

Scottish Certificate of Education

Proposed Arrangements in

Standard Grade Urdu

Foundation, General and Credit Levels in and
after 1989

NB The proposals contained in this report are issued for the purpose of consultation only and are not to be misunderstood as decisions affecting syllabuses and examinations.

PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS IN STANDARD GRADE URDU

Publication date: April 2000

Published by the Scottish Qualifications Authority

Hanover House	Ironmills Road
24 Douglas Street	Dalkeith
Glasgow	Midlothian
G2 7NQ	EH22 1LE

© The Scottish Qualifications Authority 2000

The information in this publication may be reproduced to support SQA qualifications. If it is to be used for any other purposes written permission must be obtained from the Publications Officer at the SQA, Glasgow.

Where the publication includes materials from sources other than SQA (secondary copyright), this material should only be reproduced for the purposes of examination or assessment. If it needs to be reproduced for any other purpose it is the centre's responsibility to obtain the necessary copyright clearance. The SQA's Question Paper Unit at Dalkeith may be able to direct you to the secondary sources.

This publication must not be reproduced for commercial or trade purposes.

Contents	Page
Introduction	4
Rationale	5
1 General Aims and Objectives of the Course	7
2 Summary of the Arrangements	11
3 Assessment Syllabus	13
4 Assessment for Certification	41
5 Writing – Assessment for Certification	47
6 Grade Related Criteria	49
Appendix	
Implications for Teaching and Organisation	58

Introduction

In April 1994, the Scottish Examination Board was invited by the Scottish Office Education Department to develop a Standard Grade examination in Urdu. A Working Group was constituted to take forward the development and proposed arrangements for Standard Grade Urdu at Foundation, General and Credit Levels were issued to interested bodies for comment in January 1996.

Examinations based on the arrangements set out in this document will be offered in and after 1998.

Rationale

Although Urdu is one of the most widely spoken community languages in the United Kingdom, the linguistic background of pupils wishing to follow a Standard Grade course in the language will be very varied. Some will be proficient and fluent speakers, some will be less so and others will be coming to Urdu as complete beginners; there will also be those who do not fall neatly into any of the foregoing categories and whose proficiency varies according to the skill being employed, ie Speaking, Listening, Reading or Writing.

It is considered, however, that the needs and aspirations of each of the above groups can best be served by the provision of a single set of assessment arrangements, and it is believed that the existing Arrangements for Modern Languages at Standard Grade offer the potential for sufficient flexibility in syllabus design to cater for a wide range of pupils. In particular, the arrangement whereby assessment in Writing is optional will offer opportunities for differentiated courses, and it is anticipated that fluent speakers and many who are developing bilinguals in Urdu will be strongly encouraged to attempt the external examination in this element.

Urdu is a Modern Language in the same way as French, German, Italian, Russian or Spanish. The following statement of aims is therefore that which appears in the Standard Grade Arrangements document for Modern Languages, updated where necessary.

Section 1

General Aims and Objectives of the Course

1 General Aims and Objectives of the Course

1 1 The teaching of Modern Languages should result in skills which are usable in themselves at age 16, in addition to serving as a springboard for further study by specialists in language and non-specialists alike.

1 2 The syllabus and assessment arrangements have, as their primary objective, the development of communicative competence and confidence among the pupils. By this is meant the promotion of real language in real use, enabling the language learner above all to speak, listen and read in real-life situations. In promoting speaking as a primary skill it has been kept particularly in mind that listening and speaking are interdependent and that speakers are interactive, most conversations having a purpose rather than being an occasion for mere language display.

An important implication of the Arrangements is therefore to encourage the use of the language in the classroom. In suggesting communication in and through the language as the primary objective of teaching, and in encouraging use of the language in the classroom, account has been taken of empirical evidence in educational and linguistic research. This research stresses that exposure to and use of the language being studied is the one element which should never be excluded and which fosters language acquisition most effectively.

1 3 The ability to communicate implies the ability to be communicated with, and our understanding of what we hear will always be greater than our capacity to speak. Nor does our understanding always show itself through answering questions, whatever language we use. Non-verbal reaction often demonstrates understanding, and may be used as part of the techniques of assessment.

1 4 A vitally important aim is to engage the pupil's interest and involvement. The third and fourth years at school will assume significance for pupils only if they can be made to feel the relevance and importance of their curriculum to their own life and development, and that languages are relevant to their general social, educational and vocational needs. In consequence, the Arrangements emphasise those language skills most likely to be useful to the pupils and which they may use, successfully, at every stage of the learning process: understanding the language when spoken and written, and speaking it.

1 5 The learning process itself, however, carries important social and educational implications. By focusing on the primary purpose of language use, namely, communication between people, pupils can be led to an awareness of the social strategies necessary in any dealings with others. Such things as forms of politeness, appropriate register, friendly demeanour, clear articulation, courteous disagreement are important in the development of socially adaptable young people, and may well find their most effective proving-ground in the modern languages classroom.

1 6 At the same time the focus on practical language skills in no way diminishes the necessity for proper attention being paid to the appropriate grammatical structures. Teachers of Modern Languages play an increasingly central role in providing this aspect of linguistic study for pupils in school.

1 7 The context in which the language is used should be rooted in the pupil's own interests and in real life wherever possible. The context is the country or countries where the language is spoken, but it may also be speakers of the language in this country, and these contexts should be used to stimulate interest both to develop language and to break down the natural insularity of pupils. "Broader horizons" is an expression that may be used literally in language classes.

1 8 As pupils learn to communicate within such contexts another objective assumes importance – that of developing their confidence. At this level it is important to know that communication can be achieved in the teeth of language mistakes, halting fluency, incomplete understanding and fresh starts. Pupils should be encouraged to face problems in language and overcome them, not blush for them. If the Standard Grade course is considered both as an end in itself and as a preparation for continuation at a future stage, then the pupils must be given a sense of confidence in what they can do, rather than a sense of inadequacy in what they do not know.

In developing the pupils' confidence in their ability to communicate about things which interest them, the teacher must also foster their ability to find things out for themselves. By fostering this capacity for self-reliance, the teacher will be equipping the pupils with an internal mechanism which will serve them not only in future language learning, but also in wider educational and social contexts.

1 9 In addition to developing greater levels of understanding and speaking, a further concern is to develop the essential skill of reading. It is a skill which is needed at all levels, and none more so than in specialist study in higher education. It is a skill which demands, for its proper development, continually increasing knowledge of the grammatical structure of the language. It is a skill which opens the windows into the society and culture of the other country. It is, however, a skill which too often has not been taught, but has rather been used in short bursts to illustrate points of grammar or as a check on the memorisation of vocabulary.

In the external examination, Standard Grade pupils will be required to demonstrate their reading ability through a range of different kinds of text and visual stimulus. Understanding (including reaction and response) will be tested by means of different types of question. The format of the examination will encourage the development of the skill of "skim" reading for the extraction of information, and a dictionary will be allowed, since this is a natural tool for any language user. Teachers will, therefore, find it essential to develop systematic strategies for the methodical and progressive development of those skills which are necessary to achieve fluency in reading. The use of the dictionary does not mean that systematic learning of vocabulary is to be neglected. Indeed, the degree of reliance on the dictionary is one clear indicator of the pupil's ability in reading the language.

1 10 It is acknowledged that writing constitutes a legitimate and valuable element in the teaching of the language, both as an aid to and as a consolidation of learning. It is also recognised that teachers and pupils require interludes of quiet work as a relief from a high frequency of concentrated oral work, and that this quiet work will include writing. Moreover, there is a case for regarding writing as a communicative skill which may be needed even at an elementary level.

However, it must be borne in mind that, despite the nomenclature, even Credit Level is still only a foundation in terms of the total process of language learning, and that at Standard Grade the writing skill, by exaggerating the effect of errors, can act as a depressant to real communicative confidence, in any evaluation system however weighted.

Writing is, of course, a practical language skill, but in real life it is the skill which is least used. The view is therefore taken that to include writing in the language as an obligatory part of the examination would attract to it a disproportionate part of the available teaching time, and thus would hinder the achievement of the central aim. It is therefore concluded that it would be more advantageous to remove writing in the language from the assessment on which the overall award is based. It is emphasised, however, that writing remains a legitimate part of the teacher's armoury of teaching techniques.

The written mode will be covered by an optional paper at each of General and Credit Levels. Success in this paper will be recorded on the Certificate but will not contribute to the overall grade of award.

The option arrangement for writing in the language offers a great measure of flexibility in the design of courses appropriate to the needs of all pupils.

Section 2

Summary of the Arrangements

2 Summary of the Arrangements

2 1 Syllabus

- a) The syllabus is based on communicative needs.
- b) The same syllabus is common to all pupils.
- c) Although the syllabus is presented in terms of **Reading and Listening**, and **Speaking**, it recognises that, in practical use of the language, these elements are interdependent.
- d) It espouses authentic texts and real life language use.
- e) It prescribes topic areas and language functions.
- f) It describes what pupils have to do in terms of tasks.
- g) It allows different performance levels to be achieved within the common syllabus.
- h) It does not impose a defined specification of language.

2 2 Assessment

2 2 1 **Speaking** is viewed as an essential element in assessment of Modern Languages, indeed as the most important element. It is accordingly weighted at 50% of the whole. The arrangements for assessment of Speaking have been arrived at in the light of the following considerations.

