



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**Urdu**

**46454**

**(Specification 4645)**

**Unit 4: Writing**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **General Comments**

This was the first year for the Controlled Assessment Writing in Urdu and schools/colleges were able to handle the requirements of this new format very well. There were examples of work of excellent quality, showing evidence of thorough preparation for the component. Students were able to produce original and detailed responses to some interesting tasks, offering points of view together with justification and using a range of complex structures with a high degree of accuracy. Many schools/colleges used their experience of the Coursework component from the legacy specification and this was a good basis for encouraging students to produce extended pieces of writing. There were various different titles used, including: Holidays, School, Home and Environment, Leisure, Relationships with others, Lifestyles and Teenage Issues. Some schools/colleges decided to use the titles from the specification and these were handled well.

To maximise attainment the following suggestions are offered to schools/colleges:

- Schools/colleges are reminded that task titles and bullet points should always be in English. Task titles need to be carefully thought out so that students are writing fully relevant responses. The title and not the bullet points are what the students should be concentrating on. The bullet points are there as a guide to ensure that appropriate language is elicited.
- Schools/colleges should make students aware of the assessment criteria and, in all writing assignments, should encourage pupils to ensure their piece is fully relevant and contains opinions and, according to their ability, justification. Some students were awarded lower marks because their tasks did not offer the opportunity to display the features required for the various assessment categories. Where possible, students should be encouraged to write longer sentences and to use a range of tenses. Most schools/colleges are familiar with the controlled conditions coursework from the legacy specification so that controlled assessment is not entirely new to them. As teachers become more familiar with the criteria for assessment and the new specification, it is likely that performance will improve.
- Schools/colleges are encouraged to make use of exemplar material.

## **Task Planning**

The use of Task Planning Forms is optional but beneficial for students if used correctly. Teachers are reminded that conjugated verbs must not be used and if they are they should be obliterated from the Task Planning Form. Good examples of Task Planning Forms were seen where students had numbered each word. Teachers are advised to spend time with their students modelling what is and what is not permissible on a Task Planning Form. Schools/colleges are also reminded that the task title must be written on the Task Planning Form.

## **Use of Dictionaries**

The use of a dictionary can be very useful but only if used sensibly. Some students may lose valuable time looking for one or two words. It is advised that students are trained in the use of bilingual dictionaries in order to avoid misuse and potential loss of marks.

## Assessment

### Content

Schools/colleges are advised to study the criteria for assessment and ensure that preparation for tasks matches what is required for each band of marks. Where able students were not scoring 13–15 marks, it was because the responses were not always **fully** relevant and they were not always conveying information clearly (and this is where Accuracy can impact on Content). The key phrase in the 10–12 band is ‘convey **a lot** of information clearly’ and in the 7–9 band ‘**quite a lot** of information clearly communicated’. Students who scored at the 4–6 band and the 1–3 band generally produced short pieces of work containing errors that impeded communication.

### Range of Language

Where students scored well, there was evidence of good preparation and familiarity with the production of complex sentences and a variety of verb tenses. However, errors in tense formation and inaccuracies in spelling were common with some students. It is in these areas that a lack of precision and inappropriate vocabulary prevents students from scoring marks in the top bands. Students who appropriately scored 5–6 used simple connectives effectively and this should be encouraged.

### Accuracy

The marks of 3-4 were the most common marks awarded. Students had the ability to produce language that communicated a message so that ‘the intended meaning was clear’ but in many cases errors were not generally occurring in complex sentences. The verb and tense formations were usually correct in most cases.

### Administration

Most schools/colleges followed the instructions and the Controlled Assessment Tasks were very well presented. In addition, schools/colleges are encouraged:

- to collate each student’s work – i.e. the two tasks - together with the Candidate Record Form and the Task Planning Form. The use of treasury tags to keep portfolios together is preferred as paper clips and plastic wallets cause significant handling problems for the examiners.
- to make sure the examiner receives the full Controlled Assessment Task sheet relevant to the student or group. Marking cannot begin until the examiner knows what the students are writing about.
- to remind students to write neatly as poor handwriting can affect marks.
- to send the work in the same student order as on the Attendance List, as would be done for a terminal examination paper.
- to check that the students have correctly filled in the Candidate Record Form and the Task Planning Form. There were errors with candidate numbers this year.
- to remind teachers that they should not write on the students’ work (i.e. marks they may have awarded) and they must submit the original work, not photocopies.
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- to adhere to the deadlines given by AQA.

### **Further support**

Three further points to provide help to centres:

- the guidance provided to examiners is published at the end of this report for your information
- at the time of publication of results, centres will receive the total mark out of 60 for Unit 4 as well as the UMS score for the unit. In order to access the breakdown of the mark out of 60 (ie the mark out of 30 per task and the mark awarded for each assessment criterion), schools/colleges must register with e-AQA and use the Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA). It is only through ERA that a breakdown of marks will be made available
- further examples of completed writing tasks with marks and commentaries from the 2011 examination will be available in the Teacher Resource Bank on the AQA MFL website in the autumn term.

