

## Aga Khan University Examination Board

### Notes from E-Marking Centre on SSC-II English Compulsory Examination May 2017

#### Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of Secondary School Certificate (SSC-II) English Compulsory. It contains comments on candidates' responses to the 2017 SSC-II Examination indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

#### E-Marking Notes

This report includes overall comments on candidates' performance on every question and *some* specific examples of candidates' responses which support the mentioned comments. Please note that the descriptive comments represent an overall perception of the better and weaker responses as gathered from the e-marking session. However, the candidates' responses shared (where deemed necessary) in this document represent some specific example(s) of the mentioned comments.

The following is a description of the tasks and skills required for fulfilment of those tasks.

Question No	Question Type	Skills Assessed
1 (a,b,c,d,e)	CRQs on a reading passage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Literal understanding of a reading text</li><li>- Inferential understanding of a reading text</li><li>- Reasoning skills</li></ul>
2 (a,b)	Letter/ Report Writing (formal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ability to write a formal letter/ report</li><li>- Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc.</li><li>- Ability to develop and organise information in a familiar everyday context.</li></ul>
3 (a,b,c)	Essay Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ability to develop a piece of writing with appropriate focus, organisation and purpose</li><li>- Ability to persuade, analyse, express and reflect on familiar, everyday life situations and ideas</li><li>- Ability to use accurate sentence structure, connective devices, spellings, etc.</li></ul>

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating knowledge, understanding and application skills they have developed by studying the course.

Candidates also need to know that the marks allocated to the question and the answer space (which is provided on the examination paper) are a guide to the length of the required response. A longer response will not in itself lead to higher marks. Writing far beyond the indicated space may reduce the time available for answering other questions. The careful reading of a question, or essay topic, is vital if a student is to attain high marks.

Candidates need to be familiar with the command words which contain some terms commonly used in examination questions. However, candidates should also be aware that not all questions will start with, or contain, any key word from the glossary. Questions such as ‘how?’, ‘why?’ or ‘what?’ may be asked, and verbs which are not included in the list may be used, such as ‘elaborate’, ‘analyse’ or ‘state’.

**Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spellings or factual information.**

### **Detailed Comments:**

#### **Question 1:**

**Comprehension skills** are critical for success in the English Compulsory Examinations. Candidates are expected to be able to engage with a diverse range of texts and demonstrate the ability to retrieve information, draw inferences from what they have read, interpret viewpoints and perspectives and question or critically evaluate it, as required.

Question 1 was based on a reading passage. It had six sub-parts. Candidates were required to understand the reading passage and accordingly answer the questions asked on various aspects of the passage. The criteria against which marks were allotted are as follows: detailed understanding of the contents of the passage demonstrated through the responses and authentic interpretation and discussion of different aspects of the passage.

The reading passage was a story *The Bike Basket - A Mother's Day Tale* by Elizabeth Flock. It aimed to express the value of hard work and how it affected author's life.

#### **Part a:**

What do you understand about the parenting philosophy of the author's parents? Explain with TWO textual evidences.

The question received mixed responses. In many cases, candidates were able to interpret that the actions of author's parents indicated 'a firm approach', 'a sense of responsibility', 'a strict mind-set'. This assertion was followed by adequate explanations of textual details which included points about children working hard/ doing household chores to earn pocket money. Such responses scored well. In *better responses* candidates mentioned that the parents wanted the children to value hard-earned things.

**Example:**

Parenting Philosophy refers to the rules of parents of the author for her better upbringing and behaviour of the author. As when the author wished to get the beautiful basket, Her mother said "If you save up you could buy this yourself". She wanted to make the author feel her things valuable and work hard to get them. The text also reflects that "Your basket is special because you paid for it yourself". This depicts that her mother was successful in achieving to make her child responsible and realize the striving hard of things, makes them valuable to you.

In *weaker responses*, candidates seemed confused about the requirement of the question. They traced the phrase 'parenting philosophy' from the original text and copied a sentence/ two surrounding sentences. A significant number of answers employed overlong quotations from the passage, way beyond what was needed to substantiate the points being made, i.e., "my parents were united in their parenting philosophy...we were the housekeepers". Such answers did not depict an effort to adjust/ paraphrase/ interpret the passage; even the use of first person 'my' or 'I' was witnessed and no effort was seen to adjust the requirement of the answer. It must be communicated that quotation is most effective when it is concisely used and supported by a personal interpretation of what is understood.

**Example:**

- 1) The author's parent's were serious about there childrens, they wanted them to be responsible and taking care of there selves.
- 2) The Author's mother was so stick she never byys anything for them, she wanted them to earn it on. there own.

**Part b:**

Mention any TWO phrases from the text that BEST indicate that the author desperately wanted the bike basket.

If you were in the place of the author, what would you say in this situation to convince your mother?

The question attempted to assess basic understanding of language used by the author and its intended purpose. The second part called for an informed opinion established after careful reading. This question was attempted well by most candidates.

In *better responses*, candidates mentioned phrases/ sentences such as “Mom, please can I please, please get it?” / “I’ll do extra chores for as long as you say.” / “I’ll do anything, but I need that basket. I love that basket.” This was followed by a plausible/ persuasive way the candidates proposed to persuade their mother.

