



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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

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Introduction

The International GCSE qualification has been designed to accommodate a wide range of student profiles. This examination paper 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. It consists of three writing tasks, where candidates are asked to choose two questions out of three questions and are required to write a minimum of 300 words in each answer. Both tasks require writing in Modern Standard Arabic, where they 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 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 very good standard and most of the questions proved accessible for a considerable number of candidates.

Question 1:

Question 1 asked candidates about the benefits of traveling around the world and how does travel affects the traveler's personality and thinking. This was the most popular question in this series, because it relates to travel, which is a popular topic that candidates enjoy writing about. This question was straight forward and quite clear for candidates who showed good knowledge of the subject. This was reflected through the number of words written for each response; some of which exceeding the required word count. However, there was some digression when they allocated too much space in

their essays to write about tourism and its positive effects on the economy of host countries. Some candidates showed confusion between (استكشاف واكتشاف).

Many candidates showed good knowledge of the topic and used excellent subject-related vocabulary. Others dedicated a big amount of their essays to discuss/talk sport in general, giving too much detail about the types of sports that gyms provide for interested people. Consequently, leaving a smaller space to touch on the points required by the question. There were some good responses that could have scored full marks, had they used first person and put themselves as part of the process of becoming a distinctive sports champion. Approximately 20% of candidates responded exceptionally well to this question, providing strong and well-supported opinions. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the task and achieved high scores. Their essays stood out for their excellent content, coherent structure, and advanced language proficiency, earning them well-deserved top marks.

Question 2:

Question 2, though the least popular, inspired excellent essays from the candidates who selected it. The topic explored the reasons behind the growing demand for plastic surgery in modern times. Responses reflected diverse perspectives: some candidates firmly opposed cosmetic surgery, others viewed it as essential, while the majority considered it a matter of personal choice. The essays demonstrated a strong understanding of the subject, incorporating insightful ideas and employing precise technical and subject-specific vocabulary effectively.

This question invited candidates to express their opinions about plastic surgery. Many candidates demonstrated thoughtful ideas to support their viewpoints, often making effective use of the provided bullet points for guidance.

Overall, a significant number of candidates who attempted this question performed exceptionally well, presenting well-structured responses and achieving high scores.

Question 3:

Question 3 was the second most popular choice, where candidates were tasked with delivering a speech on a proposal to modernise their school's sports department.

Although many candidates found this topic straightforward and engaging, a significant number focused extensively on discussing sports in general. They elaborated in detail on the types of sports the PE department should offer and the health benefits of each, rather than addressing the proposal more directly.

In this question candidates used good vocabularies related to the topic, and a fair grammatical level and accuracy.

As with the other two questions, the bullet points are designed to assist candidates in addressing a range of areas within their response. However, it is crucial that candidates focus on responding precisely to the specific task outlined in the question prompt.

Communication and content:

- Some responses were excellent in terms of content, language and accuracy scoring full marks or close to full marks.
- A significant number of candidates relied on pre-learned clichés, phrases, clauses, and unnecessarily long sentences, which were misplaced, and irrelevant to the task.
- Some introductions were more than 100 words of jargon and repetition.
- While some responses effectively incorporated quotations from the Quran, sayings of the Prophet, or lines of Arabic poetry, adding significant value to the content, others included such references inappropriately. These irrelevant and randomly inserted quotes detracted from the overall quality of many responses.

Application and accuracy of language:

- Many candidates tend to use excessively long sentences without proper punctuation, leading to unclear responses. A lack of punctuation knowledge results in some answers being entirely devoid of punctuation, with additional challenges in sentence syntax and connectivity.
- Pre-learned phrases, terms, and expressions were often used excessively and without consideration, rendering them unnecessary and out of place.
- Numerous responses lacked proper structure, organization, and paragraphing. Some were merely bullet points instead of cohesive essays.
- Several answers lacked coherence, with ideas presented in a random and conflicting manner within the same paragraph, causing confusion for the reader.
- Candidates frequently struggled with maintaining consistent verb tenses, often mixing tenses within the same sentence without justification.
- Common grammar mistakes included confusion between **Hamzat Al-Wasl** and **Hamzat Al-Qat** (e.g., همزة الوصل وهمزة القطع), as well as errors in writing **Hamza** on **Alef** in definite articles (أل).
- Persistent challenges with **accusative case endings** (نصب المفعول به) and **the predicate of** (خبر كان) were evident.
- Confusion in spelling certain letters such as ز and ذ, or ق and ك, as well as ص and س, or د and ض. For example: (الفرض = الفرد), (الصححة = الصحة).
- Issues with **Idafa** (الإضافة) were noted, with candidates adding both **Alif-Lam** and **Idafa** unnecessarily, e.g., الماضي الزمن.
- Mistakes in conjugating verbs in the third person masculine plural (e.g., يعملوا instead of يعملون) were common.
- Errors in negation, such as incorrect usage of لا, لم, and لن, along with corresponding verb forms, were evident.

- Gender agreement issues arose frequently, with candidates mismatching feminine/masculine nouns, adjectives, and demonstrative/relative pronouns (e.g., — الذي ---- التي, هذا — هذه)
- Prepositions were often misused, leading to awkward constructions like:
 - تؤدي الرياضة على آثار
 - النظام الغذائي يحتوي إلى
- Some candidates wrote diacritics at the end of words as full letters, e.g., لهو = له، and ألعبو = ألعِبْ.
- Specific words, such as السفر (a masculine word), were incorrectly treated as feminine, resulting in sentences like:
 - السفر تعطي
 - السفر تُعَلِّم

Efforts to address these issues would significantly enhance the overall quality of responses.

Conclusion:

This paper provides candidates with three topics, and they are required to write about 300 words on any two of them. The chosen topics are derived from the specified areas of study outlined in the syllabus. Each topic is accompanied by three suggested bullet points for candidates to consider if they choose to address them. The areas of study for the topics this examination 2411 series, presented three topics centred around **Travel**, **Culture** and **Sports**. Questions were formulated in plain language and utilized straightforward vocabulary. The bullet points following each question were structured with simplicity and clarity, aiding candidates in understanding the tasks at hand.

The demands of the questions were similar to previous years. The option was to choose and answer two questions out of three, allowed candidates to respond to tasks were more familiar with and well-prepared for. Candidates relied extensively on the bullet points, especially in question two. Candidates should be reminded that they are provided with bullet points as guidance, but they have to focus more on the question.

Looking closely at the questions of this paper combined, this exam questions were well prepared and they worked as intended.

- Some responses were excellent in terms of content, language and accuracy scoring full marks or close to full marks.
- In the three questions, a very high percentage of candidates seemed to not only to share the same ideas about the topics but also followed an almost identical line of argument with a similar choice of content and language.
- Pre-learned clichés, phrases, clauses and long sentences were unnecessarily used as they were in most cases redundant and out of place.
- Some introductions were more than 100 words of jargon and repetition.

- While some responses contained good use of quotations from the Quran, the Prophet's sayings or lines of Arabic poetry that added extra value, others were irrelevant and randomly inserted doing more harm than good to a lot of responses.

Advice to centres:

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

- More efforts should be made to direct candidates to write their two answers on separate answering spaces. Some candidates are still making the mistake of writing their two answers on the same answering space, which is wrong! Teachers should remind candidates to write their answers on two different answering pages.
- More effort should be made to train candidates not to use dialect in writing their essays. Any use of dialect writing, whether partially or fully is expected to influence the rating of candidates' performance.
- Some candidates had problems with grammar and structure of sentences and spelling, which was enough reasons for candidates scoring less 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.
- Some questions in this season's examination paper were more popular than others and were consequently answered better than other topics, with better candidate results. For example, question 1 was more popular, teachers need to make sure that candidates read well into the questions. This will better prepare candidates and help reflect candidates' ability.
- The use of English words should be avoided. Moreover, candidates are advised to avoid 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 that were unnecessarily used. A high number of responses lacked organization in terms of structure, layout and paragraphing; some responses were just bullet points.

