



GCSE

URDU

8648/SH- Speaking (Higher)
Report on the Examination

8648
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General comments:

It is pleasing to report that the 2022 GCSE Urdu Higher tier speaking test allowed the majority of students to demonstrate a level of oral proficiency commensurate with their ability. The overall impression is that the level of performance was slightly lower than the 2019 exam series.

The following report aims to give an overview of the Higher tier speaking test, both in terms of teacher conduct and student performance and also to signpost areas for future improvement.

Some students were not well prepared for their speaking test and some teacher-examiners who conducted the exam were not sufficiently familiar with the Urdu specification.

Unfortunately, there were instances when the wrong combination of cards was used, resulting in the theme of the Photo card being duplicated in the General Conversation. Some students failed to score marks in the role-plays or photo cards because they did not use the teacher script in the role play or ask the compulsory questions for the Photo card. It is essential that all teacher-examiners conducting speaking tests review the training materials and Instructions for the conduct of the exams on the AQA website to ensure they are sufficiently familiar with the requirements of the speaking tests.

A reminder to teacher-examiners to record the introduction for each new student which must include the role-play number, photo card letter and nominated General Conversation theme. It is particularly important to announce a change of theme during the General Conversation.

Part 1 – Role-plays

When conducting the role-play task, most teacher-examiners adhered to the script in the Teacher's booklet and followed the guidance perfectly. In cases where teacher-examiners re-worded the script, unfortunately any subsequent response by the student was invalidated.

Students' performance was adversely affected by:

- using English/Mirpuri/Punjabi words
- missing out the student question task or asking a question not on the teacher script
- using the student's question to ask an additional question
- using the wrong tense
- not following the teacher script given in the Teacher's Booklet
- allowing the students to give lengthy responses which did not gain them any extra marks eg providing six or seven pieces of information whereas only one or two pieces of information was required by the bullet point
- the teacher-examiner giving lengthy responses to the student question task.

In role-play 11, students were asked about the importance of maths and English. This bullet point caused an issue for examiners, as some students described the importance of each subject separately in detail which meant that they only answered the question partially in the first two responses and as a result the subsequent responses could not be credited.

Here are the Urdu phrases, which some students found very challenging. Other tasks that are not mentioned were generally completed well, especially those asking for opinions and, where appropriate, reasons.

طالب علموں کے لئے رعایت۔ حساب اور انگریزی کے مضامین کی اہمیت۔

Part 2 – Photo card

Generally, students seemed well prepared for this part of the test. Most students were able to give a reasonably well-developed response to the first prepared question؟ اس تصویر میں کیا ہے؟ In the case of less able students, the responses to this question were brief and very basic. Responses were enhanced where students had used the ‘PALMS (Physical, Action, Location, Mood, Something else)’ technique to develop their answers. Examples of these included –(Card K) اس تصویر میں کچھ طالب علم ہیں۔ وہ کھیل رہے ہیں۔ وہ سکول کے میدان میں ہیں۔ وہ خوش ہیں۔ لگتا ہے کہ کوئی خاص موقع ہے۔

There were a small number of cases where students spoke only briefly about the content of the photo before giving a personalised response. A good number of students invented a present continuous form to describe activities in the picture. For example, in Card L:

’لڑکی تصویر لے رہی ہے۔ یہ لوگ خوش لگ رہے ہیں۔‘

Most teacher-examiners conducted the photo card task very well. Some students’ performance was adversely affected due to:

- using the student’s card rather than the Teacher role which missed out questions 4 & 5 completely.
- allowing students to go into far too much detail with 12, 13 pieces of information for some questions.
- not asking the questions in the correct order as stipulated in the Teacher’s Booklet.
- not using all three tense/s.
- not using 3rd person verbs.

Here are the tasks which some students found challenging. Tasks that are not mentioned were generally executed well, especially those asking for opinions and, where appropriate, reasons. Reference to a lack of knowledge of use of 3rd person verbs and past verbs are not made repeatedly but should be understood.

