

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

To do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the texts and the rubrics and questions carefully and understand what is being asked;
- write concise responses to **Questions 3** and **4**, answering each question in their own words as far as possible rather than copying extensively from the texts;
- keep within the prescribed total word limit of 140 words in **Question 5**.

General comments

Overall, candidates performed well and scored good marks although a few questions proved to be challenging for some candidates.

The texts discussed the positive and negative aspects of Physical Education being compulsory in schools and most candidates understood them well and answered the majority of questions accurately.

Although, most candidates used their time and skill to handle questions correctly, there were some cases where candidates copied information from the texts indiscriminately or provided lots of unnecessary details which did not demonstrate that they had understood what they had read. In other cases, some candidates wrote very well in terms of vocabulary and grammar, but unfortunately did not focus on the specific details asked in the question.

Weaknesses and errors in spelling and grammatical structures were noticeable in some responses.

In one or two questions in **Question 3** and **Question 4**, copying information from the text was evident. Where candidates copied indiscriminately from the text, without any manipulation, marks could not be awarded as it was not clear whether or not they had actually understood what they had written as their answer.

In **Question 5(a)**, many candidates did not read and understand the focus of the question and therefore did not answer appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

The majority of candidates attempted this question with success and secured good marks, but some did not fully understand the word (شَرَح) and a few got confused with the word (مَعْنَى). In a few cases, candidates copied sentences from the text and marks could therefore not be awarded. Candidates must write their own sentences to demonstrate the meaning of the words.

Question 2

Some candidates did not understand what was required in this question. For each phrase provided candidates needed to find the corresponding synonym in Text 1. Some used their own words. Many candidates found (شامل ہوتے ہوئے) and (مدد کے بغیر) difficult and gave incorrect answers. In some cases spelling was inaccurate and some candidates got confused with the Urdu phrases (پشت پناہی کے بغیر) and (اس کے برعکس ہے).

Question 3

Only a few candidates did not correctly attempt **Question 3(a)** (بڑے ہو کر ورزش پر توجہ نہیں دیں گے), **Question 3(c)** (اس بات کا خوف نہیں ہوتا کہ دوسرے بچے مذاق اڑائیں گے) and especially **Question 3(d)** (ملک سے کھلاڑی فراہم نہیں ہوں گے) due to a lack of understanding of the focus of the key words (غیر موجودگی) in the questions. Those candidates who understood the demands of the question were able to secure full marks.

Question 4

Only a few candidates correctly attempted **Question 4(b)** (سخت موسم میں کھیلنے پر مجبور نہ کریں), **Question 4(c)** (اساتذہ کا تدریسی وقت) and **Question 4(d)** (دوسرے بچوں کے ڈرانے دھمکانے سے محفوظ رہیں گے) again due to a lack of understanding of the key words in the questions.

Question 5

(a) Most candidates understood the focus (طلباء کے لیے اسکولوں میں پی ای کے فائدے اور نقصانات) of the question and explained the positive and negative aspects well.

However, some candidates did not understand that the question was related to the benefits and downsides for *students* rather than schools and therefore missed out on some of the available marks.

A few candidates did not cover both aspects adequately leaving their responses incomplete. Some candidates simply reproduced the text and did not appear to have the summarising skills required for this question.

(b) In **Question 5(b)**, a significant number of candidates did not understand the question fully. The candidates were asked to give their opinion about PE in their *own* school. Many candidates instead talked about schools in general.

Quality of Language

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

URDU

Paper 9686/03
Essay

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- select the essay title with which they feel most comfortable;
- write a composition on the essay title, **not** the general topic heading;
- write a response that is clearly relevant, well-illustrated, coherently structured, and well informed;
- use Urdu which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature and demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-related vocabulary;
- use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

Content

Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent essays. The best responses showed a genuine interest in the chosen essay title and were relevant, detailed and showed a solid understanding of the issues raised in the title. These essays were mature and thoughtful and clearly reflected an in-depth study of the chosen topic. A significant number of responses, however, did not address the precise wording of the question or misunderstood the task set, leading to generalisations and irrelevant answers. It is particularly important that essays should target the precise terms of the question and not merely relate to the general overarching topic area.

