

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the passages and the questions carefully;
- write concise responses and answer in their own words;
- stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

Most candidates appeared to have understood the passages very well and answered all the questions reasonably accurately. Candidates must ensure that they read the rubrics and questions carefully in order to be clear about what they are being asked to do. A few candidates misunderstood the requirements of **Question 2**. Some candidates did not always respond precisely and appropriately to parts of **Questions 3** and **4**, for example, by using the same information to answer more than one question.

Candidates are reminded that they must answer **Questions 3** and **4** in their own words. Answers which are copied in their entirety from the passage do not demonstrate understanding of the passage and/or the question and therefore risk not being awarded content marks. This in turn can have an impact on the mark awarded for Quality of Language.

In **Question 5**, the specific requirement was to compare various points of view on the use of animals in sports and entertainment. The majority of candidates were able to include appropriate points. Others focused on facts and statements given in the passage instead of points of view and were therefore unable to access the full range of marks available.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

In response to writing sentences using the words printed on the question paper, the words *Ghair Mayari* (غیر معیاری) and *waqe* (واقع) proved challenging for many candidates and they were unable to convey their meanings clearly in complete sentences. Some candidates confused *waqe* (واقع) with *waqea* (واقعه).

Similarly, some candidates did not appear to know the meanings of some of the words and copied sentences from the passage instead of writing a sentence in their own words. Marks could not be awarded for these answers.

Question 2

Many candidates did not seem to understand some of the phrases and selected longer phrases than the equivalent phrase required. Some candidates did not appear to have read the rubric as they used the phrases to write their own sentences.

Question 3

- (a) This was a straightforward question and did not cause any difficulties for the majority of candidates. Some candidates missed the phrase 'for sports and entertainment'.
- (b) This was generally very well answered by most candidates. Others gave their own opinions instead of answering based on the information in the passage.
- (c) Most candidates were able to provide the three points required.
- (d) Some candidates did not appear to have read the question carefully and missed 'for sports and entertainment' in their response which meant that the marks could not be awarded.
- (e) Most candidates answered this well although some included answers which they had already given in answer to another question and which were not appropriate in answer to this question.
- (f) As in **Question 3(e)**, most candidates answered this question accurately and gave all three points required, but some gave answers from another question.

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) This was generally answered well by the majority of candidates.
- (b) This was also very well answered by most candidates.
- (c) Three points were required for a complete answer and some candidates found this question challenging to answer. Some candidates answered based on their own opinions rather than using the information provided in the passage – these answers could not score marks.
- (d) This question was attempted very well by the majority of candidates who gave full and accurate responses. As before, a few candidates wrote their own opinions instead of using the information given in the passage.
- (e) On the whole this was answered well with only a few candidates appearing to misunderstand some of the information in the passage.

Question 5

- (a) The majority of the candidates responded to this question with confidence. Candidates were asked to summarise the points of views given in the passage in favour of and against the use of animals in sports and entertainment activities. Many candidates did not focus on points of view as required by the question and instead included factual statements which could not be credited.
- (b) Candidates are expected to include two or more opinions and to justify their point of view in order to gain full marks for this part of the question. The majority of candidates gave a detailed answer – most felt that animals should not be harmed or caused any pain during sports or entertainment activities.

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Paper 9686/03
Essay

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments;
- write a composition on the essay title, **not** on the general topic heading;
- stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

Overall, the performance of candidates was good and many candidates wrote in accurate Urdu and were able to develop their response in an organised and well-structured way.

The best essays were those which demonstrated a structured and considered response, with an introduction, several cogent points relating directly to the title which had been set, and a concluding paragraph. Linguistically, these essays included a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences containing dependent clauses, judicious use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and, where appropriate, relevant quotations.

Many essays would have been much improved by stricter observance of the rubric relating to the prescribed word limits. Candidates are required to write concisely, and to access the top of the mark range for Content they must write a well-structured essay. Candidates who write too much are unlikely to reach a concluding paragraph within the prescribed word limit and this will have an impact on the mark awarded for Content.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was the second most popular question this year and was generally well answered. The best responses focused on the duty and commitment in society to achieve the most success in the future. Many candidates described in detail both positive and negative activities carried out by young people and how this affects one's life. Some good essays mentioned how young adults should contribute towards the development of his/her country. What distinguished the very good from the good in terms of Content, was the ability of candidates to express points of view and structure their arguments into a coherent essay.