**Example:**

i- "I'll do anything, but I need that basket. I love that basket.  
I'll do extra chores as long as you say. Please, mom, Please?". ii- "By  
the time I make enough, it'll be gone!". These two phrases  
reflect that the author was desperate to get the basket.  
If I was on the place of the author, I would have said "Mom,  
I will work hard for exams and help you in daily chores," but please  
get me the desired thing.

However, it was observed that the second part of the question posed some problem for the average and low scoring candidates. Candidates need to understand the demand of the question, i.e. in this case, the question aimed to assess how successfully the candidates can expand on the details of the passage. Some suggestions, measures and/ or plausible plans would show the examiner that the candidates have understood the passage adequately and can add/ offer some additional information and personal viewpoint to it.

In *weaker responses*, most candidates attempted the first part correctly. However, they did not show any attempt to think beyond what is written in the text. Such candidates merely mentioned that they would do what the author has done. Though such candidates were given a bit of leverage in marks, it must be communicated that questions asking for viewpoints should not be treated this superficially. At times, candidates mentioned an imaginary conversation between themselves and their mother. Again, this was not required.

**Example:**

(i) 1- My 8 years old feet pedalled hard.  
2- I don't care what [so - and - so] for birthday.  
(ii) I would say " Mom just because i do what  
You say and i will do, please get me that  
basket other wise someone else will buy  
it please"

**Part c:**

- i. How did the author earn her bike basket?
- ii. Do you agree with the way the author's mother handled this situation? Give a reason for your answer.

Most responses were well-attempted.

In *better responses*, candidates described the situation in detail that the author's mother bought the bike basket and the author had to do extra chores at home to earn it from her mother. In the second part of the question, most candidates said that they agreed the way the author's mother approached the situation as it resulted in good life-lesson for her children. A few candidates thought this approach is too strict and children should not be dealt this harshly/ children should be provided with perks and their wishes should be fulfilled. The most successful responses to the question approached the topic from a personal point of view whilst engaging with the wider lessons inferred from the author's tale.

**Example:**

i: The author earned her bike basket by her own money that she had collected and saved by doing extra chores of house and helping her mother in work by which she received some money and used them to buy that bike basket.  
ii: I think the author's mother was wise enough to handle the situation, because in this <sup>way</sup> she didn't ~~state~~ <sup>directly</sup> accepted her demand and also did not make her stubborn rather she instructed the author to <sup>earn</sup> ~~collect~~ money and get that basket <sup>on her own</sup>.

In *weaker responses*, candidates were able to respond to the first part correctly. In the second part, most responses indicated a brief agreement without any added value/ explanation of reasons behind agreement. Recognition of information and stating an opinion is just not enough; for high reward it needs to be backed by sound reasons. Some candidates thought the author is a boy. This was surprising as there was enough indication that the author is female.

**Example:**

i) each week eagerly he did extra work (washing cars, helping mother in making food, taking things on my bike, and 'Choringhouse').  
 (ii) I would do same same author did "cleaning, Canning and helping my mother e.t.c".

**Part d:**

- i. Why was the author disappointed at the end of the story?
- ii. If you were in the place of the author, would you feel the same? Give a reason for your answer.

The question asked candidates to use their a) knowledge and inference skills and b) thinking skills to go beyond what is explicitly mentioned and think from the character's perspective.

*Better responses* clearly stated that the author was disappointed because when she was able to finally earn her much desired bike basket; she discovered that a neighbourhood girl already owns the same basket. Candidates who scored high marks showed discernment in gauging the situation from the author's perspective and affirmed that the situation can be 'upsetting/ disappointing/ distressing' for anyone. A few candidates also mentioned that they would not feel bad because: it is a free world and everyone has a right to own things that they like/ they would play together having the same baskets, etc.

**Example:**

i. At the end of the story the author was disappointed because she got to see the same white plastic daisy bike basket, on her friend's ~~bicycle~~ bike. That basket was <sup>same as</sup> ~~author's~~ the one for which the author had worked really hard to get it and the basket was author's one of the favourite belonging.  
 ii. If I ~~was in~~ That basket for which author had worked hard was also with her friend who did nothing or made no effort to get that basket <sup>was disappointed</sup> ~~as a result~~ author.  
 ii. Yes, I would have felt the same way because one thing that I got after extra hard work <sup>was</sup> ~~when~~ with my friend who didn't value that item as much as I did.

Weaker responses demonstrated limited understanding of the author's situation and the lesson of the story. Some candidates wrote that the author's mother had given the bike basket to the neighbourhood girl. This indicated lack of comprehension. A few candidates just copied random selections from the text. Whereas, some candidates did get the first part correct and wrote about the reason the author was upset, however, they did not show complete understanding/engagement with the text and hence received limited credit.

**Example:**

(i) well, "A neighbourhood girl, with th whom he know and played millions of times, appeared with the same exact shiny and beautiful basket he want, so he pedalled his feet hard on floor and ran out."
(ii) I would cry in front of her because what i wanted was no more mine and i did alot for it

**Part e:**

- i. What life-lesson did the author learn by the end of the story?
- ii. Describe whether this lesson is applicable to real-life situations experienced by you.

