

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, answering the questions in their own words as far as possible;
- stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

The passage in **Section 1** was about the negative impact of adverts on children. Both the parents and the political circles expressed their unhappiness about adverts. The passage in **Section 2** was about the importance and the benefits of the adverts for the children's upbringing and developing their skills. Here the passage defends adverts and holds parents responsible for any shortcomings in the children.

Most candidates understood the passages very well and answered all the questions fairly accurately. However, some candidates needed to read the rubric more carefully in order to be certain about what was being asked. For example, in **Question 2** a number of candidates wrote sentences using the given phrases instead of writing the synonyms.

In **Questions 3** and **4** candidates needed to respond precisely and appropriately to what was being asked. Some candidates repeated the same information in response to more than one question.

In **Question 5**, the specific requirement was to compare the various points of views on the pros and cons of the adverts. Many candidates were able to identify appropriate points from the two texts. Some candidates were less successful as they focused more on statements or facts from the passages rather than the points of view expressed in them.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

The word *Mushtamil* (مشتامل) proved challenging for many candidates and they were unable to convey the meaning in a complete sentence in Urdu.

Some candidates confused *Khushaamad* (خوشامد) with the Urdu word *Khush Aamdeed* (خوش آمدید).

Some candidates used the word *Ghair Ikhlāqī* (غیر اخلاقی) incorrectly. This word is an adjective and must be followed by a noun whereas many candidates used it on its own.

Question 2

Most candidates answered the items in this question correctly although many found **Question (e)** challenging and gave پابندی ہے in their answer. Some candidates did not appear to have read the rubric: a number of them gave the antonym of the given words while others used the phrases in their own sentences

(as was required in **Question 1**). Candidates are advised to read the rubric very carefully before starting to write their answers.

Question 3

- (a) A considerable number of candidates did not appear to understand the second part of this question and only a few correctly attempted یورپ کے چند ممالک میں due to a lack of understanding of the focus words in the question.
- (b) Many candidates were able to answer the question fully but there were some who did not write both the required points. Many candidates missed the key word *Khushaamad* (خوشامد).
- (c) Most candidates wrote all three points accurately.
- (d) Most candidates understood the question and correctly gave all three points required. However, a considerable number of candidates did not include the first point (ہر سچے کے پاس ہونا لازمی ہے).
- (e) Most candidates understood this question well and gave all three points required by the mark scheme.
- (f) The majority of candidates answered this question very well.

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) A large number of candidates were unable to give the third point correctly, perhaps because of a lack of understanding of the focus words in the question.
- (b) This was answered very well by most candidates.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question very well. Two points were required for a complete answer (اہم معلومات بچوں تک نہیں پہنچانے کے گی) and (اشتہارات پر پابندی لگانا ممکن ہے). Some candidates were unable to cover both points correctly.
- (d) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly. A few candidates wrote their own opinions rather than answering based on the information given in the passage and therefore marks could not be awarded.
- (e) Many candidates found this question straightforward to answer based on the information given in the passage. As in **Question (d)** some candidates wrote their own response which did not relate to the information in the passage and therefore could not score any marks.
- (f) Most candidates understood this question well and gave all three points required. However, some candidates again gave their own opinion rather than basing their answers on the information given in the passage.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates responded to **Question 5(a)** with confidence. They were asked to compare the points of view given in the two passages in favour of or against adverts in children's TV programmes. Some candidates did not write about the points of view but instead wrote factual statements which were not eligible to score marks. Others simply reproduced the text given in the passage.

Some candidates exceeded the word limit allowed by the mark scheme by a considerable margin and therefore did not score as many marks as they might have done had they written concisely and to the point. Candidates are not required to give lengthy introductions as this wastes words and can result in valid points being made beyond the word limit and these will be disregarded by Examiners.

- (b) In **Question 5(b)** the majority of the candidates found it easy to write their opinion in response to the question asked. Most candidates were in favour of a ban on adverts in programmes for children. Some candidates emphasised the importance of showing only useful adverts so that children do not feel left out and get essential information to develop their thinking skills and the ability to make the right decision for them.

Quality of Language

A large majority of candidates scored highly for the quality of the language used in their responses.

Infrequent minor errors, which do not change the meaning of what is being said, do not normally have a significant effect on the mark awarded for Quality of Language. More frequent minor errors or major errors, which make the meaning unclear, will result in candidates scoring less highly for language. Candidates are advised to check their answers before the end of the examination.

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Paper 9686/03
Essay

Key messages

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

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

General comments

Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. The best essays were written in accurate Urdu and in an organised and well-structured way with an introduction, several cogent points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph. Where appropriate, there were also relevant quotations.

Linguistically, many essays were almost error-free, with a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences, a variety of clause structures, dependent clauses, judicious use of the passive voice and appropriate use of more sophisticated idioms and metaphors.

Many essays could have been much improved by staying within the prescribed word limit. Candidates need to be able to write concisely and if they exceed the upper word limit this is likely to have an effect on the mark awarded for Content as they may not reach a concluding paragraph within the word limit, or may end up repeating points already made which affects the overall structure of the essay.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This was a very popular question. There were some very good essays, which contained a thoughtful discussion about the government's responsibility to provide healthy food to the public, not only for the benefit of the people, but also to benefit the economic state of their country.

Most candidates wrote in detail about the responsibility of the government to provide standard healthy food to the public. The best responses included some information about what healthy food was and the benefits of consuming this over unhealthy food, health problems that can occur if healthy food is not consumed, the advantages of eating healthy food and how food inspectors should make regular checks of hotels and restaurants so that healthy food is provided to the public.

