

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/21
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

In their preparation for this paper, candidates are expected to:

- have a good range of vocabulary relating to topics encountered in daily life
- be able to communicate information in the form of a note or brief letter/email, using accurate vocabulary, structures and verbs
- feel confident in expressing their feelings, likes, and dislikes.

General comments

In general, candidates showed a sound understanding of the tasks and handled the paper very well with a large number gaining high marks. Candidates would benefit from reading more widely in the target language as this would help their confidence when tackling **Section 3** of this paper. They would also benefit from practising more creative writing to prepare for **Section 2**. Candidates who scored low marks tended to be those whose work contained considerable errors in **Sections 2** and **3**.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1, Questions 1–5

Most candidates answered these discrete questions correctly.

Exercise 2, Questions 6–10

The questions in this matching task were generally handled well. Most errors occurred in response to **Question 10**.

Exercise 3, Questions 11–15

For this exercise, candidates were given a short text to read followed by five multiple choice questions. As in the previous two exercises, these questions were answered well by the majority of candidates. **Question 14** proved to be more problematic.

Exercise 4, Question 16

Candidates were asked to write a short message, giving three pieces of information: **(a)** what time they are leaving home, **(b)** what they are going to buy, and **(c)** who they are going to meet. There were three marks available for Communication (1 mark for each element of the message) and two marks for the Language used. The points of information are cued by a short Arabic stimulus supported by an illustration and the correct interpretation of the illustrations is important.

Candidates should be advised that there is nothing to be gained from expanding their answers to this exercise. There are no additional marks to be gained by adding to the required information and any time spent adding such embellishment, cannot be credited by the Examiner, but could be allocated more profitably to **Sections 2** and **3**. The most successful answers are those which manage to communicate the required information briefly, yet accurately.

This writing task was generally handled quite well. Some candidates struggled to provide a response to part (b). Responses often contained a number of grammatical and spelling errors, but spellings were tolerated provided that the meaning was clear.

The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

صديقي العزيز محمد
سأذهب إلى مركز المدينة، وسوف أخرج من البيت الساعة الثانية عشرة منتصف النهار، وذلك لأنني سأشتري حذاء وسوف ألتقي
هناك بأصدقائي سامي وأيمن وعبد الله. لن أتأخر.
سليمان

Section 2

Exercise 1, Questions 17–25

In this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended passage of Arabic and to answer questions on it, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. The passage took the form of a letter to a friend about visiting France. Sometimes a one or two word answer was all that was needed, as in **Question 17**, **Question 19**, and **Question 22**, but provided that what the candidate had written contained the correct answer, additional material copied from the text was tolerated unless it was contradictory. The majority of candidates answered these questions correctly.

Exercise 2, Question 26

In this writing task candidates were asked to write about their school. In their piece of writing they were asked to complete 3 tasks: (a) to describe the school, (b) to describe a typical day at school and (c) to express their opinion about the school and what they would like to change if they could. 10 marks were available for Communication of the required elements and 5 marks were available for Language.

In terms of the mark for Language, candidates should aim to write reasonably accurate and understandable Arabic. The most successful candidates wrote simply and clearly, using a range of apt vocabulary and structures. They avoided attempts to convey over-complicated ideas for which they did not have sufficient command of the language. Less successful responses were characterised by short, abrupt sentences and various grammatical errors, particularly in the conjugation of the verb and in the use of tenses.

In terms of the mark for Communication, candidates should be reminded that they must address all the given bullet points in order to have access to the top marks.

Many candidates drew on their own experiences to help them answer the question, and there were a number of good answers where candidates clearly demonstrated that they were familiar with the topic and its associated vocabulary. The strongest candidates addressed all the bullet points very clearly in their responses. The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

أدرس في مدرسة النور. هي كبيرة وجميلة. تتكون من ثلاثة أقسام. الابتدائي، المتوسط، و الثانوي. وفي مدرستي حديقة وصالة رياضة، ومسرح. ومكتبة، ومختبر. لون جدرانها أبيض وأخضر.

تبدأ الدراسة السابعة والنصف، وقبل هذا يجتمع الطلاب في الملعب، في طوابير حسب الصفوف ويلقي المدير كلمة صغيرة يذكر فيها بعض التوجيهات، ثم نبدأ الحصص الأولى والثانية بالحساب، ثم بالعربي وبعد ذلك نذهب إلى الغداء فالصلاة، ثم استراحة للعب ثم نعود إلى صفوفنا فندرس الجغرافيا ثم التربية الإسلامية ثم نذهب إلى صالة الرياضة لبعض التمرينات.

مدرستي رائعة، ولكن إذا استطعت أن أغير شيئاً فيها فإني سأضيف حوضاً للسباحة.

Section 3

In this section, Examiners are looking not just for evidence that candidates are able to locate the information in the passage, but are seeking signs of genuine comprehension, i.e. the ability to select exact details required for the answer.

Exercise 1, Questions 27–32

In **Exercise 1**, candidates are required to read an extended passage in Arabic, decide which of the given Arabic statements are صح and which are خطأ , and then go on to correct the false ones as simply as possible, in Arabic, using the material from the passage, and in the style of the example given. While it is still sometimes possible to lift answers from the passage, candidates need to be very precise in what they choose for their answer, as additional material copied indiscriminately may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. It is therefore important that candidates are taught to answer succinctly as the longer the answer, the higher the risk of including extra distorting material and invalidating an otherwise correct answer.

Generally, candidates struggled to correct the false statements, which often indicated a lack of understanding of the reading passage. A number of candidates ticked صح but then attempted to correct the statement. There is no need to provide a correction where candidates decide that the statement is true. The questions which proved the most problematic were **Question 29** and **Question 30**. Some candidates ticked both boxes for some questions, while others did not tick a box at all. In both these cases, the candidates were not awarded a mark.

Exercise 2, Questions 33–38

In this final exercise of the paper, candidates are required to read an extended passage in Arabic and show their understanding of it by answering questions, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. This exercise requires responses to be sufficiently accurate to communicate the answer without ambiguity or distortion. This means that answers 'lifted' unselectively from the text may contain additional or unclear information which can invalidate an answer.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/22
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

In their preparation for this paper, candidates are expected to:

- have a good range of vocabulary relating to topics encountered in daily life
- be able to communicate information in the form of a note or brief letter/email, using accurate vocabulary, structures and verbs
- feel confident in expressing their feelings, likes, and dislikes.

