

URDU

Paper 9686/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

To do well in this examination candidates are advised to:

- read each text and the questions carefully before writing their answers;
- in **Questions 3** and **4** write precise responses in their own words as far as possible – candidates will not be awarded marks for content if they copy whole sentences/phrases from the text;
- keep within the prescribed word limit in **Question 5**;
- avoid giving irrelevant and superfluous details in their answers.

General comments

In **Question 1**, candidates were asked to show the meaning of the given words by using them sentences in their own words. Any sentences directly copied from the text were not accepted.

In **Question 2**, candidates were asked to write a synonym of the words provided on the question paper which were taken from **Text 1**. A small number of candidates either gave an antonym or used the words in a sentence. Candidates are advised to read the rubric carefully before answering questions.

In **Questions 3** and **4**, most candidates understood the texts very well and answered questions accurately. Candidates must respond precisely to what is being asked in each question and should read the texts carefully to ensure they have understood them before answering the questions. A small minority of candidates copied their answers directly from the texts instead of using their own words. In some cases, they copied out large parts of the text without demonstrating any understanding of what was being asked. Marks could not be awarded for Content in these cases.

In **Question 5**, the specific requirement was to write about the positive and negative aspects of media mentioned in the two texts. Many candidates answered precisely and accurately but others did not focus on the positive and negative aspects mentioned in the texts.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Questions (b) (محدود) and **(c)** (میں) proved challenging for many candidates and they were unable to convey the meaning of the words in accurate Urdu sentences.

Question 2

Many candidates attempted this question correctly by writing a synonym of the given words from **Text 1**. Some candidates struggled to spell words correctly which made the meaning unclear. A few candidates provided an antonym in **Questions (a)** (روئنا) and **(c)** (محدود) in their answers. Some candidates used the words in sentences, which was the requirement for **Question 1**.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates answered correctly and showed a clear understanding of the key words in the question.
- (b) Many candidates gave all three points correctly. A few candidates missed the key point
ملکی صورت حال / حالات حاضرہ پر زیادہ بات نہ کرنا
- (c) This question needed a clear focus on the text to find the relevant information. Candidates needed to include آزاد کرانے کی مہم in the first point in the mark scheme. In the third point, many candidates missed out Internet (انٹرنیٹ).
- (d) This was answered well and most candidates scored all three marks.
- (e) This question was correctly answered by the vast majority of candidates.

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates answered this question correctly and scored all three marks. A few candidates wrote آگاہ instead of عوام کی رائے for the first point in the mark scheme.
- (b) This question required clear understanding of the implication of ethics. Some candidates answered it correctly and scored all marks while a few candidates gave irrelevant information.
- (c) Most candidates answered this question very well.
- (d) Some candidates found this question challenging and gave irrelevant information in their answer. A few candidates gave their own opinions rather than focusing on the information in the text and therefore no marks could be awarded.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question correctly. There were some more instances of candidates using information from their own experience rather than what was in the text.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates responded to **Question 5(a)** very well although some wrote irrelevant information and did not appear to have understood the requirements of the question. Some candidates used up a lot of words in a general introduction giving their opinions on the topic, none of which could score any marks for Content. The best responses got straight to the point and wrote a concise summary using information from the texts which was relevant to the question.
- (b) Most candidates answered this question well and there were a number of interesting responses. Most candidates were in favour of at least one type of media and outlined its advantages/benefits compared to other types. The best answers were those which showed some originality and included at least one opinion which had not already been mentioned in the two 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 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 limits.

General comments

Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. The best essays were written in accurate Urdu in an organised and well-structured way. They included an introduction, several relevant points relating to the title and a thoughtful conclusion. 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.

Some essays were too long and exceeded the prescribed word limit. Candidates are advised to write concisely and not doing so is likely to have an effect on the mark awarded for content as candidates may not reach a concluding paragraph within the word limit, or may end up repeating points already made.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A fair few candidates chose this essay title and successfully wrote essays which included detailed discussion on the differences between the old and new generations. The most successful candidates were able to identify a variety of different reasons for the generation gap and provide a balanced argument to support their ideas. The main differences mentioned by candidates were a difference in perception, rejection of old ways by the younger generation and an intolerance of rules, regulations and social norms set out by the older generations.

The best essays also commented on the reasons why the younger generation has differing ideas and opinions to their parents and grandparents. In particular, candidates mentioned growing up in a world which is fast changing and the prevalence of social media.

The most impressive essays also gave a clear conclusion about bridging the gap between the two generations by creating a safe environment for people to express themselves and tackle any misconceptions through communication. There were responses that successfully demonstrated the use of appropriate and extensive vocabulary as well as confidently using complex sentence patterns to articulate points.

Question 2

This question was attempted by a majority of candidates. Successful candidates thoughtfully presented their arguments and wrote well-structured essays making clear points. They mentioned how easily accessible fast food has become and its convenience in the modern-day world we live in. The best essays also mentioned that, when eaten in moderation, these foods would not have a detrimental effect on a person's health.

Candidates further developed their points by mentioning more healthy fast-food options that are now becoming popular and which can be considered healthier options whilst also providing the convenience of not having to cook.

For a balanced argument, candidates made points related to health issues that can arise as a result of an overindulgence in unhealthy foods. They mentioned the need for a balanced and nutrient rich diet containing foods from different groups and the overall health benefits this would have.

Overall, there were some very insightful responses which were developed logically and had a clear, well thought out structure. The best essays were almost error-free and contained a thoughtful and balanced discussion with examples from daily life in a well-structured essay including a coherent argument and a thoughtful conclusion.

Question 3

This essay was attempted by a number of candidates who showed great passion when discussing their argument. The best responses addressed the specific question, considered all aspects of the question in a relevant way and were supported with points that had been elaborated and justified.