Question 2

Few candidates attempted this topic, but most of those who did performed satisfactorily. There was a tendency for some to address the question from a very restricted point of view and they merely described different types of media instead of discussing the most effective means of communication in their country.

Question 3

This question was satisfactorily answered by most of those who attempted it. Some wrote too much and tended to focus on the importance of education in general without discussing how university education is a waste of money and time as required by the question.

The best essays were the ones which described the benefits of university education and how it helps certain individuals to secure good jobs. They also mentioned the high cost of higher education and that this can be a deterrent for individuals from poor economic backgrounds.

Question 4

This was the most popular question this year. There were some very good compositions which contained a thoughtful discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of technology, not only for one's own benefit, but also the social and economic benefit of their country. The majority of candidates wrote about mobile phones, Internet, TV, computers and cars.

Most candidates wrote in detail about the uses of different types of technology and also the disadvantages of excessive use which can result in laziness. Some very good essays included the fact that people can also save time and energy using new technology and can therefore do other activities which makes their lives more efficient.

Many responses to this question were general essays on the topic of technology, which had only a paragraph or two that really addressed the set title. Such essays could not score highly for Content.

Question 5

This was reasonably well attempted by most candidates, and it was appropriate for them to discuss both sides of the issue. The majority of candidates gave far too much detail on different types of pollution that affect our environment and this resulted in a very general essay which did not address the question asked. Better essays included a discussion of both the government's responsibility and the citizen's duty on how to clean the environment.

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Paper 9686/04
Texts

Key messages

- Candidates must ensure they understand the focus of the question before attempting to answer.
- **Questions 1(a), 2(a) and 3(a)** require detailed answers to both parts of the question.
- Candidates are reminded that it is not in their interests to answer more than **three** questions.

General comments

The paper was divided into sections of poetry and prose and candidates generally made good use of the choice of questions. The exception to this was **Question 3** which was not attempted by many candidates. On the whole candidates performed well.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Candidates gave a good explanation of the *ghazal* in part (i). Some did not expand sufficiently in part (ii) which required them to give their opinion about a particular aspect of Aatish's poetry in relation to that *ghazal*.
- (b) Many candidates missed the focus of this question, and discussed Hasrat's life rather than his poetry with reference to the key words given in the question. Most candidates provided detailed analysis as required, enabling them to access the full range of marks available.

Question 2

- (a) This was a popular choice within the poetry section, with many candidates providing good explanations. Responses to part (i) were often better than those to part (ii). Some candidates discussed only the revolutionary aspect of the *nazm* and missed the romantic aspect and therefore could not access the higher mark ranges.
- (b) In this question, candidates were asked to discuss Iqbal's poetry from a particular point of view. This question was attempted by many and there were some excellent essays. Others included detailed analyses of Iqbal's poems but did not address the precise focus of the question.

Question 3

- (a) This question was not chosen by many candidates. Of those who attempted it, many explained the extract from the poem without giving a detailed response to part (ii).
- (b) There were few answers to this question. Those who chose to answer it expanded well on the romantic aspects of the poetry of Majaz but wrote very little on his revolutionary ideas.

Question 4

- (a) Many answers showed good understanding of this question and listed many instances of Umrao's sympathetic attitude towards other people. Others misunderstood the question and argued for people's sympathy towards her.

- (b) Many candidates chose this question and discussed the issue in good detail referring to the general attitude of society towards women. Others limited their commentary to Umrao's life only.

Question 5

- (a) A significant number of those who answered this question recounted the story of *Garam Coat* without expanding on the role of a woman in general as was required by the question. Some answers demonstrated a good understanding of the question, providing excellent discussion.
- (b) The general trend in answers to this question was for candidates to reproduce the story but not include their own views. There were only a few excellent first-hand responses.

Question 6

- (a) This question was quite popular and was generally answered well. Those candidates who reproduced the story without discussing it were not able to access the full range of marks available.
- (b) This question required candidates to discuss the role of Akbar in *Anaar kali* in response to a given statement. Most candidates provided excellent detail in their responses. The best answers demonstrated a comprehensive analysis of the role of Akbar.