General comments

In general, candidates showed a sound understanding of the tasks and handled the paper very well with a large number gaining high marks. Candidates would benefit from reading more widely in the target language as this would help their confidence when tackling **Section 3** of this paper. They would also benefit from practising more creative writing to prepare for **Section 2**. Candidates who scored low marks tended to be those whose work contained considerable errors in **Sections 2** and **3**.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1, Questions 1–5

Most candidates answered these discrete questions correctly.

Exercise 2, Questions 6–10

The questions in this matching task were generally handled well. Most errors occurred in response to **Question 10**.

Exercise 3, Questions 11–15

For this exercise, candidates were given a short text to read followed by five multiple choice questions. As in the previous two exercises, these questions were answered well by the majority of candidates. **Question 14** proved to be more problematic.

Exercise 4, Question 16

Candidates were asked to write a short message, giving three pieces of information: **(a)** what time they are leaving home, **(b)** what they are going to buy, and **(c)** who they are going to meet. There were three marks available for Communication (1 mark for each element of the message) and two marks for the Language used. The points of information are cued by a short Arabic stimulus supported by an illustration and the correct interpretation of the illustrations is important.

Candidates should be advised that there is nothing to be gained from expanding their answers to this exercise. There are no additional marks to be gained by adding to the required information and any time spent adding such embellishment, cannot be credited by the Examiner, but could be allocated more profitably to **Sections 2** and **3**. The most successful answers are those which manage to communicate the required information briefly, yet accurately.

This writing task was generally handled quite well. Some candidates struggled to provide a response to part (b). Responses often contained a number of grammatical and spelling errors, but spellings were tolerated provided that the meaning was clear.

The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

صديقي العزيز محمد
سأذهب إلى مركز المدينة، وسوف أخرج من البيت الساعة الثانية عشرة منتصف النهار، وذلك لأنني سأشتري حذاء وسوف ألتقي
هناك بأصدقائي سامي وأيمن وعبد الله. لن أتأخر.
سليمان

Section 2

Exercise 1, Questions 17–25

In this exercise, candidates were required to read a more extended passage of Arabic and to answer questions on it, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. The passage took the form of a letter to a friend about visiting France. Sometimes a one or two word answer was all that was needed, as in **Question 17**, **Question 19**, and **Question 22**, but provided that what the candidate had written contained the correct answer, additional material copied from the text was tolerated unless it was contradictory. The majority of candidates answered these questions correctly.

Exercise 2, Question 26

In this writing task candidates were asked to write about their school. In their piece of writing they were asked to complete 3 tasks: (a) to describe the school, (b) to describe a typical day at school and (c) to express their opinion about the school and what they would like to change if they could. 10 marks were available for Communication of the required elements and 5 marks were available for Language.

In terms of the mark for Language, candidates should aim to write reasonably accurate and understandable Arabic. The most successful candidates wrote simply and clearly, using a range of apt vocabulary and structures. They avoided attempts to convey over-complicated ideas for which they did not have sufficient command of the language. Less successful responses were characterised by short, abrupt sentences and various grammatical errors, particularly in the conjugation of the verb and in the use of tenses.

In terms of the mark for Communication, candidates should be reminded that they must address all the given bullet points in order to have access to the top marks.

Many candidates drew on their own experiences to help them answer the question, and there were a number of good answers where candidates clearly demonstrated that they were familiar with the topic and its associated vocabulary. The strongest candidates addressed all the bullet points very clearly in their responses. The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

أدرس في مدرسة النور. هي كبيرة وجميلة. تتكون من ثلاثة أقسام. الابتدائي، المتوسط، و الثانوي. وفي مدرستي حديقة وصالة رياضة، ومسرح. ومكتبة، ومختبر. لون جدرانها أبيض وأخضر.

تبدأ الدراسة السابعة والنصف، وقبل هذا يجتمع الطلاب في الملعب، في طوابير حسب الصفوف ويلقي المدير كلمة صغيرة يذكر فيها بعض التوجيهات، ثم نبدأ الحصص الأولى والثانية بالحساب، ثم بالعربي وبعد ذلك نذهب إلى الغداء فالصلاة، ثم استراحة للعب ثم نعود إلى صفوفنا فندرس الجغرافيا ثم التربية الإسلامية ثم نذهب إلى صالة الرياضة لبعض التمرينات.

مدرستي رائعة، ولكن إذا استطعت أن أغير شيئاً فيها فإني سأضيف حوضاً للسباحة.

Section 3

In this section, Examiners are looking not just for evidence that candidates are able to locate the information in the passage, but are seeking signs of genuine comprehension, i.e. the ability to select exact details required for the answer.

Exercise 1, Questions 27–32

In **Exercise 1**, candidates are required to read an extended passage in Arabic, decide which of the given Arabic statements are صح and which are خطأ , and then go on to correct the false ones as simply as possible, in Arabic, using the material from the passage, and in the style of the example given. While it is still sometimes possible to lift answers from the passage, candidates need to be very precise in what they choose for their answer, as additional material copied indiscriminately may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. It is therefore important that candidates are taught to answer succinctly as the longer the answer, the higher the risk of including extra distorting material and invalidating an otherwise correct answer.

Generally, candidates struggled to correct the false statements, which often indicated a lack of understanding of the reading passage. A number of candidates ticked صح but then attempted to correct the statement. There is no need to provide a correction where candidates decide that the statement is true. The questions which proved the most problematic were **Question 29** and **Question 30**. Some candidates ticked both boxes for some questions, while others did not tick a box at all. In both these cases, the candidates were not awarded a mark.

Exercise 2, Questions 33–38

In this final exercise of the paper, candidates are required to read an extended passage in Arabic and show their understanding of it by answering questions, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. This exercise requires responses to be sufficiently accurate to communicate the answer without ambiguity or distortion. This means that answers 'lifted' unselectively from the text may contain additional or unclear information which can invalidate an answer.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/23
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

In their preparation for this paper, candidates are expected to:

- have a grasp on vocabulary relating to topics encountered in daily life
- be able to communicate information in the form of a note or brief letter/email, using straightforward vocabulary, structures and verbs
- feel confident in expressing their feelings, likes, and dislikes.

