

GCE

Persian

Advanced GCE A2 **H595**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS **H195**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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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 sixth series of Unit F885, the GCE Persian AS examination. The format of the question paper this year was almost the same as that of 2013. The number of candidates sitting the exam for this paper was a little higher than last year.

Many candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately to respond to the tasks in all sections; however some did not seem to have the 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 Tasks 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 the 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 on screen.
- 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 3, 5, 8 and 9 provided differentiation for better candidates.

Task 2 - Listening

The questions were responded to by majority of candidates quite well, however some candidates had problems with gaps number 5, 18 and 12, and gaps numbers 18 and 15 provided differentiation.

Task 3 - Listening Comprehension

Most candidates responded quite well to the questions in this task. Questions 5 and 7 provided good differentiation for the more able candidates and Questions 2 and 8 were accessible to all candidates. Particular attention was required to respond correctly to Questions 5.

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.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Task 5 - Reading

The format of part A of this task was the same as last year; however the format of Part B of the Task was changed in order to make the paper more accessible for all candidates. The majority of candidates responded very well to both parts of the Task, particularly to Part B. In Part A, Questions 3 and 8 provided good differentiation. Particular attention was required to respond correctly to Questions 4 and 10. In Part B Question 7 provided good differentiation.

Task 6 - Reading Comprehension Questions 1-12

The questions of this task were generally responded to well, although some candidates had problems with questions 3 and 4. Questions 5 and 9 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 in 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 discuss the points and give their own opinions about them. Some good candidates discussed and developed only the points and the examples in Part A and did not discuss other situations where using mobile phones should be banned. The questions in 7b are usually open so that the candidates have the opportunity to use their imagination. It should also be noted that using colloquial style is not appropriate in essay writing; formal writing is required.

F886 Persian Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments:

Most candidates performed well. Their performance would improve further if they could be encouraged to:

- a) Familiarise themselves with the various exercise types and rubrics used in the exam.
- b) Follow the rubrics 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) Observe the word limits set for the various writing tasks (where applicable).
- e) Write legibly.
- f) 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.
- g) 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.
- h) Candidates are required to complete half-finished sentences in Persian with correct grammar and make sense.
- i) Pay particular attention to 'spelling'. Wrong spelling could create a different word with an entirely different meaning.

Comments on Individual Questions:

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.

Exercise 2

Questions were generally well answered. Since the rubrics for this exercise were in Persian, candidates with stronger reading and writing skills in Persian did very well in this exercise.

Exercise 3

Questions were generally well answered. Question 7 played a differentiating role.

Exercise 4

Questions were generally well answered. Question f played a differentiating role.

Exercise 5

Questions were generally well answered. Question 5 played a differentiating role.

Exercise 6

Questions were generally well answered.

Exercise 7

Questions were generally well answered. Question 7 played a differentiating role.

Exercise 8

This was a 'transfer of meaning' task. Only candidates with a sound knowledge 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 command of the target language (English) when transferring meaning.

Exercise 9

Questions were generally well answered. Questions 9(a) and 9(c) differentiated between the better candidates.

Exercise 10

Questions were generally well answered. Question 10(a) and 10(g) were answered correctly by better candidates.

Exercise 11

Questions were generally well answered.

Exercise 12

Section C (Writing) played a very significant part in differentiating the better candidates, who displayed:

- (a) genuine insight in responding to the task providing consistently relevant information in support of their points of view and opinions;
- (b) 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.

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