In *better responses* candidates inferred that the author learnt that you value those things more that you have earned yourself by working hard. If something is given/ gifted to you, you do not value it as much. This was followed by a relevant and well-stated real-life situation where the candidate appreciated some hard-earned gift/ vacation. Interesting situations conveying a past event with a sense of nostalgia about the event and lesson learnt were quoted by most of the candidates who scored high marks.

**Example:**

(i) The author learned that how difficult ~~to~~ it is to earn money after doing such hard work and understood how her parents <sup>from</sup> earn money which we easily ask to buy us things which are not even necessary. And also learned that the thing we earn or get from our own earning or money is most special. (ii) Yes this lesson is applicable to real-life situations for e.g.: I asked for new clothes each time an event or function ~~comes~~ arrives. but I should not do this and this I understood when once I brought something for myself from the money I saved myself.

In weaker responses, candidates showed lack of inference and engagement with the text. They selected/ identified the section of the text where the author talks about her grief upon seeing her neighbour with the same bike basket; however, they left their answer there. Development of ideas was just not witnessed. The second part was also ignored in most cases; a few made an attempt to address this part but quoted an incident which was disappointing to them in some ways without capturing the relevance of the topic/ lesson learnt. Some candidates wrote about a situation where they worked hard but it was not enough to create any relevance to the main theme of the text which is 'you cherish what you work hard for'.

**Example:**

(i) Life-lesson author learned that hardwork is never wasted, if you want something desperately you will get one day all you need to do is patience and mothers always wants to fulfill the wants and things that their children wants.

(ii) ~~One~~ I eagerly and desperately want to get 1<sup>st</sup> position in class but everytime I get 2<sup>nd</sup>, my mother encouraged ~~me~~ me to do more hardwork and be determinant and one day I got 1<sup>st</sup> position.



**Part f:**

Summarise the passage in no more than 100 words.

In *better responses*, candidates displayed precision of language and brevity of thought. Mostly, three main ideas were enlisted, e.g. the parenting philosophy, the author's desire for and how she acquired the bike basket, and the lesson that she learnt. The language used was impersonal and concise. In few better responses, candidates made use of statements like: 'The text states that...' which clearly helped in establishing the fact that they are summarising someone else's word in an objective manner. Such candidates showed the much-needed skill of a) interpreting the focal point/ main idea of the given text, and b) extracting/ selecting the important points whilst recognising and eliminating the less important textual details.

**Example:**

Two things influenced author's life: her mother and a bike basket. From these 2 things she learned life lessons. Her mother and father were unite in the parent philosophy but her mother mostly enforce it. They use to fulfill all their needs but were not in favour to fulfill unnecessarily wishes which makes a child stubborn. They made the children do little house work to make them responsible also. Once author & her mother went to the market ~~there~~ there she liked and ~~there~~ chose a basket but her mother refused saying she should buy it herself by saving money. Then her mother brought the basket and asked her to save money and then take. One day she finally got the basket but then she saw her friend with same basket she cried but her mother console her and told her that ~~the~~ her basket was more special as she paid for it herself. This was a lifetime lesson for the girl.

In *weaker responses*, candidates showed selection of examples and details along with the main ideas of the text. At times, candidates wrote way beyond word limit. Some candidates focused on the initial part of the passage only, i.e. they explained, rather than mention with precision, the lifestyle experienced by the author and how it affected her. The most common mistake was lack of elimination of details and exceeding word limit. Moreover, many candidates who scored average to low marks did not paraphrased textual details. In many cases, the first person pronoun 'I' was used. It must be stressed that summarising a text involves using phrases like 'The author describes.../ This story revolves around the main character who describes that...'. In some cases, candidates showed understanding of the contents of the story, however, they lost 1 mark due to lack of/ incorrect paraphrasing. Two of the most common examples have been shared below.

### Example 1:

I never knew that the silly bicycle accessory will turn into a life lesson. My mother and father were united in parental philosophy and ~~that~~<sup>which</sup> said to stay firm when ever we demand something we were asked by our parents to work for it so you can have it one day me and my mother went to a bike shop and there we saw a white, beautiful basket and that seems like the most beautiful thing I asked my mom but she followed the same ideology and asked me to earn it. I worked hard day and night and when I gathered the money I found that it has been sold, I told my mom and <sup>she said no it has been sold</sup> <sup>precious</sup>

### Example 2:

My mother and I were united in parenting philosophy. If we complained about not having anything that other children did she would say, "I don't care. We altogether do our house hold chores. One day my mother drove me to the bike shop to get a tire fixed and I saw a beautifully decorated basket. at the first sight I fell in love with that basket. I told my mother to get me but, she said save up and buy this your self. I worked hard, did extra work. and when I finally collected that basket was bought by my neighbourhood girl. I came home to tell my mother about this calamity. My mom wiped my tears and said, "Your basket is special because you paid for it self."