General comments

In general, candidates handled this paper well with a large number achieving high marks. Centres are advised to prepare candidates by exposing them to the target language through creative writing for **Section 2**, and reading in Arabic to prepare for **Section 3**. Candidates who scored low marks were those whose work contained many errors in **Sections 2 and 3**.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1, Questions 1–5

Most candidates answered these discrete questions correctly.

Exercise 2, Questions 6–10

The questions in this matching task were generally handled well. Some candidates found **Question 7** problematic.

Exercise 3, Questions 11–15

For this exercise, candidates were given a short text to read followed by five multiple choice questions. As in the previous two exercises, these questions were answered well by the majority of candidates.

Exercise 4, Question 16

Candidates were asked to write a note giving three pieces of information: **(a)** who they are going to town with, **(b)** what they are going to do there, and **(c)** how they are going to return home. There were three marks available for Communication (1 mark for each element of the message) and two marks for Language. The points of information are cued by a short Arabic stimulus supported by an illustration and the correct interpretation of the illustrations is important. Those parts of a candidate's answer which are not credited for Communication are not considered for reward for Language.

Candidates should be advised that there is nothing to be gained from expanding their answers to this exercise. There are no additional marks to be gained by adding to the required information and any time spent adding such embellishment, which is ignored by the Examiner, could be allocated more profitably to **Sections 2 and 3**. The most successful answers are those which manage to communicate the required information briefly, yet accurately.

In response to part (c), some candidates used the word *باص* which was accepted as correct, but the word would have been *حافلة* which was also used by many candidates.

This writing task was generally handled quite well. Some candidates struggled to provide an adequate response to this question. Responses often contained a number of grammatical and spelling errors, incorrect spellings were tolerated provided that the meaning was clear.

The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

صديقتي ميسون

لا أستطيع الذهاب معك إلى السينما لأنني سأذهب إلى مركز المدينة هذا الصباح مع أخي علاء لنسبح في مسبح المدينة، وسنبقى هناك حتى الثالثة، ثم نرجع إلى البيت بالحافلة. أنا متأسفة جداً.

فاطمة

Section 2

Exercise 1, Question 17–26

Candidates were required to read a more extended passage of Arabic in this exercise and to answer questions on it, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. The passage was a letter to a friend about a geography teacher. The majority of candidates answered these questions correctly although several errors occurred in responses to **Question 21** and **Question 25**.

Exercise 2, Question 27

In this writing task candidates were asked to write about money. In their piece of writing they were asked to complete 3 tasks: (a) to say how and when they get their pocket money, (b) how they spend their pocket money and (c) how they would spend a large sum of money if they got it. 10 marks were available for communication of the required elements and 5 marks were available for language.

In terms of the mark for language, candidates should aim to write reasonably accurate and understandable Arabic. The most successful candidates wrote simply and concisely, using a range of apt vocabulary and structures. They avoided attempts to convey over-complicated ideas for which they did not have sufficient command of the language. Some candidates provided short, abrupt sentences and various grammatical errors, particularly in the conjugation of the verb and in the use of tenses, and as a result scored less successfully.

In terms of the mark for communication, candidates are reminded that they must address all the given bullet points in order to have access to the top marks.

Many candidates drew on their own experiences to help them answer the question, and there were a number of good answers where candidates showed they were familiar with the topic and its associated vocabulary. The best candidates addressed all the given bullet points very clearly in their responses. The following is an example of a good answer to this question:

لأحصل على مصروفي لا بد لي من أن أعمل دروسي كلها، و أساعد أمي في أعمال المنزل، كما يجب أن أساعد أخي الصغير هيثم في حل واجباته المدرسية. أبي يعطيني مصروف الجيب عادة، وذلك صباح كل يوم خميس، لأتمكن من الذهاب إلى مركز المدينة لشراء ما أريد.

أنفق نقودي عادة بشراء بعض الألبسة التي أحتاجها في المدرسة، إذا بقي معي بعض النقود أشتري كتاباً فيه قصص لأنني أحب قراءة القصص. وإذا ما كنت في حاجة إلى شراء أي شيء أضع نقودي في البنك.

إذا أصبح عندي مال كثير فساأشتري دراجة نارية لأنني أحب ممارسة رياضة ركوب الدراجات النارية، كما سأشتري جوالاً جديداً وحديثاً لأن جوالي قديم جداً.

Section 3

In this section, Examiners are looking not just for evidence that candidates are able to locate the information in the passage, but for signs of genuine comprehension, i.e. the ability to select the exact information required for the answer.

Exercise 1, Question 28–33

In **Exercise 1**, candidates were required to read an extended passage in Arabic, decide which of the given Arabic statements are صح and which are خطأ, and then go on to correct the false ones as simply as possible, in Arabic, using the material from the passage and in the style of the example given. Although it is sometimes possible to lift answers from the passage, candidates need to be very precise in what they choose for their answer, as additional material copied indiscriminately may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. It is therefore important that candidates are encouraged to answer succinctly, as the longer the answer, the higher the risk of including extra distorting material and invalidating an otherwise correct answer.

Many candidates struggled to correct the false statements, which often indicated a lack of understanding of the reading passage. A number of candidates ticked صح but then attempted to correct the statement. There is no need to provide a correction where candidates decide that the statement is true.

Exercise 2, Question 34–39

In this final exercise of the paper, candidates are required to read an extended passage in Arabic and show their understanding of it by answering questions on it, also in Arabic. The questions are asked in the same order as the information is presented in the passage. This exercise requires responses to be sufficiently accurate to communicate the answer without ambiguity or distortion. This means that answers 'lifted' unselectively from the text may contain additional information or unclear information which can invalidate an answer. The most problematic questions were **Question 35** and **Question 37**.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/03
Speaking

Key messages

In preparing for, and conducting, the IGCSE Arabic Speaking examination, Centres should bear the following pointers in mind.

