

GCE

Persian

Advanced GCE A2 **H595**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS **H195**

OCR Report to Centres June 2015

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Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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F885 Persian Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments:

This was the seventh series of Unit F885, GCE Persian AS examination. The format of the question paper this year was almost the same as that of 2014. The number of candidates sitting for the exam for this paper was a little lower than last year that is 257 compared with 285.

Many candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately to respond to the tasks in all sections, however some did not seem to have knowledge and skills required to answer the questions in Tasks 6 and 7 correctly. Appropriate time allocation for each section is essential for candidates to improve their performance.

Candidates' performance will also improve if they can:

- a) Familiarise themselves with the various exercise types and the rubrics of the tasks.
- b) Read the rubrics and follow them carefully.
- c) ***Speakers of Dari (spoken in Afghanistan):***
Familiarise themselves with the differences between Dari and Persian as spoken in Iran. This mostly involves vocabulary, pronunciation and some grammatical structures.
- d) Allocate time appropriately for completing different sections within the time allocated for each task.
- e) Write legibly.
- f) Learn and practise the use of advanced grammar such as relative clauses, passive structures and conditionals. This is particularly relevant for Task 4, the transfer of meaning task, for answering the questions in Section B, Reading Comprehension and for the Writing Section, both Task 7a & 7b.
- g) Use correct spelling and pay attention to the use of prepositions.
- h) Be fully aware of the AS topics in the GCE Specification for Persian.
- i) Use a formal style in writing when answering questions in Reading and Writing Sections rather than a colloquial one.
- j) Develop their knowledge of vocabulary and use a range of vocabulary in the Reading and Writing sections as there are separate marks allocated for this activity.
- k) Write in the allocated spaces and avoid writing in the margins, this is particularly important as the papers are marked onscreen.
- l) Use pen and not pencil.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A: Listening and Writing

Task 1 – Listening – Questions 1-12

The majority of candidates responded very well to the questions in this Task. Questions 7 and 9 provided differentiation for better candidates.

Task 2 – Listening

The questions were responded by majority of candidates quite well, however some candidates had problems with gaps number 6 & 13 and gaps 1 & 8 provided differentiation.

Task 3 – Listening Comprehension

Most candidates responded quite well to the questions in this task. Questions 5 and 8 provided good differentiation for the more able candidates and Questions 7 and 11 were accessible to all candidates. Particular attention was required to respond correctly to Questions 3.

Task 4 – Listening and Writing

This task required a good understanding and knowledge in both languages and was generally well responded to. More able candidates were identified by their ability to correctly transfer the meaning of the first and the last sentence, using the correct structures of the target language. However some candidates had difficulties in translating the first long sentence using the correct grammar.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Task 5 – Reading

The format of parts A and B of this task were the same as last year. The majority of candidates responded very well to both parts of the Task, particularly to Part B. In Part A, Questions 3 and 7 provided good differentiation. Particular attention was required to respond correctly to Questions 1 and 8. In Part B Question 2 provided good differentiation.

Task 6 – Reading Comprehension Questions 1-12

Questions of this task were generally responded to well, although some candidates had problems with question 6. Questions 3 and 7 provided good differentiation for better candidates. Candidates are advised not to copy the text in answering the questions in this task as they lose marks for Quality of Language.

Task 7 – Reading and Writing Parts 7a & 7b

In Question 7a, candidates are advised that they need to transfer **all** the information points in the text by using their own words and rephrasing the sentences. Marks were not awarded to those candidates who copied the text and used more than five consecutive words from the text.

Responses to question 7b were generally much better compared to last year. However, it should be emphasised again that candidates are required to read the question(s) raised in this section carefully and respond to the question and discuss the points and give their own opinions about them. Some candidates discussed and developed only the points and the examples in Part A. The questions in 7b are usually open so that the candidates have opportunity to use their imagination.

It should also be noted that using colloquial style is not appropriate in essay writing as it requires formal writing. Candidates are advised to write Part B in paragraph format.

F886 Persian Listening, Reading and Writing 2 (A2)

General Comments:

The majority of candidates engaged in doing the test and there were only a few blank papers. Candidates can also improve their performance if they are encouraged to:

- familiarise themselves with different exercise types and specific rubrics in exam papers. Working on past papers is a good way to learn them.
- understand the rubrics and follow them accordingly.
- those who Speak ***Dari (spoken in Afghanistan)*** need to learn differences between Dari and Persian as spoken in Iran. This mostly involves vocabulary, pronunciation and some grammatical structures.
- observe the word limits set for the various writing tasks (where applicable) and write in readable and understandable prose. They should learn different type of writing styles, such as essay, email, web blog and lecture.
- where applicable, use a style or register that is appropriate to what they have been asked to write. A colloquial style may be considered acceptable in a personal letter or an email to a friend, but inappropriate in a formal piece of writing, such as an essay or a business letter. Inappropriate style loses marks.
- write answers in the allocated spaces, and within the page frame - i.e. avoid writing on the margins. This is particularly significant for on-line marking. See also below.
- not attach blank papers to their exam papers.
- complete half-finished sentences in Persian, with correct grammar which makes sense.
- pay particular attention to 'spelling'. Wrong spelling could create a different word with an entirely different meaning which can end up with losing a mark.
- develop good time management, as this is a long paper, otherwise they will lose marks in some sections that they could have answered.
- learn about all A2 topics and improve their vocabulary knowledge about each A2 topics.
- not forget to write only in black ink.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A – Listening and writing

Exercise 1

Questions were generally well answered. Since the rubrics for this exercise were in English, candidates whose English was as good as their Persian did well in this exercise. Question f provided differentiation.

Exercise 2

Majority of candidates answers questions very well. Since the questions were in Persian, candidates with stronger reading and writing skills in Persian did very well in this exercise. As the question has quality marks as well, candidates should pay attention to grammar in their answers.

Section B – Reading and Writing

Exercise 3

Questions were generally well answered. Question 2 and 4 provided differentiation. Candidates should choose the correct answer for words or phrases based on the meaning in the text.

Exercise 4

This task required a good understanding and knowledge of vocabulary. Candidates should find and write the exact synonym in the text for each of the questions. Question f played a differentiating role.

Exercise 5

As all questions in this section followed the same grammatical pattern, candidates need to have a good understanding of the text in order to answer the questions. Paragraph numbers were indicated in the rubric to help candidates.

Exercise 6

Most candidates responded quite well to the questions in this task.

Exercise 7

Questions were generally well answered. Question c and d played a differentiating role.

Exercise 8

This was a ‘transfer of meaning’ task. Only candidates with a good knowledge and understanding of both languages managed to obtain full marks for this exercise. It played an important differentiating part, as candidates had to demonstrate their understanding of the source language text (Persian) as well as show command of the target language (English) when transferring meaning.

Using correct grammar and spelling count in the assessment as well.

Exercise 9

Candidates should fill gaps based on the meaning of the text; paragraph numbers have been mentioned as an indication for each question. Question e provided differentiation for the better candidates.

Exercise 10

Questions were generally well answered. Questions b and f were answered correctly by the better candidates.

Exercise 11

As this involves writing in the target language and requires explanation, candidates should pay attention to correct use of grammar for the quality of language mark. Question a was a good discriminator.

Section C – Writing

Exercise 12-19

There are 8 questions out of 13 different A2 subtopics, which give candidates a wide range of choice. This section plays a very significant part in differentiating the better candidates, who displayed:

- (a) a genuine insight when responding to the task, providing consistently relevant information in support of their points of view and opinions;
- (b) a logical organisation of thought in developing and structuring their argument;
- (c) a high and consistent level of accuracy in a wide range of vocabulary and idiom, with a variety of complex sentence structures;
- (d) a good general knowledge of different A2 topics in regards to the target language;
- (e) answers to the chosen question with developed ideas and points of view, mentioning examples to clarify their arguments;
- (f) writing in paragraphs, following the correct formal structure of writing as required in this section;
- (g) good punctuation.

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