- a) It would not be practicable within the permitted cost limits to attempt to test every pupil in Speaking by external examiner.
- b) Ability to speak in the language cannot be fairly assessed by a single, short, formal proficiency test.

These considerations led to the conclusion that there is no viable alternative to internal assessment of this element.

Accordingly, awards in Speaking will be based on internal assessment of pupils' performance in speaking activities carried out during the course. Arrangements to ensure that this assessment is carried out in accordance with a common national standard are described in 4 7.

2 2 2 **Listening and Reading** are each weighted at 25%.

In each case there will be three separate papers each containing the items appropriate to one of the three Levels. These papers will be externally set and assessed.

2 2 3 For the reasons explained in 1 10, assessment of the element **Writing** in the language will be optional, and offered at General and Credit Levels only. The award in Writing will not be aggregated into the overall grade of award, but will be recorded separately on the Certificate. In this way, the overall award is achieved without the Writing element.

Papers will be externally set and assessed.

Section 3

Assessment Syllabus

3 Assessment Syllabus

- 3 1 Introduction
- 3 2 Reading and Listening
- 3 3 Speaking
- 3 4 The Question of Defining a Language Syllabus
- 3 5 Guidelines on Language for Productive Use (Urdu)

3 1 *Introduction*

This syllabus gives priority to communicative ability and emphasises what pupils can do rather than merely what they know.

In the elaboration of the syllabus an attempt has been made to identify certain communicative needs that are essential for all pupils. Language skills at different levels differ not in kind but in the degree of subtlety, refinement or sophistication with which they are used. Accordingly, there will be a single, common through-syllabus for all Levels. The assessment system is designed to allow pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their maximum attainment in each element.

The assessment syllabus provides the common ground within which the pupils are assessed and within which they show how competent they are. This common ground is defined by the syllabus in the following ways:

- it defines the purposes of reading, listening and speaking;
- it prescribes topic areas and language functions;
- it describes the kinds of texts on which the reading and listening skills are to be assessed;
- it describes the types of assessment tasks which have to be carried out.

The syllabus therefore describes what is to be assessed. It does not constitute a ready-made teaching programme. It does not dictate or set limits on what is to be taught, how it is to be taught or in which order. It cannot decide what is of local or particular interest to individual pupils: it cannot decide between the motor show and the agricultural show. It does not provide or stipulate specific teaching materials. It will be a major element in the design of schemes of work in schools but it is not in itself a teaching syllabus.

The syllabus is organised into two parts:

- Reading and Listening (receptive)
- Speaking (productive).

While such a two-part division is not always reflected in reality, nevertheless, for the sake of order and clarity of presentation, it is felt that such an organisation is justified here.

3 2 *Reading and Listening*

3 2 1 Purposes

3 2 2 Prescribed Topic Areas for Reading and Listening

3 2 3 The Nature of the Texts

3 2 4 Texts for Reading

3 2 5 Texts for Listening

3 2 6 Tasks for Reading and Listening

3 2 7 Differentiation

3 2 1 Purposes

At Standard Grade the prime assessable purpose of Reading and Listening is considered to be to obtain information of various kinds and from various sources of interest.

3 2 2 Prescribed Topic Areas for Reading and Listening

- People and personal relationships
- Home
- Family
- School
- Work
- Leisure
- Holidays and travel
- Environment, places and facilities
- Food and drink
- Goods and services
- Accidents and emergencies
- Events, concerns and ideas of adolescent and general interest.

Adoption of a single through-syllabus for all pupils means that these topic areas are prescribed for all pupils. For example, within the broad area of **holidays**, a variety of texts could be found suitable for use at different Levels. It is not the topic area in itself which is the differentiating element. Differentiation is discussed in 3 2 7 below.

3 2 3 The Nature of the Texts

Authenticity will be one of the essential principles guiding the choice of materials. By that is meant materials which were originally designed by native speakers for a real purpose, not by examiners as a test.

Such purposes include

- a) **to inform** by presenting, for example, information of a functional kind such as prices, instructions, objective reports;
- b) **to persuade** by presenting, for example, a particular point of view;

3 2 3 (continued)

- c) **to entertain** by presenting material of general interest and of particular interest to adolescents.

It is considered that all pupils should be presented, to some extent, with material serving all three purposes and that no pupil should be limited to purely functional information such as signs, notices and announcements.

3 2 4 Texts for Reading

Examples of sources and content are

a) Personal

From correspondence; letters from individuals; from a class (handwritten or typed); enclosures such as descriptions, opinions or explanatory accounts accompanying photos, etc, of people, places, events, etc.

Personal correspondence may be considered as a kind of one-way conversation at a distance. Any topic area from 3 2 2 is relevant to the kind of reading described here.

b) Public

- (i) Information/instructions/advice/requests/warnings/rules/advertisements to be found in

- brochures, leaflets, labels, signs (including street signs), notices, posters, publicity hand-outs

issued by

- restaurants, hotels, camp sites, leisure establishments, shops, stations, airports, tourist offices, local and national organisations and so on.

- (ii) Interviews/reports/investigations/news in brief/local information/advertisements/reviews/discussions/readers' letters/features to be found in

- magazines, including magazines for adolescents, books and other published material.

Graphics and illustrations which occur in the originals may be retained.

It is not thought that it would be helpful to identify any one specific source with any particular Level. In a newspaper, for example, it might be possible to find texts suitable for any of the Levels. It is not the source which in itself differentiates. Differentiation is discussed in 3 2 7 below.

3 2 5 Texts for Listening

It is much more difficult to respect the principle of authenticity in listening.

Examples of sources and content are

a) Personal

- Taped messages
- Conversations between fluent speakers
- Information, directions and so on, given by a fluent speaker
- Anecdotes.

b) Public

- Announcements made in public places such as in airports, stations and supermarkets.
- TV and radio items such as local events and information/anecdotes/ interviews/ discussions/news items/weather reports/phone-in programmes/ publicity items/ traffic reports.

Appropriate sound effects may be used and future developments may allow the use of video.

3 2 6 Tasks for Reading and Listening

The need for authentic materials has already been stressed. An attempt must now be made to define authenticity in terms of tasks. What constitutes a realistic and meaningful task? What is to be asked of a pupil faced with a text?

By the word “tasks” is meant those activities

- which do more than test knowledge of discrete items of vocabulary;
- which involve not only finding information but also applying it to a situation;
- which involve a personal response.

The concern, therefore, is less with the gathering of a series of discrete bits of information than with the use of information derived from authentic language.

Tasks may involve working from one text or more than one text as a source. They may involve seeking factual information as well as giving opinions and stating personal reactions. They may involve matching information, assessing conflicting points of view or using given information to make decisions or choices.

a) Examples of task types

- Investigating the suitability of holiday locations or packages.
- Choosing clothes/meals/gifts within the limits of price and personal preferences.
- Deciding on the most suitable penfriend from a selection offered.
- Planning a night out.
- Deciding what to watch on television or listen to on the radio.
- Finding how to do things from instructions.
- Discovering and reacting to particular points of view expressed.
- Finding out about and commenting on particular aspects of life in the foreign country, or elsewhere as seen by the inhabitants of the country.
- Finding information from stories and features of human interest.

3 2 6 (continued)

b) Presentation of the tasks

Since many of these tasks involve setting up a realistic situation, the presentation might well be directed to the pupil in the following way:

You are planning to go out

You only have a limited amount of money

You have to be back by 11 o'clock

Do **you** think it would be worthwhile

Is there anything else **you** think

Do **you** think this would be an interesting place to go to?

Would it suit **you**?

How convincing do **you** find this argument against

It follows that Yes/No questions, open-ended questions and questions demanding a personal reaction will all find a place in the more realistic tasks envisaged here, provided that evidence from the texts is demanded in support of the answers given.

3 2 7 Differentiation

Given the overlap of sources, topic areas and general task types, how will tests be constructed to allow differentiation of performance to emerge? In essence this depends upon differentiation both by text and by task.

a) Differentiation by text

(i) The language of the texts

Some of the factors which make texts more or less difficult are simplicity or sophistication of structure and the degree of familiarity of vocabulary. However imprecise these descriptions may be, different levels of language difficulty will remain a major factor in differentiation.

(ii) The length of the texts.

(iii) The density of the texts

This relates to how explicit or implicit the information is and how difficult it is to dig out the meaning.

(iv) The content of the texts

Here it is a question of the level of difficulty posed by the ideas the text is intended to convey. Increasing demands are placed on the pupil as the ideas move from

familiar	----->	unfamiliar
personal	----->	impersonal
concrete	----->	abstract
immediate	----->	distant.

Take as an example an item from several newspapers about a forthcoming event. One might simply indicate when and where the event is to take place. Another might give details of what exactly is to be happening. Another might attempt to describe whether or not it will be interesting or worth attending. A fourth might indicate the writer's subjective attitude towards it.

3 2 7 (continued)

(v) The speed of delivery

In listening, this is an important factor. At Foundation Level the speech will be slow and clearly enunciated, rising at upper Levels to a pace more normal to the speaker. At no Level, however, will the speed of delivery be so slow as to cause distortion of natural speech patterns. Certain set formulae will be delivered at normal speed throughout. Some texts by their very nature will be relatively deliberate in pace at all Levels, eg public announcements, the giving of directions or instructions.

b) Differentiation by task

While the general principles governing the choice of task types apply to all Levels, clearly the particular information to be extracted from a text and the use to which it is to be put will be important in differentiating between Levels. In this respect, the level of cognitive difficulty of the text may well be reflected in the task as well.