## Question 2:

The candidates were directed to write a letter or a report on any one of the two given choices. Most candidates chose to use formal structure and concise and impersonal language appropriate to examination context. Candidates wrote appropriate reasons and suggestions for their choice of letter. In a few cases, tone and style seemed a bit informal and did not take into account the nature of relationship with, and the interests of, the recipient. The content, in most cases, was relevant and appropriate. In their preparation for the examination, candidates should know the mechanics of writing an effective and comprehensive letter related to the details of the given prompt.

### Part a:

Imagine your friend has been the victim of bullying for a few weeks which has caused a negative impact on his/ her school life. You know that it is the right of every student to learn and grow in a safe environment without fear. However, you have felt that many people do not consider bullying a serious problem. Therefore, you have decided to write a report for the Principal of your school to inform him/ her about the seriousness and consequences of bullying. Your report should include the following information:

- Discuss the views of students and impact of bullying on their personal and social life.
- Mention findings/ observations of real incidents in school.
- Recommend school authorities to make policies to prevent bullying in school life.

In *better responses* for Question 2 a, the candidates

- reported that bullying is prevalent/ has increased in their surroundings and how they impact all students. Good answers kept any introductory remarks very brief, and engaged with the key characteristics of the report writing, i.e., short and to-the-point comments about the impact of bullying through representative incidents.
- Occasionally, some candidates indicated the methods of collecting the information, e.g. surveys/ observations/ interviews. This corresponded closely to the context of report writing and made their report convincing.
- used correct format of a report which includes an introduction (To/ From/ Date), body (subject of the report, sources of information, findings) and conclusion (suggestions);
- organised the information under headings, bullets or in paragraphs;
- used connectors to demonstrate sequence, cause and effect and possible solutions of the problem. The requirement of each of the mentioned bullet points was met. The situation mentioned in most responses appeared plausible and provided scope for the development of the overall report.
- used appropriate punctuation marks.

**Note:** It was observed that even in better responses a few candidates wrote their real names and/ or address. It is prohibited to reveal your identity. Teachers need to inform the candidates to avoid using their real name or address in the examination.

**Example:**

To: The Principal \_\_\_\_\_  
From: XYZ \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: 10th May 2017 \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject: Information regarding bullying done by seniors \_\_\_\_\_

Last Wednesday, during recess time I went downstairs and headed towards canteen to buy snacks and to my astonishment I saw senior girls snatching money from junior girls of primary section. Our behaviour secretary was on duty and warned them not to do again but it was no use. Those girls snatched money, pushed junior girls just to buy snacks for themselves and those girls ordered other primary kids to do shameful things like ordered them to dance and ordered them to do pushups. Those kids being afraid of their blackmails had to do it but their gloomy, dull faces showed that they had so much terror, and were about to cry. These shameful creatures bullied those poor primary girls.

Bullying has become common in every school and is faced by every student in their life. It is actually a nuisance which can cause many problems. It can even have dreadful effects in their life. Students being bullied start to dislike school and so they do not like to attend school because of the fear being bullied. Bullying shake the confidence of many students and due to lack of confidence they do not speak up in class and feel degraded. They sit in their classes with a chicken heart, zip up their lips and are usually busy in their own world or others are only blank. There are many cases <sup>in which</sup> ~~that~~ students make suicide attempts just because they are being bullied too much in their school life.

I think that school should take serious measures against bullying so that students can learn in a safe environment without any fear. Senior girls should be warned against bullying or there should be counselling sessions for them. warness against bullying should be spread ~~against~~ amongs the students. To boost the confidence of primary kids against bullying. There should be specific timings for recess and home time so that senior girls should stay away from primary students. I hope that you will take this matter on a serious note and take measures against bullying.

XYZ

13th May 2017

In *weaker responses* for Question 2a, the candidates

- did not reflect an understanding of the term bullying. At times, there was lack of emphasis on social impact/ problems; hence, the candidates mentioned about a variety of issues that were not social in nature. The prompt/ stimulus given with the question insinuated the insight of what many students face at various instances as a result of bullying.
- did not display language accuracy; various errors of grammar and punctuation were seen.
- displayed errors of spellings and/ or punctuation.
- did not display an understanding of the difference between the format of a report and a letter or an essay. Mostly, weaker responses wrote the format of a letter instead of a report. The answers displayed lack of organisation and the objective outlook needed for a report.

Example:

Option A

Report Writing  
But

To:- The principle, NJA, School.

From:- The student, NJA, School.

Date:- 13 May 2017.

Subject:- one friend has been victim of bullying.

I hope you are fine Thank you but I can write a report to you to tell us my one friend has been the victim of bullying ~~for~~ a few weeks. I write to this report to inform you the seriousness and consequences of bylling.

The views of students at this side he all of them are help us but you can nat give atantion there or the impact on the student for you are so bad but all the student with I do something for the friend which bully from here.

Principle at Sunday the student of ~~and~~ ~~and~~ class sit in the class and find

the observation of real indication in the school  
to help it or please you be do some  
thing for the friend. To bully or with ill.

Principal the student of class say's to the  
authority of the school to tell us anyone  
with to bully. What happend in your life?  
What to do?

What belongs to your life.

OK Pricipal "good luck" I hope you do  
some thing for the class.

Signature of student in class.

