Examiner's Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2023

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

General Overview:

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of the performance of the candidates who were entered for the November 2023 International GCSE Bangla (4BA0/01). The examination was designed to assess candidates' proficiency in various language skills, including reading, writing and transmission skills and most candidates demonstrated a commendable level of competence.

The number of entries in this series was 910. Overall, the candidates' performance in the 4BA0/01 2311 Examination was good.

Paper overview:

This paper which is aimed at reading, writing and translation skills, comprises three sections. The first part is Section A: Reading Comprehension with an allocation of 40 marks which is 40% of the total marks and mapped on assessment objective 01 (AO1), Section B is Writing, allocating 40 marks targeting AO2 (40% of the total marks), and Section C is Translation which is out of 20 marks, 20% of the total marks with the assessment objective AO3. Section A is mainly reading and responding to a variety of tasks through 4 question items i.e., questions 1, 2, 3 and 4. Section B consists of 2 questions i.e., questions 5 and 6 through the guided writing tasks on varieties of topics. Only question 6 has the optionality to choose one out of three choices. Section C consists of one translation task from English to Bangla which is numbered as question 7. All of these three sections are assessed through a 2-hour and 30 minute examination. The total number of marks is 100 for this paper. Every question in each section is set following the suggested themes in the specification.

Section A – Reading Comprehension (AO1)

Question 1 is a closed response type which in other words is a gap-fill or word- drop question. It contains 6 marks. Candidates are expected to choose the correct letter from the provided word box in the answer grid. The chosen word would be the best fit in the gap making the sentence logically correct. This year's text is about '**Snoopy and Shaun are set for space travel**'. Question 1 is out of 6 and the mean mark in this item was 5. Candidates who could not score full marks in this question had challenges to identify the correct word for either question 1(d) or 1 (e). Candidates needed to consider not just meaning, but also grammar to make their selection.

Question 2 is a multiple matching (three-column multiple matching) question in which candidates read three texts (in three speech bubbles) by three different persons and respond to the statements below marking a cross in the grid provided. It contains 8 marks. This year the stimulus reading in this question is about '**College life**'. The mean mark in this question was 6. The instructions inform the

candidates that some statements may refer to more than one person or none of them. Candidates must place eight crosses in the appropriate boxes. Most candidates followed this instruction, although some gave more than or fewer than eight.

Question 3 is a note-taking (note completion) question which is a text from a certain source. Candidates are expected to fill in the gaps appropriately in the statements given. The total mark for this question is 12 and the mean mark was 8. The topic of the reading text was '**Dream of winning the Olympics**'. Candidates found questions 3(d), 3(e) and 3(h) challenging. Some candidates opt to write the incomplete lift from the text. Candidates need to think carefully about what they are writing.

Question 4 has two parts i.e., part 4(a) and part 4(b). Part 4(a) is an open-response question which is a literary text that is an extract from a novel, short story, biography, etc. Candidates must write short answers correctly in the spaces given below the text. It contains 10 marks all together.
Part 4(b) is a summary question based on question 4(a) in which there is a dialogue between two people as texts. Candidates must summarise the opinions of each person. This part of the question contains 4 marks i.e., 2 marks per each summary.
Please note that there was an unintentional addition in the rubric of question 4(a) in the November 2023 series, which emphasises that the candidates should not copy exactly from the given text. While marking responses for 4(a) this unintentional requirement was not implemented. Following the generic marking guidelines and historically used in other series, as long the candidate has referred to the correct key messages in their answer, no matter if it was the exact phrase used in the given text, the response was credited.

This year's topic in question 4 is '**Young pioneers of Science**'. Some candidates scored well on this challenging question, but a few found it difficult. In question 4(a), the mean mark was 6. Although the candidates have confidently answered questions 4(a) (i), (iv) and (v), but a significant number of candidates found questions 4(a) (ii) and (iii) challenging. Due to being less successful in identifying the key messages in question 4(b) part, the mean mark was a little bit above 1 out of 4 as it was in the previous series.

Grammar and spelling are not tested in the comprehension questions in this section of the paper, so mistakes can be overlooked necessarily without losing a mark. It all depends on whether understanding the text can be effectively communicated without ambiguity.

Section B – Writing (AO2)

These two questions are writing tasks that can either be narrative or descriptive writing according to the task.

Question 5 is a short writing task where candidates must include four stimuli. It is a guided writing of about 80 words. The four prompts are provided in four boxes to support candidates to write on the given topic referring to past, present and future events. This question is out of 14 marks. This year question 5 required candidates to write about '**Online games'**. Successful candidates performed well and were able to write paragraphs using the provided stimuli given in the task and secured good scores both in 'communication and content' and 'quality of language'. However, some candidates struggled to display appropriate grammatical skills and to maintain coherence in their responses. To secure a higher score on this question, reference to each stimulus is a must with at least two tenses. The mean mark for this question was 10. Unfortunately, some candidates lost communication and content marks as they failed to refer to all four stimuli or they used a word irrelevantly because they did not understand it. It is essential to use all the stimuli and present them in a balanced way.

Question 6 is a descriptive writing task which is also guided writing. More formal writing with register and style is expected to achieve a high mark in this question. Candidates must write a long essay of about 140 words. There are three options i.e., option 1, option 2 and option 3 given so that candidates can select one out of them to respond as they wish. The format of the question, for example, is to write a letter or an email, an article or a report or a blog, etc. The bullet points provided with each descriptive writing encourage the use of a variety of tenses and opinions. This question contains 26 marks in total. Each option has a link to a topic of the themes suggested in the specification.

