses, or popular sayings were unnecessarily used.

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