- Careful preparation by teacher/Examiners is essential
- Modern Standard Arabic should be used by both teacher/Examiner and candidate during the examination
- Teacher/Examiners should adhere to the role play tasks as set out in the Teachers' Notes booklet
- Teacher/Examiners can prompt to allow the candidate to clarify if candidates omit an element of a role play task
- On the Topic presentation, once the candidate has presented his/her chosen topic for 1-2 minutes, the rest of the 5 minutes should be spent discussing the topic
- Questions should be more open-ended and probing, allowing candidates to justify opinions and show a wider range of structures
- Teacher/Examiners should ensure they ask questions which give candidates the opportunity to use past, present and future tenses in each of the conversation sections
- Teacher/Examiners should make a clear distinction between the Topic Presentation/Conversation and the General Conversation
- Teacher/Examiners must adhere to the timings in the Teachers' Notes booklet
- Teacher/Examiners are reminded to vary the topics covered and should not ask all candidates the same series of questions
- Candidates should be asked both expected and unexpected questions
- To achieve high marks, candidates do not have to be of native speaker standard
- An Arabic version of the Teachers' Notes booklet is available for free download from the Cambridge website.

General comments

This paper is common to all candidates, whether they follow the Core curriculum or the Extended curriculum. Cambridge Moderators heard the full range of candidate performance submitted by Centres.

Candidate performance

This year there was a big improvement in how the role plays were conducted. Candidates who performed very well on this paper covered all parts of the two role plays, presented a topic of their own choice for no more than 2 minutes, and responded well to both expected and unexpected questions on their topics in a spontaneous and natural manner for 3 minutes. General conversation for strong candidates lasted for 5 minutes where they were able to answer a series of linked questions on two or three topics including their opinions and justifications. Strong candidates also developed their answers, using more complex structures, a variety of tenses, and were able to convey both past and future meaning in both conversations.

In many Centres it was evident that speaking practice was a regular part of classroom activity and that candidates were familiar with the requirements of the Speaking examination. In such Centres, the teacher/Examiner conducting the examination had prepared the role plays well, enabling candidates to show that they could communicate in a variety of everyday situations.

Candidates gained marks by following their cues and answering concisely in the role plays section. They were aware of the need to respond to unexpected questions on the conversation sections. The teacher/Examiner managed a smooth transition to the conversation sections and then pitched questions at a level appropriate to the candidate, while bearing in mind the descriptors of the mark scheme. Conversations

were natural and candidates were given the opportunity to work in a variety of tenses, using a range of structures and vocabulary and covering a selection of different topics across both conversation sections.

In general, Moderators noted that teacher/Examiners were aware of the need for spontaneity. In the conversations featured both predictable and unexpected questions. Candidates were given the opportunity to show that they could respond to questions on topics with which they may have been familiar, but which they had not over-prepared.

A few Centres need to work towards achieving greater spontaneity during the examination. The use of question banks is, of course, useful during the learning process. However, once vocabulary and structures have been acquired, candidates should be encouraged to move gradually away from predictable banks of questions. If the same banks of questions, which have been used in class, are used in the examination, there is little opportunity for spontaneous conversation. A more effective approach is for teacher/Examiners to keep eye contact with candidates, listen to what they have to say, and respond accordingly.

Conduct of the examination

From the evidence heard on the recorded samples, many teacher/Examiners are clearly at ease in their role and familiar with the requirements of the IGCSE Arabic Speaking examination. The role of the conducting teacher/Examiner remains crucial in terms of putting the candidate at ease and enabling him/her to work for the available marks. Those teacher/Examiners who have prepared their own roles fully and are confident in what they are doing are better able to help candidates who experience any difficulty. A well-prepared teacher/Examiner ensures that his/her candidates are given ample opportunity to demonstrate the full range of their abilities.

Unfortunately, there was a teacher/Examiner at a number of Centres omitted a part of the Speaking examination. If a part is omitted, no marks can be awarded. Teacher/Examiners are reminded that the IGCSE Arabic speaking examination consists of three sections:

- **Part One** is two role plays- Role play A and Role play B, lasting **about five minutes**
- **Part Two** starts with a presentation by the candidate on a topic of his/her choice. The teacher/Examiner must allow the candidate to speak for about 2 minutes on his/her prepared topic and then follow this up with specific spontaneous questions related to the topic. This section of the examination should last **about five minutes** in total.
- **Part Three** of the examination is a spontaneous conversation of a more general nature and should last **about five minutes**.

The following list of comments is intended to help teacher/Examiners elicit the best possible performance from their candidates:

• **Preparation time**

Teacher/Examiners should ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of the Speaking examination before embarking on any examining. Where this worked well, teacher/Examiners were familiar with the instructions, paperwork, the role play situations and their role in them. As a result, they followed the role play cues/script provided in the Teachers' Notes booklet and did not confuse candidates by omitting one or more of the prescribed tasks and/or inserting extra tasks.

Teacher/Examiners are reminded that they should cue all tasks as specified in the role plays, that no section of the examination should be omitted, that they should keep to the stipulated timings of 5 minutes per conversation section, and that they should give candidates the opportunity to respond in a range of tenses and to unexpected as well as predictable questions in both conversation sections.

Many teacher/Examiners are to be commended on their careful preparation of the role plays. Some, however, had not familiarised themselves sufficiently with the role plays and either miscued or missed out certain tasks. In such cases, candidates could not be awarded marks for tasks they had not attempted.

• **Timings**

It is helpful to candidates to know before the examination that each of the two conversation sections will last for 5 minutes. Teacher/Examiners should then adhere to these timings during the examination. In the Topic Presentation, it is always good practice to stop a candidate after they have presented for 2 minutes and to start to ask questions. The stipulated timings were often not observed and this can have a detrimental effect on candidates' performance: a Speaking examination that is too short may not allow a candidate enough

time to demonstrate his/her abilities, and a Speaking examination that is too long may cause to become tired and therefore increase his/her chance of making errors.

- **Transition between different sections of the Speaking examination**

Teacher/Examiners are encouraged to make it very clear to candidates when they were moving from one section of the examination to the next. This helps to put candidates at their ease. The transitions can be managed easily by using a phrase such as "سوف ننقل الآن إلى الجزء الثالث من الامتحان: المحادثة العامة".

- **Questioning technique**

Teacher/Examiners are reminded that questions to elicit different tenses **must be asked** in **both** of the conversation sections.

- **Recorded sample: quality and composition**

The recorded sample should be selected to represent the **full** spread of performance in the centre. This enables the Moderator to check that the application of the scheme is fair and accurate throughout the Centre's mark range. Where more than one teacher/Examiner is used (usually Centres with large numbers of candidates) the sample should, wherever possible, include examples from each teacher/Examiner. Centres should not select and submit a full recorded sample per teacher/Examiner: please include equal numbers of recordings from each teacher/Examiner.

