



Course Report 2016

Subject	Urdu
Level	National 5

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Summary of the course assessment

Reactions to the examination from centres and practitioners were overwhelmingly positive, and centres and practitioners are to be congratulated on the high standard of candidate performance.

Component 1 – question paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing

Reading

Candidates read three texts of equal length in Urdu. Each text was taken from a different context: society, employability & culture and it was followed by questions in English.

Candidates responded to the questions in English. Marks for the questions on each text will come to a total of 10. One of the questions in the reading paper was to identify the overall purpose of the text. Candidates were allowed to use a dictionary.

Writing

Candidates were asked to write in Urdu a job application in response to a job advert. This year's job application was for a job in a furniture store.

The stimulus is supported by six bullet points which the candidate must address. Four of the bullet points are common (students were well prepared for these) and are predictable, with two additional unpredictable bullet points that are linked to the specific context.

The two unpredictable bullets were challenging to some.

Candidates are permitted to use a dictionary for this paper.

Component 2 – question paper 2: Listening

Listening

The context area for the Listening task this year was 'Learning'. It had a 25-minute duration.

This question paper has 20 marks out of a total of 100 marks. This is 20% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

Candidates listened to one monologue in Urdu, and respond to questions worth 8 marks and one short conversation in the modern language, with questions worth 12 marks.

The texts are linked thematically and are based on the context which was not sampled in the reading texts. The questions were in English and candidates responded in English. The final question on the monologue was to identify the overall purpose of the text.

Component 3 – performance: Talking

The component performed as expected, and is the same talking performance task as in previous years at National 5.

It was noted that most of the assessors are familiar with the aim of the performance task, and they encouraged candidates to use topics and contexts which allowed candidates to use detailed language and therefore perform well. Some performances were way beyond the required difficulty level at National 5. Some poor performances were also seen where the same approach to assessment was used for all the candidates.

Centres marked candidates' performances in line with national standards using revised detailed marking instructions.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1 – question paper 1: Reading and Writing

Reading: There were couple of areas in Reading paper which were demanding for candidates and they did not get achieve good marks

Some questions were particularly well answered, with most of candidates being able to achieve the marks for the questions. For example:

Question 1(e) 'they can learn a new language', 'They can practise speaking skills', 'They can improve language by talking to a first language /native speaker'

Question 2(b), 'Experience of working', 'Knowledge of sports equipment', 'Develops communication skills (with customers)', 'enhances his Maths skills'

Question 3c (i), 'Kite flying'

Question 3c (ii), 'some people like to watch', 'Encourage participants'

Writing

In bullet points one to four, there was evidence of a good range of vocabulary and structures and some very complex language. Markers highlighted a good degree of accuracy and fluency. However, the 'unpredictable' bullet-points (Your IT and communication skills & any specific knowledge you have that would help in this job) proved more challenging, with a large number of candidates having difficulty with these

Candidates also showed competence in the use of different tenses, past tense (wrote about past work/work experience) present (what they can do/or good at) and future (how they will be good for the company).

Centres are to be commended in preparing the candidates for the Writing assessment. Many pieces were authentic. Many responses were opened and closed appropriately. Some

candidates were able to demonstrate accuracy and detail in addressing the two unpredictable bullet points. Many candidates were able to use memorised material correctly when addressing the predictable bullet points.

Component 2 – question paper 2: Listening

Most candidates performed well in Urdu Listening paper, as expected. Many candidates attempted to give the appropriate level of detail.

Feedback indicated that responses to the Listening paper was 'as expected' and 'was of an appropriate standard'.

Examples of responses:

Question 1(a), 'Tips/techniques/ways to prepare'

Question 2(b) 'Education is compulsory in Scotland' 'Every child is enrolled in/goes to a school when he/she is (approximately) 5 years of age'

Question 2 (c) 'Education is not compulsory/necessary in Pakistan Parents decide if they want to send their child to school (or not)'

Question 2(d) 'free education/books', 'Teachers have a friendly relationship with pupils'

Question 2(e) 'School fees are inexpensive/very little' 'The standard of education is different', 'Most parents prefer to send their children to private or English schools'

All above were particularly well answered, most of candidates being able to achieve the marks for the questions.

It was noted by markers that some candidates had developed very good skills to deal with exam questions: during the time given at the beginning of the exam to read through the questions, they had taken the time to underline key words in the questions; and during the listening process, they had also developed the skill of note-taking rather than attempting to write the full answer while listening.

Component 3: Performance — Talking

Overall the quality of most candidate performance was in line with the required level for National 5. Some very high quality performances were also noticed. On the other hand, poor performances were also seen where all the candidates were observed to be discussing the same topic.

Presentation Section (10 marks)

The presentation section of the performance was very well prepared and rehearsed. Therefore, most of the candidates were awarded the upper pegged marks (8 or 10).

Conversation section (15 marks) and sustaining the conversation (5 marks)

Most of the candidates coped very well and the majority of candidates were awarded pegged marks of 15.

With regards to the 'sustaining the conversation' aspect, most candidates sustained the conversation well and were awarded 3 or 5 marks for this aspect.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1 – question paper 1: Reading and Writing

Some candidates did not do well and found this paper demanding.

Reading: candidates did not write full answers, and there was confusion in the text.

