

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel International IGCSE
in Urdu (4URO) Paper 1

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The following points were noted by examiners:

Introduction:

The question paper was accessible and majority of candidates attempted the paper well. The topics were relevant, interesting, informative and easily accessible for the majority of the candidates. The overall level of difficulty, content and linguistic demand of the paper was similar to previous years. The exam was appropriate for the set ability of the age group.

The overall performance of the candidates was better than previous year as the paper was comparatively more accessible. The Urdu to English translations is improving when compared to previous years.

Question 1:

In question 1, candidates were required to translate 5 sentences in Urdu. The sentences were interesting and are frequently used in everyday life. More able candidates with good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary performed very well and achieved full marks.

In 1(a) many candidates for the Urdu translation missed out the phrase ‘at least once’. In case of 1(b) the phrase ‘regular eye test’ caused a bit of difficulty. 1(c) with reference to ‘you have a beautiful house’ the word ‘house’ was misunderstood and translated as ‘horse’ by many candidates. In 1(d) the phrase ‘one’s parents’ translated as ‘others parents’ by majority of the candidates. For 1(e) some candidates found it difficult to translate ‘pleasantly surprised’.

Question 2:

In question 2, the two different passages for translation were interesting, informative and very different from each other.

For passage 2(a), most candidates completed the translation and more able candidates achieved good marks. The phrases like ‘covered with thousands of bacteria’ and ‘public toilets’ caused some difficulty and for less able candidates only few translations were of very good standard.

In question 2b, most candidates understood the idea completely but found the use of appropriate Urdu language for the keywords used in English like ‘walk down’, ‘local high street’, ‘takeaways’, ‘by adapting eastern heritage’, ‘within the western upbringing’ difficult.

This may have been due to the popularity of topic area and direct relevance with the age group.

Question 3:

In question 3, both parts were in Urdu and the candidates were required to translate into English language. The candidates found it very accessible as the two passages were relevant to their everyday life.

Passage 3(a) was about social networking media. Examiners really enjoyed reading the answers, as there were many variations in vocabulary used. Most candidates understood the question and translated the basic idea comfortably.

In 3(b), the reference was made to the health benefits of water, where the candidates wrote their own understanding of the scientific knowledge. Some phrases which caused difficulty were 'freshness and glowing of skin', 'almonds soaked overnight in water', mental tiredness/fatigue.

Question 4:

There seemed to be a fairly equal distribution of the candidates attempting one of the three possible tasks for essay writing. Only a few candidates chose to write on one of the essay topics when compared to those who went for writing a letter. Candidates showed good vocabulary and some awareness of idioms.

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

In case of letter writing, most candidates had more or less similar content due to the nature of the situation described in the task, i.e. describing their future plans. The majority of students used the usual format of letter writing to help them. The quality of language and accuracy varied and candidates scored marks accordingly.

Paper Summary:

The overall performance of the candidates was good due to better accessibility of the paper. However, there are few areas for improvement. In English to Urdu translations, weakness in writing good quality Urdu was still evident. There were issues in writing names of cities, dates and times, directions, use of appropriate tenses, plurals, and good vocabulary. There were too many spelling errors in writing commonly known words and phrases.

Teachers should look at these things when preparing their students for this examination. Any improvement will surely help them to score higher marks. Many candidates continued to write numbers in Urdu and got them wrong. Candidates should understand that the numbers written in English digits are perfectly acceptable in 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 which should be avoided.

Teachers from all centres must ensure that their students understand the importance of responding to the rubric. They must focus their response precisely and accurately on what is specifically being asked in the question to gain high marks, rather than write their own interpretation.

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