In a small number of cases, the cassette/CD submitted by the Centre was blank. Centres are reminded to check that the recordings are present on the cassette/CD, that all parts of the examination have been recorded, and that all recordings are audible before sending to Cambridge.

In general, the quality of the recordings was satisfactory, largely due to the more widespread use of digital technology. However, Centres are reminded to check the position of microphones and the quality of the recording, both during the examinations (between candidates) and before samples are despatched to Cambridge. The best quality recordings were produced in small rooms in which mobile phones had been switched off and which were not situated close to noisy areas. Where recordings are saved as .mp3 files, please ensure that these have been labelled in accordance with the naming convention stipulated in the Teachers' Notes booklet. **Please record each exam on a separate file** (each candidate's exam should be recorded on one file only). Please ensure that before each examination, the teacher/Examiner announces the candidate name, number and role play card number. Please remember to identify all candidates on the recording and mark sheets, using their official examination number. Note that once an examination has begun, **the recording should not be stopped or paused between elements of the examination**, but should run continuously until the end of that candidate's examination.

- **Coversheet for moderation sample**

Unfortunately, several centres forgot to include the cover sheet for the moderation sample. This is provided in the Teachers' Notes booklet and should be completed in the centre and submitted together with the recorded sample and other paperwork.

- **Internal moderation**

Centres with a large number of candidates are reminded that they must seek permission from Cambridge before the start of the speaking test period if they wish to use more than one teacher/Examiner. To assist Centres in their internal moderation procedures, Cambridge has produced guidelines on how to carry out the Internal Standardisation/Moderation of Cambridge IGCSE foreign language Speaking examinations which are sent once permission has been granted.

Where permission has been granted, the coordinating teacher/Examiner is responsible for checking that the mark scheme has been applied consistently by all of the teacher/Examiners in the Centre. If a particular teacher/Examiner's marking is judged by his/her colleagues to be out of line with the other marking at the Centre, the marks for candidates examined by that teacher/Examiner must be adjusted on **both the Working Mark Sheet and on the MS1** before paperwork is submitted to Cambridge.

- **Clerical errors**

A number of clerical errors were noted this year. Centres are reminded to check all transcriptions very carefully before submitting their materials to Cambridge. Please note that entries entered on the MS1/computer should be the same as the ones shown on the Working Mark Sheet.

● Administration

On the whole, the administrative tasks relating to the speaking examination were completed very well. When despatching the materials to Cambridge, please ensure that a copy of the completed working mark sheet(s) is enclosed in the parcel, together with the recording and other paperwork.

● Application of the mark scheme

Generally, Centres' marking was close to the agreed standard although sometimes adjustments were necessary. Where centres required considerable adjustment, this was usually due to one of the following:

- awarding marks for Role Play tasks which had not been attempted or which were only partially completed
- the Topic Presentation Conversation was not conducted
- the General Conversation was not conducted
- the brevity of the conversation sections meant that candidates did not have the opportunity to demonstrate the range of vocabulary and structures required to score marks in the top bands
- candidates were not given the opportunity to use a range of timeframes in both conversation sections
- candidates were not given the opportunity to present a topic of their own
- the award of marks for the conversation sections although the candidates did not convey past and future meaning accurately
- the award of marks for Impression was more than the agreed standard
- Candidates did not have the opportunity to develop their answers and thus use more complex structures.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

This section of the test was very well conducted when teacher/Examiners followed the script provided in the Teachers' Notes booklet. Teacher/Examiners are reminded of the need for careful preparation. Where the stipulated tasks are changed or omitted and/or extra tasks are added, this will confuse candidates. **Marks can only be awarded for completing the tasks as presented on the role play cards.** Candidates should be trained to include a greeting and thanks where appropriate. Centres are reminded that on some tasks a short response may be sufficient to attract a mark of 3. Although full sentences with a conjugated verb are often not required to complete a task, should a verb be used by the candidate it must be correct for a mark of 3 to be appropriate. If the verb is incorrect, the maximum mark that can be awarded for the task is 2. Ambiguous pronunciation should be queried because Communication may be affected when pronunciation is unclear. Candidates are allowed to self-correct but cannot be given marks if the teacher/Examiner completes the task for them (e.g. if the teacher/Examiner provides an item of vocabulary which the candidate merely repeats).

If a candidate misses out a task, the teacher/Examiner should try to naturally guide him/her back to it. Some teacher/Examiners did not introduce role plays, and others created additional role play tasks. In the interests of international standards, and in fairness to candidates, teacher/Examiners should not miss out parts of the role play tasks, nor replace parts with alternative or different tasks.

If only one part of a task is completed, only 1 mark can be awarded. Please remember that the mark scheme does not contain any half marks and that a maximum of 3 marks can be awarded for each task in the role plays. Where a candidate makes no response to a task, no marks can be awarded for that task. The teacher/Examiner should not offer vocabulary items or options, unless these appear in the Teachers' Notes – candidates must be allowed to work for their marks.

Each candidate should be examined in two role play situations (one 'A' role play and one 'B' role play), using one role play card only, which should be selected at random by the teacher/Examiner from the cards

supplied by Cambridge. **Candidates are not permitted to choose from the role play cards** and should be given 15 minutes' preparation time just before the examination to allow them to familiarise themselves with the settings of the role plays.

A Role Plays

The A role plays are designed to be easier than the B role plays. Although most centres conducted this part of the exam successfully, it was missing in a few centres.

B Role Plays

As always, the B role plays were more demanding in that they required candidates to respond spontaneously to an unexpected question, provide a reaction to a situation, and operate in a tense other than the present tense. Again, most centres conducted this part of the examination well but again very few centres missed it.

Topic Presentation and Conversation

Candidates had chosen a wide range of topics for their presentation, many of which were interesting and lively. Some topics were rather ambitious but these were generally handled well by the candidates who had chosen them, demonstrating their mastery of the Arabic language.

Some teacher/Examiners forgot to allow their candidates to present their topic. It is very important that no part of the examination is omitted, as this can severely limit a candidate's marks. Teacher/Examiners are reminded that, where a candidate presents his topic for two minutes and shows no sign of finishing his/her Topic Presentation, the teacher/Examiner must interrupt and follow this up with specific spontaneous questions related to the topic.