It is more difficult to assess information and come to a reasoned conclusion than merely to report or relay information. For example, finding out when the circus starts is a less daunting task than weighing up the pros and cons of a debate on the morality of using animals for our entertainment.

Extensive verbal responses will be more demanding than placing a cross on a map or placing a tick on the paper.

A task might be more difficult if more than one text is used as a source.

The construction of the test is also a factor in differentiation insofar as the pupils are expected to demonstrate pace and stamina in reading as they progress through the texts.

3 3 *Speaking*

3 3 1 Purposes

3 3 2 Prescribed Topic Areas and Functions

3 3 3 Settings

3 3 4 Tasks and Activities

3 3 5 Differentiation

3 3 1 Purposes

It is considered to be of prime importance that pupils should be able to take part in conversations involving the exchange of information, whether this be in a personal, social or a more transactional-tourist context and that they should be able to respect the basic social conventions that these situations involve.

3 3 2 Prescribed Topic Areas and Functions

The productive syllabus is again a single through-syllabus for all pupils. It prescribes a number of topic areas and language functions.

a) Topic areas

These are:

- Self
- Home
- Family/Daily routine
- School
- Work
- Leisure
- Holidays and travel
- Environment, places and facilities
- Food and drink
- Goods and services
- Accidents and emergencies
- Events (past, present, future), concerns and ideas of adolescent and general interest
- Clothes and fashion
- People
- Personal belongings/Pets/Money
- Places
- Immediate plans
- Time/Dates
- Weather
- Morale (happy, bored, etc)
- Physical state (hungry, ill, etc).

b) Functions

In the context of Standard Grade, “functions” are defined as the purposes for which the language is being used. The following are regarded as the most appropriate for a syllabus at this stage.

- Greeting/Taking leave
- Being polite/sociable
- Attracting attention
- Introducing someone
- Expressing good wishes
- Thanking
- Apologising
- Agreeing/Disagreeing
- Refusing/Accepting
- Approving/Disapproving
- Coping with language problems

- Asking about (topic area)
- Stating facts about (topic area)

- Opinions/Feelings
- Likes/Dislikes
- Reasons
- Needs/Requests/Wishes
- Instructions/Commands
- Intentions
- Permission
- Inviting
- Suggesting
- Offering.

In many cases the functions are seen as working in two directions. For example, the function “Likes/Dislikes” means both expressing likes and dislikes and asking about someone else’s. Similarly, “needs” will mean expressing needs and asking about someone else’s.

It is not to be assumed that each of these functions can be developed to the same extent. **Refusing** and **accepting**, for example, are not likely to present the linguistic possibilities offered by **giving** one’s **reasons** for some action or other. Many of the first eleven functions listed (those which are grouped together first in the framework which follows) will be realised through the set language of conventional formulae.

To put it another way, these first eleven functions will tend to be very specific and restricted both in the language form they take and in the use to which they are put. The other functions are more open-ended in both respects, representing, to some extent, clusters of functions rather than individual, specific ones. Thus, **asking about** could involve asking about who, what, how, where, when, why, how much. **Giving instructions** could involve giving someone directions and saying when to turn up or, in a different context, explaining how to do something or how something works.

- c) A framework of the prescribed topic areas and functions in Speaking is set out on the next page to give an overall view.

Language Functions

Topic Areas	Greeting/taking leave Being polite/sociable Attracting attention Introducing someone Expressing good wishes Thanking Apologising Agreeing/Disagreeing Refusing/Accepting Approving/Disapproving Coping with language problems	Asking about (topic area) Stating facts about (topic area)	Opinions/Feelings	Likes/Dislikes	Reasons	Needs/Requests/Wishes	Instructions/Commands	Intentions	Permission	Inviting	Suggesting	Offering
Self												
Home												
Family/Daily routine												
School												
Work												
Leisure												
Holidays and travel												
Environment, places and facilities												
Food and drink												
Goods and services												
Accidents and emergencies												
Events (past, present, future), concerns and ideas of adolescent and general interest												
Clothes and fashion												
People												
Personal belongings/ Pets/Money												
Places												
Immediate plans												
Time/Dates												
Weather												
Morale (happy, bored, etc)												
Physical state (hungry, ill, etc)												

3 3 2 (continued)

- d) These topic areas and functions should be covered at several points of the teaching programme and at increasing levels of difficulty. During the assessments, therefore, pupils should not find themselves in completely strange territory.
- e) Together, the topic areas and functions provide the stuff of the communicative activities and tasks which form the essential aims of the syllabus. Here are two examples.
- (i) A task might involve exchanging information with someone about your school.

Within the topic area “School”, the following functions might be relevant:

Asking about	location/transport/subjects/
Stating facts about	teachers/examinations/
Likes/Dislikes	class hours/homework/etc.

- (ii) If the task involved deciding what to watch on TV one night, then within the topic area “Leisure”, appropriate functions might be:

Opinions	kinds of programme/personalities/
Likes/Dislikes	starting and finishing times/
Intentions	clashes/etc.

3 3 5 b) gives further examples.

- f) The syllabus, therefore, allows both the exchanges of a personal nature suggested in the two examples as well as familiar tourist-based, transactional conversations. However, such a distinction is to a large extent artificial, dividing lines are blurred and the one does not exclude the other. Indeed, much spoken language is used to be sociable, to oil the social wheels by finding a topic of conversation, eg the weather, that allows some exchange to take place. The triviality of such exchanges is often irrelevant to the purposes they serve: we often talk about the weather but only sometimes are we interested in the information exchanged. Rarely do we set ourselves in advance the task of exchanging such information – it usually just crops up. Topic areas, therefore, may occur in conversations even if they are not an essential part of a genuine exchange of information.

3 3 3 Settings

Since the intention is to encourage the use of language in situations as real as possible, the activities will normally fall into two main settings:

with a fluent speaker in Scotland

and/or with a fluent speaker abroad.

Certain task areas seem to derive naturally from these settings and are elaborated in 3 3 4 below.

3 3 4 Tasks and Activities

- a) What the pupils have to do within the syllabus, the assessment tasks they have to carry out, should conform to these general principles.
- (i) The pupils will be themselves and will not have to play a different role. (This will not always be true in the teaching situation, where practical considerations and the use of the imagination will require that pupils play other roles.)
 - (ii) Assessment tasks should be authentic as far as possible in reflecting potential real-life situations.
 - (iii) The context of the task will be made clear; the pupils will know the physical setting, to whom they are talking and what they have to do.
 - (iv) The pupils will not be directed to use any particular items of language.
 - (v) The pupils will be expected to cope with any difficulties by using the language.
 - (vi) Some genuine exchange of information not held by the other person in advance may take place (ie there may be an information-gap).
 - (vii) As far as possible some element of unpredictability will arise.
- b) From the topic areas and functions a number of tasks can be created. The syllabus does not attempt to specify a set list of specific tasks for assessment. Instead, examples of task-types and activities are given in 3 3 4 c) and 3 3 4 d).
- c) The settings identified in 3 3 3 suggest such tasks as:
- (i) With a fluent speaker in Scotland
 - Meeting people
 - Giving/asking for information about self and other's family
 - Explaining about facilities and routine in the home
 - Asking what they need; offering food/drink, etc
 - Planning activities
 - Explaining about local facilities and transport.
 - (ii) With a fluent speaker abroad
 - Getting there
 - Giving/asking for information about self and other's family
 - Meeting people
 - Asking about facilities and routine in the home
 - Coping at mealtimes
 - Planning activities
 - Asking about local facilities and transport
 - Obtaining goods, services, help (travelling, eating out, shopping, cinema, accommodation, etc).

These would involve both the personal and transactional modes (3 3 2 f)).

3 3 4 (continued)

d) Other tasks will not be specific to one setting or context and will involve

- Talking about
- Asking about
- Discussing
- Explaining
- Finding out about
- Arguing about
- Getting things done
- Making arrangements

and so on about the events and subjects of the topic areas.

Here the possibility arises of exchanging personal attitudes as well as factual information.

3 3 5 Differentiation

How is differentiation to be realised in the context of a through-syllabus of topic areas and functions for all pupils? Clearly pupils achieving upper grades will show richer, more versatile and accurate language and an ability to cope with more sophisticated tasks and activities. Differentiation within the receptive syllabus has been discussed (3 2 7) and some of the issues raised, notably that concerning the content, apply here. However, in this, the productive mode, other factors must be considered, notably the different nature of this interactional activity and the role of the interlocutor.

a) Differentiation by tasks and activities set

Precise descriptions about what makes one task potentially more difficult than another are open to debate; such descriptions can serve only as tentative indicators of the relative difficulty. For practical purposes, the following indications might be helpful.

shorter	----->	longer
simple	----->	composite/complex
closely-defined	----->	open-ended
little unpredictability	----->	more unpredictability
immediate	----->	distant
factual/concrete	----->	abstract
familiar	----->	unfamiliar
particular	----->	general
personal	----->	impersonal

Not all of these characteristics, nor indeed any particular one, need be present to ensure a particular level of difficulty.

b) Some examples

- (i) A task might involve giving information about one's family. Here the basic task might demand simple factual information such as name, age of self, siblings, whether there is a pet, etc. It might be developed to include some discussion of attitudes, impressions, what others think, eg no dog because parent(s) would not accept the extra work, making comparisons with other families.
- (ii) If the task were to talk of leisure interests, a development over and above factual information might entail giving some indication of future ambitions or how these interests compete for time with school work, in what way a particular interest might be recommended, or a more detailed account of a particular incident.
- (iii) A task which involved arranging to go out might allow at a basic level a simple proposal and acceptance. A development of the task might prevent early agreement and require negotiation and discussion before an acceptable compromise is reached. This could involve exchanging information, making a proposal, accepting, resisting, coming to a provisional conclusion, modifying the conclusion in the light of subsequent information and eventually perhaps reaching a compromise agreement. Such a development clearly demands considerable initiative and language resource.

c) Differentiation by pupil performance

(i) Language used

Sections *a)* and *b)* above show that the more a task is developed the greater will be the demands on the language resource. A steady monotony of monosyllables is not going to allow a task to be developed in a sophisticated way. Greater development within the task will as a rule demand a greater range of structure and lexis and a higher level of performance will reflect greater appropriacy, accuracy and fluency.

