



GCSE Urdu

8648/WH Paper 4 Writing Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

There were big differences in the quality of work, but overall students coped well with the demands of the examination. Most students were able to score highly on Question 1 and it tended to be Questions 2 and 3 that discriminated more clearly. More able students applied their linguistic knowledge effectively in responding to unexpected tasks and could use a wide range of structures and vocabulary in so doing. Inaccurate language often made comprehension difficult or impossible and this had a negative impact not only on the marks for language, but also for the mark for Content. The recommended number of words to write for Question 1 is 90 and, for Question 2, 150. When students far exceeded the recommendation, they very often made significantly more errors, which had an impact on the marks for language.

Question 1

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 90 words in total, about four different bullet points. All bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets. The quality of work seen was generally good, with many students able to provide extended responses, which demonstrated their ability to develop ideas, express opinions and refer to different time frames. Where students were less successful, this was mainly due to misspelling or omission of bullet points and overlong responses, which led to more scope for error.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: coverage of the bullet points, development of ideas, clarity of communication and expression of opinions. Students need to be reminded that coverage of bullet points is key, as misinterpreting or omitting even one means that the award of a mark above 6 is impossible, given that for the award of marks in the range 7 – 10, all aspects of the task must be covered. In addition, although students had no difficulty in developing ideas and expressing opinions, there were occasions when inaccuracy led to a lack of clarity of communication (referred to as ‘lapses’) and this impacted on marks awarded.

Question 1.1

All four bullet points were answered well and often more was written in relation to the last three bullet points. The 1st bullet point was not done so well by some students, mainly because some students simply wrote about using social media in general not about schoolwork as it was asked in the question. The number of students misinterpreting the first bullet point was smaller than in the Foundation tier. However, there were some good examples of appropriate responses.

Question 1.2

Many students answered this question and most of them produced a good response, but some did not develop the last bullet point to write about what would be their advice to friends to stay healthy. Overall, the students’ performance for content was better than for the quality of languages. The majority of students gained 4 or more marks for content.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment here are variety of language, attempts at complexity, time frames and accuracy. In relation to the first three elements, the following was seen: successful references to two- or three-time frames; different persons of the verb; detailed opinion (negative and positive); structures reflecting complexity were often successfully attempted, for example: infinitive constructions, adjectives, connectives, intensifiers, negatives, use of subordinate clauses and relative pronouns. Less successful language included some confusion of tenses and verb endings, problems with the possessive pronoun and spelling mistakes. As far as tenses were concerned, the most common problem was when students attempted to refer to a past event and sometimes used the present tense to do so.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the suggested number of words.
- Mention all of the bullet points. Attempt to write something about them rather than omitting them. Tick off the bullet points on the question paper once they have been covered.
- Identify which bullet points target the different time frames and check that your verb formation is accurate.
- Make sure you include opinions as required by the task.
- Make sure the spelling is accurate.

Question 2

For this question, there are 15 marks for Content, 12 marks for Range of Language and 5 marks for Accuracy. Students write approximately 150 words in total, about two different bullet points. Both bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the points. The quality of responses was generally high, with most students able to complete both bullet points in each question, showing good ability to express and justify opinions. Many students were able to produce fluent pieces of extended writing with few lapses and a variety of language. Again, the philosophy behind this specification is for students to use their knowledge to respond to the exact requirements of the task rather than just reproduce pre-learned language. Where students were less successful, it was because they had misinterpreted the bullet points or they wrote very lengthy responses, which increased the scope for error.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: relevance and detail (implicit in this is coverage of both bullet points), amount of information conveyed, clarity of communication and expression and justification of opinions. Students had no difficulty in developing ideas and expressing and justifying opinions, but there were occasions when inaccuracy led to a lack of clarity of communication (referred to as ‘ambiguities’) and, again, this impacted on marks awarded.

Question 2.1

This was the more popular choice with students, the vast majority of whom were able to write clearly about their best holidays and the advantages of going on holidays. Some students simply wrote about their past holidays but forgot about their best holidays. Again, this is a topic with which students are familiar and they were able to provide a great deal of information. Opinions and justifications were

regularly included. The vast majority of students achieved 10 or more marks for content. In addition, a number of students were able to express their opinions and provide justifications.

Question 2.2

This question asked students to write about the advantages of working hard in school and what they would like to study in future. There were some interesting responses where students expressed their opinions and justified. This was not as popular a choice as question 2.1. Those who answered this question addressed both bullet points well.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment here are variety of language and a confident ability to produce complex sentences. It is worth noting that reference is not made to time frames or tenses in the criteria, but the use of these would be considered to be attempts at complexity. In terms of variety of language, there was an impressive variety of connectives seen.

A range of negatives was attempted by some students. There was also a wide range of tenses, including the conditional tense. It is also worth noting that the criteria refer to style and register. This was not generally an issue with the quality of the work, but there were instances of attempts to include idioms that were sometimes highly unnatural and did not always reflect an appropriate style or register for the piece.

Accuracy

The criteria for assessment focus mainly on verbs and tense formations, and the type of errors that students make. It is to be noted that a ‘major’ error is one that interferes with communication, and a ‘minor error’, but still an inaccuracy, does not. The majority of students were able to produce work worthy of 3 marks and above. Common major errors included the inappropriate use of infinitives and poor formation of the past tense. Minor errors included gender errors, inaccurate adjectival agreements, and minor misspellings.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the number of words required.
- Read the bullet points and the scene setting carefully, ensuring you know exactly what they require in terms of response.
- Ensure that what you write relates to the bullet points in some way.
- When including complex language, check that your verbs and tense formations are secure, and spellings are accurate.

Question 3

This is the translation task. For this question, there are 6 marks for Conveying key messages and 6 marks for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. Given that the level of demand of the messages was aimed at covering grades 4 to 9, the question differentiated well, with all students able to score some marks.

Conveying key messages

Key messages	Main issues
It is hot in our cities	Some students did not write the plural of 'city'
Yesterday, after school	Some students missed 'after school'
For my school friend	Some students missed 'school;' they simply wrote 'friend'
On his birthday	Some students found 'birthday' difficult
He was very happy	This was done very well by most students, no issues here

Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures

Minor errors did not prevent marks being awarded for conveying key messages provided they were communicated. These inaccuracies were considered when deciding on the mark for the application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures.

Advice to students

- Practise high frequency words and phrases, especially connectives and prepositions.
- Check carefully that all aspects of the translation have been addressed accurately, particularly the little words.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.