For paragraph 3, some candidates wrote answers in wrong sections, for example Question 2 answered what was supposed to be in Question 3. Some language was perhaps challenging, and candidates were not well prepared for this paper.

There was a lot of information in paragraph 1, especially the last three to four lines. Candidates got confused and did not understand which part of the information was important as an answer.

Some examples — not enough details in answers or wrong translation of text:

1(b), too much time spent on TV/internet/computer. Have no time to visit family, friends or pay attention to neighbours.

1(d), Grandparents (in Canada) can watch a live graduation ceremony (from Scotland). An aunt (in America) can attend a wedding (in Pakistan) from her home.

Q 2(a) some candidates answered Toy instead of Sports shop.

3(b) They decorate parks and roofs of houses with banners. They organise parties with friends and family

3(d) (Equally) popular, most candidates could not translate (equally) so the team had to make minor adjustment to the marking instructions.

3(e), Ignoring safety precautions, Accidents happen, Children can fall from roofs/ injure themselves

3(f) to warn people to celebrate festival carefully

Either the vocabulary was too difficult for candidates or they did not give the full answer.

Component 2 – question paper 2: Listening

Listening: 2e candidates found it challenging and did not perform well in this question

Answers: School fees are inexpensive/very little, the standard of education is different

Most parents prefer to send their children to private or English schools

Sentences were long for candidates, so they did not give the full answer.

Overall candidates performed well in Listening paper this year.

Writing

Many candidates accurately used memorised material, but a significant proportion were not able to match that standard in the two unpredictable bullet points. For a significant number of candidates, there was a marked difference in quality between the predictable and unpredictable bullet points.

It seemed a lot of the responses were rehearsed; some candidates were not able to adjust their responses to meet the bullets. Some candidates were able to pick up hints from the advert (but for this candidates must be able to read the advert fully/properly).

Component 3: Performance — Talking

Presentation Section

Some candidates presented their topics far beyond the time limit, and some did not meet the minimum time limit. Some repetition of ideas was also noticed in some of the performances where candidates spoke on the same topic as each other.

Conversation section

Where the centre has used same approach to the assessment and almost all the candidates have talked about the same topic, performance was average or poor in the conversation section. Due to the choice of a very easy topic, very little room was left for the conversation. The candidates were repetitive in conversation and had no other choice but to say the same things already said in the presentation.

Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1 – question paper 1: Reading and Writing

Reading paper: it was difficult to read some candidates' handwriting. Encourage students to write clearly and leave space between answers.

- ◆ Candidates should continue to be encouraged to provide detailed responses in line with the National 5 method of marking.
- ◆ Where possible, candidates should receive opportunity to read authentic Urdu texts.
- ◆ Candidates must revise all common grammatical structures and vocabulary

Component 2 – question paper 2: Listening

Listening paper: ask students to concentrate on first couple of questions for first hearing; then try to answer middle ones after second hearing; and the last questions after the third hearing.

Some students got confused and did not write answer to the linked question.

As stated above, Markers noted evidence of highlighting key words (especially question words) during the silent time on the CD, and also evidence of note-taking during the first playing of the Urdu. As the monologue **and** dialogue was not a feature of listening at Standard Grade, this is to be encouraged.

In 'tick box' answers, although most candidates do tick the correct boxes, it would be worthwhile for practitioners to remind candidates that one mark will be deducted for each box ticked over and above the required number of ticks. This also applies to Reading.

Writing paper: ask pupils to cover all bullet points; some candidates wrote good essays but lost marks because they missed one or two bullet points.

- ◆ Candidates should also be reminded that they must include relevant information in their responses. They should imagine that this is a genuine job application.
- ◆ Centres should spend time preparing candidates for the unpredictable bullet points. Candidates should learn how they may adapt a bank of templates/sentence structures in order to address the unpredictable bullet points.
- ◆ Candidates should be reminded that they must include a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary in order to demonstrate their skills and range. Candidates should avoid repeating grammatical structures if possible.
- ◆ Candidates should be encouraged to write in sentences at all times and avoid listing/using bullet points.

Component 3: Performance — Talking

Overall, candidate performance was in line with the required level for National 5. Most of the candidates used complex language with listed nouns and a variety of verbs. Grammatical accuracy was also good in most of the performances, but there is still room for improvement.

Centres are advised to encourage the pupils to select different topics for the performance from the four contexts of learning, employability, culture and society. Students should also be encouraged not to choose the same topic for the performance.

Centres are also advised to train the candidates to ask questions to the assessors not only when seeking help but also for expressing their own views and ideas. Assessors must ask open-ended questions to enable the candidates to perform to the best of their ability.

Assessors must make sure that all the candidates meet the minimum time limit for the spoken performances, and neither the presentation nor the conversation should be too short or too long, which will restrain the candidates from performing to the best of their ability. The length of performances (notably presentations) varied, and centres are advised to refer to the information regarding the recommended time length for the presentation and the conversation provided in the document *Modern Languages Performance: talking, General assessment information (National 5)*.

Centres are also advised to submit proof of internal verification along with the candidate's performance. Some sort of written commentary about the candidates' performances would also be appreciated because it will help the verifiers see the judgement of the assessors.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	49
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Number of resulted entries in 2016	62
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	72.6%	72.6%	45	70
B	9.7%	82.3%	6	60
C	9.7%	91.9%	6	50
D	4.8%	96.8%	3	45
No award	3.2%	-	2	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.