

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Urdu (4UR0)
Paper 01

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Introduction

The overall standard and level of difficulty of this paper was similar to previous years. The content of the paper was relevant, interesting, informative and easily accessible by the majority of the candidates. Similar to previous year, most of the candidates attempted the paper very well. Generally, the exam was very successful and appropriate for the set ability of the age group.

The overall performance was marginally better than previous years. The general trend of Urdu to English translation has shown some improvement, while English to Urdu translations have shown little improvement as compared to previous years.

In Questions 1, 2 and 3 a few candidates failed to translate some keywords and phrases correctly. Candidates with good Urdu writing skills still appear to show lack of confidence in their English composition skills and vice versa.

Question 1:

In question 1, where the candidates were required to translate 5 sentences in Urdu, most of the candidates managed it well and did an accurate and precise translation into Urdu. These sentences were interesting and frequently used in everyday life but with a grammatical touch in the translation. Candidates with good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary performed very well and achieved full marks.

In question 1(a), a number of candidates translated the sentence 'What have you been doing with my motorbike' in a variety of ways and missed the correct form of tense required in the translation.

In case of question 1(b), the word 'hurt' and the phrase 'any body's feelings' also required careful translation.

In case of question 1(c), most candidates translated it very well.

The majority of candidates tackled question 1(d), well except a few who stumbled on the word 'hobbies'. It brought a variety of translations, some of which were not appropriate.

Again, most candidates translated question 1(e), very well.

Question 2:

In question 2, one passage for translation from English to Urdu was given 25 marks. The passage 'Muslim contributions to modern world.' was informative and interesting. Most candidates translated it well and achieved good marks. The phrases like 'golden period'; 'amazing inventions'; 'combined their own culture, traditions and knowledge with Greek philosophy and science'; 'to create a new era'; 'serving and eating food out of Turkish brassware' caused some difficulty to less able candidates. Still many translations were of high standard. However, the low-performing candidates were not as many as seen in the previous years.

Question 3:

In question 3, one passage for translation from Urdu to English was given for 25 marks. The passage 3 was about 'butterfly exhibition'. Examiners noticed a variety of styles for the same piece of translation and enjoyed reading the answers. Most candidates understood and grasped the basic idea comfortably and translated it well. However, some candidates translated the passage by including their own interpretations, which was not appropriate. A few of the phrases, which caused little difficulty were:

(Because their wings are extremely delicate) 'کیونکہ ان کے پر بے حد نازک ہوتے ہیں' ;
(All really cherish this experience) 'سب ہی بہت محظوظ ہوتے ہیں'

Question 4:

In Question 4, most candidates demonstrated very good Urdu essay writing and note writing skills. They demonstrated their subject knowledge well and tackled the topics maturely with appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary. They provided good reasons to justify their arguments in a natural and convincing manner. However, many candidates continued writing informal letter rather than note as instructed in the rubric.

In case of Question 4, similar to previous year, there seemed to be an equal distribution of the candidates choosing one of the three topics offered for essay writing. Question 4(a) was about 'my most adventurous journey.' Many candidates attempted it. Question 4(b) was about 'who should keep my city clean: my government or me?' which was also attempted by a good number of candidates. Question 4(c) was about 'how can I improve my school?' Fewer candidates attempted it. Similar to previous years, only a few candidates chose to write on one of the essay topics as compared to those who went for writing a note/letter. Those who tackled these have demonstrated good vocabulary and awareness of some idioms.

The ability to plan and present a balanced essay, on one of the three questions, with an introduction, reasoning and a conclusion whilst demonstrating good use of Urdu language was evident from most of the essays.

In case of note writing, most candidates had more or less similar content as for an informal letter, due to the nature of the situation described in the task, i.e. describing their reasons for not being able to attend the 'birthday party of the nephew.' However, many candidates managed to show their creative writing skills to justify achieving high marks. The majority of candidates used the usual format of informal letter writing although the rubric asked for writing a note rather than an informal letter. The quality of language and accuracy of these compositions however, varied a lot and candidates scored marks accordingly.

Paper Summary

The overall performance of the candidates was good. This qualification is for normal Urdu rather than Urdu as a Second Language. Expectations for the quality and standard are more challenging at this level of examination. Keeping that in mind, there are some areas for improvement for candidates to achieve better marks.

In English to Urdu translations, some issues with the quality of Urdu language were evident. There were serious issues in writing names of subjects, cities, dates and times, directions, colours, use of appropriate tenses and plurals, and lack of more variety in the use of appropriate vocabulary. There were many spelling errors in writing commonly known words and phrases. Teachers should carefully look at these aspects when preparing the students for this examination to help them score higher marks.

Some candidates continued to show difficulty in writing numbers in Urdu. The numbers written in English digits are perfectly acceptable for this examination. The quality of performance in Urdu to English translations was better. However, some candidates continued to skip certain words and phrases or transliterated them during translation. As examiners read all responses carefully, they discover such omissions easily. These candidates must avoid this practice for this level of examination.

Teachers from all centres must ensure that the candidates understand the importance of following the instructions given in the rubric. They must focus their response precisely on what has been asked in the question to achieve good marks.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>