Some teacher/Examiners were well aware of the need to ask questions, which could elicit past and future tenses, and did so to good effect. Teacher/Examiners are reminded to allow the candidate time to expand his/her answer.

On the whole, the timing of this section was either too short or much too long. A Speaking examination that is too short may not allow a candidate enough time to demonstrate his/her abilities, and a Speaking examination that is too long may cause the candidate to become tired and therefore increase his/her chance of making errors.

As above, teacher/Examiners are reminded of the importance of indicating to candidates that the Topic Conversation has finished and the General Conversation is about to begin.

General Conversation

Many teacher/Examiners were aware of the need to cover two or three different topics in this section of the examination, though it is worth bearing in mind that it may be necessary to cover more topics with less able candidates who will not be able to answer in as much depth. The topics discussed in this part of the examination should not be the same as that discussed in the topic presentation/conversation and **must be chosen by the teacher/Examiner**, rather than by the candidate.

It is helpful to the candidate if the teacher/Examiner guides him/her smoothly between topics. Questioning that moves abruptly from topic to topic can be confusing or unsettling for candidates. It is better to let the conversation flow rather than asking a series of unconnected questions.

In order to award marks in the satisfactory band or above, the candidate must show that he/she can use past and future tenses accurately. It is not sufficient for teacher/Examiners to ask questions to elicit past and future tenses if the candidate cannot use these tenses successfully in his/her reply. It is useful to practise adverbs of time in the classroom because familiarity with these will help candidates identify the time frame in which they should be operating.

Questions should invite candidates to talk. Where questioning restricts candidates to short or 'yes'/'no' responses, they will not have the opportunity to use the range of structures necessary for access to the higher mark bands.

Overall, performance was very good in this section of the examination. In a very small number of cases, the teacher/Examiner spoke for most of the time then asked the candidate if he/she understood. Another case

the teacher/Examiner started to ask grammar questions instead of the General Conversation. These questions do not form part of the IGCSE Arabic Speaking examination.

Regrettably, many of the General Conversations heard by the Moderators were too brief to warrant the award of the highest marks. Teacher/Examiners are reminded that this section of the examination should last approximately **5 minutes**.

Impression

At the end of the examination the teacher/Examiner must make an assessment of the candidate's pronunciation, accent and fluency based on his/her overall performance. Banded descriptors are enclosed in Table C of the Marking Instructions in the Teachers' Notes booklet. In general, teacher/Examiners awarded appropriate marks for this aspect of the examination.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/41
Continuous Writing

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to demonstrate that they can communicate in writing, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the Arabic language correctly. When a choice of questions is offered, candidates should select the question they consider to be the best suited to their knowledge of Arabic. Candidates are encouraged to prepare a brief plan of their answer to meet the set tasks. As the recommended length is 140 words, they should plan to spread the answer fairly evenly over the tasks set out in the rubric. Candidates are warned against devoting too much of the answer to the first one or two tasks as they may not have enough words left to complete the later tasks. Equally, if they cover all the points in 100 words they might be reduced to padding out the ending to reach 140 words, which is also not recommended. Candidates should instead look to identifying the areas where they can expand their response with examples, staying within the word count. Where candidates write answers which are shorter than 130-140 words they are likely to restrict their chances of gaining the maximum marks available for Language.

Candidates should remember to adhere strictly to the rubric which sets out a number of required elements, each of which carries one or more specific Communication marks. They should read the question carefully and keep succinctly to these tasks. If the tasks require a certain tense then they should stick to that tense.

Candidates should compose each sentence carefully and keep spelling accurate. They should also take their time as the time allowed for the paper is normally ample. When they have finished they should make full use of the time left to check their work thoroughly.

Within the limits on content imposed by the set tasks, the paper is an exercise in free composition so candidates should write what they know to be correct Arabic and avoid what they do not know to be correct.

Presentation is very important. If the Examiner cannot read what the candidate has written, no marks can be awarded. Handwriting must always be legible.

Some candidates included long lists of proper nouns such as place names or personal names. This practice is discouraged as the mark scheme cannot credit this.

It is also vital that candidates present their work in the writing format required, e.g. letter writing/ article/ story to achieve the maximum number of marks available.

General comments

The Continuous Writing paper consisted of two questions. **Question 1** offered a choice of two essays. Candidates were asked in **Question 1(a)** to write a letter to a friend to tell him/her that they moved to a new house with their family, and **Question 1(b)** to write an article in the school magazine about a sports activity s/he organised at school. In **Question 2** candidates were asked to write about cleaning up the town with friends. Both questions required candidates to demonstrate a variety of skills and each was marked out of 25: 5 marks for Communication, 15 marks for Language and 5 marks for General Impression. The total mark for the paper was 50 marks.

The questions posed an appropriate challenge to the candidates. The vast majority of candidates attempted both questions although the quality of their writing skills varied significantly.

The majority of candidates' handwriting was legible. However, there were several cases where the handwriting created a barrier to understanding candidates' writing. The majority of candidates also failed to complete both tasks within the time allocated.

The performance of the candidates spanned a range of ability. Generally, candidates' performance was good to excellent. Some candidates were awarded low grades due to their limited command of the Arabic language and showed good understanding but with poor spelling and grammar. A few candidates showed practically no understanding of Arabic by copying rubrics from the question.

Most candidates appeared to have sufficient knowledge of Arabic grammatical structures to enable them to complete the paper without undue difficulty, but there were a number of common basic errors which included:

- using *tanween* as a letter and not as *tashkeel* such as أَيْضَان instead of أَيْضاً and صباحاً is written صباحن.
- misuse of the gender, when describing male or female objects or people.
- confusing التاء المربوطة and التاء الطويلة
- confusing التاء المربوطة and الهاء
- not applying the correct agreement between feminine nouns and adjectives.
- verbs used in inappropriate person or tense with expressed subject.
- not applying feminine adjective to refer to non-human plural, for example الشوارع النظيفة instead of الشوارع النظيفة.
- using colloquial spoken dialect.
- not applying the correct possessive pronoun endings.
- using long and short vowels incorrectly.
- using prepositions incorrectly.

The predicate of *kana* was used in the nominative rather than the accusative case which was the most common error.

A few candidates drifted into irrelevancies which affected their final mark.

Comments on specific questions:

Question 1

This question was generally well attempted and the majority of the candidates achieved very good marks. In addition, careful reading and comprehension of the rubric helped the vast majority of candidates produce appropriate answers suitable for a letter. Candidates were awarded marks according to Communication, Language and General Impression.