### **Advice to Students**

Below is some advice you may wish to provide to your students:

- Once you know the title of your task and your teacher has given you the bullet points to use in your task, think carefully about how you intend to write about each one and prepare to write as much as you can and as clearly and accurately as you can
- It will improve your mark if you can use a variety of vocabulary and structures, if you can express opinions clearly and, when you can, justify these opinions by giving a reason. It also helps if you can use different tenses by saying what you did in the past, and/or what you are going to do or will do in the future, for example
- You are allowed to use a Task Planning Form on which you may write up to 40 words (in the target language and/or English) and you may use this form at Stage 3 (once it has been checked by your teacher). Be sure to spell words accurately on this sheet so that they will be accurate when you write up your piece of work. It might be wise to include the same order of bullet points on your Task Planning Form as the teacher gave you on the Task Sheet and then jot down a few words next to each one. If you are worried you may forget what a target language word means, you could write the English translation next to it, as long as the English word is included in your final count. Remember not to use conjugated verbs (parts of verbs in whichever tense); if you want to jot down verbs, you can only include infinitives
- You are allowed to use a dictionary when you write up your piece of work. You should use this to look up occasional words, but do not waste too much time looking up lots of words; you only have 60 minutes and you need to write as full a response as you can. Remember that your dictionary is likely to contain verb tables and you could always use it to check that you have written the part of the verb/the tense of the verb accurately
- Be sure that everything you write is relevant to the title
- Try to write as much as you can about each bullet point but keep an eye on the clock. Remember you only have 60 minutes. If you follow the order of the bullet points provided, this should bring a well-organised structure to your piece, but if time is running out you might choose to round off the piece neatly even if you have to cut short what you were intending to write.

## GUIDANCE NOTES

### 1. Task Planning Forms (TPF)

If more than 40 words have been used, examiners will ignore when awarding a mark, the parts of the student's response (ie the phrases or clauses) which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

If a conjugated verb appears on the TPF, examiners will ignore the clause(s) where that verb is used when awarding a mark for Range of Language and Accuracy. If the sentence (with the conjugated verb discounted) still communicates, then it may be counted towards the mark for Content.

Visuals on Task Planning Forms must not appear on Task Planning Forms in June 2012 and beyond.

### 2. Exactly what do examiners mark?

- They mark the student's response **to the title**.
- They do **not** mark a response to the bullet points which have the status of guidance. The student may choose to ignore the bullet points completely.
- The response must be relevant to the title.

### 3. Must the title relate directly to the Contexts defined in the specification?

No. The title can be anything.

### 4. How do examiners identify the title?

- The title is the task.
- The task and the scene-setting may seem blurred or merged together. The focus is the task.
- See examples in *Additional Exemplar Tasks: Controlled Assessment Writing and Speaking* on the AQA website within the Teacher Resource Bank for your language at <http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/languages.php?id=11&prev=10>, where the task and scene setting are clearly separated

### 5. What is a relevant response?

- The response must be relevant to the task.
- Students are not penalised for not responding to the scene setting details.

### 6. And what if there is a significant amount of irrelevant material?

- It would affect the mark for CONTENT.
- Only the material which is relevant should still be assessed for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY.

**7. What if a student has omitted an entire aspect of the title?**

A student with the task 'Home, local area and special occasions' who writes nothing about home area, for example, could be considered to have completed two thirds of the task. The piece could therefore be eligible for the 10-12 band for Content, assuming the piece fulfils the criteria for that band in other ways. This would still allow the student access to all mark bands for language.

**8. What if there is a significant duplication of material across the two pieces of work submitted?**

- The same material cannot be credited twice.
- Incidental and occasional overlap do not count as duplication.

**9. What if it is clear the student's entire response is identical (ie exactly the same, word for word) to model answers in a textbook or to the wording of tasks from other students at the same centre?**

The work would be referred to AQA's Irregularities/Malpractice Department.

**10. Does the number of words affect assessment?**

- The quality not the quantity of work affects the assessment outcome.
- 200-350 words across both tasks if aiming at grades D-G, 400-600 if aiming at grades A\*- C, is for **guidance** only.
- Obviously, the shorter the assignment, the more difficult it becomes to meet the upper bands of assessment criteria for CONTENT (and therefore other categories).
- There is no *upper* limit on the number of words. The whole piece will be read and marked by the examiner.

**11. How does the CONTENT mark affect the marks for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY?**

Content Mark	Maximum Mark for Range of Language	Maximum Mark for Accuracy
0	0	0
1-3	1-4	1-2
4-6	1-6	1-3
7-9	1-8	1-4
10-12	1-10	1-5
13-15	1-10	1-5

## 12. The criteria for assessment

### (a) CONTENT

**The criteria for CONTENT refer to ideas, points of view and, in the 4-6 band, opinions. In terms of assessment, how are they viewed?**

They are all viewed as one notion. Ideas, points of view and opinions are the same for assessment purposes. In terms of evidence, there must be more than one instance of this feature.