Planning is a useful step in writing a good essay and candidates who organised the material and their ideas, even briefly, before writing, tended to gain higher marks for Content and were more likely to present their arguments logically, using paragraphs and a range of linking words. Candidates who were not as deliberate in their planning ended up repeating points already made which affected the overall structure of the essay.

Quality of language

The best essays demonstrated a good level of grammatical accuracy and variety in the choice of vocabulary and structures, including topic-appropriate vocabulary and thoughtful use of linking words, which enabled candidates to communicate their ideas effectively.

The best essays were error-free with evidence of a wide range of clause structures and complex sentences being used. Candidates who achieved the highest marks were very deliberate in their use of sophisticated idioms and metaphors to further enhance their essays. Some candidates showed little grammatical and structural awareness and there were inaccuracies with irregular verbs, subject-verb agreement, articles and basic grammar.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was fairly popular and those candidates who attempted it were able to raise some good points and show good understanding. They linked their responses to modern life and the affect it has on people's mental health. The best responses considered the question from different perspectives and offered a more balanced approach, raising both positive and negative impacts of modern life. Although many felt that too much time spent watching TV and surfing the net is not good for mental wellbeing, some candidates argued

that, after long working hours and pressures at school, people are too tired to get involved in meaningful pursuits to maintain their mental health. Others considered these valid ways of spending one's free time if they provide a sense of wellbeing and relaxation. They went on to suggest that more rewarding ways of maintaining good mental wellbeing is to spend time doing creative activities, learning a new hobby, helping others, and getting involved with charity work.

Some candidates successfully argued that spending too much time on one's mobile phone or social media is a bad use of time as it can reduce face-to-face contact and interactions with loved ones, leading to isolation and loneliness. The best responses further extended the argument and linked it to physical health arguing both mental and physical health go hand in hand.

Question 2

This was a very popular question and essays demonstrated a sound and extensive amount of knowledge on the topic. The best responses contained a detailed and insightful discussion into the importance of a balanced diet and how this has an impact on overall health. In addition to this, they emphasised the increased importance of fuelling your body with the right nutrients especially when training and exercising. They argued that exercising without adhering to a healthy diet was not an effective strategy for weight gain or weight loss. Those candidates who were able to develop their ideas and raised points for both diet and exercise provided a more balanced essay and were awarded higher marks for Content.

Weaker responses to this title provided a general essay focusing on overall health and how to maintain it through a healthy diet with little or no mention of exercise. They were not able to relate their response to the specific title which had been set resulting in an answer that was not wholly relevant.

Question 3

This was a fairly popular question and candidates were able to demonstrate sound knowledge, providing well-structured and coherent arguments. The best responses included subject-specific vocabulary and used more complex sentence structures to convey their points. In these essays, candidates were able to thoughtfully present their discussion emphasising the importance of gaining skills and how this affects future job prospects. Many candidates suggested that highly skilled individuals are always in demand and therefore, will always be sought after but not all responses provided counterarguments. The ones that did, suggested that being well connected and knowing the right people was also a key component for progression in the workplace. The best responses developed this argument further suggesting that often deserving people are overlooked because they do not have the means to network socially. Furthermore, they commented on relevant issues such as Covid-19 and the impact this has had on employment regardless of one's skill set. A few candidates had interesting suggestions in their conclusions on what the government can do to help skilled and educated individuals thrive in their area of work.

Question 4

This was not a very popular question and only a few candidates attempted it. Those that did showed a deep understanding of economic development and people's welfare. The highest scoring candidates described how economic developments have a positive impact on people's quality of living, which is good for overall welfare. In addition to this, they help to eradicate poverty which is a contributing factor to poorer welfare. Candidates provided a well thought out conclusion summarising the main points and suggesting changes that could be implemented to enhance people's welfare and to bring good economic welfare.

Question 5

This was a very popular question and there were some very interesting responses. Candidates wrote good compositions which contained thoughtful discussions on the significance of poverty and how it should be given more importance than pollution.