Question 6a was about writing a newspaper article on '**Recreational activities in your city'** which was the second most attempted item by the candidates. Question 6b was the most popular option chosen by the candidates. This question item was writing an email about '**Rural life'**. Question 6c was the least favourite one by the candidates this year and was about a blog writing on '**Movies and young generation'**. A significant number of candidates successfully narrated their chosen task with a range of sophisticated vocabularies and coherent sentences relating to past, present and future events. Many of the candidates were successful in providing opinions and justification. The mean mark for this question was 18. Examiners are looking for each bullet point to be covered and developed here. Every essay stimulus offers candidates the opportunity to write in different tenses and to give opinions.

Section C – Translation (AO3)

This section consists of only one question which is question 7 (last question of the paper). A text in the English language is provided as the test item. Candidates have to translate it into Bangla sensibly. The translation is successful if a Bangla speaker can understand the translation without having the English text. In this series, the text for translation was about '**Power cuts in Bangladesh**'. Successful candidates achieved good marks in this question although a few candidates could not achieve higher marks due to their unfamiliarity with the Bangla vocabulary of the English words used in the text. The spelling errors also often hindered their transmission. This question is out of 20 and the mean mark was 14.

Advice to centres

Based on the observations from this examination session, the following recommendations and preparation tips can be made to enhance future candidates' performance:

Section A

Strengths of the candidates in reading comprehension: Many candidates displayed strong comprehension skills and the ability to interpret texts accurately. They showcased a good understanding of vocabulary and language structures, enabling them to answer questions effectively.

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4

These questions tested candidates' understanding of key vocabulary items listed in the specification for the foundation level. Candidates should be aware and familiarise themselves with key vocabulary to be tested.

Prep-tips

Question 1

The candidates to read the rubrics carefully before they start to answer the question. They could use the reading time available and select the correct letter from the box to fit properly in the blanks. It requires only to write the relevant 'letters' in the appropriate boxes. Use grammar rules to narrow down the choices of words in this question.

Question 2

Advise candidates to identify the key message each part of the question is referring to and to match or eliminate each person before selecting the correct name(s). Candidates sometimes cross too many boxes in the grids. Wherever one selection is required in a row, more than one cross will invalidate the response. Candidates would benefit from additional scrutiny to identify whether any statement has been referred by none, a single respondent or more than one.

Question 3

These questions asked candidates to briefly respond to questions in Bangla. It would be helpful if candidates read (skim or scan) the texts carefully and write correct phrases in the gaps to fit the questions asked. Make sure any phrases copied from the text make complete sense and respond directly to the questions.

Question 4(a) and 4(b)

In question 4(a), only short answers are required. As long the required key messages are conveyed for each question item, it will be creditworthy. Too much information given in the answer may sometimes miss out on the correct response.

Q4(b) is a summary writing question. It is advisable that the candidates read the views of the speakers and brief their opinions (the gist of the ideas) in the space provided as guided. In this part of the question, candidates are expected to infer the main points of the discussion and effectively manipulate the language. Lifting a chunk from the targeted paragraph needs to be avoided.

Section B

Strengths of the candidates in writing skills: Several candidates exhibited impressive writing abilities, showcasing coherence, well-structured essays, and appropriate language usage. Their creativity and expressiveness were noteworthy.

Questions 5 and 6.

These questions asked candidates to write essays about the given topics in Bangla.

Prep-tips

The teachers could advise candidates to follow the bullet points as guidelines to write compressively a full account to get full marks. Use all four stimulus words exactly as they are stated in the question. These key points direct students to give a brief introduction to the topic and three timelines that they should use in their piece of writing. Candidates need to use style (register of language appropriately) and check grammar and spelling. Advise candidates to read the prompts carefully before they start writing their essays.

Sometimes some candidates select one option from Q6 but answer another by making a mistake such as crossing 6(a) and answering 6(b) or 6(c). Many had not met the basic requirement to get full marks because of either not being able to cover all three bullet points or not being able to show the ability to use past and future tenses correctly as the question intended to use. Respond to the bullet points as they are written and include examples of three timeframes and an opinion on this question. Ask them to use formal and standard written language as expected in the guidelines to suit the task rather than using the day-to-day spoken language. A few spellings were noticed using the colloquial style that is to be avoided. Also, a tendency to use transliterated forms of wording to replace the frequently used Bangla vocabulary needs to be addressed. Candidates are expected to use only the Bangla vocabulary as long as those are commonly used at this level.

Section C

In Section C, it was evident that most candidates showed excellent translation skills, as demonstrated by their accurate responses to the text.

Prep-tips

Question 7 requires candidates to translate English into Bangla. Candidates are advised to be mindful of the Bangla equivalent of English words and to read the English text sentence by sentence or meaningful chunk by chunk. Furthermore, candidates are advised to translate the text using additional space first before making any necessary amendments and writing the correct translation in the provided spaces. To effectively translate the given English text into Bangla, candidates could be encouraged to take one English phrase/clause/sentence at a time and translate it into Bangla before writing it as a meaningful passage with the correct sequence. p

General recommendations

- It is crucial to build a robust vocabulary and to understand grammar rules to enhance language proficiency.

- Candidates should not write very long or very short answers for questions 5 and 6. Advise candidates to see the number of words required in the instructions.

- Ensure candidates are prepared to complete all sections of the exam within the allocated time, they need to be provided with ample practice in time management and past papers.

- Candidates are also encouraged to participate in translation exercises and engage in regular practice to enhance their transmission skills.

- In conclusion, a considerable number of candidates showed linguistic flair at a level beyond what is expected. it is pleasant to see and acknowledge the efforts of the candidates who participated in the IGCSE BANGLA (4BA0/01) 2311 examination. Many of them have worked diligently to improve their language skills. With the right guidance and continued effort, candidates will undoubtedly continue to excel in their language proficiency.