

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

To do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read each passage and the questions carefully before writing their answers;
- write concise responses in their own words – candidates will not be awarded marks for content if they copy whole sentences/phrases from the text when answering **Question 3** and **Question 4**;
- stick to the prescribed word limit in **Question 5**;
- avoid any superfluous details which are irrelevant to the question.

General comments

In **Question 1**, candidates were asked to use the given words in sentences in their own words. Answers which were directly copied from the text could not score the mark.

In **Questions 3** and **4** it is important to respond precisely to each question. Most candidates seem to have understood the passages very well and answered most questions accurately.

In **Question 5**, the specific requirement was to write about why people eat unhealthy foods and what experts say about that. The best responses addressed only what was required by the question in a clear and concise way. Weaker summaries did not focus on the issues and the ways to address them and instead included general statements or explanations.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

The words **اجزاء** and **شرح** proved difficult for many candidates to convey their meanings in correct Urdu sentences. A few candidates were confused by the word **معیاری**.

Question 2

Most candidates answered correctly by writing a synonym of each given word. However, correct spellings were missing in many cases. Many did not answer **Question (b)** correctly. A good majority of candidates wrote antonyms instead of synonyms in some or all of their answers. Some candidates used the given word(s) in their own sentences, which was the requirement for **Question 1**. Candidates are advised to read the rubrics carefully before answering the questions.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly.
- (b) Many candidates were able to answer this question fully by writing about the decision and its effects. However, most candidates missed the second key effect (لازمی نہیں ہے کہ ان کھانوں میں پوری غذائیت موجود ہو).
- (c) Most candidates gave all the three points accurately. However, some wrote only two points.

- (d) This question needed a clear focus on the text to find the key information. The correct answers were *actions to avoid* unhealthy food ingredients, rather than *explanations*. Many candidates understood the question and gave at least two out of the four points required.
- (e) Most candidates understood this question well and gave all three points in their answer.

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly. Only a few candidates missed one point (دل کے (امراض پیدا ہوتے ہیں) due to lack of understanding of the question.
- (b) This question needed a clear understanding of the implications of opposing. Some candidates gave all four points correctly while other candidates answered three points only.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question very well.
- (d) Many candidates struggled to answer this question and ended up including irrelevant information in their response. The key phrases required were کچھ کھانے کی عام چیزوں میں کافی مقدار میں پوشیدہ شکر پائی جاتی ہے۔ and زیادہ تر چھوٹے بچوں میں مومنا پایا جاتا ہے۔ A few candidates wrote their own interpretations instead of referring to the information in the text.
- (e) Most candidates answered this correctly but some candidates did not refer to the information given in the text and therefore could not score the marks.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates responded to **Question 5(a)** with confidence. Here the candidates needed to write ten points about issues related to why people continue to eat unhealthy foods and what experts say about them. Some candidates did not write about *reasons* as asked in the rubric but gave their own opinions which could not score any marks for **part (a)**. A number of candidates simply explained the texts without addressing the exact focus of the question. Some candidates reproduced parts of the text and these did not answer the question which had been asked.

Some candidates with proficient writing ability did not achieve as many marks as they could have because they wrote long introductory sentences and included their own opinions rather than writing a focused and concise summary of the information required.

- (b) In **Question 5(b)** candidates were asked to write about whether they and their friends eat healthy food. Most candidates performed well in this question and the majority were in favour of eating homemade food but indulged in fast food when they were with their friends.

The best responses were those that included something new and original, which had not already been mentioned in one of the texts.

Quality of Language

The language used across the paper generally ranged from sound to good or very good.

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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** the general topic heading;
- stay within the prescribed word limits.

General comments

There was a choice of five essay titles, from which candidates were expected to choose one and write between 250 and 400 words. While the overall performance was good, with most candidates displaying very good writing skills, many essays could have been much improved by stricter observance of the prescribed word limit.

In the best essays candidates developed their chosen question in accurate Urdu within the maximum word limit, and responded in an interesting, thoughtful, organised and well-structured way.

The quality of the language used by candidates was generally very good. It is the Content part of the assessment criteria where some candidates tended not to perform as well. Part of the problem lay in their difficulty to write within the word limit, which requires candidates to be able to write concisely. This means that candidates who write too much often cannot access the full range of available marks because they are unlikely to reach a concluding paragraph within the limit given or the essays become repetitive and are not well structured.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This essay title was answered reasonably well by most candidates who chose to write about it. There were some very good essays which contained a thoughtful and balanced discussion with examples from daily life. Candidates also included their own experiences and thoughts in regards to the topic of family systems within society and how they have changed over time. They described in detail: the traditional family system; ways in which this differs in the twenty-first century; the lack of time available for family due to a more modern lifestyle and how technology is affecting family relations.

Weaker responses did not include enough detail and candidates wrote a general essay on family life. At this advanced level a more mature response is expected than to write simply about family life. This is of course relevant to the question but candidates must ensure that responses are more precise and answer the specific title. It is not sufficient to write out a prepared essay on general family life and insert only one paragraph which is relevant to the question.

Question 2

This was the most popular essay title and was attempted by a large majority of candidates. There were some very good essays which contained insightful discussions about how villages play an important part in the development of cities. The best essays were almost error-free, contained sophisticated linguistic devices and were well structured including a clear introduction, a coherent argument and finally a thoughtful conclusion.

The best responses provided a detailed, balanced argument about how rural inhabitants help to manage the population in cities and how cities would become overcrowded if there were no villages. Some candidates mentioned that there was no longer a need for people living in rural areas to move to urban areas in search of jobs as there were many new factories being built in villages resulting in more job opportunities. They were able to link this to problems that urban areas previously faced such as overpopulation due to a high number of people moving to cities in order to earn a living.

Some candidates mentioned that people from villages could provide big companies with cheap labour. Further information was also provided on the impact villages have on agriculture and how they supply fresh goods to the cities. In addition to this, they mentioned modern facilities that are now accessible for people living in rural areas such as: schools, colleges, hospitals, electricity, gas, transport and the internet. They emphasised the fact that these facilities, which are now available in both villages and cities, close the gap between the two lifestyles.

Weaker responses provided a general comparison of the differences between urban and rural life and did not relate their response to the question, which required more specific information. The question required candidates to discuss precisely how villages play an important part in the development of cities. In this instance candidates were required to directly link how village life has an impact on the prosperity and development of city life using clear and concise points. General unspecific essays will not score highly for Content.

Some responses exceeded the word limit resulting in their conclusion not being considered. Candidates must address the specific essay title within the stated word limit.

Question 3

While this title was not as popular as others on the paper, it was satisfactorily answered by most of those who attempted it. Some candidates discussed how freedom of opinion is dangerous but did not spend enough time explaining the reasons why.

The best responses to this question were able to discuss the use of social media and how it is providing people with a platform to share and express their opinions to the world. Candidates were then able to highlight specific examples where expressing one's opinions on sensitive topics such as religious beliefs and politics could be detrimental to one's safety.

Question 4

The majority of candidates who answered this question wrote in detail about the different aspects of tourism in their country. They described in detail the importance of tourism and the part played by tourists to improve mutual understanding between different nations. Tourism also helps to improve mutual relationships between countries and countries are also benefit financially. The best essays included some very good examples from candidates' personal experiences. They described how travelling to new countries helps to tackle misconceptions and preconceived ideas people may have about a certain culture. They concluded that travelling to a different country provides you with firsthand knowledge and experiences of a nation's food, culture, traditions and values.

Question 5

This essay was attempted by a very small number of candidates but those who chose it performed satisfactorily. There was a tendency for some candidates to address the question from a very narrow point of view and they merely described the significance of the history of their country. The question required candidates to explain why it is important for citizens of a country to know about their history and how this knowledge could equip them for the future. Many essays demonstrated very limited knowledge and were not well discussed or developed.

The best responses provided details on how knowing about the history of your country can be inspirational for people, especially the youth, as there are many role models that have paved the way for generations to come.

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Paper 9686/04
Texts

Key messages

- Candidates are required to answer only **three questions**, each one on a different text. A few candidates attempted more than three questions thus limiting their ability to access higher marks.
- Before answering the question, candidates must take care to ensure that they understand the main focus of the question.
- If answering **Questions 1(a), 2(a) or 3(a)** it is important to provide detailed answers to **both** parts of the question.

General comments

Candidates generally performed well, although in many cases they needed to read and understand the focus of each question more carefully in order to answer appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

- (a) A good number of candidates attempted this question but there was a mixed performance. In **part (i)** the majority of candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of the ghazal. However, in **part (ii)** some candidates did not address the key words (غالب کی مشکل پسندی) in relation to the given ghazal.
- (b) Quite a few candidates attempted this question and scored relatively good marks but in some responses there was lack of understanding of the key focus of the question (سادگی اور سلاست).

Question 2

- (a) This was one of the most popular questions in **Section 1** and candidates generally performed well. In their answers to **part (ii)** some candidates simply explained the remaining verses of the poem rather than addressing the question which had been asked.
- (b) A good majority of candidates attempted this question and many wrote good responses. Some candidates discussed only the poet's life and his contributions rather than addressing the question.

Question 3

- (a) Only a few candidates attempted this question. Only a minority addressed the focus/keywords (حجم اور روح کے رشتے) in their discussion with respect to the given poem.
- (b) There were not many answers to this question but those who attempted the question performed well.

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates attempted this question. Some candidates simply reproduced the text without focusing on the demands of the question. Others wrote coherent, detailed essays with some illustrations.
- (b) This was a popular option and quite a few candidates wrote detailed responses and addressed the key points within the question (لکھنوی تہذیب کے اچھے اور برے پہلو).

Question 5

Due to an issue with the (a) question, a discussion took place before marking began, and measures were put in place for marking **Questions 5(a)** and **5(b)** to ensure that no candidates were disadvantaged by the error.

- (a) A very small number of candidates attempted this question. Many of them discussed the importance of the given sentence in the story very well.
- (b) Most of those who attempted this question fully understood the focus of the question and were able to access the higher bands of the mark scheme. Those candidates who commented on more than one story did not score as highly.

Question 6

- (a) A small minority of candidates attempted this question. Many of those who chose it discussed Saleem's character with close reference to the question and secured good marks. However, some candidates simply described his character.
- (b) This was one of the most popular questions in **Section 2**. The majority of candidates who attempted it gave a good detailed response and secured good marks.