The majority who opted for **Question 1(a)** managed to address all Communication points appropriately, while a small number of candidates were not awarded Communication marks while exceeding 140 words. Also few of them did not use appropriate beginning or ending to the letter.

Fewer candidates opted for **Question 1(b)** but those who did achieved good marks. Only few of them did not include all Communication points. Candidates are reminded to respond to the rubrics with care, for example believing they were taking part in the sport activity rather than organising it.

To answer this question successfully, candidates are reminded to attempt all parts of it, keep their responses relevant and concise, and avoid lifting from the rubric.

Question 2

This question allowed more scope for the candidates' imagination than the first question as it required candidates to write a composition. Most candidates attempted this question successfully and confidently, using an appropriate style, with some showing excellent creative talents.

The task consisted of the candidate describing cleaning the town with friends, and how s/he felt after town was cleaned up.

Also, candidates had to describe a past event there was an important number of candidates who made mistake when using *kana*, as referred to above. Most candidates wrote about their experience and many were very imaginative using interesting expressions including their friends' involvement in the cleaning activity and their feelings. However, few candidates did not fully understand the question and wrote about their own town. Thus, they did not satisfy the question requirements and lost marks for Communication.

Less successful candidates' writing was confusing due to poor word selection. Sometimes there were instances where sentences or texts could not be followed due to the lack of basic linking devices, incorrect use of tense or pronouns and repetitions.

To answer this question successfully, candidates are reminded to attempt all parts of the question, avoid lifting the rubric, ensuring their answers are succinct, and answering the question carefully and accurately.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/42
Continuous Writing

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to demonstrate that they can communicate in writing, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the Arabic language correctly. When a choice of questions is offered, candidates should select the question they consider to be the best suited to their knowledge of Arabic. Candidates are encouraged to prepare a brief plan of their answer to meet the set tasks. As the recommended length is 140 words, they should plan to spread the answer fairly evenly over the tasks set out in the rubric. Candidates are warned against devoting too much of the answer to the first one or two tasks as they may not have enough words left to complete the later tasks. Equally, if they cover all the points in 100 words they might be reduced to padding out the ending to reach 140 words, which is also not recommended. Candidates should instead look to identifying the areas where they can expand their response with examples, staying within the word count. Where candidates write answers which are shorter than 130-140 words they are likely to restrict their chances of gaining the maximum marks available for Language.

Candidates should remember to adhere strictly to the rubric which sets out a number of required elements, each of which carries one or more specific Communication marks. They should read the question carefully and keep succinctly to these tasks. If the tasks require a certain tense then they should stick to that tense.

Candidates should compose each sentence carefully and keep spelling accurate. They should also take their time as the time allowed for the paper is normally ample. When they have finished they should make full use of the time left to check their work thoroughly.

Within the limits on content imposed by the set tasks, the paper is an exercise in free composition so candidates should write what they know to be correct Arabic and avoid what they do not know to be correct.

Presentation is very important. If the Examiner cannot read what the candidate has written, no marks can be awarded. Handwriting must always be legible.

Some candidates included long lists of proper nouns such as place names or personal names. This practice is discouraged as the mark scheme cannot credit this.

It is also vital that candidates present their work in the writing format required, e.g. letter writing/ article/ story to achieve the maximum number of marks available.

General comments

The Continuous Writing paper consisted of two questions. **Question 1** offered a choice of two essays. Candidates were asked in **Question 1(a)** to write a letter to a friend to tell him/her that they moved to a new house with their family, and **Question 1(b)** to write an article in the school magazine about a sports activity s/he organised at school. In **Question 2** candidates were asked to write about cleaning up the town with friends. Both questions required candidates to demonstrate a variety of skills and each was marked out of 25: 5 marks for Communication, 15 marks for Language and 5 marks for General Impression. The total mark for the paper was 50 marks.

The questions posed an appropriate challenge to the candidates. The vast majority of candidates attempted both questions although the quality of their writing skills varied significantly.

The majority of candidates' handwriting was legible. However, there were several cases where the handwriting created a barrier to understanding candidates' writing. The majority of candidates also failed to complete both tasks within the time allocated.

The performance of the candidates spanned a range of ability. Generally, candidates' performance was good to excellent. Some candidates were awarded low grades due to their limited command of the Arabic language and showed good understanding but with poor spelling and grammar. A few candidates showed practically no understanding of Arabic by copying rubrics from the question.

Most candidates appeared to have sufficient knowledge of Arabic grammatical structures to enable them to complete the paper without undue difficulty, but there were a number of common basic errors which included:

- using *tanween* as a letter and not as *tashkeel* such as أَيْضَان instead of أَيْضَاءً and صباحاً is written صباحن.
- misuse of the gender, when describing male or female objects or people.
- confusing التاء المربوطة and التاء الطويلة
- confusing التاء المربوطة and الهاء
- not applying the correct agreement between feminine nouns and adjectives.
- verbs used in inappropriate person or tense with expressed subject.
- not applying feminine adjective to refer to non-human plural, for example الشوارع النظيفة instead of الشوارع النظيفة.
- using colloquial spoken dialect.
- not applying the correct possessive pronoun endings.
- using long and short vowels incorrectly.
- using prepositions incorrectly.

The predicate of *kana* was used in the nominative rather than the accusative case which was the most common error.

A few candidates drifted into irrelevancies which affected their final mark.

Comments on specific questions:

Question 1

This question was generally well attempted and the majority of the candidates achieved very good marks. In addition, careful reading and comprehension of the rubric helped the vast majority of candidates produce appropriate answers suitable for a letter. Candidates were awarded marks according to Communication, Language and General Impression.

The majority who opted for **Question 1(a)** managed to address all Communication points appropriately, while a small number of candidates were not awarded Communication marks while exceeding 140 words. Also few of them did not use appropriate beginning or ending to the letter.

Fewer candidates opted for **Question 1(b)** but those who did achieved good marks. Only few of them did not include all Communication points. Candidates are reminded to respond to the rubrics with care, for example believing they were taking part in the sport activity rather than organising it.

To answer this question successfully, candidates are reminded to attempt all parts of it, keep their responses relevant and concise, and avoid lifting from the rubric.