(ii) Willingness to communicate

A high level of performance will not be achieved without an extensive knowledge of the language, but factors other than such knowledge will be taken into account when evaluating pupils' performance: willingness to attempt to communicate, to interact in conversation, to take the initiative, to go beyond uniformly minimal responses, to accept some responsibility for sustaining the dialogue.

d) The role of the interlocutor

The interlocutor's role is a crucial one in what is a live performance without a fixed script. The complexity of language used by the interlocutor, the pace of his/her speech and his/her attitude may be used as other differentiating factors. While a helpful and encouraging attitude will normally be expected, a particular task may require the interlocutor to adopt a deliberately less cooperative and less sympathetic role. It is the interlocutor's responsibility to ensure that the pupils are given the opportunity to reveal both their communicative ability and their language repertoire.

3 3 5 (continued)

It will be evident from the previous paragraphs that the through-syllabus allows for both qualitative and quantitative differences. Even though pupils will not all have been taught to the same level, differentiation will still be achieved in the same assessment syllabus.

3 4 *The Question of Defining a Language Syllabus*

3 4 1 In the previous sections dealing with the receptive and productive aspects of the Assessment Syllabus, no attempt has been made to set out a linguistic specification. How closely should a national testing syllabus define the language to be tested? Is there a place for a prescribed list of the actual vocabulary, grammar, idiom and structure to be tested?

3 4 2 Any attempt to reduce the linguistic content of authentic texts to a list of predictable items would place such arbitrary limits on the receptive language possibilities that the authenticity of the texts would be compromised to an unacceptable extent through reduction or distortion. Pupils would no longer be dealing with authentic material. The syllabus would have become the strait-jacket.

3 4 3 In productive use, there can be no binding, permanent equivalence between the meaning to be communicated and any particular language form chosen to communicate that meaning at any particular time.

Considering the idea of obligation in the statement **I've got (to go)** in, for example, French, would one specify

- Il faut que (je parte)
- Je dois (m'en aller)
- Je m'en vais

or others?

It would surely be absurd to distinguish between various levels, ie to suggest that the first of these versions was superior, the third basic and the second somewhere in between (or a different ordering). It would be only a small step from that position to suggest that a pupil who could learn a list of language prescribed for a grade and reproduce it on the day of a test should earn an award on that grade, or that the converse would apply if another pupil used none of the language predetermined on the list as appropriate to that grade.

3 4 4 In receptive terms, such a specification would militate against the use of authentic language. In productive speaking tests it would leave the pupil less free to express his/her meaning in the way he/she found most fitting and would result in the use of the spoken language as a form of language display rather than communication. It might place too heavy an emphasis on strict accuracy at the stage where it is important to encourage confidence in trying to use the language purposefully rather than trying to avoid error by "playing safe". Moreover, it could tie the hand of teachers in exploiting language topics corresponding to real pupil interests and needs.

3 4 5 In view of these considerations, there is no **detailed** specification of language items.

3 4 6 On the other hand, performance cannot be divorced from increasing knowledge and use of the language. The Grade Related Criteria indicate an increasing ability to communicate with greater linguistic sophistication. The achievement of a higher grade therefore reflects the assimilation of an increased language resource. As a consequence, it would seem helpful to provide at least a broad indication of guidelines on basic grammar appropriate to Grade 6 and the extension to Grade 1. These guidelines are presented below.

3 5 *Guidelines on Language for Productive Use: Urdu*

3 5 1 Introduction

Several points must be stressed at the outset.

- a) It must be clearly understood that what is under consideration in this section is only the language it might be reasonable to expect from pupils when they are speaking, that is to say, engaged in active face-to-face communication. It is not a matter of describing the full range of language pupils might have to understand in what they hear or read.
- b) The contents which follow constitute only a working guide and are not intended to be complete and definitive.
- c) The guidelines do not have the status of basic minimum requirements and the use by pupils of any particular grammatical items will not guarantee the achievement of any particular level of performance.
- d) The guidelines must not be taken as describing the sum total of what should be taught. They do not represent a language teaching syllabus which would, in any case, normally be expected to go well beyond what pupils actually produce in performance.

3 5 2 Presentation

The classification used to present the language goes beyond that of traditional grammatical categories. In 3 5 4 the guidelines are set out on a notional basis; in 3 5 5 on a grammatical basis. The central and indispensable role of grammar in communication is recognised and an attempt is made here to relate it to the ideas which the syllabus requires the pupils to convey.

The scale from Grade 6 to Grade 1 which runs through the classification reflects an increasing grammar and language resource across the Levels. It also presupposes an increase in accuracy.

3 5 3 Summary

Grade 6

Extent and quality of language are adequate for basic communication; little nuance is achieved.

(A blank in this column in the guidelines below does not imply that the item is totally absent from a pupil's performance at this grade. It may appear in set phrases.)

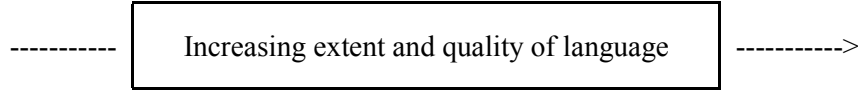
Grade 1

Extent and quality of language allow nuance beyond basic communication; control of system is evident; increased correctness of form.

(A blank in this column in the guidelines below implies increasing sophistication in use.)

Grade 6

Grade 1

**Time**

Present, Past and Future	realised through appropriate verb forms and aspects	----->	
Clock Time	basic clock times, including digital	----->	all clock times
Points in Time	eg morning/evening/dates	----->	wide range, including important festivals and dates
Frequency	common expressions eg	----->	wide range

الشر - ہمیشہ - کبھی نہیں

Space

Location	common postpositions and adverbs eg	----->	all common postpositions with oblique case markers; all common adverbs
-----------------	--	--------	--

پیر - میں - اوپر - نیچے
یہاں - وہاں

Movement	eg ideas of coming going going in/out arriving leaving	----->	eg ideas of going back going forward turning going away coming near
	common means of transport	----->	

Grade 6

Grade 1

-----> Increasing extent and quality of language ----->

Quantity

Numbers basic -----> all numbers and
 (1-20, 25, 30, 35, 40 etc up to 100)
 and fractions ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$) fractions

Measurement basic units of: -----> wider range

distance eg

میل - کلومیٹر

weight eg

پونڈ - کلو

liquids eg

بوٹل - لیٹر

solids eg

ٹکڑا - پیریا

amount eg

اتنا جتنا

Degree

صورت - بہت

----->

Grade 6

Grade 1

-----> Increasing extent and quality of language ----->

Characteristics

Physical Descriptions of People	eg size/hair/eyes/age	----->	wide range of description
Personality and State	eg nice/intelligent/happy happy	----->	wide range of description
Basic Ailments	eg ill	----->	wide range of description
Physical Appearance of Things	eg colour/size condition eg broken	----->	wide range of description

Evaluation

price:	cheap/expensive	----->	wide range of description
judgement:	common expressions of approval/disapproval	----->	
true/false		----->	
easy/difficult		----->	
stock formulae, eg		----->	

آء - واوا - اوو - ءءء

-----> Increasing extent and quality of language <----->

Relationships

comparison (as in **Quantity:**
Degree above) ----->

possession – alienable and inalienable –
in basic expressions -----> more complex expressions
eg

میرا - میرے پاس

negation ----->
eg

نہیں

logical relationships ----->
eg

اور - بھی - یا - لیکن

اسلئے - کیلئے - اگر... تو

People and Things

direct and oblique forms of pronouns ----->
eg

میں - آپ - وہ
مجھے - آپ کو - ان کو

interrogatives -----> all interrogatives
eg

کون - کیا

Grade 6

Grade 1

-----> Increasing extent and quality of language ----->

-----> relative pronouns
eg

جو۔ جس کا

-----> indefinites
eg

کوئی۔ کچھ۔ سب

others:

کچھ نہیں

-----> others
eg

سارا۔ کافی۔ کچھ

Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form

Adjectives

inflected, eg

چھوٹا - چھوٹی - چھوٹے

uninflected, eg

آسان

possessive, eg

میرا
ہمارا

correct use of

اپنا

interrogative:

کون - کتنا - کیسا

demonstrative:

اس کا - اُس کا
ان کا - اُن کا

Adverbscommon adverbs
such as:

جلدی - آہستہ

wide range

-----> Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form <----->

Nouns (Direct)

Masculine, eg ----->

گھر - لڑکا

Feminine, eg ----->

عورت - لڑکی

Plural, eg ----->

گھروں - لڑکے
عورتیں - لڑکیاں

Nouns (Oblique)

Masculine, eg ----->

گھر - لڑکے

Feminine ----->

no change

Plural, eg ----->

گھروں - لڑکوں
عورتوں - لڑکیوں

Nouns (Irregular)

پانی - آدمی - بھائی

----->

most other common
irregulars

Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form

Pronouns

Personal All subject pronouns in
direct form, eg ----->

میں - آپ - وہ

All object/oblique
pronouns, eg ----->

مجھے - اس - ان - اُس - اُن

Use of special
oblique forms with نے
eg

انہوں نے

Demonstrative ----->

یہ - اس کا - ان کا
وہ - اُس کا - اُن کا

Indefinite ----->

کوئی - سب
کچھ - دونوں

Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form

Interrogative

کون - کیا

Relative

جو - جس سے - جس کو

Verbs

Use of appropriate forms to make requests,
give commands/advice
eg

دیکھئے - بتائیں - مٹ جائیں

Use of **ہے** and **تھا** to
locate actions and events in time
eg

مجھے سسر درد ہے -
مجھے سسر درد تھا -

Grade 6

Grade 1

Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form

Use of appropriate forms to indicate
Uncompleted and completed actions
eg

ہوں - تھا

Basic use of نا forms
eg

مجھے ٹینس کھیلنا پسند ہے +
مجھے ہسپتال جانا ہے +

Some mastery of
subjunctive forms,
eg

آپ کو کوٹ لانا چاہیے -

Grade 6

Grade 1

Growing evidence of control of system
and correctness of form

Negatives

eg

نہیں

----->

نہ and نہت
with commands

Interrogative

use of appropriate
question words

----->

Postpositions

common postpositions
such as:

----->

wide range

پہر - میں - تک - سے - کو

Connectors

eg

لیکن - یا - اور

----->

wide range, including
common correlatives
eg

اگر - کہ - کیونکہ

Section 4

Assessment for Certification

4 Assessment for Certification

- 4 1 Pattern of Assessment
- 4 2 Certification
- 4 3 Presentations for External Papers
- 4 4 Grade 7 and No Overall Award
- 4 5 Reading
- 4 6 Listening
- 4 7 Speaking
- 4 8 Estimates

4 1 *Pattern of Assessment*

Pupils will be assessed in the three assessable elements of Reading, Listening and Speaking. For the reasons set out in 1 10, Writing has been excluded from mainstream assessment, to appear as an option at General and Credit Levels.

Speaking will be internally assessed at all Levels with external moderation.

Reading and Listening will be externally assessed at all Levels.

Writing will be externally assessed at General and Credit Levels where the option is taken up.

4 2 *Certification*

The Certificate will record an overall award on a 7-point scale of grades, Grade 1 being the highest. The Certificate will also record attainment in each of the three assessable elements. The overall award will be derived from the mean of the element grades, with Speaking having double weighting.

If a pupil attempts the Writing option and succeeds in terms of the Grade Related Criteria, the award will be entered on the Certificate. No mention of Writing will appear on the Certificate of a pupil who has not attempted the option, or of a pupil who has attempted the option but has failed to meet the Grade Related Criteria.

4 3 *Presentations for External Papers*

Pupils presented for the examination may attempt the written papers at two adjacent Levels, ie, Foundation and General or General and Credit, but may not attempt both the Foundation and Credit Level papers in any element(s). Pupils are not obliged to attempt papers at two Levels but in most cases are advised to do so, since, other than as the result of an appeal, pupils can only be awarded one of the grades assessed by the paper(s) attempted, or Grade 7 for the element(s) concerned. Pupils who attempt papers at two Levels will be awarded the better of the two grades achieved on these papers. Performance at one Level will not be taken into account in grading at the other Level.

4 3 (continued)

The following table may be a helpful guide to papers which pupils are advised to attempt:

<i>Expected External Grade</i>	<i>Papers</i>	<i>Grades Assessed</i>
7, 6	Foundation	6, 5
5, 4	Foundation and General	6, 5, 4, 3
3, 2, 1	General and Credit	4, 3, 2, 1

This arrangement allows in each case for the award of a grade higher or lower than expected (except at Grades 1 and 7 respectively). A pupil expected to achieve either Grade 7 or Grade 6 may attempt both the Foundation and General Level papers.

Irrespective of external papers attempted, the full range of grades is available for the internally assessed element (Speaking).

4 4 *Grade 7 and No Overall Award*

For Reading, Listening, and Speaking, Grade 7 will indicate that the pupil has, in the element concerned, completed the course but has not demonstrated achievement of any specified level of performance as defined by the Grade Related Criteria. Grade 7 in an element will not be available to external pupils.

The Board will regard the submission of an estimate grade for an externally assessed element as evidence that the course has been completed in that element.

Pupils who have not complied with the assessment requirements in any element (eg due to unauthorised absence from the external examination) will be deemed not to have completed the course in that element. Such pupils **will not receive a grade** for that element and hence **will not receive an overall award** for the subject. In such cases, however, grade(s) for the other element(s) will be recorded on the Certificate.

4 5 *Reading*

4 5 1 Reading will be assessed by an external examination. There will be three separate papers, one at each Level.

The time allocations of the papers will be as follows:

Foundation Level	–	45 minutes
General Level	–	45 minutes
Credit Level	–	1 hour.

4 5 2 Marks will be allocated to each question and a total mark obtained. The two grades associated with each Level will be distinguished by setting two cut-off scores. The lower score will reflect a satisfactory overall standard of performance, the upper score a high overall standard of performance.

4 5 3 Questions will be set in English and pupils will answer in English. Questions may require extraction of detailed information from the text in response to specific questioning, or they may require more general responses. At each Level, items and questions eliciting both types of response will be set. There will be a progression in difficulty, and usually in length, from Foundation to Credit Level. The items will range from a few words or phrases at Foundation Level, to reasonably lengthy passages at Credit Level. There will be a number of items set at each Level. The items within each paper will be connected by a thematic development which will be stated in English; they will not be presented in isolation.

The items, which will be drawn from authentic sources, will be chosen to reflect the topic areas set out 3 2 2. However, it is clearly not possible to cover all of the topic areas in any one year. The nature of the items may vary from year to year, using utilitarian, personal, journalistic, discursive, or literary material. No one type of material will be considered appropriate for only one particular Level.

Responses expected from pupils will vary from a few words to a detailed answer. At Foundation Level, long answers will not be expected.

Pupils will be allowed to use an English-Urdu / Urdu-English dictionary.

4 5 4 Centres will be required to provide for each pupil an estimate grade for Reading.

4 6 *Listening*

4 6 1 Listening will be assessed by an external examination. There will be three separate papers, one at each Level.

The time allocations of the papers will be as follows:

Foundation Level	–	25 minutes (approximately)
General Level	–	25 minutes (approximately)
Credit Level	–	30 minutes (approximately).

Material will be presented on tape and will be heard twice.

4 6 2 Marks will be allocated to each question and a total mark obtained. The two grades associated with each Level will be distinguished by setting two cut-off scores. The lower score will reflect a satisfactory overall standard of performance, the upper score a high overall standard of performance.

4 6 3 Questions will be set in English and pupils will answer in English. Questions may require the extraction of detailed information from the items in response to specific questioning, or they may require more general responses. At each Level, items and questions eliciting both types of responses will be set. There will be a progression in difficulty, and usually in length, from Foundation to Credit Level. The items, which may be spoken by one or more than one person, will range from a few words or phrases at Foundation Level, to reasonably lengthy passages at Credit Level. There will be a number of items set at each Level. The items within each paper will be connected by a thematic development which will be stated in English; they will not be presented in isolation.

4 6 3 (continued)

The introduction, linking material and questions, all of which will be in English, will be both recorded on tape and printed in the question paper.

The items will be chosen to reflect the topic areas set out in 3 2 2. However, it is clearly not possible to cover all of the topic areas in any one year. From year to year the nature of the items may vary, using utilitarian, personal, journalistic, or discursive material. No one type of material will be considered appropriate for only one particular Level.

Responses expected from pupils will vary from a few words to a detailed answer. At Foundation Level, long answers will not be expected.

4 6 4 Centres will be required to provide for each pupil an estimate grade for Listening.

4 7 *Speaking*

4 7 1 The grade awarded for Speaking will reflect the pupil's performance in internally devised activities.

- a) For certification purposes centres will be required to assess, for each pupil, a number of Speaking activities which arise out of normal class work.

This assessment will allow scope for individual initiative and freedom to departments to develop their own teaching syllabus and to devise their own methods of assessing it – methods which may include varieties of assessment procedures which would be inappropriate at a national level. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide variety of techniques, examples of which are given in Section 3 of Appendix I. This should enable them to elicit personal responses and reactions from pupils, and to seek topics for Speaking arising from the pupils' own interests.

As the assessment of Speaking is designed to encourage diversity of Speaking activities, it would not be acceptable to base assessment on one style and format of activity, or on an unduly narrow range of topics. The activities assessed should reflect the topic areas and functions set out in 3 3 2.

