

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2013

International GCSE Arabic (4AR0)
Paper 02

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Publications Code UG034260

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This paper required students to produce two pieces of continuous writing. Candidates were asked to choose two titles from a choice of six. Candidates were advised to write about 300 words on each of their chosen topics. The six titles included a range of writing styles. Each piece of writing was marked out of 30 according to the marking grid on pages 6-7 of the specification. The 30 marks were awarded to content and communication (18 marks), language application (6 marks) and accuracy of writing (6 marks).

Question Analysis:

- Q1 To compare between studying traditionally at university level with distant/online learning by giving the advantages and the disadvantages.
- Q2 To talk about fame and how that might affect the candidate's future life.
- Q3 To write a letter to government officials to convince them that the task of bringing up children is mainly the parents' responsibility and hence the government should not get involved too much.
- Q4 To write an article to a (local) newspaper to show how educating offenders is better than sending them to prison.
- Q5 To show that the excessive money spent on a marriage ceremony would be better spent on the couple's future than on a one-off celebratory event.
- Q6 To write a story about the provided picture.

Candidates' performance:

The most popular questions were questions 1 and 2. These were then followed by questions 5, 4, 3 then 6.

Q1: The majority of the candidates who tried this question were able to satisfy the question requirements; however some candidates diverted from the main task by talking about the general advantages and the disadvantages of the Internet, and consequently they were not successful enough to score well here.

Q2: Candidates who attempted this question and gave a good account of how fame would affect their life scored well here. Others who only talked about a famous person or defined fame without relating it to themselves were not as successful as their peers in obtaining higher marks here.

Q3: The best of the responses here were those which were written in a form of a letter with good persuasive style and clear sentence structures with minimal or no spelling or grammatical errors.

Q4: The most successful candidates were those who wrote good responses about the advantages of educating or reforming offenders as an alternative approach to imprisonment. Candidates who concentrated on why people were sent to prison with little or no relevant material to the required task were not as successful as their peers who responded well to the task.

Q5: Most candidates who attempted this question were able to demonstrate good understanding of the task and were able to score well here.

Q6: This question offered a picture to the candidates and asked 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:

1. Enrich their general knowledge through reading different styles of writing from books, magazines, newspapers and internet as well as acquiring knowledge from other media sources.
2. Read and understand previous International GCSE exam material which normally carries valuable information that can be very helpful when answering future exams.
3. Read the model sample answers of previous exams.
4. Familiarise yourselves with the format of the question paper.
5. Adhere to writing on the designated lined pages in the answer book.
6. Clearly mark the question of their 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.
7. Ask for extra lined paper from invigilators should the specified area not be big enough for your response.
8. 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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Order Code UG034260 January 2013

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