13 May 2017

**Part b:**

New drugs are often tested on animals in order to judge their efficacy before they are presented for human use.

- Animals are very different physically and in their genetic make-up from human beings and therefore results of drug testing are different for animals and human beings.
- According to various studies, there is at best only a 5% to 25% chance that a substance tested on animals will have the same effect on humans.
- Around 50-100 million vertebrate animals are used in experiments annually.

Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper and present a case **against** testing of drugs on animals. You can use the information given above, as you need, to add at least **THREE** supporting details/ reasons/ examples that are not written in the question.

In some ways, this was the most challenging question for the candidates. The detailed stimulus was used for scaffolding the argument against drug testing on animals and those candidates who performed well were able to use it in their favour.

In *better responses* for question 2b, the candidates

- reflected understanding of the context, i.e. the letter was addressed to the editor of a newspaper and presented arguments against drug testing. A defining characteristic of the best answer was that the pointers given in the question were used sporadically and major details were added/ argument was built from candidate's understanding of the issue. Candidates identified drug testing as 'cruel', 'wasteful', 'controversial' and 'pointless'. The use of similar examples was clever and less risky. Whilst defining responsibilities of pharmaceuticals, candidates also mentioned the ethical dimensions of animal rights/ valuing life, etc.
- used vocabulary and the knowledge of grammar to good effect. Mostly, candidates wrote complete sentences suggestive of formal language. used appropriate punctuation marks.
- wrote the letter with an appropriate format (open punctuation/ block style, mostly).
- appeared to be in control of the structure of the letter. Paragraphing was used with one idea being developed in one paragraph.

**Note:** It was observed that even in better responses a few candidates wrote their real names and/ or address. It is prohibited to reveal your identity. Teachers need to inform the candidates to avoid using their real name or address in the examination.



**Example:**

Option (b)

Examination Hall

City A.B.C.

Date 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2017

The Editor

Daily Dawn News

Karachi.

Subject:- The effects of testing drugs on animals.

Respected Sir,

I am writing this letter to you to draw your attention towards the major issue that arising day by day and encourage me to write this letter to you.

The issue is the testing of <sup>new</sup> drugs on animals that are <sup>prepared</sup> for human use. As the animals are <sup>generally</sup> different from humans; moreover, they behave differently; therefore, <sup>result of</sup> the tested drugs on them is totally different. The animals are highly affected by these experiments. Some were died during or after the experiment. For example; the first human protein is obtained from ~~by~~ sheep mind for humans by ICI which may causes

Mad Cow disease in animals. <sup>The</sup> It causes a lot of ~~The~~ humans are also <sup>severe</sup> affected and diseases in animals as well to pay humans are also affected and some dangerous diseases taking place in them.

The testing of new drugs on animals are responsible in disrupting the food chain and food web. There is a sudden decrease <sup>swayed</sup> in animals. The number of hazardous creatures were increase; <sup>as well as getting fond of</sup> Likewise, cow which is responsible for the production of milk for humans through which they get protein is reduce ~~it~~ it will leads toward deficiency of protein in humans <sup>or</sup> or brittleness of bones may cause. The testing of drugs on animals imbalance the balance diet <sup>natural</sup> ~~Earth's~~ cycle of Earth. Might be possible these drugs are dangerous for humans except animals.

Sir, I request <sup>your</sup> to you for making it an important part of newspapers. I need your help to created awareness among scientists about against the testing of drugs on animals and their negative affects on Earth or human beings. I hope you consider it important.

Yours sincerely  
X.Y.Z

In weaker responses for Question 2 b, the candidates

- did not understand the context, the term 'drug' confused tem; despite the detailed stimulus. There was a tendency to use idioms unnecessarily. It was observed that candidates write informally and use shorthand/ slangs as well.
- displayed brief and undeveloped ideas.
- did not demonstrate appropriate sentence structure, tenses and subject-verb agreement.
- displayed errors of spellings and/ or punctuation.

Example:

Option **b.**

Examination Hall,  
X.Y.Z, school.

13<sup>th</sup> May 2017

To the Editor,  
Dawn news.

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter to you because I have some problems. Eid-ul-Adha is coming soon. People are buying cattle animals for Qurban. Many laboratories are testing drugs and chemicals on animals before selling them. These drugs are very dangerous for human body. When animals take in these drugs and digest it. It flows in whole body when people eat their meat. 5% to 25% of drugs are present in their bodies which affect human beings. ~~Many~~ Many people are getting infection, diseases by this drug and get died. Through this ~~pop~~ population is getting decreased.

Please take action on it. Make a legal case on these type of laboratories to not use harmful drugs and chemicals on vertebrate animals. If they want they can use Invertebrate ~~animals~~ animals.

Please take a serious action on it. I hope you will control it.

your obediently  
Haris Mehmood.

### Question 3:

The candidates were directed to write an essay on any of the three choices given. Candidates were assessed on their understanding of the prompt, situation and context of the question and the language proficiency. This year's writing tasks were based on very familiar topics and candidates were asked to appeal to audiences using their unique ideas and writing styles. The vast majority of candidates recognised the fact that they had been given a familiar topic and that they were at liberty to have some fun and engage their audience through both the details included and the style of their writing.