- b) Each centre will designate a teacher whose responsibility it will be to ensure the consistency of standards of oral assessment within the centre. It will also be the responsibility of the designated teacher to ensure the acceptability of Speaking activities suggested by the class teacher.

It will be the responsibility of the class teacher to arrange and conduct the agreed Speaking activities in consultation with the designated teacher.

The designated teacher will be expected to conduct briefing meetings within the centre, and he/she should normally be present on a number of occasions when assessment takes place. Another approach is to discuss tape-recordings of Speaking activities.

- c) Centres will be required to keep a record of what each activity involved and how each pupil performed. Although it will not be necessary to keep tapes of pupils' performances for certification purposes, centres may find it useful to keep tapes of sample performances which, together with guidance from the Board, would help in monitoring the consistency and continuity of internal assessment from year to year.

4 7 2 Assessment Moderation

To ensure the application of the national standard, internal assessment of Speaking will be subject to moderation by Visiting Moderators appointed by the Board. Moderation will take place in March each year.

Presenting centres will be required to have available, prior to the Moderator's visit, a provisional grade reflecting each pupil's normal performance in Speaking.

For the purposes of the moderation exercise, a Speaking activity involving approximately 10 minutes of face-to-face conversation between pupil and teacher will be set by the Board each year. Details of the activity will be issued in advance of the Moderator's visit. The Moderator will not conduct the activity, but will observe the performances of a sample of pupils and will discuss with the teacher(s) the allocation of grades to these performances. This will indicate the standard against which centres will finalise their assessments. It will be the responsibility of the designated teacher to ensure that any teachers not present during discussion with the Moderator are made fully aware of the advice and/or instructions delivered by the Moderator.

In the light of the Moderator's advice/instructions, the centre will review pupils' provisional grades in each of the languages being presented and determine the final grades to be awarded.

4 8 *Estimates*

Presenting centres must submit to the Board an estimate grade for each pupil for each of Reading and Listening (and for Writing, if that option is taken up). The teacher should determine the estimate grades on the basis of each pupil's work. Estimates may be used by the Board for its internal procedures, including such cases as absence from external examinations, adverse circumstances and appeals. Evidence in support of these estimates should be retained by centres for submission to the Board if required.

Section 5

Writing – Assessment for Certification (Optional)

5 Writing – Assessment for Certification (Optional)

5 1 There will be an optional paper in Writing at each of General and Credit Levels. Assessment will be by means of an external examination. These optional papers need not be taken at the same diet of examinations as are the other (compulsory) papers.

5 2 Pupils presented for the Writing option are not obliged to attempt the papers at both Levels.

5 3 The time allocations of the papers will be as follows:

General Level – 45 minutes

Credit Level – 1 hour.

5 4 At General Level the pupil will be asked to write a number of short, simple messages in Urdu. These will be linked in English by context.

At Credit Level the pupil will be asked to study a passage or passages in Urdu, whose theme will be directly related to the Writing task. This stimulus material is not intended to be a test of reading comprehension and will be designed to be read and understood in no longer than 5 minutes. The material will be drawn from authentic sources, and while topics will not necessarily exclude matters of a controversial kind, they will be drawn from areas likely to be of interest to the age group. The test will not be a matter of facile recounting of anecdotes. Having read the stimulus passage or passages, pupils will be expected to compose, in Urdu, a personal response of some 200 words. To assist in the composition of this response, a question or questions will be set. Pupils will be expected to present their material in an ordered fashion and to express their views coherently, even if only at a fairly elementary level.

At both Levels pupils will be allowed to use an English-Urdu/Urdu-English dictionary.

5 5 Centres will be required to submit to the Board, by 30 April of the year of the examination, an estimate grade for each pupil taking the Writing option.

Section 6

Grade Related Criteria

6 Grade Related Criteria

6 1 *Definition*

Grade Related Criteria (GRC) are positive descriptions of performance against which a pupil's achievement is measured. Direct comparisons are not made between the performance of one pupil and that of another.

6 2 *Application of GRC*

GRC are defined at three levels of performance: Foundation, General and Credit.

Awards will be reported on six grades, two grades being distinguished at each Level. The upper of the two grades at a given Level will be awarded to pupils who meet the stated criteria demonstrating a high standard of performance, the lower grade to those who demonstrate a lower, but still satisfactory, standard of performance.

There will be a seventh grade for pupils who complete the course but fail to meet the criteria for any Level.

6 3 *Types of GRC*

Summary GRC are broad descriptions of performance. They are published as an aid to the interpretation of the profile of attainment by pupils, parents, employers and other users of the Certificate.

Extended GRC are more detailed descriptions of performance. They are intended to assist teachers in making their assessments for each element, and to be used by examiners when conducting external assessment.

6 4 *Reading – Summary GRC*

At each Level:

- items reflected the topic areas specified in the assessment syllabus;
- items were based on authentic material;
- questions and tasks were given in English;
- pupils were permitted to use a dictionary.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The pupil understood items in simple language ranging from a single phrase to a few connected sentences.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The pupil understood continuous passages in straightforward language.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The pupil understood extended passages in quite complex language.

6 5 *Listening – Summary GRC*

At each Level:

- items reflected the topic areas specified in the assessment syllabus;
- items were based on authentic material;
- contexts were made clear to the pupils;
- material was spoken by fluent speakers and heard twice;
- questions and tasks were given in English.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The pupil understood items in simple language ranging from a single phrase to a few connected sentences, spoken clearly and slowly by a fluent speaker.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The pupil understood short conversations and passages in straightforward language spoken by a fluent speaker, usually at normal speed.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The pupil understood conversations and extended passages in quite complex language, spoken by a fluent speaker at normal speed.

6 6 *Speaking – Summary GRC*

At each Level the conversation arose from the topic areas specified in the assessment syllabus.

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)

The pupil took part in simple face-to-face conversations.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The pupil took part in simple face-to-face conversations. He/she was prepared to go beyond minimum responses, occasionally taking the initiative.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The pupil took part in extended face-to-face conversations, going beyond the minimum responses and readily taking the initiative.

6 7 *Writing – Summary GRC*

At both Levels pupils were permitted to use a dictionary.

General Level (Grades 4, 3)

The pupil communicated with some success in writing simple messages.

Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)

The pupil communicated information and personal opinions with clarity, showing some facility in the use of the language.

6 8 *Descriptions of Grades*

These describe performance within Levels. They apply to each element.

Grade 6 The pupil met the criteria for Foundation Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance.

Grade 5 The pupil met the criteria for Foundation Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance.

Grade 4 The pupil met the criteria for General Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance.

Grade 3 The pupil met the criteria for General Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance.

Grade 2 The pupil met the criteria for Credit Level, demonstrating a satisfactory overall standard of performance.

Grade 1 The pupil met the criteria for Credit Level, demonstrating a high overall standard of performance.

6 9 *Reading – Extended GRC*

Authentic material is used although it may be modified to fit the criteria below.

Questions and tasks are given in English.

Pupils may use a dictionary.

Task

At each Level pupils can extract information from texts in response to specific questioning, or give more general responses.

Input

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)	General Level (Grades 4, 3)	Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)
<p>The language ranges from single phrases to items consisting of a few connected sentences. These contain only the modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, which are essential to the message.</p> <p>The content is confined to the statement of basic information.</p>	<p>The language consists of short passages containing subordinate clauses and modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, even though these may not be essential to the basic meaning.</p> <p>The content goes beyond the statement of basic information.</p>	<p>The language consists of extended passages containing subordinate clauses and modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, even though these may not be essential to the basic meaning.</p> <p>The passages may contain a number of major and subsidiary points, or changes of topic. The content goes beyond the mere enunciation of facts and may deal with emotional, intellectual and moral attitudes.</p>

Descriptions of grades are given in 6 8.

6 10 *Listening – Extended GRC*

Task

At each Level pupils can extract information from the items heard in response to specific questioning or give more general responses.

Input

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)	General Level (Grades 4, 3)	Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)
<p>The language ranges from single phrases to a few connected sentences. These contain only the modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, which are essential to the message.</p>	<p>The language consists of short conversations and passages containing subordinate clauses and modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, even though these may not be essential to the basic meaning.</p>	<p>The language consists of short conversations and extended passages containing subordinate clauses and modification devices, such as adjectives and adverbs, even though these may not be essential to the basic meaning.</p>

6 10 (continued)

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)	General Level (Grades 4, 3)	Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)
The content is confined to the statement of basic information.	The content goes beyond the statement of basic information.	The passages may contain a number of major and subsidiary points, or changes of topic. The content goes beyond the mere enunciation of facts and may deal with emotional, intellectual and moral attitudes.
The language is spoken clearly and slowly.	The language is usually spoken at normal speed.	The language is spoken at normal speed.

Descriptions of grades are given in **6 8**.

6 11 *Speaking – Extended GRC*

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)	General Level (Grades 4, 3)	Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)
<i>Interlocutor</i>		
The interlocutor has to limit himself/herself to short phrases and sentences.	The interlocutor goes beyond short phrases and sentences.	The interlocutor goes beyond short phrases and sentences.
He/she has to speak slowly, using frequent repetition and/or rephrasing to make himself/herself understood.	Most of the time he/she can speak at normal speed. He/she has to use some repetition and/or rephrasing to make himself/herself understood.	He/she can speak at normal speed. He/she may occasionally have to use repetition and/or rephrasing to make himself/herself understood.
He/she has to provide a great deal of help, which may well be unsolicited.	He/she has to provide some help.	He/she has to provide only minimal help.

