



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In Arabic (4AA1)

Paper 02: Writing

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Summer 2025

Publications Code 4AA1_02_2506_ER

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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: Asked candidates to write an email to their principal proposing steps to make the school buildings more environmentally friendly.

This was the least popular question in the series (answered by 21.5% of candidates). Environment questions are usually challenging and this year, candidates found it challenging to link the theme of the environment to the protection of school buildings. However, most essays written showed creative

writing ideas. Many candidates responded well, addressing all the bullet points in detail. Responses are summarised as follows:

- **The majority of students** demonstrated a clear understanding of the task and were able to structure their emails appropriately. Their messages included formal greetings, logical sequencing of ideas, and relevant suggestions related to environmental improvement, such as using eco-friendly materials and developing school gardens.
- **Many students** showed promising use of vocabulary and attempted to engage with the principal respectfully. There was a visible effort to incorporate transitional phrases and justify their proposals with benefits. Students structured their emails clearly, used appropriate formal language, and offered relevant suggestions such as using eco-friendly materials and improving school gardens. engaged respectfully with the topic, used transitional phrases, and attempted to justify their ideas with expected benefits.
- **Some students** still struggle with maintaining a formal tone or organizing their ideas cohesively. A few tended to list ideas without elaboration or used casual expressions more suited to informal contexts. struggled with tone and organization, sometimes listing points without elaboration or using informal or dialect expressions.
- **A few students** excelled beyond expectations, employing sophisticated sentence structures, persuasive language, and a forward-thinking perspective. They offered concrete examples and imaginative initiatives that reflected strong critical thinking skills. These students excelled significantly, showcasing advanced writing skills, persuasive language, and creative ideas, such as cross-school collaborations or student-led sustainability clubs.

In general, candidates wrote satisfactory answers with the help of the bullet points. Those who gave weak responses which were too brief and lacked detail, focused solely on the environment without making a clear connection to the school, which suggests they did not fully grasp the question.

Question 2: Asked candidates to write an essay considering if young people have lost the ability to communicate face to face.

This question was the most popular choice as 42.5% of the candidates attempted it. This popularity was expected as the topic of social media is a current topic and is part of the youth's daily life. In the bullet points certain ideas about the addiction of using social media and virtual communication were suggested – such as the effect of physical and virtual communication on youth.

Candidates' answers can be summarised as follows:

- **The majority of students** demonstrated a solid understanding of the topic and were able to organise their essays effectively. Most structured their ideas into clear paragraphs and provided relevant examples, particularly regarding social media habits and the need to balance digital and real-life interactions.
- **Many students** engaged with the topic from a personal perspective, offering thoughtful reflections and opinions. Their ability to connect real-world experiences with the broader issue added depth and sincerity to their writing.
- **Some students** struggled with maintaining consistent coherence or formal tone throughout the essay. While their ideas were generally relevant, they would benefit from further practice in linking paragraphs smoothly and avoiding overly casual expressions.
- **A few students** stood out with exceptionally mature insights and advanced language. Their essays exhibited strong analytical skills, persuasive arguments, and an excellent use of vocabulary, elevating the discussion well beyond basic observations.

In general, many candidates excelled answering this question, obtaining very high marks. Other essays compared the pros and cons of social media and a hand full diverted from the main point of the question.

Question 3: Asked candidates to write an essay about a childhood dream which came true.

Q3 was another popular question as 36% of candidates attempted it. They were given the opportunity to be more creative and talk about their childhood dream that came true. Most of the essays focused on e.g. becoming famous footballers or doctors who help others, etc. Candidates were presented with similar “dream” questions in previous exam papers. There were a number of excellent essays.

The main issue for this question was that some candidate wrote about dreams to be achieved in the future; however, candidates were not penalised for this.

There were some excellent essays covering the challenges and setbacks that students faced on their journey to realise their dreams and how family and friends supported them to achieve them. The responses are summarised as follows:

- **The majority of students** demonstrated a strong grasp of narrative writing. Their essays were well-structured, moving smoothly from childhood aspiration to the moment of achievement. Many used emotional language effectively, which helped convey their personal journey with clarity and engagement. They added thoughtful reflections, describing what motivated their dreams and the role of family and friends in their success. These personal touches enriched the essays and added authenticity to their voice.

- **Many students** added thoughtful reflections, describing what motivated their dreams and the role of family and friends in their success. These personal touches enriched the essays and added authenticity to their voice.
- **Some students** struggled with fully developing the story arc or maintaining coherence throughout the essay. While their ideas were relevant, they occasionally jumped between points without transitions or lacked elaboration on key moments.
- **A few students** produced exceptional work. Their writing stood out for its maturity, depth of emotion, and creative structure. They explored challenges with insight and conveyed a genuine sense of growth, making their essays memorable and impactful.

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

Application and accuracy of language:

- Students are using very long sentences without punctuation. Problems with syntax and connecting sentences. Some even had problems with syntax and connecting sentences.
- There are mistakes in conjugating in the third person masculine plural (يعملون) instead of (يعملوا)
- There are lots of mistakes regarding choosing the wrong tense.
- The same grammar mistakes related to hamzat alwasl, hamzat alqat-aa are repeated this year.
- There is a big concern about (نصب المفعول به) and (خير كان)
- Some students get confused in spelling words with the following letters (ز) and (ك) and (ذ), (ق)
- There is an issue with idafa. Students add both (alif and lam) and idafa to define words.
- Confusion in gender agreement in using (التي) and (الذي)
- Pre-learned set of phrases, terms and sayings were heavily and unnecessarily used without any rationale.
- A high number of responses lacked organization in terms of structure, layout and paragraphing; some responses were just bullet points.
- Some responses lacked any coherence where candidates confused their audience with conflicting and contradicting ideas, which had been randomly put together in one paragraph.
- Some candidates struggled with maintaining consistency in using verb tenses, which were muddled up in the same sentence without justification.
- Again, the same grammar mistakes related to hamzat alwasl, hamzat alqat-aa are repeated this year. استخدام همزة الوصل وهمزة القطع
- Lack of using or misusing “Hamza” (أهم أنسان) or Putting (Hamza) on Alef in أل (ال التعريف)

- There is a big concern about (نصب المفعول به) and (خبر كان)
- Some students get confused in spelling words with the following letters (ز) and (ذ), (ق) and (ك)
- Mixing up letters such as (س - ص - د - ض - ق - ك) (الفرض = الفرد) (السحة = الصحة)
- Problems with using 'Negation' لا - لم - لن with the correct form verb tense.
- Lack of awareness of gender agreement, where candidates struggled in using feminine/ masculine nouns, adjectives and their corresponding demonstrative and relative pronouns:)
(عدم توافق أسماء الإشارة مع الفاعل الذي --- التي --- هذا ---- هذه)
- Writing the diacritics at the end of words as letters (لهو = له - ألعبو = ألعب)

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 year 2506 series presented three topics centred around **Environment**, **Technology** and **Youth matters**. Questions in both series 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. 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.
- 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 each answer in the specific answer space for each selected question.
- 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 year's examination paper were more popular than others and were consequently answered better than other topics, with better candidate results. For example, question 2 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.