Weaker responses provided hardly any detail on the government's responsibility and instead provided a general essay on food and drink with very little or no link to the question. Candidates must address the specific essay title. General, unspecific essays will not score highly for Content.

Question 2

This question was satisfactorily answered by most of those who attempted it. Some wrote too much about the importance of education and did not spend enough time highlighting the equal opportunity for education as the question demanded. The better essays were those which included details about education provided by government schools and private schools and linked this to social classes within society. The best arguments were ones which considered opportunities provided to less wealthy pupils in comparison to more

wealthy students and how this affected their achievements in education and in employment. Most candidates agreed that the government should provide equal opportunities of education for every citizen of the country irrespective of gender and social class.

Question 3

This essay title lent itself to a balanced discussion on the benefits of taking part in a sport at an international level. Many candidates mentioned how taking part in sports competitions can be beneficial to the players/athletes due to improvements in physical health as well as developing their personality and boosting their self-esteem. The best responses also highlighted the benefits such sporting events provide for the country where the competitions are held and how this can be good for tourism and businesses within the country (print media, electronic media, hotels and resorts etc.). The most interesting responses were the ones where candidates were able to express their own point of view as well as structuring their compositions and their arguments into a coherent essay that was easy to follow.

Question 4

This essay title was answered reasonably well by most candidates who chose to write about it. There was a tendency for some to address the question from a very restricted point of view and they merely described the financial aid. The question required candidates to explain how financial help given to developing countries causes more problems in the country. Problems candidates might have mentioned included corruption, reliance on other countries and being in debt to other countries.

Question 5

The majority of candidates who attempted this question gave detail on different types of pollution including air, water and noise, all of which can have a negative effect on our environment. The best responses provided a balanced argument mentioning both the government's role and the citizens' responsibility in reducing these factors. Weaker responses took a one-sided stance and outlined only the government's contribution. Some essays included ways in which the environment can be protected from socially occurring problems such as theft and terrorism, but the question required details on how the environment can be protected from *pollution*.

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Paper 9686/04
Texts

Key messages

- Candidates must ensure that they understand the focus of the question before attempting to answer;
- Candidates must write about poems, poets or short stories from the syllabus which corresponds to the year of examination;
- **Questions 1(a), 2(a) and 3(a)** require detailed answers to both parts of the question;
- Candidates should not answer more than three questions.

General comments

On the whole candidates performed well in this paper. Many candidates gave excellent answers to questions which invited them to express their opinion, by citing examples from their society and family life.

Many essays missed out the main point of the question and instead digressed into summaries of the set work, irrelevant personal details about the writer, or some character sketch which could not access the higher bands of the mark scheme. With regards to poetry, there appeared to be a clear lack of familiarity with the standard literary tools for analysing poetry.

Whilst the quality of language is not assessed, essays need to be written in clear Urdu so that Examiners can follow the logic of the ideas being communicated.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) (i) Candidates' understanding and explanation of Ghalib's ghazal was generally good although most candidates did not appear to understand the mood and the message of the third couplet.
- (ii) Most candidates were not able to describe the poetical aspects and particularities of Ghalib's poetry as evidenced in this particular *ghazal*.
- (b) Very few candidates attempted this question but those that did answer it were able to give relevant details. In some essays there was evidence of good preparation and an ability to critically analyse Urdu *ghazals*. Some candidates' marks were affected because they chose a poet (most commonly Iqbal or Faiz) who is not in the Ghazal section of the 2017 syllabus.

Question 2

- (a) (i) Many candidates performed very well in this question.
- (ii) A few candidates managed to justify well their position on Iqbal's poetic style in analyzing this particular poem using accurate examples. However, most candidates were unable to identify the concepts and stylistic markers present in this particular *nazm* and did not comment on whether or not they are characteristic of Iqbal's poetry.

- (b) This question was very popular and the majority of candidates who answered it explained all three of Sahir's poems very well. However, many were unable to justify whether Sahir was a romantic poet or otherwise (for example, revolutionary), replacing this analysis with irrelevant details from his personal life. Candidates needed to have an understanding of literary movements and a critical eye for the romantic thread in Sahir's works.

Question 3

(a) (i) and (ii)

Although there were a few candidates who wrote excellent answers, many did not appear to understand the religious symbolism and the historical context of Aligarh University in relation to this poem.

- (b) Some candidates who attempted this question discussed at least one of the three *nazms* by Josh in the syllabus. Some candidates' marks were affected because they chose a *nazm* by Josh from a previous syllabus. Candidates must ensure that the poem they are choosing is from the syllabus corresponding to the year of examination.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates attempted this question but a number of them wrote a summary of the novel rather than analysing the situation and events to support their position.
- (b) Here again, most candidates wrote a summary of the novel rather than focusing on the relevant cultural aspects of that epoch in history. A few candidates wrote very good essays.

Question 5

- (a) The most popular choices for this question were *Kafan*, *Maha Laxmi Ka Pul*, and *Garam Coat*. Candidates justified their viewpoints very well, demonstrating controlled structure and good analysis and writing excellent conclusions.
- (b) This question was very well answered by those who chose it. There were some comprehensive essays citing real-world examples from contemporary life.

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates attempted this question but most of them wrote a summary or a character sketch of Dilaram instead of focusing on what the question was actually asking. Very few candidates were able to analyze the play in the specific critical manner required and many did not mention the relevant events to justify their standpoint.
- (b) Again, most candidates missed the real point of the question by writing a summary or a character sketch of Saleem. Better essays justified statements by including carefully chosen events and critically speculating on the 'what-if' scenarios.