

MALAY (Foreign Language)

Paper 0546/02
Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

Candidates need to ensure that they:

- read the questions and rubrics very carefully
- allow themselves time at the end to check their work and correct any mistakes.

General comments

On the whole, candidates performed very well on this paper. Almost all candidates obtained high marks in **Section 1**. Many candidates coped very well with the exercises in **Section 2**, but some candidates struggled with the exercises in **Section 3**.

Candidates need to be reminded to read the questions and rubrics carefully: some candidates who showed promise made careless errors and did not therefore perform as well as they might have done had they read the questions closely enough.

Candidates would benefit from further practice in writing within the word limits given. There is no need to write more than 40 words (in Section 1 Exercise 4) or more than 100 words (in Section 2 Exercise), provided that the response is focused and accurate.

A few candidates lifted answers from the text without changing the pronoun *saya* ('I') in their answers; this demonstrated a lack of understanding.

Where candidates used items of vocabulary that belonged to languages other than Malay, no credit could be given.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

As in previous years, candidates generally performed extremely well in this exercise, with many gaining at least four of the five marks available. Where candidates did not score, it was usually on **Question 3** where some candidates chose option C (wind and rain) rather than B (sun). This was perhaps because they had not understood the phrase *sesuai untuk berkelah* ('suitable for a picnic').

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

The majority of candidates scored full marks in this exercise.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

Most candidates scored full marks in this exercise. A few candidates made errors when answering **Questions 11, 13 and 15**, perhaps because they had not read the text carefully enough.

Exercise 4 Question 16

For this piece of writing, there are three marks available for communication and two for accurate use of language. Candidates were asked to write a short postcard to a friend about a holiday and provide three pieces of information, based on the pictures given:

- (a) how the candidate travelled (aeroplane)
- (b) what there was in the city (museum/antique shop/art gallery – *all accepted*)
- (c) what the candidate did (young person holding a camera)

Candidates must respond precisely to the picture stimuli: if they choose vocabulary which is not appropriate, the mark cannot be awarded. Candidates should be aware that any material they introduce into their answer which is not relevant to the task will not be awarded marks.

Many candidates managed to score the full three marks for communication. The most common reason for not scoring full marks for communication was forgetting to respond to task (a).

For task (b), the anticipated response was 'museum' but variations such as 'antique shop' and 'art gallery' were also accepted. Task (c) did not cause any problems.

Some candidates who were very confident in their use of the Malay language were sometimes less careful about adhering to the word limit: many included a lengthy general introduction which was not required. There is no need to write more than 40 words provided that the response is focused and accurate: candidates could make better use of their time working carefully through the more demanding exercises in **Section 3**.

The majority of candidates scored the full two marks for accurate use of language. A few candidates mistakenly wrote their postcard in the future tense, using *akan*, and they could not therefore be awarded full marks for language.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17–25

This section tests reading comprehension skills. Almost all candidates understood the text and coped extremely well with the questions. Weaker candidates often encountered difficulty with **Questions 18** and **21(a)**.

Exercise 2 Question 26

This writing task – a short essay of 80 to 100 words – was well within the experience of most candidates. Candidates were asked to mention:

- (a) the activity that they like to do in their free time
- (b) who they do the activity with and when
- (c) the benefits of the activity

Most candidates adhered to the limit of 80–100 words.

The hobbies that candidates mentioned included football, badminton, basketball, swimming and reading. Candidates often wrote that they did these activities with family members during weekends and after school hours. Improving health or improving language/vocabulary were cited as advantages of these activities, as well as fostering closer relationships with friends and relatives.

Ten marks were available for communication of the required elements and five marks were available for language. Many candidates scored the maximum marks available.

The best candidates worked methodically through the tasks in order and were able to add enough extra relevant details to be awarded the full ten marks for communication. Many candidates chose to include a number of extra details relating to the activities themselves or to the advantages of doing the particular activity they had mentioned.

A few candidates, including some very good ones, wrote just one short sentence to cover each of the tasks. This was not sufficient to be awarded the full ten marks for communication. Candidates would benefit from

more practice in tackling this exercise, particularly how to go about adding enough extra details within the word limits.