Question 2

This question allowed more scope for the candidates' imagination than the first question as it required candidates to write a composition. Most candidates attempted this question successfully and confidently, using an appropriate style, with some showing excellent creative talents.

The task consisted of the candidate describing cleaning the town with friends, and how s/he felt after town was cleaned up.

Also, candidates had to describe a past event there was an important number of candidates who made mistake when using *kana*, as referred to above. Most candidates wrote about their experience and many were very imaginative using interesting expressions including their friends' involvement in the cleaning activity and their feelings. However, few candidates did not fully understand the question and wrote about their own town. Thus, they did not satisfy the question requirements and lost marks for Communication.

Less successful candidates' writing was confusing due to poor word selection. Sometimes there were instances where sentences or texts could not be followed due to the lack of basic linking devices, incorrect use of tense or pronouns and repetitions.

To answer this question successfully, candidates are reminded to attempt all parts of the question, avoid lifting the rubric, ensuring their answers are succinct, and answering the question carefully and accurately.

ARABIC (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0544/43
Continuous Writing

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to demonstrate that they can communicate in writing, showing knowledge of a range and variety of vocabulary and applying the grammar and structures of the Arabic language correctly.

When a choice of questions is offered, candidates should select the question they consider to be the best suited to their knowledge of Arabic. Then they should prepare a brief plan of their answer in accordance with the set tasks. As the recommended length is 140 words, candidates should plan to spread the answer fairly evenly over the tasks set out in the rubric. Candidates are warned against devoting too much of their answer to the first one or two tasks as they may not have enough words left to complete the later tasks. Equally, if they cover all the points in 100 words they might be reduced to padding out the ending to reach 140 words which also not recommended. If this is the tendency, candidates should look to identify the areas where they can expand their response with examples. Examiners will not mark anything which occurs outside the word count. Where candidates write answers which are shorter than 130–140 words they are likely to restrict their chances of gaining the maximum mark available for Language.

Candidates should remember to adhere strictly to the rubric which sets out a number of required elements, each of which carries one or more specific Communication marks. They should read the question carefully and keep succinctly to these tasks. If the tasks require a certain tense then they should stick to that tense.

Candidates should compose each sentence carefully and are rewarded for careful, accurate spelling. Candidates should manage their time carefully and the time allowed for the paper is normally ample. When they have finished they should make full use of the time left to check their work thoroughly.

As the set tasks determine the content required, in this free composition the paper candidates should write that which they are confident is correct Arabic and avoid what they do not know to be correct. They should be encouraged to present their best Arabic in the examination.

Presentation is very important and handwriting must always be legible. If the Examiner cannot read what the candidate has written, no marks can be awarded. .

Some candidates included long lists of proper nouns such as place names or personal names. This practice is discouraged as the mark scheme cannot credit this. Such lists also take up a significant proportion of the word allocation.

It is also vital that candidates present their response in the writing form required, for example, letter writing/ article/ story. They are also encouraged to check their work thoroughly.

General comments

The Writing paper consisted of two questions. **Question 1** was a choice of two essays. Candidates were asked in **Question 1(a)** to write an essay about how you spent the last summer holiday, and **Question 1(b)** to write an article about the use of Internet. In **Question 2** candidates were asked to write a story about an incident that took place before going to the cinema with friends. Both questions required candidates to demonstrate a variety of skills and each was marked out of 25: 5 marks for Communication, 15 marks for Language and 5 marks for General Impression. The total mark for the paper was 50 marks.

The questions posed an appropriate challenge to the candidates. The vast majority of candidates attempted both questions but the quality of their writing skills varied significantly.

The majority of candidates' handwriting was readable. There were few cases though when it created a barrier to understanding candidate's writing.

Time management did not appear to be a problem as the majority of candidates managed to complete tasks.

The performance of the candidates spanned a range of ability. On the whole, candidates' performance was good. Some achieved excellent results. Some were awarded low grades due to their limited command of the Arabic language and showed good understanding but with poor spelling and grammar. Only few candidates showed no understanding of Arabic and their answers was only copying rubrics from the question.

Most candidates appeared to have sufficient knowledge of Arabic grammatical structures to enable them to complete the paper without undue difficulty, but there were a number of common basic errors which included:

- using *tanween* as a letter and not as *tashkeel* such as *أيضاً* instead of *أيضاً* and *أصباحاً* written *صباحن*.
- misuse of the gender, when describing male or female objects or people.
- confusing *الناء المربوطة* and *الناء الطويلة*
- confusing *الناء المربوطة* and *الناء*
- not applying the correct agreement between feminine nouns and adjectives.
- verbs used in inappropriate person or tense with expressed subject.
- not applying feminine adjective to refer to non-human plural, for example *العطلات الجميلات* instead of *العطلات الجميلة*.
- using colloquial spoken dialect.
- not applying the correct possessive pronoun endings.
- using long and short vowels incorrectly.
- using prepositions incorrectly.

The predicate of *kana* used in the nominative rather than in the accusative case, was the most common grammatical mistake.

Comments on specific questions:

Question 1

This question was generally handled well and the majority of the candidates achieved very good marks. In addition, careful reading and comprehension of the rubric helped the vast majority of candidates produce appropriate answers suitable for a letter. They were awarded marks according to Communication, Language and General Impression.

The majority of them who opted for **Question 1(a)** managed to address all Communication points appropriately, while a small number of candidates were not awarded communication marks while exceeding 140 words. Also few of them did not use appropriate beginning or ending to the letter.

Less number of candidates opted to answer **Question 1(b)** but those who did achieved good marks. Only few of them did not include all communication points. Only a few candidates struggled to reflect the rubric's request, for example: talking about computer games rather than Internet.

Question 2

This question allowed more scope for the candidates' imagination than the first question as this question was about descriptive writing. Most candidates attempted this question successfully in an appropriate style, some showing excellent creative talents and confidence.

Also, as the candidate had to describe a past event there was an important number of candidates who made a mistake when using *kana*. The predicate of *kana* should be used in the accusative case (instead of the nominative). Most candidates wrote about their experience and many were very imaginative and creative and used interesting expressions and details with only a minority of candidates misunderstanding the question and therefore losing Communication as a result.

Candidates are reminded to select their words carefully. Sometimes there were instances where sentences or texts could not be followed due to the lack of basic linking devices, incorrect use of tense or pronouns and repetitions.