Most candidates mentioned factors that contribute to pollution levels and how recycling, the use of renewable energy resources and using less plastic can reduce pollution. They made points to suggest how this would not only help a country's development but would also be beneficial for the environment worldwide. Many candidates were able to provide reasons for poverty and how a lack of education resulted in higher poverty levels. Answers in the good to excellent range were able to argue which of the two should be prioritised more and why. They justified their thoughts with clear, logical examples and references which further supported their ideas. The best responses offered personal opinions suggesting educating people on the pollution crisis would help them be more mindful and careful, which could help to overcome it in the future. They suggested

that education and skilling people from lower economic backgrounds could also have a positive impact on poverty levels.

Candidates who argued in favour of pollution being given more importance suggested how campaigns, planting more trees, and finding better methods of eliminating industrial waste would have a positive effect on keeping the environment clean for future generations. They suggested that pollution is affecting all living creatures, including animals, and is therefore a greater issue that should be tackled with urgency.

URDU

Paper 9686/04
Texts

Key messages

Teachers should:

- think carefully about which texts to prepare and choose ones that their candidates can handle conceptually;
- train their candidates to manage their time in the examination and answer **only** three questions, each one on a **different** text;
- encourage candidates to think carefully about the focus of the question and plan each essay before they start to write.

Candidates should:

- choose carefully either **Question (a)** or **Question (b)** on each of their chosen set texts and provide a complete and relevant answer to each question;
- write the question number clearly in English at the start of each question;
- answer the question precisely, stating in the introduction what will be said and coming to interim and final conclusions;
- explore all elements of their chosen questions and understand their focus.

General comments

Candidates should not write an opening paragraph which addresses in general terms the author, his or her works or the audience that he or she was addressing. Candidates should just answer the question rather than writing about the life and achievements of the author.

It was evident that centres had used past questions when training their candidates, and detailed knowledge was shown in those areas. Candidates should carefully select the question they choose to answer and ensure that their material is relevant. Sometimes the material was tailored efficiently and relevantly to the questions, but at other times there was evidence of responses being based on questions from previous years' papers which were therefore not relevant to the question being answered this year.

The best responses were those where candidates had planned their essays before starting to write and those which led to a clear conclusion.

Candidates are advised to leave time to re-read, check, and edit their work.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

- (a) Only a few candidates attempted this question. Many candidates did not understand the meaning of بازیچہ اطفال and only a very few candidates could explain the meaning of اورنگ سلیمان اور اعجاز مسیحا and the history behind it. They also did not understand the meaning of گل افشانی گفتار اور پیمانہ صہبا so they could not secure high marks in **part (i)**. Candidates did not perform very well in **part (ii)** either because of the lack of understanding of the key words in this ghazal.

- (b) Only a few candidates have attempted this question and those who did secured relatively good marks.

Question 2

- (a) This question was quite well done overall, and the context was well explained, but the majority of candidates responded better to **part (i)** than **part (ii)**. Most candidates unnecessarily discussed the poet's life and his contributions rather than addressing the question.
- (b) The majority of candidates who attempted this question answered very well and successfully addressed the focus of the question.

Question 3

- (a) Not many candidates attempted this question. Overall, **part (i)** of this question was quite well handled but most candidates struggled to produce good-quality answers to **part (ii)**.
- (b) Not many candidates answered this question. A few candidates misunderstood the meaning of جوش and did not appear to understand that it was the name of the poet.

Question 4

- (a) Only a very few candidates attempted this question but those who did secured good marks.
- (b) The majority of candidates who attempted this question addressed their ideas in a particularly good way and were able to access the higher mark bands.

Section 2

Question 5

- (a) This was a very popular question in this section and many of those who attempted it secured good marks. Some candidates struggled to discuss the demands of the question with the focus on حقیقت and simply reproduced the story and described the characters of the مہاکشمی کاپیل .
- (b) This question was quite well done overall, and the context was well explained. The best essays were those where the candidates addressed the exact focus of the question.

Question 6

- (a) This question required candidates to compare King Akbar's role as a father and as a king. This was a highly popular option this section. Many candidates wrote detailed responses and obtained good marks.
- (b) This was also a very popular question and most candidates secured good marks but some candidates simply described the whole story of انارکلی ڈرامہ rather than addressing the focus of the question. Candidates are strongly advised that to access the higher mark bands their answers must be fully relevant, addressing the focus of the question.