For the second task, which asked when and with whom they do the activity, some candidates wrote that the hobbies were done during their free time. This was not sufficient as it was merely a repetition of the information that was given in the question. Candidates needed to offer information that was more specific, i.e. a day (e.g. during the weekend) or a time (e.g. after school, during the holidays) etc.

Candidates need to take care not to repeat themselves as each piece of information can only be rewarded once.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 27–32

For this exercise, having read the text, candidates have to make up their minds which of the given statements are *Betul* and which are *Salah*. Having made their choice, they must then go on to correct the false ones in the style of the example given.

There was a mixed response to this exercise. Compared to the other exercises in the paper, some candidates showed a less confident approach to these questions. In their preparation for the examination, candidates would benefit from more practice in tackling this type of exercise. Those who did not gain full marks sometimes ticked the boxes correctly but did not offer any corrections of the false statements.

Some candidates struggled with **Questions 28 and 29**. In **Question 28**, some used the wrong affixes in the statement. The correct word to be used was *tinggal* ('to stay'/'to live') but many candidates used *meninggal* ('to die'). Candidates need to ensure that they use the correct affixes.

In **Question 32**, a few candidates incorrectly wrote *Ketua Kampung mengajar mereka cara hidup di kampung*; the correct answer was *Ketua Kampung bercerita tentang cara hidup di kampung*. The word *mengajar* is 'to teach', whereas *bercerita* is 'to narrate'/'to tell about'.

Exercise 2 Questions 33–39

This final exercise was, as intended, the most demanding part of the paper. Nevertheless, a good number of candidates achieved full marks, as they found the necessary information in the text and demonstrated their understanding by selecting only the required information and changing the language where necessary to avoid *saya*.

Some candidates faltered in **Question 35**; the required answer was *kagum* or *syngguh kagum*, (i.e. Alia felt in awe of the country where her friend resided). Instead some wrote that the country was beautiful, with no reference to how Alia felt about the country.

In **Question 36**, the required answer was 'Katie's ability to learn the new language in one year'. Those who did not score the mark for this question usually copied out the phrase from the text regarding the language, country and culture of the new country.

In **Question 39(a)**, ('What did Alia want Katie to do for her?'), the required answer was 'to post the bag she left behind'. Examiners also accepted 'to post the things Alia left behind'. The answer to **Question 39(b)** was 'because the bag contains souvenirs she bought for her parents and siblings' or 'because she bought the souvenirs in it for her parents and siblings'.

MALAY (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0546/03

Speaking

Key messages

- Examiners must familiarise themselves fully with the contents of the Teachers' Notes booklet.
- Examiners must follow the script of the Role Play tasks as set out in the Teachers' Notes booklet.
- If a candidate misses out an element of a Role Play, the examiner should prompt them to try to elicit the complete task.
- Examiners should make a clear distinction between Test 2 and Test 3.
- Keeping a close eye on the time elapsed is crucial so that candidates all have the same experience.
- Examiners should vary the topics covered and should not ask all candidates the same series of questions.
- Candidates should be asked both expected and unexpected questions.
- To achieve the highest possible mark candidates do not have to be of native speaker standard.

General comments

This Speaking Test was common to all candidates, whether Core or Extended, and, as in 2012, a wide range of performance was heard by the Moderator. The majority of candidates displayed excellent levels of competence and their range of communication skills was extremely good. They had been appropriately prepared for the test and were familiar with its requirements.

Administration

An increase in the number of clerical errors has been noticed by the Moderator. The following administrative problems were encountered:

- Errors in addition of marks: Centres are reminded that they must ensure that the addition of each candidate's marks is checked before transfer to the MS1 Mark Sheet.
- Centres are reminded of the need to include the name of the conducting Examiner(s) in the space allowed for this purpose on the Working Mark Sheet (Oral Examination Summary Mark Sheet).
- Incorrect candidate numbers: it is crucial that names and numbers on all documentation are correct.
- Use of more than one Teacher/Examiner per Centre: where large Centres wish to use more than one Teacher/Examiner, permission to do so must be requested from Cambridge well before **each** Oral examination session. Where permission is granted, Internal Moderation procedures will need to be put in place in the Centre to ensure that candidates follow a single rank order. Such Centres will then submit a recorded sample of 6 candidates, across the range, in the usual way, but ensuring that the work of all Teacher/Examiners is covered.
- Missing MS1 (computer-printed) Mark Sheets: the Moderator copy of the completed MS1 Mark Sheet or printout must be included with the materials for moderation to allow the Moderator to check that totals have been correctly transferred from the Oral Examination Summary Mark Sheet.
- Missing examination details and labels on cassettes/CDs: Some Centres did not put any details or labels on cassettes/CDs, making it very difficult for the Moderator to find the necessary recordings. This is even more difficult with Centres with large numbers of candidates.
- There were Centres which did not adhere to the instructions specified by Cambridge with regard to sample selection, especially the bigger Centres. A number of Centres sent all their recordings without carrying out any sample selection. In addition, some Centres did not spread the sample selection evenly, where moderation was more often than not unavailable for the weaker candidates. Some only submitted recordings of one Examiner and failed to include recordings of the other Examiner(s) as part of the sample selection.

Quality of recording

The vast majority of Centres took great care to ensure the audibility of their samples, but work received from a very small number was inaudible/muffled in places. This was sometimes the result of poor positioning of the microphone/tape recorder. Centres are reminded of the need to check all equipment prior to the test in the room in which the examination will take place. There were also some background noises which affected the moderation process badly. Examiners should also remember to announce the name and number of each candidate on the recording – the candidate him/herself should not do this. Once started, the recording of each candidate should be continuous, for example, the recording must not be paused/stopped during an individual candidate's examination. Some Centres, unfortunately, did not spot check their recordings before submitting them to Cambridge; some elements of the examination were not available for moderation as the recordings were missing, incomplete or stopped abruptly; for example in the Conversation sections.

Timings

Timings were usually good (15 minutes per candidate), but in some Centres candidates were not examined for the correct amount of time. Some tests were very short and did not comply with the requirements of the examination. Some were too long and became quite tedious for candidates. Please remember to ensure that all candidates receive equal treatment and that the timings specified in the Teachers' Notes Booklet are kept to.

Preparation of candidates

Most Centres had prepared their candidates in an appropriate way and there was evidence of spontaneous, natural conversation in the two Conversation sections. There were, however, a small number of Centres in which candidates were over-prepared and all focused on the same topic, for example, "My Self", "My Family" and "My School". Centres are reminded that under no circumstances must candidates know in advance the questions they are to be asked in the examination. It is also important that Examiners vary questions between candidates. If candidates are over-prepared, it becomes difficult for the Moderators to hear evidence of the ability to cope with unexpected questions in a variety of tenses and candidates are denied access to the top bands of the mark scheme. It was pleasing, however, to note that, in the large majority of Centres, Examiners did manage to engage their candidates in a lively, spontaneous and engaging way, following up leads wherever possible. Such Examiners used a variety of questions with different candidates and pitched the level of questioning according to the ability of the candidate being tested.

However, there were also Examiners who did not abide by the instructions given by Cambridge, especially in the Role Plays section where some Examiners did not keep to the prompts and created their own tasks. This disadvantaged candidates who in actuality prepared themselves well for the examination but lost marks as they struggled to follow the Examiners' own newly created tasks.

There were some cases where candidates seemed unaware that they should have prepared a topic in advance for Section 2. Instead the Examiner posed the topic to the candidates and the candidates then had to speak on the topic without any prior research on it. This disadvantaged weaker candidates who were unable to speak so spontaneously, and hence affected their marks. All Centres are reminded to tell their candidates about Section 2 and ensure that the candidates know they have to prepare in advance a topic to discuss.

Application of the mark scheme

The mark scheme was generally well applied in Centres and marking was often close to the agreed standard.

MALAY (Foreign Language)

Paper 0546/04
Continuous Writing

Key messages

Candidates need to ensure that they:

- adhere to the word limits specified
- allow themselves time at the end to check their work and correct any mistakes.

General comments

In general, performance on this paper was good.

The first stage of marking for Examiners is to count up to the 140th word and cross out the remainder. No credit is given for anything beyond the 140th word since the rubric stipulates 130–140 words. It is therefore important that candidates construct their answers in such a way that they address all of the required points within 140 words.

