



GCSE

URDU

8648/WH: Writing Higher
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The quality of work produced for this examination was encouraging. The paper differentiated very well in that students were able to score marks over a variety of questions. The vast majority of students had been entered appropriately for this tier. The quality of work seen in the overlap questions was of a higher standard than the Foundation tier. The ability to use a range of tenses and more complex language was impressive and students were also able to express and justify opinions well. Where students failed to score marks, this was where inaccuracy caused a delay in communicating messages. This was mainly due to inaccurate verb formation or students writing extended responses, far longer than the suggested word count, which created more scope for error. Another barrier to achievement was omission or misinterpretation of the bullet points in questions 1 and 2.

Question 1

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 90 words in total, about four different bullet points. All bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets. The quality of work seen was generally good, with many students able to provide extended responses, which demonstrated their ability to develop ideas, express opinions and refer to different time frames. Where students were less successful, this was mainly due to misspelling or omission of bullet points and overlong responses, which led to more scope for error.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: coverage of the bullet points, development of ideas, clarity of communication and expression of opinions. Students need to be reminded that coverage of bullet points is key, as misinterpreting or omitting even one means that the award of a mark above 6 is impossible, given that for the award of marks in the range 7 – 10, all aspects of the task must be covered. In addition, although students had no difficulty in developing ideas and expressing opinions, there were occasions when inaccuracy led to a lack of clarity of communication (referred to as ‘lapses’) and this impacted on marks awarded.

Question 1.1

This was a very popular question. All four bullet points were answered well and often more was written in relation to the first two bullet points than the others. The fourth bullet point was to write opinions about shopping from this online shop and many wrote just a couple of sentences about that. The 3rd bullet point was not done so well, mainly because of the need to refer to the future event. If the present tense was used, this clearly led to a lack of clarity in the intended message. However, there were some good examples of appropriate responses.

Question 1.2

Many students answered this question and most of them produced a good response, but some did not develop bullet point 3 to include a range of verbs in future tense and wrote only one sentence about how would young people benefit from this centre. Overall students’ performance in content is better than the quality of languages. Majority of students gained 4 or above marks in content. Some students didn’t give their opinion about the facilities in the community centre.

Question 1.3

This was an additional question added for this series. This was not as popular as the other two questions. Bullet points 1,3 and 4 were generally well done as these showed good development. Bullet point 2 was about the benefits of open days for students and some students could not

elaborate on that. Bullet point 4 was usually quite well done as some students used this as a prompt to write about their career plans when they finish university.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment here are variety of language, attempts at complexity, time frames and accuracy. In relation to the first three elements, the following was seen: successful references to two- or three-time frames; different persons of the verb; detailed opinion (negative and positive); structures reflecting complexity were often successfully attempted, for example: infinitive constructions, adjectives, connectives, intensifiers, negatives, use of subordinate clauses and relative pronouns. Less successful language included some confusion of tenses and verb endings, problems with the possessive pronoun and spelling mistakes. As far as tenses were concerned, the more common problem was when students attempted to refer to a past event and sometimes used the present tense to do so.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the suggested number of words.
- Mention all of the bullet points. Attempt to write something about them rather than omitting them. Tick off the bullet points on the question paper once they have been covered.
- Identify which bullet points target the different time frames and check that your verb formation is accurate.
- Make sure you include opinions as required by the task.
- Make sure the spelling is accurate.

Question 2

For this question, there are 15 marks for Content, 12 marks for Range of Language and 5 marks for Accuracy. Students write approximately 150 words in total, about two different bullet points. Both bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the points. The quality of responses was generally high, with most students able to complete both bullet points in each question, showing good ability to express and justify opinions. Many students were able to produce fluent pieces of extended writing with few lapses and a variety of language. Again, the philosophy behind this new specification is for students to use their knowledge to respond to the exact requirements of the task rather than just reproduce pre-learned language. Where students were less successful, it was because they had misinterpreted the bullet points or they wrote very lengthy responses, which increased the scope for error.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: relevance and detail (implicit in this is coverage of both bullet points), amount of information conveyed, clarity of communication and expression and justification of opinions. Students had no difficulty in developing ideas and expressing and justifying opinions, but there were occasions when inaccuracy led to a lack of clarity of communication (referred to as 'ambiguities') and, again, this impacted on marks awarded.

Question 2.1

This was the most popular choice with students, the vast majority of whom were able to write clearly about the advantages and disadvantages of having friends. Again, this is a topic with which students are familiar and they were able to provide a great deal of information. Opinions and justifications were regularly included. Vast majority of students achieved 10 or above marks for content. In addition, a number of students were able to express their opinions and provide justifications.

Question 2.2

This was the least popular choice because Q2.1 and Q 2.3 were on more familiar topics. Very few students answered this question and addressed both bullet points well. Writing about charity proved to be challenging for students.

Question 2.3

The question 2.1 was a popular choice and had a more successful outcome as both bullet points were addressed well. Nearly all students were able to make a statement about the school uniform they would like to have, many going on to provide detailed descriptions of the uniform in their school.. The second bullet point was well addressed by suggesting the advantages and the disadvantages of school uniform. This demonstrated an ability to use their knowledge to produce a more creative response.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment here are variety of language and a confident ability to produce complex sentences. It is worth noting that reference is not made to time frames or tenses in the criteria, but the use of these would be considered to be attempts at complexity. In terms of variety of language, there was an impressive variety of connectives seen; 'لیکن۔ کیونکہ۔ اور۔ اس'۔ A range of negatives was attempted by some students; 'لیے۔ حالانکہ۔ جب۔ تو۔ ب'۔ There was also a wide range of tenses, including the conditional tense. It is also worth noting that the criteria refer to style and register. This was not generally an issue with the quality of the work, but there were instances of attempts to include idioms that were sometimes highly unnatural and did not always reflect an appropriate style or register for the piece.

Accuracy

The criteria for assessment focus mainly on verbs and tense formations, and the type of errors that students make. It is to be noted that a 'major' error is one that interferes with communication, and a 'minor error', but still an inaccuracy, does not. The majority of students were able to produce work worthy of 3 marks and above. Common major errors included the inappropriate use of infinitives and poor formation of the past tense. Minor errors included gender errors, inaccurate adjectival agreements and minor misspellings.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the number of words required.
- Read the bullet points and the scene setting carefully, ensuring you know exactly what they require in terms of response.
- Ensure that what you write relates to the bullet points in some way.
- When including complex language, check that your verbs and spellings are accurate.

Question 3

For this translation task, there are 6 marks for Conveying key messages and 6 marks for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. Given that the level of demand of the messages was aimed at covering grades 4 to 9, the question differentiated well, with all students able to score some marks.

Conveying key messages

Key messages	Main issues
With her household chores	Struggled to translate 'household chores'
I celebrated my birthday	Struggled to translate celebrated
My parents and my relatives	Struggled with 'relatives'
I will spend this money	incorrect tense
On my next holiday in Pakistan	Found 'next holiday' difficult

Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures

Minor errors did not prevent marks being awarded for conveying key messages provided they were communicated. These inaccuracies were considered when deciding on the mark for the application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures.

Advice to students

- Practise high frequency words and phrases, especially connectives and prepositions.
- Check carefully that all aspects of the translation have been addressed accurately, particularly the little words.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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