کیا آپ دوسرے مذہبوں کے تہواروں میں جاتے ہیں؟ آپ نے نئی ٹیکنالوجی کو حال ہی میں کن کاموں کے لئے استعمال کیا ہے؟ زیادہ سبزیاں اور پھل کھانے کے لئے آپ اپنے گھر والوں کو کیسے راضی کریں گے؟ پی ای کے بارے میں آپ کے دوستوں / سہیلیوں کی کیا رائے ہے؟ کیا آپ اس سال کوئی نئے کھیل کھیلیں گے؟

Card J- Bullet point 2 and 3 are very similar. This caused students some confusion. See below:

آپ مستقبل میں چھٹیوں پر جانے کے لئے سفر کا کون سا طریقہ استعمال کریں گے اور کیوں؟ اپنے ملک سے باہر جانے کے لئے لوگ سفر کا کون سا ذریعہ استعمال کرتے ہیں اور کیوں؟

Part 3 - General Conversation

For most students, the conversation element of the test was where they performed best. This was to be expected as students are able to nominate a theme to be covered. There were many impressive and spontaneous conversations from the highest-achieving students at this tier. However, some students' performance was adversely affected due to:

- the teacher-examiner only covering one theme with students which meant that some very capable students did not have access to the full range of marks available for Communication
- not being well prepared for the 2nd theme
- not conducting the general conversation for the minimum length as specified in the Instructions for the conduct of the exams
- Students not asking the teacher-examiner a question in the general conversation.
- not asking questions to elicit a range of aspects in the assessment criteria (opinions, justifications and use of tenses).
- little meaningful interaction between teacher-examiner and the student.
- teacher-examiners asking very closed questions and not giving an opportunity for students to extend their answers.
- students giving lengthy, pre-learnt responses with few follow up questions from the teacher-examiner to demonstrate spontaneity
- teacher-examiners using the same questions for Foundation and Higher students irrespective of their level of ability and interests
- teacher-examiners not using differentiated questions to elicit the best performance from students.

Key aspects of good practice for teacher-examiners for future exams

- Check all recording equipment before the day of the first test.
- Check sound levels are adequate and that a suitable application, website or programme is used and mp3 files created for each speaking test
- Respond to a student's question briefly in the role play and in the General conversation.
- Prepare yourself well so that the student's experience is smoother.
- Be well organised before the start of each test. For example, close email software or at least silence the arrival of new emails. Know which cards the next student has been given.
- Have all the required material in front of you, for example, the Teacher's Booklet containing the role-play card, photo card etc...
- Conduct the whole of the test in Urdu, including the introduction of the different sections. Don't use English words/phrases in questions and remind students that they must use Urdu not English. They won't be credited for English.
- Ensure the exam is conducted by a qualified/trained teacher with good Urdu language skills.
- Have a clear understanding of how the exam should be conducted and how to help students achieve higher marks by asking relevant questions.
- Introduce each student clearly, in terms of the student number and name.
- Use a timer to monitor the duration of the photo card and general conversation
- Label recordings adequately to ensure the correct identification of each student.
- At the start of the test, announce the Role play, Photo card and nominated Theme for the Conversation chosen by the student.

- Do not shuffle papers or move items around on the desk during the test. Such distracting practices can be unsettling to the student. With regard to recordings, the extraneous noise produced can obscure utterances and disadvantage students as examiners can only credit what is audible.
- Pay attention to what the student says. For example, some teachers asked a question which the student had just answered in their response to a previous question. This is likely to unsettle some students.
- Adhere closely to timings as outlined in the Instructions for the conduct of the exams available on the AQA website
- Invite the student to ask a question in the General Conversation in good time rather than at the very end.
- Keep to the sequence chart provided at the back of the Teacher’s Booklet to ensure there is no overlap of task.
- Review the training materials for conduct of the speaking tests on the AQA website and review the Instructions for the conduct of the exams before conducting any tests.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.