Candidates should be reminded to read the questions carefully before starting to write.

When checking their work, candidates need to pay particular attention to affixes. This was an area where more errors were made this year than in previous years.

Where candidates used items of vocabulary that belonged to languages other than Malay, no credit could be given.

Comments on specific questions

The Continuous Writing paper requires candidates to respond to two questions. Candidates could choose either **Question 1(a)** or **Question 1(b)**. In addition, all candidates were required to answer **Question 2**.

Each response was marked out of 25: 5 marks for Communication, 15 marks for Language and 5 marks for General Impression. The total mark available for the paper was 50.

Question 1(a) was more popular than **Question 1(b)**.

In **Question 1(a)**, candidates were asked to write a letter to their sister who was abroad to tell her about their dance performance in a school concert/show. Candidates needed to include the kind of performance (e.g. whether it was a dance, a play or a musical), who prepared them for the performance, who was in the audience, how the audience responded and how the candidate felt after the performance.

Most candidates answered **Question 1(a)** using the format of a letter, beginning with the usual greeting, asking after their sister's health and hoping that all was well. Some candidates wrote an unnecessarily long introduction which took up a large portion of their total word allowance; this meant that they did not leave themselves enough words to tackle the specified tasks.

The term *kekanda* was used by almost all candidates to refer to their older sister. This is the old, formal term used in letter writing; the more usual term is *kakak*.

The best candidates followed the rubrics carefully. Some candidates addressed their letter to a friend and then referred to their sister at some point in the letter. Candidates need to ensure that they take the time to read the questions thoroughly before starting to write.

Most candidates included the required content. Many expressed sadness that their sister could not see the performance and/or described their happiness at having completed the performance successfully. Some candidates wrote about their hope that they could perform for the sister when she returned.

A small number of candidates forgot to include the audience's reaction to the performance. It is possible that they did not understand the word *sambutan* in the question, as a number of candidates thought that it referred to a celebration after the performance.

Some candidates did not know how to use the word *persembahan* ('performance'). The verb 'to perform' is *persembahkan* or *mempersembahkan*. Many candidates used the words *menyembah* and/or *sembah*, which were not appropriate as they refer to 'worship' rather than 'perform' or 'performance'.

Some candidates did not know the difference between *kami* and *kita* – both mean 'we'/'us' but *kami* does not include the person who is being spoken to, while *kita* does include the person who is being spoken to.

In **Question 1(b)**, candidates were asked to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper to voice their opinion on an article entitled "Young people nowadays are more engrossed in computer games and have ignored the environment."

Candidates needed to include their opinion of the article, what they and friends do during their free time, what they do to help the environment, the problems faced by young people nowadays and what should be done to solve these problems.

Some candidates handled this question very well, addressing all of the required points. Some candidates did not know how to write a formal letter, and instead used terms which were more appropriate to an informal letter.

Question 2 allowed more scope for the candidates' imagination than the first question as it asked them to continue a story which started "You and your friends were waiting at a bus stop when you were approached by an old lady who wanted you to help her."

Most candidates answered this question very well. The most common reasons that candidates gave to explain why the lady needed help were:

- the old lady had lost her grandson while out at the morning market
- the old lady's dog had fallen into a drain
- the old lady had forgotten her way home
- the old lady wanted help to carry her shopping onto the bus.

There was no need for candidates to repeat the beginning of the story in their responses; candidates should start their composition with their continuation, rather than waste time and words repeating the beginning of the story printed in the question paper.

The majority of candidates ended their essays by saying that they felt very happy because they had helped an old lady when she needed assistance.

Throughout the paper, there seemed to be difficulties in the use of affixes. *Ikut* – to go along with the woman – was the proper word to use. *Mengikuti* is usually used to convey that you are following something, such as following a lecture or a programme. There was also a problem with the use of *arah/arahan*: the verb 'to show direction' is *tunjuk arah/tunjuk jalan*, not *tunjuk arahan*. Similarly, there were problems with the use of *ambil/bawa* ('to take/to carry'), *tanya* (to ask) and *minta* (to ask for).