**How do examiners decide between the 3 marks available for CONTENT in each mark band?**

If the descriptor fits the piece exactly, then the examiner will award the middle mark in the band. If there is strong evidence of the descriptors and the examiner had been considering the band above, the highest of the three marks would be awarded. If there is just enough evidence and the examiner had been considering the band below, then the lowest mark in the band would be awarded.

#### 13-15 marks

- Students provide a **fully relevant** and **detailed** response with **almost all** information conveyed **clearly** and **developed**.
- They must offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and at least two of them must be explained or justified.
- The piece should have a well organised structure, ie a sound ordering of ideas but **not** necessarily a formal essay structure or an introduction, conclusion, etc.

#### 10-12 marks

- The response will be **mostly** relevant and **a lot** of information will still be provided and conveyed **clearly** and will **generally** be developed.
- There is a requirement to give **and explain** ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2)

#### 7-9 marks

- The response will be **generally** relevant with **quite a lot** of information conveyed **clearly**.
- There will still be evidence of an ability to **develop** ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions / points of view (minimum 2).

#### 4-6 marks

- The response is **limited** but **some** relevant information will be conveyed.
- There will be **some development** of basic ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2). These could be very simple, eg: 'I like French. I like Spanish. France is good.' = 3 simple opinions.

#### 1-3 marks

- The response is **very limited** with **little** relevant information conveyed.
- There will be **no real structure**.

#### 0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated in a coherent fashion. If zero is awarded for Content, zero must also be awarded for Range of Language and Accuracy.



## (b) Range of Language

- The immediate future (ie *main jaon ga*, etc) counts as a future tense. A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg *main kal ja raha hun...*) does not.

### 9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used **successfully**. This means two or more tenses and a minimum of one instance of a tense use which is other than the default tense used. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect) but a greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used.  
An overall judgement needs to be made as to whether “verb tenses are used successfully.” There needs to be evidence that the candidate can communicate messages successfully in more than one tense. There may be minor spelling errors but provided they do not prevent communication they can be credited.
- The use of different tenses is not a ‘passport’ to the 9-10 band.
- There must be evidence of **successful use of complex sentences**. This could be:
  - use of subordinating conjunctions (but this is not an absolute requirement)
  - use of adverbial phrases (*aahistah say*, *tayzi say*, etc).
  - use of conjunctions and connectives (eg *awr*, *yaa*, *laykin*, *magar* etc.)
- There needs to be a **wide range of vocabulary**. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use.

### 7-8 marks

- **Mainly successful** use of complex sentences. The note above about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will also apply here.
- No specific requirement to use more than one tense but the use of different tenses may constitute evidence of ‘more complex sentences.’
- There must be a **good range** of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.

### 5-6 marks

- There will be some attempts made at longer sentences using appropriate linking words. At this level this will often mean repeated dependence on simple connectives such as ‘and’ / ‘but’ , though ‘because’ will also be found fairly frequently when candidates attempt to explain ideas and points of view. Use of other forms of complex sentences will often not be wholly successful.
- There should be **some variety** of vocabulary, though candidates will generally be using a more basic range of vocabulary than in the higher bands and there may be more repetition.

### 3-4 marks

- Language will be basic, with **short, simple sentences**. Attempts at longer sentences and more difficult constructions will usually not be successful.
- Vocabulary will generally be appropriate to the basic needs of the task but will be **limited**, with a lot of repetition and overuse of a few common verbs such as *to be*, *to have*, *to like*, *to go*.

### 1-2 marks

- Little understanding of language structure shown with just the occasional short phrase which is correctly used.
- Vocabulary will be very **basic**, with only isolated words correctly used. Vocabulary will often be anglicised.

### (c) ACCURACY

**For ACCURACY, is there an implicit requirement for different tenses to be in evidence?**

No. Range of tenses is assessed under RANGE OF LANGUAGE. The range of tenses is not considered when assessing Accuracy.

There are 5 marks available to cover the whole range of ability (i.e. 8 grades). This means the mark awarded could represent quite different performances. Moreover, a mark of 5 will not be used only to represent an A\* performance.

5 marks

- **Largely accurate.**
- Major errors only usually appear in complex structures.
- There may be some minor errors (eg gender).
- Verbs and tenses are **secure**.

4 marks

- Errors occur but the piece is **generally accurate**. Mistakes made will not generally impede communication.
- Verbs and tenses are **usually correct**.

3 marks

- **More accurate than inaccurate**, though there will often be fairly frequent errors.
- The intended **meaning is clear**.
- Verbs and tenses are **sometimes unsuccessful**.
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2 marks

- **Many errors.**
- Mistakes **often impede communication**.
- Verbs are **rarely accurate**.

1 mark

- **Frequent errors.**
- Mistakes **regularly impede communication**.
- **Limited understanding** of basic linguistic structures.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below

**UMS conversion calculator** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion).