

## Arabic B

### Overall grade boundaries

#### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 18	19 - 36	37 - 50	51 - 62	63 - 74	75 - 86	87 - 100

#### Standard level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 12	13 - 26	27 - 44	45 - 59	60 - 74	75 - 88	89 - 100

### Higher level internal assessment

#### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

This year a wide range of topics were covered by candidates, the most popular of which being health, healthy food and avoiding fast food. Also popular was the theme of technology which included the effects of social media and internet addiction. The topics presented were suitable for the candidate's age and interests; however some centres presented topics such as leisure in a very simplistic way which did not truly reflect the abilities of the HL candidate and were more suitable to SL level.

It is recommended that the visual stimuli reflect scenes or issues from the Arab world to encourage candidates to relate their comments to the Arabic culture and teachers are advised to use their questions to guide the candidates towards discussing this. Teachers are also reminded to write a topic or a caption underneath the picture to stimulate and engage.

In the majority of cases, procedures for conducting the internal assessment were carried out correctly. It should be remembered that the presentation should last between 3-4 minutes and should not exceed the 4 minute mark. It is important also that during the discussion, the teacher discusses the picture before moving to a different topic. The questions posed should be challenging and stimulating enough to encourage the HL candidate to demonstrate their language skills. The majority of teachers were skilled in conversation techniques and were able to ask clear and proactive questions.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A: Productive skills

Most candidates showed a good command of the Arabic language. They were able to express their opinions and points of view and support this with evidence from the Arabic world clearly and skilfully. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of fluency and could converse with confidence and ease. Minor errors, which are to be expected, were present and did not affect meaning or communication. Candidates demonstrated high level, sophisticated vocabulary and complex grammatical structures and most were capable of pronouncing the language very well.

### Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills

The majority of candidates were able to understand the questions asked and maintained a competent level of interaction with their teachers. Many conversations flowed smoothly with pauses that might be the result of a lack of ideas as much as a difficulty with the language. Most presentations were clear and well structured with candidates describing the picture presented before relating it to their culture or problems in the Arab world.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- It is recommended that rich visual stimuli are chosen which reflect the Arab world or culture and which allow candidates to demonstrate their high levels of language competency.
- The caption must reflect the content of the stimulus and direct the candidates to specific topics for discussion.
- The time frames given for each section of the assessment must be adhered to and teachers should intervene if these are exceeded.
- It is reminded that after the 15 minutes preparation time, the assessment should begin immediately.
- Teachers are encouraged not to interrupt or correct candidates when they are speaking as this can interfere with their train of thought.
- Questions posed should reflect the higher level ability of the candidate and encourage them to demonstrate high levels of language.

## Further comments

The visual stimuli should be of a good quality, in colour and clear.

## Standard level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

In the majority of cases, procedures for conducting the internal assessment were carried out correctly. There was a wide variety of visual stimuli although some pictures were not clear, or in colour, and in some cases no caption was provided. Some stimuli were not culturally appropriate and it is reminded that the photographs chosen should relate to or be linked to the Arab world or Arab culture. The majority of captions were appropriate and suitable for SL candidates. The best examples included interesting and stimulating captions which provoked thinking.

Some candidates exceeded the time limit, particularly in the presentation section, and teachers are urged to intervene in any presentation that exceeds 4 minutes. Most candidates were able to present skilfully and related the photograph to the topics covered during their academic studies. Most teachers were able to ask appropriate, suitable and interesting questions and were supportive of the candidates, rephrasing questions when necessary.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A: Productive skills

Most candidates demonstrated a very good command of the Arabic language. They were able to express themselves using appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures supporting ideas that were relevant to the topic and culture. Most candidates showed fluency and very few were not able to express themselves. Many produced language with great ease and confidence and, although there were simple errors in some complex grammatical structures and sophisticated vocabulary, this didn't hinder communication. Most candidates were able to use correct intonation with clear and appropriate pronunciation.

### Criterion B: Interaction - receptive skills.

Most candidates were able to answer the teacher's questions clearly and to the point. The pauses which were evident appeared to be the result of a lack of ideas and information and not a reflection of the candidate's language ability. Interaction was generally lively and led to a coherent conversation in which candidates were able to express themselves confidently and with ease. The majority

successfully presented, commented on the caption and were able to relate the photograph/caption to the topics they had studied in lessons.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- It is recommended that rich visual stimuli are chosen which reflect the Arab world or culture and which allow candidates to demonstrate their high levels of language competency.
- The caption must reflect the content of the stimulus and direct the candidates to specific topics for discussion.
- The time frames given for each section of the assessment must be adhered to and teachers should intervene if these are exceeded.
- It is recommended that teachers avoid political and religious topics and stimuli that might cause offence.
- Teachers are encouraged not to interrupt or correct candidates when they are speaking as this can interfere with their train of thought.
- Pictures should be of a good quality, in colour and clear.

## Higher level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 25

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

The candidates performed well in the written assignment. Most were aware of the requirements of the task and the assessment criteria and were able to present work that showed their understanding in a creative manner. Unfortunately, many candidates exceeded the word limit of 600 words and teachers should remind candidates that examiners will not mark work beyond this point. Some assignments were word processed which was not the format required for 2014 and it is advised that this is checked for future sessions. Most centres used the same 2-3 literary works which, unfortunately, provided little variety.

There has been a big improvement in the handling of literary work however candidates still struggle with the rationale, omitting some of the elements stated in the Language B guide. Despite the range of literary works studied being very limited, the tasks submitted were very creative and demonstrated a clear understanding of the texts. Some examples of tasks include the diary of a main character or

an alternate ending to a story. Some candidates wrote more of a critical analysis of the literary work but often this was not suitable for the chosen text type and accordingly marks were lost in criterion B.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A: Language

The standard of language used was very good with sophisticated vocabulary and complex grammatical structures which reflect the high ability of the candidates. It should be noted that the language used should reflect the character portrayed if writing in the first person. The use of language should be clearly explained and justified in the rationale.

### Criterion B: Content

Candidates who achieved high grades were able to use carefully selected quotes to justify and support their writing. Many presented work that showed creativity, cohesion, clarity and effective planning. On the other hand, those who failed to make reference to the literary work or show creativity in their assignment lost marks in this criterion.

### Criterion C: Format

Most candidates were able to follow the conventions of their chosen text type. It was noticed, however, that some candidates specified one text type in their rationale and produced another in their assignment and accordingly lost marks in this criterion.

### Criterion D: Rationale

Generally, the rationales were much clearer this year, however, many candidates are still losing marks in this section due to a lack of understanding of the requirements. It is advised that candidates are given more guidance in this area as some simply used it to summarise or retell the literary work.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- The rationale should come after the cover sheet and precede the assignment.
- The rationale should include a summary of the literary work and specify the aims of the assignment in relation to the literary work- there needs to be a clear link between the two. The language should be appropriate to the task and the text type should be mentioned and justified.
- It is recommended that candidates do not copy paragraphs from the literary work but are given guidance on how to select quotes appropriately.
- Teachers should expose candidates to a variety of literary works and not limit them to only one or two specific texts.
- Candidates should be reminded not to write more than the word limit specified in the Language B guide.
- Analytical essays should be avoided

## Standard level written assignment

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Candidates performed well in the written assignment this year. There was a wide range of tasks and the language produced was of a good standard, however many candidates exceeded the word length specified in the guide.

Most texts related to topics studied during the academic year, however some were too long and the language too sophisticated. These texts contained a lot of information and detail, with links which were too broad to enable the candidate to be creative or complete the task within the required word limit. Some centres presented two texts only and others supplied the web link without a hard copy.

Many candidates copied large paragraphs from the text and were not able to select quotes appropriately while others made reference to things which were not contained in the text. It is important to note that quotations do not count as part of the word count. There were a lot of articles submitted this year, but also interviews and letters demonstrating originality and creativity.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: Language

The language used was of a very good standard with a wide range of vocabulary and both simple and complex grammatical structures. Mistakes made did not affect comprehension. Better examples used quotations from the original text to reinforce or support an idea.

#### Criterion B: Content

Successful candidates were able to use the three texts skilfully and creatively, weaving the ideas within them together to produce one coherent piece of text. As instructed in the guide, aims must clearly be stated in the rationale and the task should reflect these aims. Most tasks were organized logically and developed in a coherent manner with successful candidates using discourse markers, punctuation and connectors appropriately.

#### Criterion C: Format

There was a wide variety of text types chosen with letters and interviews being amongst the most popular. Most candidates were able to use the appropriate conventions for their chosen text type although some articles lacked creativity.

## Criterion D: Rationale

Many candidates lost marks in the rationale because they didn't fulfil all requirements and in some instances the rationale did not reflect the aims of the candidate. The rationale should include: a description of the topic, the ideas and arguments raised in the texts, the purpose/aim of the task, how this will be achieved and the text type used to complete the task. There must be a link between the rationale and the task.

## Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- Texts chosen should be between 300-400 words; excessively long texts disadvantage the candidates.
- The three texts must be linked by a specific topic.
- The candidates must use all three resources and link them to the aim given in the rationale.
- Candidates shouldn't choose an essay for a text type as it is difficult to contextualize this convincingly.
- Candidates should avoid copying very long sentences or paragraphs and should be instructed on how to select quotations carefully to clarify or support an idea.
- Candidates must adhere to the word limit prescribed in the guide.
- It preferable to write the rationale on one sheet and the assignment on another, or to distinctly separate the two if written on the same sheet.
- Candidates must be made aware of the risks of plagiarism and importance of academic honesty.

## Higher level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 16	17 - 32	33 - 37	38 - 42	43 - 48	49 - 53	54 - 60

## The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

A general observation is that a large number of candidates were not able to complete the paper this year with the questions for texts D and E unanswered or only partially answered.

Most questions were answered well although many struggled with the reference questions 19 and 20 where candidates were asked to look for the appropriate pronoun in the text. This is a new form of question which will need further reinforcement in the classroom. Some candidates also had difficulty with vocabulary questions 37 and 40 and others struggled with literary questions.

## The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Overall there were no problematic questions in the papers this year with the stronger candidates being able to access all questions.

## The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Qs 1-5: Most candidates' were able to answer these questions however some were not able to justify their choices.

Qs 6-8: These questions were answered correctly by most candidates. Weaker candidates wrote unnecessarily long answers indicating that they were not completely sure of their answers.

Qs 9-11: Most candidates were able to answer questions 9 and 10 but some struggled with question 11 which tested the use of connectors.

Qs 12-14: Most candidates had no difficulty in extracting short answers form the text.

Q 15: Answered well.

Qs 16-18: Candidates of average ability had difficulties with questions 17 and 18 as they were not able to infer the answer from the text.

Qs 19-20: Question 21 proved more accessible than 19 and 20 but many candidates were not able to understand the aim of these questions.

Qs 22-26: The majority were able to respond to the True/False questions but some were not able to write the correct justification for their choice.

Qs 27-29: Most candidates found these questions accessible. It is recommended that candidates do not write long answers when the instruction requests "short answers".

Qs 30-32: Most were able to answer these questions.

Qs 33-36: Comprehension questions on the literary text were handled well.

Qs 37-40: These questions seemed to cause the most difficulty with some candidates failing to identify the correct synonym from the text. Candidates should be advised to consider the context in which a word is used before determining what it means.

Qs 41-43: These questions were handled well by most candidates.

Qs 44-45: Average-ability candidates struggled with Q45, inferring meaning from the text.



Qs46-47: These two literary questions proved demanding for many candidates. It is recommended that teachers focus on literary question techniques when they are presenting literary texts in lessons.

Qs 48-49: It is important to emphasize again the fact that short answers are required.

Qs 50-52: These questions were accessible for most candidates but some lost marks because the correct justification was not provided.

Qs 53-55: Some candidates were not able to extract the correct words using context.

Q56-58: These questions proved demanding for a large number of candidates.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need more experience of time management under exam condition; this year many were not able to reach or answer questions on Text D or Text E despite having performed well in the first 2 texts.
- Candidates should be taught strategies for dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary and using context to decipher meaning.
- The importance of clear handwriting cannot be stressed enough.
- Further guidance should be given on the range of literary devices employed in texts.
- Candidates would benefit from further instruction on the use of different connectors and their functions within a text.

## Standard level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 8	9 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 27	28 - 33	34 - 39	40 - 45

### The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Vocabulary questions proved the most difficult area for SL candidates and teachers should focus on techniques for deducing meaning through context. Also, understanding the function of connectors in a sentence is very helpful and enables candidates to answer gapfill questions. Another problematic area was pinpointing the exact answer within the text.

## The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

The texts were accessible for the candidates and there were few difficulties in answering the comprehension questions. Generally, the standard of the candidates was good.

## The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Q 1: Answered correctly by the majority of candidates.

Qs 2-4: Q3 was answered incorrectly by a number of candidates; this could be the result of hasty reading of the text leading to misunderstanding.

Qs 5-6: Most answered this set of questions correctly and gave the appropriate justification for their answers.

Qs 7-9: Most found these questions accessible however weaker candidates struggled to answer Q9.

Qs 10-12: Q10 caused confusion for average-ability candidates.

Qs 13-15: This set of questions proved to be the most difficult in the exam. It is advised to teach candidates strategies to enable them to deduce meaning through context.

Qs16-18: Some candidates failed to answer the whole set of questions correctly.

Qs 19-22: The majority were able to identify the correct answers but some justifications were not correct.

Qs 23-25: Some average-ability candidates found these questions difficult, especially Q23.

Qs 26-28: It is advised to train candidates in the skill of copying short answers from the text; some answers given were very lengthy and did not necessarily answer the question.

Qs 29-30: These questions proved challenging and many candidates failed to refer to the correct answer in the text. It is advised to train candidates on this type of question.

Qs31-33: Few problems.

Qs 34-36: Some candidates struggled with Q34.

Qs 37-40. Completed well by the majority of the candidates however weaker candidates were not able to fill in the gaps with the appropriate connectors.

Qs 41-43: Many candidates failed to choose the correct vocabulary for these questions.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- It is recommended that candidates are taught strategies and techniques to deduce meaning from context.

- Further teaching should be given on the different functions of connectors to enable candidates to answer the gapfill questions. Candidates should carefully read words in context before answering any questions.
- It is important to stress to candidates that clear hand writing is essential.
- Guidance should be given on selecting appropriate sections of the text to answer questions or justify responses. In many cases the sections of the text which were selected were too long and, in many cases, lacked the appropriate answer.

## Higher level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 25	26 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 38	39 - 45

### The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Overall the candidate's performance was very good with a general upward trend in written skills. Work contained some mistakes in grammatical structures and complex vocabulary however meaning was not impeded. This year the candidates seemed to demonstrate a better understanding of the tasks and the majority were able to keep within the prescribed word limits.

Common language errors included; verb conjugations, poor sentence structure, inaccurate use of prepositions and misspelt words. It was noticed that average-ability candidates tended to use simple, short sentences rather than attempting more complex structures. Despite the evident improvement, many candidates still don't understand what is meant by reflection or argument and lost marks as a result of this.

### The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

The most popular question was Q3 which required candidates to write a speech to encourage donations for a new hospital. The question was very popular and the candidates seemed very enthusiastic writing about the topic. The majority were able to adopt the appropriate conventions and register for writing a speech.

## The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

### Question 1: Cultural diversity – interview

This was not a popular choice and those who did attempt this question were not very successful.

### Question 2: Customs and Traditions – report

Many candidates were able to write about customs and traditions in the Arab world but, unfortunately, were not able to present any form of a report.

### Question 3: Health – talk – speech

This was the most popular choice. The majority of candidates were able to present interesting ideas to encourage their colleagues to make donations for building a hospital. Most were able to follow the conventions of writing a speech, and the register chosen was appropriate. The responses were successful.

### Question 4: Leisure – Diary entry

Most who wrote about this topic were successful in describing their experiences of working in a volunteer camp with children. Many diaries contained realistic experiences and ideas using clear and interesting writing.

### Question 5: Science and Technology – essay

This was a popular choice and many candidates had creative and new ideas to present. The progression of ideas was clear, organized and connected.

## Section B Personal Response

Once again, the overall improvement this year was evident in this section of the paper. Successful candidates were able to respond to the stimulus and present a convincing argument; however, weaker candidates failed to understand the purpose of the task.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Candidates need more experience of time management under examination conditions as many who scored high marks in section A failed to reach the same level in section B.
- More emphasis should be placed on the conventions of different text types, particularly reports and diary entries, emphasizing the need for the use of appropriate register. It is important to note that in a diary entry, paragraphing and cohesive devices are both important.
- There are some frequently recurring grammatical errors which should be addressed in lessons.

## Standard level paper two

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 23	24 - 25

### The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates seemed well prepared to write on a range of topics. The most popular choice was science and technology with many demonstrating enthusiasm in their writing.

Common language errors were present but did not interfere with meaning. Some common errors included; verb conjugations, poor sentence structure, inaccurate use of prepositions and misspelt words. It is noticeable that average-ability candidates tended to use simple, short sentences rather than attempting more complex structures.

Hand writing seems to be a problem for many and, on occasions, it was extremely difficult to read the candidate's writing. Most, but not all, were able to meet the word limit.

#### Message

Most candidates were able to deliver the content of the message but weaker candidates needed to demonstrate more focus. The majority of the candidates presented their ideas in an organized and coherent manner although some wrote irrelevant ideas while trying to reach the word limit.

#### Format

Most candidates were able to adhere to the appropriate conventions of the different text types, for example, those who answered Q2 were able to write the text of an interview. It is worth noting however that some candidates were negligent in ending letters appropriately.

### The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

The majority of candidates chose Q5, an essay about a new invention. The topic was challenging and many candidates wrote about interesting inventions. The candidates also seemed to be well prepared in the conventions of conducting an interview/ writing a letter to an editor.

### The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

#### Question 1: Cultural diversity – email

Few, if any candidates chose this task.

### Question 2: Customs and traditions- dialogue

This was a popular choice. The majority of candidates chose to write the text of an interview with their grandparents and were able to present different and interesting ideas regarding the different customs and traditions between the two generations. The register used was semi-formal and appropriate to the task. Most candidates were successful in dealing with this topic.

### Question 3: Health – Letter

This question was a popular choice and well addressed by most of the candidates who provided convincing ideas and points of view and supported these with examples. Successful candidates were able to follow the conventions of writing a formal letter to an editor; however weaker candidates were not able to close the letter appropriately. Generally, this was a successful topic.

### Question 4: Leisure – Report

Surprisingly, this topic was chosen by very few candidates.

### Question 6: Science and technology – Essay

This was the most popular option. Most candidates produced creative and authentic inventions that reflected their perceptions of technology in the future. Most handled the format of an essay well and were able to write an introduction, main body and conclusion.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Attention should be paid to hand writing during examinations as many scripts were difficult to read and, in some cases, this affected the ability to comprehend the content.
- It is recommended that candidates are exposed to a wide variety of topics and vocabulary.
- Candidates would benefit from further work on common grammatical errors.