

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE Arabic (4AR0)  
Paper 02

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## General Comments

The candidates in this paper were asked to choose two topics out of six, and to write around 300 words about each of them. The maximum mark for each was 30. The 30 marks were awarded to Content and Communication (18 marks), Language Application (6 marks) and Accuracy of Writing (6 marks).

Questions were set to cover a variety of areas of study, and writing styles, and candidates were given clear instructions to the required tasks in each question.

### Question 1

This question tells candidates that oil is an important source for the national income, and asks them to give their own opinion on whether oil producing countries should rely on oil as their main economical source, or if there should be other means by which to catch up with the modern economical developments for a better standard of living.

Candidates who gave their own opinion in a relevant and linked together piece of writing managed to score well in this question. However, high marks were not awarded to responses when a candidate wrote mostly about:

- The various usages of oil, such as using it in generating power, such as fuel cars and other machineries, etc
- How much oil contributes to polluting the Earth
- How oil is made naturally, and the process of finding it underground.

### Question 2

The question asks candidates to imagine that they live in a village where the government officials have decided to build an international airport. Candidate's are asked to write a letter to the Minister of Transport conveying to him or her the opinion of the people in the village, including the negative and positive aspects of this project as well as giving his or her own opinion of it.

A large number of the candidates who tried this question wrote a clear and pleasant piece of writing, in a form of a letter, including the villagers' opinion pointing out both negative and positive sides of the project. They gave their own opinion and therefore managed to score well in this question. However, some candidates' responses did not qualify for high marks due to misunderstanding the task. Common examples of this appeared to be when candidates:

- Concentrated on convincing the village people of the benefit or disadvantages of the project, without writing a letter
- Gave contradicting justifications when giving their own opinion
- Forgetting either to give their own opinion, the possible negative or the positive outcome of the project.

### Question 3

This question gives the candidates an Arabic proverb which states “We may forget those we have a laugh with, but we never forget those who we cry with”. Candidates here were asked to write a story to reflect on the meaning of the proverb.

The majority of the candidates who tried this question managed to give well constructed short stories which were relevant to the task, and hence scored well. However, some candidates’ responses did not qualify for high marks due to misunderstanding the task. Common examples of this appeared to be when candidates:

- Did not give their answer in a story form
- Gave irrelevant material
- Gave a title to their story, such as, “A friend in need is a friend indeed”, and did not succeed in linking their story to the required task.

### Question 4

This question suggests to candidates that the social networking site such as Facebook and Twitter have clear a effect on our societies. It requires candidates to imagine life without these social networking sites, and asks them to give examples on what they think from real life.

High scoring candidates managed to write about what might happen if our society did not have these social networking sites, giving a good example from real life, showing a clear ability to manipulate language to suit purpose, and responses gave full descriptions and express opinions which were appropriate to the task. However, there were a considerable number of candidates who could not score well as they rushed into writing about the advantages and disadvantages of computers, and some even went as far as writing in length giving advice to people on how to protect children from the bad effect of using computers.

### Question 5

This question suggests to the candidate that they have participated in a sports or arts competition on a high level in their town, and placed first. The candidate’s task is to:

- express his or her feelings before the competition
- express his or her feelings after the competition
- explain what he or she did to prepare for the competition.

Most of the candidates who tried this question managed to give a high quality pieces of writing covering all the above three main points of the task, and therefore scored well. However, there were the very few who misunderstood the task and did not score well as they simply wrote about a sport they liked, and about their ideal sports person.

## Question 6

This question offers a picture to the candidates and asks them to write a story which is relevant to the picture. Many candidates who tried this question did well enough to deserve high marks, except for the few who could not score well because they didn't write a story, or their story had no relevant material to the provided picture.

### Advice to candidates

- Enrich your general knowledge through reading different styles of writing from books, magazines, newspapers and the internet as well as acquiring knowledge from other media sources.
- Read and understand previous International GCSE exam material which normally carries valuable information that can be very helpful when answering future exams.
- Read the model sample answers of previous exams in the official Edexcel International GCSE Arabic – First Language student book published in June 2011.
- Familiarise yourselves with the format of the question paper.
- Adhere to writing on the designated lined pages in the answer book.
- Clearly mark the question of your choice and answer it in the specified area (lined pages), ensuring that there isn't any answer of any other question in the same area.
- Ask for extra lined paper from invigilators should the specified area not be big enough for your response.
- When answering a question, you should underline the important words or phrases that refer to the required task, and ensure that you respond to the entire task.

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