Many candidates were able to identify that learning does not only occur in the confines of a classroom and they explored the idea of learning through life experiences and by using the internet as a tool to self-teach. It was pleasing to see that candidates had thought about both sides of the argument with some responses identifying the need for qualifications and certifications that can usually only be obtained by enrolling on to a course at an educational institution either online or in person. They argued that going to places like schools, universities and colleges helped to develop social skills because they enable a person to interact with other students and teachers face-to-face which is a more natural means of communicating. A few candidates mentioned online learning and its importance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Weaker responses provided a general discussion on education and did not adequately address the question itself. They provided some points on the education system and the importance of learning but this did not relate to the specific essay title which required candidates to discuss whether attending an educational institute is a vital step in gaining knowledge.

Some candidates gave their views on different educational settings and could provide some factual evidence where appropriate but again this did not always relate to the title. Candidates need to answer the question set; those who provided an answer for a question they had prepared for, rather than for the question on the paper, were limited to low-band marks for Content.

Question 4

Most candidates who chose this question wrote comprehensive essays describing advantages and disadvantages of modern technology. They described in detail how the use of modern technology over the years has made lives easier and more efficient. The best responses were able to discuss in detail how communication has vastly improved as a result of modern-day technology making us better connected to other parts of the world, not only for work and business purposes but also from a social perspective.

Successful essays also mentioned an increased dependency on technology and how this is deskilling people as they do not feel the need to learn certain skills such as memorising a route or facts about relevant topics. They provided a balanced argument and took into account the negative impact of modern-day technology such as unemployment as a result of machines being able to work more efficiently as compared to a human.

The best responses linked the question to mental health and the negative impact social media is having on people's self-image, motivation levels, concentration and productivity. By providing specific examples and references to support their arguments, candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the subject. They were also more ambitious with their vocabulary choices and confidently used a range of idioms correctly to enhance their writing.

Question 5

This question was attempted by a very small number of candidates. Those that did attempt it, however, did well and were able to thoughtfully present their arguments detailing the need to protect natural resources such as water.

The use of fines as a deterrent for wasting water was suggested as a potential solution. More successful essays further developed this point by recommending more education for the population so they can understand the severity of the issue and become more aware. The unnecessary use of water is fast becoming a global issue and by taking the right actions now the problem can be reduced, if not prevented for future generations. The best-structured essays included a detailed and balanced discussion of the relevance and importance of water and why plans need to be put in place to reduce the risk of water shortages in the future. They also provided a well thought out conclusion.

Weaker responses contained a vague and limited number of points that showed little understanding of the issues and themes of the title. Candidates need to provide more factual evidence to support their ideas and suggest other possibilities in which sanctions can be implemented to avoid water wastage. The points made were not always developed and could not be used to draw a well-structured conclusion.

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Paper 9686/04
Texts

Key messages

To do well in this examination candidates should:

- answer only **three** questions in total, each one on a **different** set text;
- take time to decide whether to answer **part (a)** or **part (b)** on each of the chosen set texts;
- think carefully about the focus of the chosen question, explore all required elements and provide a complete and relevant answer;
- answer the question precisely, stating in the introduction what will be discussed and reach a sound conclusion.

General comments

Candidates are reminded that they must write their chosen question numbers clearly in English.

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

Candidates should carefully select the question they choose to answer and ensure that their material is relevant. Some candidates tailored their knowledge efficiently and relevantly to the questions, but others reproduced information, which perhaps had been prepared when practising using past papers, but which was not relevant to the question they had chosen to answer.

The best responses were those that were carefully planned (rough notes were often made, although it is helpful if these are crossed through to avoid any misunderstanding) and 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) A good number of candidates attempted this question but only a few achieved high marks. In **part (i)**, most candidates demonstrated particularly good understanding of the *Ghazal* and explained it clearly. In **part (ii)** some candidates did not discuss the poet's style with regards to the key words in the question (بے وفائی اور لاپرواہی) in the light of the given *Ghazal* which meant they could not access the higher mark bands.
- (b) Only a few candidates attempted this question and secured relatively good marks, but again a lack of attention to the focus of the question (تصوف کا رنگ) meant that some candidates did not do as well as they could have done.

Question 2

- (a) This question was quite well answered overall, and the context was well explained. Most candidates performed better in **part (i)** than in **part (ii)**. In **part (ii)** many candidates discussed the poet's life and his other poems within the syllabus instead of focusing on the key words in the question (موجودہ دور کی عکاسی).
- (b) A good majority of candidates attempted this question and many gave good explanations which were clearly focused on the requirements of the question. 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 and those who did explained the extract from the poem in a simple way. Only a minority addressed the focus of the question (عام آدمی کی مشکلات) in their essay.
- (b) Not many answers to this question were seen but those who attempted it gained good marks by clearly addressing the focus of the question (غربت و افلاس).

Section 2

Question 4

- (a) The majority of candidates attempted this question and there were many good essays which focused on the requirement of the question (حقیقت کا رنگ).
- (b) Many candidates attempted this question and performed well.

Question 5

- (a) This was a very popular option in this section and many of those who attempted it wrote very good essays. Some candidates struggled to discuss the particular demands of the question (ایہروں کے خلاف) and simply reproduced the story and described the characters in their chosen *Afsana*.
- (b) This was a very popular question and many candidates wrote detailed responses and obtained good marks. The question required candidates to analyse their chosen short story with reference to the statement given in the question. There were some interesting and imaginative answers to this question.

Question 6

- (a) This question required candidates to discuss the character of Akbar with reference to the statement given in the question. Most candidates who attempted this question provided relevant answers and secured good marks.
- (b) This was also a very popular question and most candidates achieved good marks but some simply described the character of Dilaram and therefore, could not access the higher bands of the mark scheme.