FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

> **Paper 3247/01**
> **Reading and Writing**

GENERAL

The performance of the majority of the candidates was more than satisfactory, with many producing very good performances. Candidates coped well with the different technical demands of the question format, the only limitations being that of

(a) The candidates' ability to understand and respond appropriately to the texts and the questions, and

(b) Their linguistic ability and competence in reading and following instructions.

The standard format of this paper is that there are two passages of about 350 words each, on a linked theme which this year was Food, Diet and Health.

The first passage was an historical account of the development of cooking and types of food popular on the subcontinent, while the second passage was a more health related passage on the effects of changing to a modern 'western style' diet and its problems.

Candidates had to read these passages and then answer just two questions, both of which required extended responses. Marks are awarded for content, language and organisation/structure on a scale of 10, 10 and 5, giving a total of 25 marks for each question. There was equal weighting to each question giving a total for the paper of 50 marks.

QUESTION ONE:

'DonoN ybaratoN ke havale sesahyt mand zindagi men ghiza ki ahmiyat ka muwazana kijiye'

'With reference to both passages compare the importance of diet in a healthy life.'

This question required candidates to write a direct comparison of the two contrasting facts and comments discussed in the texts.

Candidates were, as always, expected to:

(i) Make comparisons making direct reference to these texts

(ii) Use, as far as possible, ' their own words.'

As always, it was a combination of the above two points which provided the Examiners with the opportunity to discriminate between the poor, the satisfactory and the good candidates' performances.

This question was satisfactorily rather than well answered by most of the candidates. The best were those who were able to extract the main points of each passage and fit them together in such a way as to make appropriate comparisons and contrast. Of course there are points from each text that should be mentioned: the importance of a balanced diet, effects of a modern 'fast food' diet, etc., but this does not mean that the content should be copied 'word for word'. Such responses scored lower marks for language because the language used was copied from the text and was not the candidates' own.

The best responses were those who wrote their own response to the question, compared and contrasted these different facts and points of view expressed in the two passages. The most significant problem this year was that far too many candidates simply wrote two lengthy paragraphs, the first paraphrasing Passage A and the second summarising Passage B. Indeed, some even wrote the Urdu word for summary, *'khwlaasa'*, at the beginning of their responses. Because they were asked to compare the two passages,

merely summarising them without making any direct comparisons or contrasts did not enable them to score high marks. That is not a **'muwazana'**.

The better candidates wrote about the points raised in each passage and then commented on their differing points of view and compared and contrasted the relative importance in each passage of diet and health. They did not merely paraphrase the two passages without comment.

QUESTION TWO

The main thrust of this question, although based on the central theme of the texts, is to provide a stimulus for more creative and imaginative writing on a topic deriving its theme from the texts, but not directly so. This time the candidates were asked to write a letter giving advice to a friend.

'Aap ka dost ghar ka khana taqriban chor chukka hai awr bahyr ke khane ko tarjih deta hai- apne dost ko khat ke zariye fast food ke nuqsanat se aagah kijiye'

'Your friend has practically given up home cooking and much prefers take-aways, etc. Write a letter to your friend making him aware of the disadvantages of fast food, take-aways, etc.'

This gave candidates an ideal opportunity to demonstrate their powers of language and argument. The stronger candidates produced well constructed and often amusing letters telling their friends off for not eating mother's good home cooking and wasting money and health on rubbish food. Some were very forceful and got their point across very well. They were able to make their points using their own words within a planned framework, unlike weaker candidates who merely rambled from point to point in an unstructured way.

Although the question was designed so that candidates would not necessarily need to make use of much material from the passages, the weaker candidates did rely overmuch on material drawn from the passages. One surprising point of interest emerged, and that was the fact that there were some candidates who held very strong views on the subject of diet and health and were enjoying the chance to berate a friend about his unhealthy lifestyle. Certainly the humour displayed by a good many candidates was here entirely appropriate in an informal communication between friends.

This question was much better attempted by candidates than the first task.

There were very few candidates whose written Urdu was not up to the task, although a minority of papers displayed very messy handwriting style with crossings out and scribbled insertions. Presentation of work and clear legible handwriting is important.

The length of some of the responses was also problematical. The rubric states that answers should be about a side and a half of paper, depending on size of handwriting. The length of some scripts was well over double that limitation; these will have lost some marks for structure and content. It is very important to follow rubrics if high marks are to be achieved.

That being said, overall the majority of candidates wrote relevant, interesting and linguistically accurate responses to both questions.

FIRST LANGUAGE URDU

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Paper 3247/02
Texts
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General comments

The overall performance of candidates was very good. Candidates showed a very good command of language as well as knowledge of the texts. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to write very detailed responses with confident use of complex sentences structures enabling them to communicate their points well. Most candidates' answers were relevant and well illustrated. All six questions were attempted by some candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1: Poetry

Question 1

This question was about a poem/ghazal written by '*Bahader Shah Zafar* '.

There are five parts to this question and candidates are required to answer all five parts. This question was very popular and the majority of candidates gave excellent responses.

(a)   Almost all candidates answered this part correctly except a very few who did not name the poet.

(b)   The majority of candidates answered this part well and comprehensively, though a few candidates were unable to explain the background to the poem.

(c)   Most candidates answered this more challenging part of the question very well. Referring to second poem in the text, candidates expressed the sentiments of the poet very well and showed a good understanding of the depth of feeling portrayed.

(d)   This was a very straightforward question and almost all the candidates gained full marks.

(e)   A very popular part of the question. Candidates demonstrated the ability to write very detailed responses and showed a confident use of complex sentences. Most candidates gained full marks. The question required using the words in sentences, so candidates who just mentioned the meaning of those words were awarded fewer marks.

Question 2

This year this question was divided into two parts: **one** worth five marks and the second worth twenty marks.

Part **1** was about '*Mir Taqee Mir*' asking candidates to give reasons for his gloomy poetry. The majority of candidates answered this part very well and secured full marks.

Part **2** was about five poetic qualities/features. Candidates were required to find these five qualities in any two poets from the prescribed texts apart from the poet discussed in **Question 1**.

Apart from a very few candidates, most showed a very good understanding of the topic. Most candidates were able to discuss the poetic qualities/features well and those who illustrated their answers with close reference to the texts achieved the highest marks.

Section 2: Prose

Question 3

(a)
Almost all candidates who attempted this question gained good marks. Candidates covered the topic well and correctly identified the value of Mrs Niaz's independence. They were also able to give quotations from the original text.

(b)
Again the majority of candidates competently discussed the attitude of civil servants, giving examples from society. Some very good answers with quotations were given mentioning all the relevant points clearly and lucidly.

Question 4

This proved to be a very straightforward question for many candidates. The majority wrote very well explaining their own feelings about the nation. Again those who supported their answers with close reference to the texts gained the most marks.

Question 5

This was the least popular question set on a passage from the new novel; however candidates who attempted it performed very well and secured good marks.

(a)
Candidates were clearly able to write about the mental conflict *Sulat Jehangir* was experiencing.

(b)
This part of the question was very well attempted and candidates illustrated their answers with close reference to the novel.

Question 6

Only a few candidates attempted this question but those who did answered well with good references from the text.