#### **Part a:**

Community service is a non-paying job performed by individuals or a group of people for the benefit of the public or its institutions. Mostly, volunteers rendering community services work in the areas of healthcare, security services, welfare services, environmental awareness, food distribution networks and education.

Write a persuasive essay identifying ONE area where community service is most needed in your surroundings. Mention FOUR reasons and/ or examples to support your choice.

Most candidates did not fulfil the requirement of the task. It was generally observed that many candidates explained and/ or discussed many generic problems faced by people around them. This was not required. Candidates should have focussed on one area where community service is most needed and should have cantered persuasion techniques around it. Generic statement regarding many problems undermines the task.

In *better responses* for Question 3a, the candidates

- chose 'education', 'availability of drinking water', 'healthcare facilities' as leading areas where community service is needed. However, there were some brilliant responses which showed discernment and highlighted insightful observations with careful expression. One such example is shared here. It must be noted that for most cases, the elaboration was hackneyed and did not show an attempt towards persuasion as to why that area should be the focus of the community service.
- mentioned ways to make community service worthwhile in one area. A number of candidates who chose to persuade their readers, did so with great clarity. The best candidates always chose to state some observation or personal experience to promote their stance;
- used clear and lucid language which was relevant to the prompt;
- used appropriate tenses and subject-verb agreement;
- used correct spellings appropriate punctuation marks.

**Example:**

Option 'A'

Working for your society or for someone, voluntarily, gives you everlasting happiness and it makes you feel unique in yourself. Community service has become the desire need of today's life.

In my opinion the one area where community service is much needed and it has been left behind by everyone's eye is to work for the rights of transgenders.

Why are Transgenders considered not-so-good? Why are not they seen working to earn for their lives as we do?

Why are their destination the bus stops and why. why their parents disown them? Are not they normal humans?

Nobody has ever stood up for them as to give them a living. There is no third box in the gender question of school forms, donot they have the right to get educated?

Individuals or groups of people should take a stand for their rights. I have many reasons for my desire to get something done for Transgenders, here goes the few

main reasons (a) Allah has created all of us and to him we are all equal. all of us should be given equal rights, equal oppurtunities and freedom of speech. (b) If Transgenders are being educated they will result as an earning factor for our economy that will surely made a visible rise in our economy. (c) Those parents who leave their child all alone as they are told

that their child is not a girl or a boy, those parents should be aware and told to keep those children with them as child is a blessing from God.

Parents should not disown them from the fear of what society will say instead they should be proud of them and they should educate them and provide them a living they deserve, the love they deserve.

② To go with my last reason along with making the importance of these children realized by their parents, community services should provide funds if the parents are poor and by doing this Allah will be happy by the act of ours and also Transgenders will get a life and would prove themselves in every aspect of life and this would result in less discrimination in our society.

I think working for Transgenders should now be the motive of every community service groups or individuals as this develops a sense of empathy for others and it stops one from considering himself the superior. This would help the society having a positive growth in economy as set of hands on work will increase.

In weaker responses for Question 3 a, the candidates

- did not fulfil the requirement of the question/ misunderstood the requirement of the task. At times, essays did not sound persuasive as no attempt was made to indicate a choice/ if a choice was made it was not elaborated or supported with reasons. Most candidates also kept their ideas very random and there was no dearth of statements like 'all areas need improvement, etc.' This showed lack of precision and focus.
- presented generalised and random problems; this was not required.
- wrote incorrect language, i.e. errors of spellings, tenses, sentence structure and run on sentences.

**Example:**

Option d

Community service is non-paying job which is performed by a group of peoples. In my opinion this community service is most needed in education area. Because as you know there is too much illiteracy in Pakistan, some childrens are not going to school because they have to take care of their house and family. and the ~~at~~ ~~the~~ childrens which are going to school ~~at~~ are not getting proper education. Because of Absence of teachers ~~or~~ and many other things, and the most interesting thing is that the school is giving them full salary. ~~at~~ There is another problem nowadays that the teachers are beating students with that aggression that ~~they~~ <sup>the student</sup> comes near to ~~it~~ his/her death. ~~I~~ I think these community service should take part in this situation and take the place of that the teacher which is doing bad to students.

so that students get good education by a good teacher. One more problem that is common nowadays is that the teachers are coming school but they are not teaching the childrens they are playing with the future of all those childrens. Community service can do much better than these teachers. Because at least they know what is humanity, and I think the Government should pay these community services because they are doing good for the Country.

#### Part b:

- Educators and experts who support that school uniforms should be implemented argue that uniforms contribute positively to the behaviour of students. They believe that students feel more professional and feel like they belong to something when they wear school uniforms.
- Buying a new school wardrobe every year can be hard on the budget.
- Critics believe that forcing students to wear uniforms to school limits their personal expression. They argue that students lose their self-identity when they lose their right to freely express themselves through personal fashion.
- Uniforms in schools and colleges are a vestige of a past that valued military-style discipline.

The given points describe pros and cons of uniform for school children. Describe your stance about whether uniforms should be compulsory in schools. Select relevant information from the above mentioned points and add details, reasons and examples from personal experience which support your view.



This question was the most popular choice for essay writing.

In *better responses* for question 3b, the candidates

- presented their stance about the topic and supported it with three to four reasons and examples. It was interesting to note the argument of candidates against uniform (many thought it is financially unfeasible; it was not explained how). Most candidates supported uniform and related it with professionalism, discipline and decorum.
- used connectors and cohesive markers for achieving coherence;
- organised the information in paragraphs with a clear introduction, body and conclusion;
- used punctuations where required. Even in good responses, candidates often made errors of grammar and sentence structure. The following response had errors of grammar, however, the candidate gained marks for ideas and organisation.

### Example:

Option B

You wake up every morning, follow the same old boring routine and then you have to go to school. You put on that ghastly, oddly-coloured, boring uniform that looks as if it was the creation of some old spinsters from the 1920s. How can anyone expect you to wear that abomination? But you do so anyway and begrudgingly trot to school where you find yourself surrounded by the similarly clad, sad little humans ~~who~~, whose minds, just like yours have been manipulated and programmed to make them behave like mindless robots who conform to everything they are told by the evil powers who intend to take over the world!

Okay, I admit. This was a little too harsh but who are we innocent little children to blame for all that we have to bear? Uniforms, unlike what so many people say, are not at all interesting. Sure, they may be affordable but they are so lifeless, lacking expression in those dull browns, blues and whites. How can a garment have expressions you ask? Well, the very definition of styling your clothes according to your taste shows that your outfit speaks volumes about your personality.

For some people first impressions are the last impressions. And what to you wear to school can very well determine how people will perceive you. For example a person who makes daring decisions when it comes to their outfits, like contrasting two colours together, accessorizing in a different way or outright going crazy with their wardrobe exhibits traits of extrovertedness, a joyous nature, and the non-conformist approach they ~~take~~ take towards their life. On the other hand, people who stick to a recurring colour in their outfits, try to keep it simple, or just make enough of an effort to look presentable exhibit traits of introvertedness, intelligence, organization and discipline. These qualities can so easily be determined by an outfit which a uniform would not have done.

Even if you are not a believer of the previous stance, you will have to admit that having your own choice in deciding your school wardrobe opens up endless possibilities, and while it may be difficult to decide what to wear for school everyday, it definitely stimulates the creative side of your brain and makes up for a healthy early morning brainstorming session. It provides you a chance to express yourself very much like <sup>how</sup> an artist does, with his magnificent works of art. Each of us is an artist and our wardrobe a medium, through which we get to express our art. Now imagine, if an artist was told to paint the same painting over and over again, for twelve consecutive years (or fourteen, counting intermediate education) would he not get tired of this conformist approach towards his life and his art? Would he not cry out in frustration of the state of things?

The answer is he would. You can present an argument of how a uniform provides a sense of belonging to people. How it shows that everyone is equal. But that is not true. We grow up getting life lessons in the form of sayings like "Be yourself, everyone is already taken." or "Each of us is different in a very special way" but how are we expected to act upon these if we are led military-style by people who in order to teach us discipline, kill our underlying creativity?

Instead of making students conform to a uniform, why not allow them to embrace their true selves, and settle their differences that way because a daily school outfit is nothing more than a choice that defines us regardless of everything else. As Albus Dumbledore so rightly once said, "It is our choices that make us who we really are, far more than our abilities."

In weaker responses for question 3b, the candidates

- mentioned unorganised ideas with many run-on sentences.
- demonstrated lack of knowledge of sentence structures: tenses and subject-verb agreement. Most candidates who scored low marks had serious and persistent errors of grammar and spellings. An example of average to low scoring response is given below where ideas are relevant but weak expression and grammatical inaccuracies limits the credit gained.
- demonstrated limited vocabulary, informal or semi-formal style and incorrect word choice.

**Example:**

Option b

Education is a very <sup>most</sup> necessary thing for every people. Without Education a person being Considered as an illiterate person. Most of the jobs are required for the Educated people.

Schools & Colleges provide Education to the childrens. The School Uniform is very important condition for a child. The School Uniform is the identity of the school. It contributes positively to the behaviour of Students. The student feels more professional and feel like they belong to something when they wear school uniform.

School uniform is limited till the school Premises for the identity of Students. It provides the confidence to the student and also improves its behaviour toward class fellows & others.

Buying a school uniform in every year is not possible by every one. So the school uniform should be compulsory but in small prices. It increase the desipline of the student.

As important is the Uniform is Considered by School. So student should be agree to accept to wear the school uniform in the school Premises because it is very important for a

student to wear the school uniform.

Generally students do not reject the school uniform for wearing because it is the necessary factor for the school.

Similarly I was seened a child who ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> very abuse guy. He didn't go to school then after some time his parents realized and force him to go to school. When he goes to school then after one year I saw him as a very good boy even don't use any abuse language. This means that school turns the student in manner way.

One more example is that a student who is good in his studies. But when new class begins his uniform is not afforded by his father by the financial problem. He was very affraid by the school. but after some days his father affort a new uniform for his and ~~for~~ now he became a very rich person in the interval of 20 years.

In the end I requested to the Government the pass a law about uniform is necessary in every school but in little amount.

### Part c:

"Charity begins at home" is a famous saying. Elaborate the given saying by describing an event from your experience or observation.

In better responses for question 3 c, the candidates

- reflected correct understanding of the given quotation and supported it by quoting a relevant and in most cases, interesting event. Mostly, expression indicated freshness, insight and precise understanding of the quote. The values of generosity and compassion and a desire to help people who are closest to you were the crux of most responses. It was interesting to note that some candidates interpreted the idiom as start charity from your personal acts. Both explanations were considered correct.
- used appropriate language structures, tenses and subject-verb agreement.

- used relevant vocabulary: adjectives or adverbs describing the situation.
- organised the information in paragraphs: however, the introduction was too long.
- used correct spellings.

### Example:

Option C

"The feeling of happiness is when people love you <sup>for</sup> your soul, not your physical appearance" - Saint George Thompson. Last Ramadan was too hot, I started to lose my temper because as I was fasting. I feel so thirsty that I cannot control my grief and I started crying in front of Al-mighty Allah. After I recovered from my mood-swings and my bipolarity, I switch on the T.V and found <sup>I was</sup> lucky. The heat stroke and the millions of the death, the hot rising sun in Karachi, the high temperature of 43°C, shocked me. Even I was sitting in the air-conditioned room, I still <sup>feel</sup> the grief of the pain of the Pakistani which are leading to death because of food-shortage. I closed my television and rushed towards my mother who was preparing the delicious and mouth-watering dishes of mine. The smell was not in the kitchen but was spread in my room which was a little far from the kitchen. I went to my Mother and asked what I should do? Why government is not working? I lost my temper again. My Mom made me patient <sup>at</sup> grabbing my hand and hugging me, saying "Charity begins <sup>at</sup> from Home".

So, after a while I understood and made a separate corner outside my house. My house is situated in the hustle and bustle of the city where a lot of hundred of people passes by as it is a main corner. My grandfather had made a cabin outside. It was a shop, but now it is closed. I rushed to get the keys. I opened it. My mother helped me to get it clean. There was a water pipe. I started to fill it with <sup>the used</sup> bottles with water with cloth pieces and the food stuff. I am a member of my school hospitality and I know how

patients  
 treat from heatstroke. As "Prevention is better than cure" I collected all the material I needed. My mother helped me because it was a right path which I was following. Thousands of people come to my "CHARITY HOME". I even have clothes for the poor and such gifts which are necessity for them. Still it is now ~~there~~ working now a days. My mother and father are so proud of me. The people love me and they always hug me. My father says: "I have been a renowned businessman but this never made me happy what I am today".

Thus, we should avoid criticism. The government is not only the one to look care towards people. We should promote <sup>to</sup> do something for our country. Our opinions, our views <sup>can</sup> be different but the love for the country and helping people should be same. The feeling of relax, comfort <sup>regret and</sup> the fasting grief went away. Every member of the society has the duty to look towards each other. This helps us to create brotherhood, cohesion, justice, love and promote unity among the country. "The deed which you do by heart is your way and shows your character and soul". Life is too short but on the last day, your deeds would go. So try helping people as long as you can. I think charity always start from your home when your parenting philosophy has such rules to implement on you! So try helping people and live a happy life.

In weaker responses for question 3 c, the candidates:

- reworded the stimulus and expanded on it without any value addition. Without a doubt, there was plenty for candidates to write about and there was no real excuse for those who wrote less than a page. The key was to carefully plan the response and develop sensible, reasonable viewpoints supported by relevant details. Occasionally, a candidate became distracted by the quote and explained the importance of charity. This was irrelevant to the topic.
- demonstrated lack of knowledge of sentence structures, tenses and subject-verb agreement;
- made numerous spelling mistakes. The issue of technical accuracy is vital for writing and, unfortunately, it was not uncommon to see scripts littered with technical errors (many of which were very basic – for example, their/there, too/to, where/were, etc.).

Example:

Option C

Charity begins at home means that charity increase the wealth. And we know in our societies ~~or~~ or other societies charity is a big responsibility to every one. because it does decrease your wealth but although increase it 70 times. And in the Islam the believing on charity is that charity is the fourth pillar of islam it is mean without this pillar you are incomplete muslim.

Because Islam teach us giving charity to poor or needy people for Allah, Allah will remove your all sins. that's why in the Quran, wherever is mention about Salah there is also mention about Zakat (Charity). And there ~~Another~~ is the quote according to ahadith is - "Give charity to Allah even its a one date" In islam we consider on charity because we know ~~there~~ that in our societies there is alot of different people live among with us. so God make this is important for us when give zakat so we clean our wealth and when this zakat goes to the poor, needy and orphan so they can fulfil the needs.



Because every one want to live happily..that's why Allah chose charity so that there is no difference between poor and rich, and rich can't feel proud and rich can't feel hopeless. ~~or~~ or disappointed. And there is no chance to ~~need~~ poor ~~for~~ that they should ~~that is why~~ have to ~~the~~ leave there religion and convert to other one.

That's why ~~charity~~ charity make common among us every one live happily..