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Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

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In Arabic (4AR0_01) Paper 1

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General:

The three sections of this paper covered all the topic areas of the specification (reading, writing and grammar), and the responses to the questions by the candidates were up to a high standard that incorporated a good structure in their answers. Some candidates had shown a lack of knowledge specifically in areas of grammar. In comparison to past papers, it was a challenging yet easy paper, but a majority of candidates had done really well in question 1. The allocated time was sufficient for the average candidate that had studied the areas in the specification, with evidence showing that the candidates were able to cope well with the allocated time.

Candidates' performance:

A majority of candidates had shown a great in-depth of knowledge, specifically in question 1. Some candidates had shown a lack of knowledge in Arabic grammar, which was evident as there were many mistakes made in questions 3 and 4 that were specific to grammatical questions. There was noticeable improvement that reflected in the responses of the candidates, showing a better understanding of the tasks. It was clear to see the questions were more challenging, although question 6 had a lot of mistakes, and there often were incomplete responses. Overall, the candidates' responses were good and maintained a good standard, although some candidates had been inconsistent.

Section 1(comprehension question):

وادي السند (Sind Vally) was a popular topic among the candidates, with the scoring of marks here being higher than that of previous years. It seemed like a generally easy question for the candidates in comparison to previous papers. This was evident in the sense that many of them were able to answer questions accurately, using bullet points to match the number of marks for that question. Overall, the section was very clear and well set up, although it was evident that there were some challenging questions and responses, specifically in question 1g:

ما الأنشطة الاقتصادية التي كانت تمارسها حضارة وادي السند مع غيرها من الشعوب؟

(What economic activities were practiced by the Indus Valley civilization with other countries?)

Section 2 (reading and writing):

Generally, candidates answered well but were not able to achieve full marks in this question. Some candidates deviated from the main points that were required of the question. There were very good responses, but some had very limited language and vocabulary that was not related to the task- an article on the importance of safety precautions they took before doing a sport that required high level of mental and physical fitness.

Section 3 (grammar):

The responses in the grammar section of the paper demonstrated a significant lack of knowledge in Arabic grammar and of understanding the grammar terms. There were many mistakes and candidates generally misunderstood the task or didn't have knowledge of the most basic grammar. In this section, questions were clear and concise in their requests from the candidates, and had no ambiguity, however, candidate responses were of a poor standard.

Additional Advice:

1. Every year, the issue of language quality arises. There is usually a slight improvement, but a majority of candidate's illegibility can cause a significant reduction in marks due to the examiner not being able to understand the response of the candidate. This is specifically problematic with the use of ePEN, as most papers are scanned, and it is difficult to make use of the writing. Centres are advised to inform their candidates to use black ink, and to ensure their writing is clear, with any crossing out done neatly.
2. Candidates tend to write on blank pages and must be informed to avoid writing on pages where it says, 'blank page'. Some candidates can lose marks if they have written valuable information on the blank page as some examiners may not check this page.

