BENGALI

| Paper 3204/01 |
| Composition |

Key message

To do well on this paper, candidates should:

write accurately
use a wide range of vocabulary and structures
provide a range of well-developed ideas
ensure their essays are fully relevant to the chosen topic, well organised and coherent.

General comments

All candidates answered both parts of the question paper as required. Those candidates who produced work with direct reference to the bullet-point prompts and topic title managed to score higher marks. Other candidates who did not pay special attention to the instructions in the rubric and were inconsistent with spelling, sentence structure and tenses did not score as highly. It was evident that candidates' awareness of the questions' demands has improved, although the accuracy of spelling needs to improve further. There were quite a few positive aspects to celebrate such as significant improvement of language quality, greater and appropriate use of idioms and proverbs and a reduced number of answers going over the stated word limit. A few candidates wrote a lengthy answer and then crossed out some parts that included a few valid points just for the sake of word count, which resulted in a loss of marks. All these could have been avoided by using a careful plan to begin with.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Candidates were required to write a letter to a pen friend describing a Bengali festival. All those who attempted this question seem to have written a very realistic answer. A small number of candidates chose a celebration that is not necessarily a Bengali festival so it was rather challenging to establish the response to the 4th bullet point. It is therefore recommended that the candidates should read all parts of the question prior to writing their answer.

Question 2

In response to this question, candidates need to write a conversation with a Radio reporter about their experience of watching a live cricket match in a stadium. Those who attempted it performed very well. This was another example of very realistic narration by candidates. Successful candidates used appropriate vocabulary and good sentence structure and paid attention to the bullet points.

Question 3

Candidates were required to write an essay on 'My favourite season.' Apart from occasional slips the overall quality of responses was good. There was a good variety of responses according to each candidate's personal choice. A small number of candidates lost marks due to inconsistency, spelling and other grammatical errors. It is advised that the candidates proofread their work prior to handing it in.

Question 4

In this question candidates are expected to write about their opinion on the 'Bad impact of electronic games addiction on school-candidates.' Some candidates presented their work with a few well-established facts and their personal opinion with logical arguments which helped them to score highly. A few candidates wrote a generalised view of this issue and didn't personalise their opinion, losing some marks as a result. In order to achieve high marks candidates must read carefully every word of the essay title to be fully familiar with the question's demands.

Question 5

Candidates were required to write an essay about 'The importance of friendship in your life.' Most candidates did very well in this question. High scoring essays included an appropriate use of idioms, proverbs and good vocabulary. A very small number of candidates narrated the 'friendship' with a generalised view rather than highlighting on 'importance' so they scored relatively lower. It is essential that the candidates read every word of the essay title.

BENGALI

| Paper 3204/02 |
| Language Usage and Comprehension |

Key message

In order to do well in this paper, candidates need to make sure that they express themselves in clear, correct and concise language.

In addition, candidates need to:

- show that they can understand and adequately convey information
- understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions
- evaluate information, select what is relevant to specific purposes and express it in their own words
- exercise control of appropriate structures
- understand and employ a range of apt vocabulary
- recognise implicit meaning and attitude
- demonstrate an awareness of the conventions of paragraphing and sentence structure
- demonstrate adequate control of vocabulary, syntax and grammar, punctuation and spelling
- ensure that their handwriting is legible.

General comments

Candidates were tested on their knowledge of grammar, manipulation of sentences and comprehension skills through a variety of tasks. It was pleasing to note that the majority of candidates had completed the paper within the time allowed. There were very few examples of unfinished or partially answered questions. The performances of several candidates were outstanding, though there were examples of candidates who could have achieved better if they had practised their exam techniques for this examination. Most candidates coped well with basic grammar tasks and the comprehension questions though at a varied level. The quality of the Bengali used in answers was very wide. Some candidates demonstrated the ability to manipulate the language very skilfully. There were also instances where candidates were unable to write answers in their own words, even at a very simple level. It should be noted that candidates who rely too heavily on the text cannot gain access to the higher marks for the quality of their language. On the other hand, attempts to write answers which make the effort to manipulate language are rewarded more generously, even when this results in increased inaccuracy, provided that it does not interfere with comprehension.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question A1

This question requires the candidate to combine five words. This task was quite straight forward except **A1 Question 2** and **A1 Question 3** where a number of candidates struggled to combine the word correctly. The candidates often missed the '*re*', '*bishargor*' and '*ref*.' As a result those candidates scored lower marks.

Question A2

This question was a gap filling task followed by idioms, proverbs and words in pairs. Candidates needed to fill in the appropriate gaps in five sentences. The majority of candidates were able to answer this question correctly, although there were instances where a number of candidates struggled to match the correct idioms/ proverbs/ words in pairs. **A2 Question 7** and **A2 Question 8** in particular posed confusion to many candidates. They struggled to choose the correct idiom/proverb and ended up with গোঁফ খেজুরে and ডুবে ডুবে জল খাওয়া. and so they scored fewer marks.

Question A3

Candidates needed to transform sentences based on clues either at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. This question was answered well by some candidates. However, less able candidates struggled particularly to manipulate the essence of **A3 Question 14** and **A3 Question 15** appropriately. But a large number of students struggled in answering **Question 14** and **Question 15**. In answering **Question 15**, many students wrote শিক্ষকের প্রস্তাবে ছাত্ররা অনাগ্রহ হলো or ছাত্ররা শিক্ষকের প্রস্তাব অনাগ্রাহ্য করলো । In response to **Question 15**, many students failed to answer with আগামী, instead they wrote পরের and so scored fewer marks.

Question A4

This question proved quite accessible to most candidates. However, weaker candidates often struggled to lift and match correct words for gaps 17, 19 and 20.

Section B5 (MCQ comprehension)

This question was difficult for many candidates. A large number of candidates struggled particularly on **Question 26** and **Question 30** to choose the most appropriate answer.

Section C6 (OE comprehension)

This question comprises of an OE comprehension followed by a set of questions. This year students answered this section reasonably well. Although responding to questions in this section is challenging as they have to write the answers in their own words rather than lifting them from the text, most students performed very well. A handful of candidates failed to manipulate the language appropriately. The students found **Question 34** the most difficult when manipulating the language in the text into their own language. Most candidates scored well in responding to **Question 35**. Again, heavy lifting was spotted in many of the candidate responses particularly on **Question 36** and **Question 37**. This resulted in these candidates scoring fewer marks than expected.

Question C7 (Vocabulary)

In this question, candidates were expected to write the appropriate meaning of 5 words taken from the reading comprehension text. In this question particularly, **Questions 39** and **40** were answered well by most candidates. However, a large number of candidates struggled to respond with the correct synonym for **Question 41** and **Question 42**. Candidates could have achieved even better if they practised and developed skills to understand the meaning of words in different contexts.