Descriptions of grades are given in **6 8**.

Pupil

Foundation Level (Grades 6, 5)	General Level (Grades 4, 3)	Credit Level (Grades 2, 1)
The pupil can take part in simple face-to-face conversations.	The pupil can take part in face-to-face conversations.	The pupil can take part in extended face-to-face conversations.
He/she tends to restrict himself/herself to minimal responses.	He/she is prepared to go beyond minimal responses and may occasionally take the initiative.	He/she goes beyond minimal responses and readily takes the initiative.
With the help provided, he/she can understand most of what is said to him/her.	He/she can largely understand what is said to him/her.	He/she can understand immediately almost everything said to him/her.
He/she can ask in the language for help if he/she requires it.	He/she can ask in the language for help if he/she requires it.	He/she seldom needs to ask for help.
He/she can make himself/herself understood. When he/she tries to go beyond fixed phrases, his/her use of the language is mostly inaccurate and characterised by hesitation, mispronunciation, incorrect intonation, mother tongue interference and frequent errors of grammar and syntax.	He/she can communicate with some success although there may be many errors of grammar and syntax. There may be mispronunciation and occasional mother tongue interference and weakness in intonation. He/she may speak carefully and deliberately with some accuracy, or he/she may be more fluent but less accurate.	He/she has no difficulty in making himself/herself understood. He/she can use the language flexibly. This use is generally accurate although there may be errors of grammar and syntax and occasional weaknesses in pronunciation. There is little mother tongue interference and intonation is generally correct. He/she speaks with little hesitation.
He/she shows a limited range of vocabulary and structures.	He/she shows a reasonable range of vocabulary and structures.	He/she can use a variety of speech patterns and shows some flair. His/her register is generally appropriate.

Descriptions of grades are given in 6 8.

6 12 *Writing – Extended GRC*

At both Levels pupils are permitted to use a dictionary.

General Level
(Grades 4, 3)

The pupil can communicate with some success although there are many errors and inaccuracies in what he/she has written.

His/her range of vocabulary and structures allows him/her to give and ask for straightforward information with some elaboration of basic statements.

Credit Level
(Grades 2, 1)

The pupil has no difficulty in making himself/herself understood, although there may be some errors and inaccuracies in what he/she has written.

His/her range of vocabulary and structures allows him/her to give straight-forward information and express personal opinions with clarity and in an ordered fashion. His/her language flows freely and naturally, and shows some variety in sentence construction.

Descriptions of grades are given in **6 8**.

Appendix

Appendix – Implications for Teaching and Organisation

The following highlights the essential features which should be borne in mind in constructing courses leading to the Standard Grade. They should underpin the teaching at all Levels of presentation.

1 Reading

1 1 In the pursuit of Reading, reading for pleasure should not be forgotten. However, it is difficult to find fictional material suited to the pupil's age and at the same time linguistically accessible; but where such material does exist, it is recommended that it be used. Interesting fictional material can be found in, for example, teenage magazines and comics, as well as in published readers, and sometimes the strength of the story line can carry the pupils through linguistic difficulties. To expose the pupil to a diet of utilitarian texts would be a rather barren exercise, and the extension of horizons is to be encouraged.

1 2 Reading may also provide a stimulus or jumping-off point for pupil activities which are, in themselves, communicative tasks. Some communicative tasks which might be adopted for assessment purposes are:

- note taking (eg of times, locations of meetings, events, sports, films, to pass on to someone else, or for the pupil's own use);
- comparisons (eg comparing holiday brochures to make an informed choice);
- extracting information (eg to pass on to someone else, to act upon, to make arrangements);
- making choices (eg quickest train, preferred meal);
- carrying out instructions (eg recipes, puzzles, clues, games).

1 3 A useful source of authentic material may be found in pen-friend letters, or indeed in letters from tourist offices, of a semi-formal or formal nature. However, there are two problems.

Firstly, young people may find different styles of handwriting extremely difficult to read, and may actually need training in deciphering the script.

Secondly, there is the question of response. An authentic response to a letter is not to sit and write answers to questions. The authentic response to a letter is probably writing a letter in reply. It is suggested that advantage be taken of this valid response, the pupils being asked to prepare a reply in English – thus fostering a useful bilingual correspondence.

1 4 It is hoped that understanding of the printed word will not always be checked by the answering of questions, nor solely by the use of passages of continuous prose. Where passages are used, they should not be seen as puzzles, but should deal with topic areas with which pupils can reasonably be expected to be familiar. Such passages should be drawn from authentic sources. In the compilation of such materials, it should not be forgotten that material geared to pupils' interests and needs should be predominant, and that such material may legitimately include the use of graphics and varying type-face.

2 Listening

- 2 1 Listening should be for information, for instructions, or for enjoyment.
- 2 2 The most effective way of ensuring that Listening is promoted to the level of a valid and immediate exercise is to try to ensure that the language is used as much as possible in the classroom. If the language is constantly used only for practice language, and switches are made to English for “real” communication, then the pupils are bound to regard the language as of second class status. Listening too becomes devalued – it becomes an exercise to be fitted into a certain slot in the timetable, instead of an all-pervading activity, the specific practice of which is merely an intensification of what is daily routine.
- 2 3 Although the primary aim of the language learner when listening to the language is to understand, many of the things he/she will hear were originally intended to be listened to with enjoyment or recreation in mind. It should not therefore be thought that the only listening which pupils should be asked to do must relate solely to pieces giving factual information – it may include songs, poems, anecdotes and jokes. Viewed in this way, there is a wealth of listening material which can be exploited to enrich the learning experience and bring a pleasurable dimension to this aspect.
- 2 4 Since the application of Grade Related Criteria will require the pupil to show clear understanding of basic information, it is hoped that understanding of the spoken word will not always be tested by question and answer. It is appreciated that the authenticity of items for Listening is harder to guarantee than the authenticity of items for Reading. Appropriate use may be made of contextualising and signalling devices such as sound effects, and of supporting visual material. It is also possible to use video, at least at local level.

3 Speaking

- 3 1 The central pillar of the system is Speaking. Speaking assumes considerable importance in the arrangements for assessment, but it should be an activity which pervades the classroom in any case. Communication by the spoken word is of such vital importance that it must be raised to this central position, both in assessment procedures and in the teaching processes in the classroom. It is fully recognised that Speaking is the element which is most time consuming and which is most difficult to organise in the classroom. Speaking activities should involve the pupils in face-to-face conversation, in group discussions, in simulation and role playing exercises – all of which will entail forward planning and careful organisation by the teacher.
- 3 2 However, it must not be thought that the only valid communicative act is face-to-face conversation across a table. If an activity produces a reaction or requires the completion of a task which is essentially non-verbal, but which, for example, adequately satisfies criteria of understanding, then it could legitimately be included in the teaching technique.
- 3 3 The freedom given to individual schools to experiment with alternative forms of oral testing should lead to the adoption of items such as the following:
- telephone conversations;
 - the assessment of two or more pupils engaged in a peer-group communication exercise;
 - simple interviews, either pupil-teacher or pupil-pupil;
 - reporting to the teacher or to the class on something read, seen, or heard;
 - relaying of messages.

3 4 As the arrangements provide for internal assessment, it follows that teaching activities and assessment are not longer separate, but begin to merge. It is hoped that this situation will lead to a realisation that the teacher can be the initiator and developer of activities which not only are valid Speaking and communicative exercises, but which will serve as the basis of the assessment programme.

3 5 In devising such material and exercises, it should be borne in mind that, while the ultimate goal is the production of authentic language, in many cases recourse will have to be made, in the classroom, to simulation. Here, the pupils' imagination may be given free rein, and their dramatic talents brought to the fore. Imaginative role play should be developed. Pupils could be asked to prepare in advance situations of their own choosing in which the foreign language must be used; they could be presented with situations in which they have to improvise and bring their imagination into play. Such creative exercises should not be considered a "reward" for good work in other areas – they should become a regular technique in classroom activities. Pupils have much more imagination and willingness to participate than they are sometimes given credit for. If they are frequently forced to use their language resource, no matter how limited it may be, it would seem reasonable to expect them to increase in confidence, at the very least, and to realise that communication can be effective without an extensive vocabulary and correctness of grammatical form.

3 6 To indicate possible ways of exploration, two linked examples follow.

The teacher might use a photograph as a stimulus for Speaking activities. This is not new – but the use to which it is put may be slightly different. Instead of displaying a photograph or poster and asking the pupils questions about it (questions to which the teacher already knows the answer), the teacher could conceal the photograph, the pupils being obliged to question the teacher in order to find out what the photograph is about. In the earlier exercise, there was no real need to question the pupils – everybody patently could see the picture. But in the later procedure, there is a gap in knowledge, and the exercise has communicative validity in that there are attempts to bridge the gap.

The same technique might be used with a short paragraph from the "News in Brief" section of a newspaper. The pupils would put questions to the teacher about the content of the story, to try to recompose the story for themselves, and to recount it from what they had gleaned by their questioning.

3 7 These two examples suggest how previously used techniques, or devices used for other ends, can be adapted to serve the needs of the teaching of Speaking and communication. Teachers are urged to look critically at their teaching strategies, and, if possible, to put a fresh slant on them so as to make them suitable for the Speaking activities which must be the cornerstone of classwork.

