

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Pakistan Studies (4PA0)

Paper 1: The History and Heritage of
Pakistan

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General comments

The standard of work presented this year by candidates was broadly comparable to last year although there was a decrease in the entry figure.

All candidates answered the required three questions with few rubric errors. It was noted that the majority of candidates had been well prepared for the examination. The highest scoring candidates were the ones who answered questions 1, 2 and 6. There was a good level of accuracy and relevant detail produced with genuine attempts at explanation in candidates' answers. However there were a large number of candidates who produced descriptive answers, especially with response to questions 3 and 7 that failed to explain the contribution of importance of the given factors. There was also a minority of candidates who produce weak answers displaying a limited amount of knowledge who were clearly unprepared for this examination.

Question 1

This was a popular question but some candidates struggled to score highly. The question focussed on the contributions of Muhammad Bin Qasim to the social, cultural and religious life of the subcontinent. Most candidates were able to describe the factors but could go little further in explaining how these factors contributed to the life in the subcontinent. As a result a large number of candidates were unable to score more than half marks since explanation was required for the higher level marks. However there were some excellent answers that demonstrated that good planning could bring just rewards in high marks by focussing on the demands of the question.

Question 2

This question on the extent to which the greased cartridge incident was the most important reason for the War of Independence brought some excellent answers and most candidates scored very well with clearly stated knowledge. However it is important to note that the question does expect candidates to explain the role of the various factors in causing the War, rather than merely describe them. There were small numbers of candidates that attempted to explain why the war failed and as a result these failed to score any or few marks.

Question 3

This question was popular and many candidates knew much about the three factors stated. However most candidates were unable to explain the importance of these factors and as a result many only scored half marks or less. It is important that Centres ensure that candidates fully understand the importance of how each question is phrased and that they make every attempt to answer the question as set.

Question 4

This was also a popular question that considered the importance of two individuals whose contributions to the Pakistan Movement were important. Again most candidates knew their facts on this topic and wrote extensively on Iqbal and Ali. However narrative answers tended to be at the forefront of such answers and as a result there tended to be few very high scoring answers apart from those candidates who were able to use their considerable knowledge to explain each other's importance.

Question 5

This was also a very popular question that required candidates explain the success and failure of the solving the problems of Partition during 1947 and 1948. Most candidates were in possession of sound knowledge of both the problems and solutions concerning Partition. However for very many candidates, a mark within level 3 could only be achieved since the vast majority were only able to identify successes.

Question 6

This was a popular question and was attempted by many candidates. Depth of knowledge was sound and many candidates were able to show how important a variety factors were in creating Bangladesh in 1975.

Question 7

This question was popular to some candidates but there were few good answers on Zia's domestic policies. Answers tended to be largely descriptive with a large concentration on the process of Islamisation. There was little attempt to explain answers and candidates in the main described as many domestic reforms as they knew.

Question 8

This was a popular question that required candidates to explain how successful Pakistan's relationship has been with the USA. Answers to this kind of question often tend to be a narrative of events since 1947 in chronological order and this year was no exception. However it is fair to say that in the midst of lots of description there were some genuine attempts to explain successes and failures and these candidates achieved just reward for their efforts.

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