



## Course Report 2017

Subject	Urdu
Level	Higher

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 assessment. 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 documents and marking instructions.

# Section 1: Comments on the assessment

## Summary of the course assessment

### Component 1: question paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing

The candidates' overall performance in the reading component was very good. Candidates gave details when writing their answers. For example:

1b: They get enjoyment from watching programmes in their mother tongue.

2a: Educational programmes help young people to make career choices. Cultural programmes enable them to see places without going there.

4: (when he likes a place) He starts saving/collecting money, he goes to visit that place.

Candidates choose between two scenarios, both worth 10 marks. Some chose **Scenario 1: Employability** (he/she worked/had job in Dubai, where the hotel was **and** what it was like, which jobs you had in the hotel, what skills you learnt by working in the hotel, whether you would like to work in a hotel in future.)

More candidates chose to go with **Scenario 2: Learning** (Last summer you went on an exchange visit to Pakistan. While there, you attended classes in the local school/college. When you went to Pakistan **and** how you travelled there, what a typical school day was like. A day trip you took with the students. Whether you would like to have your exchange friend visit you.)

The directed writing component was also completed to a good standard. Most candidates covered all four bullet points. Candidates were well prepared and wrote very good essays. Some candidates gave good details about their Job in Dubai, wrote about the different skills they learned over there. Some candidates wrote about good and bad things about their job in Dubai. Some candidates wrote about attending school in Pakistan, about their typical day and what how was their one day trip with school students.

Centres are to be commended in preparing the candidates for the Writing assessment. Many responses were opened and closed appropriately. Some candidates were able to demonstrate accuracy and detail in addressing all the bullet points. Many candidates seemed to use memorised material when addressing the bullet points.

### Component 2: question paper 2: Listening and Writing

Most candidates performed well in this paper. Many candidates attempted to give the appropriate level of detail.

Some examples of answers to Q1b:

- ◆ The youngsters would gather at his house

- ◆ He would tell the stories of past heroes/great people
- ◆ He created bond/brotherhood between the family
- ◆ He taught them how to get on with other people/how to live with others

Some examples of answers to Q2c:

- ◆ Go/do some exercise
- ◆ To change your life style
- ◆ Getting out from home
- ◆ Meeting friends (bring positive change)

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

### **Component 3 — performance: Talking**

In session 2016–17 only a small number of centres were sampled for verification. To protect candidate confidentiality, no separate report will be issued for this component.

## **Section 2: Comments on candidate performance**

### **Areas which candidates performed well**

#### **Component 1 – question paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing**

##### **Reading**

Good, detailed answers were given. For example:

Q5:

- ◆ this is a city of lights and high buildings
- ◆ food & drink stalls are present on the roadside, selling multi-cultural food
- ◆ they visited the central park sitting on a cycle rickshaw
- ◆ cycle rickshaw driver told them some interesting stories of the park
- ◆ they rode on a tourist bus
- ◆ they got interesting information about the history of the city

Q7:

- ◆ free time activities have been very popular among people during all periods of time
- ◆ free time can be spent at home, outside or abroad, touring different countries

- ◆ television/satellite channels are a good source for information

## **Component 2: question paper 2: Listening and Writing**

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

Q2b:

- ◆ did well in school exams
- ◆ she left her education/left college (stopped/finished her coursework)
- ◆ she regrets her decision

Q1C(ii)

- ◆ he helped others who were less fortunate/need
- ◆ he spent some time with unwell people to cheer them up/make them happy
- ◆ he treated with love
- ◆ he paid respect to everyone

## **Writing**

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 in the both parts of writing.

Some candidates wrote beautifully detailed stories about their grandparents, uncles/aunts by whom they are influenced, and how they have learnt things from them.

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

### **Component 1: question paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing**

In the reading question paper Q3 proved demanding for candidates.

There was one detail which required students to write percentage: this proved confusing for some candidates.

Question 2a was also challenging for students — most did not give full details.

The translation paragraph was a little challenging for some candidates. Centres should spend more time preparing students on translating techniques for this section of the paper, as some language was more discriminating.

## **Component 2: question paper 2: Listening and Writing**

In the listening paper questions 2(d), 2(e) and 2(f) were more challenging.

2(f): The language was more discriminating — some candidates did not fully answer the question.

2d & 2e: Some candidates could not translate/understand this part, and some did not give a full answer.

### **Writing**

Some candidates seemed to use memorised material.

## **Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates**

### **Component 1: question paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing**

Candidates should be encouraged to write clearly and legibly, leaving space between their answers.

Centres should continue to encourage candidates to provide detailed responses.

- ◆ Where possible, candidates should receive the opportunity to read authentic Urdu texts.
- ◆ Candidates must revise all common grammatical structures and vocabulary.

### **Directed Writing**

Centres should ensure candidates cover all four bullet points. Some candidates wrote a good essay but lost marks because they missed one or two of the bullet points.

- ◆ Candidates should also be reminded that they must include all relevant information in their responses.
- ◆ Centres should spend time preparing candidates for all the bullet points.
- ◆ Candidates should learn how they can adapt a bank of templates/sentence structures to address the given bullet points.
- ◆ Candidates should be reminded that they must include a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary 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 or using bullet points.

## **Component 2: question paper 2: Listening and Writing**

### **Listening paper**

Candidates should concentrate on questions 1 and 2 for the first hearing of the audio, then try to answer middle questions after the second hearing and then attempt the last questions after the third hearing.

Some students got confused and did not provide an 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 audio. This is to be encouraged.

## Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2016	92
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	104
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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	68.3%	68.3%	71	72
B	6.7%	75.0%	7	61
C	2.9%	77.9%	3	50
D	1.9%	79.8%	2	44
No award	20.2%	-	21	-

## 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.