In the pursuit of these activities, the authentic language use should not be forgotten. It seems reasonable to suggest that the language should, more and more, be the vehicle for communication in the classroom, for giving instructions, for the daily routine of the classroom, for stating needs. This authentic communication should not be one-way – the pupils should be encouraged to use the language for their communicative needs too. If the language is seen to be used for authentic communication, then the pupils should gradually grow to accept its use as natural.

4 Teaching Approaches

- 4 1 It is an obvious statement that a principal aim should be to engage the pupils' interest and involvement. Indeed, if their interest is elsewhere and their involvement minimal, then no matter what effort is expended by the teacher, no matter how attractive the teaching material, the end result will be disappointing.

In order to “engage the pupil’s interest and involvement”, experience suggests that objectives should be clearly explained to the pupils and agreed with them, and should be achievable within a short time span; the pupils must know where they are trying to go, and see themselves getting there. Short-term agreed objectives will not, however, be sufficient in themselves in motivating pupils unless the contexts framing those objectives arouse their interest. It follows, therefore, that teachers must be able to identify and respond to interests shown by the pupils and use these as the context for their language teaching. These interest areas are sometimes predictable, but are often surprisingly unpredictable. Teachers must therefore be free to devise teaching syllabuses based on the interests of the pupils which will enable them to achieve the linguistic objectives.

- 4 2 These teaching syllabuses must, of course, include the Assessment Syllabus, which is detailed in Section 4. It would patently be foolish to devise an internal teaching syllabus which took no cognisance of the Assessment Syllabus, as the pupils would run the risk of being ill-prepared for the external examination. However, it is pointed out that the Assessment Syllabus should not be seen as a strait-jacket, but rather as a base upon which to build. Careful examination of the Assessment Syllabus will reveal that it is, in fact, a broad base, and teachers are encouraged to expand it in the light of the pupils' interests, and any local interests which might engage their attention.

- 4 3 Worthwhile outcomes depend more than ever on a classroom atmosphere where communication is encouraged; where pupils feel that there is a reasonable chance of success; where explicit short-term targets are set; and where there is variety, and a balance between the teaching, study, and practice of the language system and real use of the language in authentic contexts where pupils feel involved, and where they feel that they have some say in what happens.

- 4 4 The basis of the methodology should be a process of interaction and participation. It has already been pointed out that Speaking demands this process, but the process should permeate the whole of the language teaching. The teacher should be seen increasingly as an enabler, as a manager of resources, as an agent to assist in the achievement of desired educational outcomes.

- 4 5 Language taught for a specific context should be used in that context in an interactive way as soon as possible. It is not necessary to wait for total mastery before the language can be used; rather, the pupils should be encouraged to use what they know as soon as they can. Thus the teacher will have to accept that making errors is an inescapable part of the process of language acquisition, and that over-eagerness to correct errors may in fact stifle oral production, undermine confidence, and encourage silent passivity. This does not mean that the teacher should not aim for a minimum of errors in the language produced by the pupils; rather it means that over emphasis on correction may be counterproductive.

- 4 6 In recent years the strategies of paired and group activities have gained currency in S1 and S2. It would seem appropriate that these strategies should be extended throughout S3 and S4, and that they should aim towards real language use, rather than practice language. There is, of course, a place for practice language, but in order to foster the skills expected at all levels in Standard Grade, it is essential to break out of the restrictions of practice language, and to move gradually towards authentic language, as indicated above. The principle of authenticity of language runs clearly through the assessment arrangements.
- 4 7 Although an essential of a Modern Languages course is to enable pupils to use personal language, this does not exclude for teaching purposes the use of imaginative role playing. The fact that the outcome of the course is to be a practical use of the language should not condemn the course itself to be aridly utilitarian.
- 4 8 Fundamental and more traditional teaching and learning techniques should not, however, be neglected. Pronunciation and intonation should be taught, not as a global assault upon words which pupils will rarely see and never use, but in specific relationship to immediate needs. Nor should they be left to be “picked up”. Similarly, repetition and learning by heart, used judiciously, will enhance the learning and hearten the learners. The pupils will not respond to dull hard labour, but by the same token do not want to be fobbed off with undemanding and puerile activities.
- 4 9 Writing in the language will often be done by the pupils to copy out words and phrases for current and future use, and as a consolidation of learning. Writing may also be done in the pursuit of a topic or where there is some contact at a distance with the country where the language is spoken. In the latter case the pupils should be given as much help as is required to produce a correct version. The writing of the language is not a skill which will be assessed for the purposes of the overall award. In Standard Grade courses it may be used as an aid, not posed as an obstacle.
- 4 10 Each class will have its own characteristics, which the teacher alone can judge. It is, however, likely that the most common syllabus design will be based on a series of topics and the tasks arising from them. These will be chosen for reasons of interest, enjoyment and relevance rather than for their specific contribution to linguistic progression. It will be for the teacher to judge when the topic has fulfilled its purpose and not wait overlong for a hypothetical perfect achievement. On the other hand, the sequencing of topics should show a coherence so that linguistic consolidation is helped rather than hindered by variety.
- 4 11 It should be borne in mind that the sequencing of topics will be determined by the teacher. It would probably not be appropriate to work simply from the Assessment Syllabus and to deal with the topics in a linear progression. Such an approach would cut across both the pupils’ interests and the topical demands of the moment. Further, it is not envisaged that a topic will be treated once, and then discarded. It will be perfectly feasible to develop a course structure which allows for the recycling of previously taught topics, so that a new slant can be offered, a new teaching point inserted, further extension given, previously taught grammar reworked, new functions and notions treated. The pace and extent of recycling will obviously vary according to the level of teaching.

5 Implications

- 5 1 It is quite clear that the preparation of courses which involve such activities as described above will demand time for cooperative forward planning by the department, and will require careful orchestration by the teacher.

The arrangements for the internal assessment of Speaking are based on the principle of “normal performance” which has long been contained in the arrangements for SCE examinations. However, validation is required. Teachers will require to keep a note of how pupils performed in various tasks and at various times. In many senses this is simple professionalism, and should be seen as an aid rather than a burden.

- 5 2 The Arrangements do not of themselves enjoin any particular form of year-group or class organisation. How classes are made up is properly a matter for the school to decide. Much more crucial are the strategies developed for teaching within the class, whatever its composition. In order to achieve an appropriate level of individual interaction, thought must be given to devising some measure of flexibility in the deployment of staff. Cooperation among teachers within the department, which is a growing feature in classes in S1 and S2, will prove to be invaluable in S3 and S4. It can give more scope to pursuing differentiated activities through group teaching methods, thus helping individualisation and allowing any different performance objectives to develop. In many cases the language assistant, if flexibly deployed, will prove to be an invaluable auxiliary in occasions of collaborative teaching, as well as being the living embodiment of that reality which is central to the Arrangements.

- 5 3 Teachers will also find that the flexibility of their teaching strategies will be further assisted by a greater use of those technical aids which are now common-place. In particular, the use of individual pupil audio-cassettes can be developed as a kind of working audio-jotter. Some schools are now being equipped with newer forms of audio classrooms the better to facilitate group teaching methods. The more conventional types of language laboratory can, however, be used to achieve individual flexibility to a greater extent than has often been the case. The overhead projector is an invaluable tool both for whole-class and for group-teaching methods. There is also increasing scope for the use of video material in language teaching, not as a peripheral frill, but as a pedagogical instrument. It is important, therefore, that language teachers should have sufficiently easy access to the school’s video equipment to enable it to be used as a teaching instrument. A careful system of cataloguing could both indicate what is available, and where it is on tape; and teachers, in using video, should not hesitate to seek the cooperation and support of the appropriate member of teaching staff and/or teaching auxiliary to ensure that the material is *in situ* when it is needed.

- 5 4 In all of this it is evident that planning and negotiation become prerequisites for successful teaching. The department will have to plan its teaching syllabus in overall terms – what is to be taught, how it is to be sequenced, what the outcomes are to be. Within this strategy it will devise shorter term tactics – units of work, related activities, teaching techniques, support materials, assessment and remedial devices. When working out these tactics it will have to identify the periods and activities for which prior negotiation will be required – cooperation between teachers in the department, appropriate deployment of the language assistant, access to departmental equipment, access to school equipment, use of other areas of the school. Approached in this way the pedagogy and the logistics will go hand in hand, the apparent rigidity of the whole-year timetable will become more malleable, and the teachers will have a clearly defined framework within which to develop their individual talents.

- 5 5 It is evident that, in the pursuit of carefully organised teaching activities, departments will require time to meet together as a group. It is in the discussion of strategies, in the sharing of ideas, and in the pooling of resources, that a richer teaching programme will develop, not only for the individual teacher, but for the department as a whole. Ideas should not be thought the prerogative of one single teacher – they should be pooled; initiatives need to be shared because not all teachers can be expected to be innovatory to order.
- 5 6 The above implications are those which departments will have to consider when planning and organising their courses. In doing so, however, it is clear that the support and cooperation of the school administration and the local authorities are essential if the arrangements are to be implemented in the most effective way.

6 Relationship between Teaching and Assessment

A distinction must be drawn between the assessment being used widely in schools as a teaching tool, and speaking activities which can supply the evidence for the award.