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# MUET SESSION 1 (2019)

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

For Session 1 2019, 49 081 candidates sat for the test.

The performance of the candidates for each paper, 800/1 Listening, 800/2 Speaking, 800/3 Reading, 800/4 Writing, and the subject, 800 MUET, according to bands is as follows:

Band	800/1		800/2		800/3		800/4		800	
	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage
6	1.63	1.63	0.07	0.07	0.16	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	9.56	11.28	2.83	2.91	6.33	6.49	0.19	0.19	1.12	1.13
4	21.84	33.12	24.90	27.81	25.67	32.16	5.37	5.55	19.67	20.80
3	19.74	52.86	51.81	79.62	38.31	70.47	54.11	59.66	48.79	69.59
2	28.58	81.44	18.28	97.89	26.16	96.64	38.83	98.49	28.85	98.44
1	18.56	100.00	2.11	100.00	3.36	100.00	1.51	100.00	1.56	100.00

## CANDIDATES' RESPONSES

### PAPER 800/1 (Listening)

#### General Comments

#### PART I

The task demands the ability to discern and reconstruct required information from a given text to note form. The listening text is a talk on the benefits of taking a gap year. The items ranged from short-answer questions, to table-completion and multiple-choice questions.

#### PART II

The task demands the ability to listen to a radio interview with a clinical psychologist on health science, more specifically insomnia. The items were of multiple-choice questions whereby candidates needed to assess every option before choosing the best answer.

#### PART III

The task demands the ability to follow a mixture of texts; a news item, and two talks. The news item is about the *Highway Challenge Run*. The first talk is on having a good conversation by listening well, and the second talk is on encouraging young people to take up hairstyling as a career. The items consisted of short-answer questions whereby the candidates are required to answer within a five-word limit for each question.

## Specific Comments

### PART I

Answers ranged from all correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The inaccurate attempts could either be due to writing more words than is required, inability to rephrase correctly, spelling errors leading to a change in meaning, partially correct information, missing required information and wrong information. There were candidates who made no attempt to answer some of the questions.

The following are some examples of the candidates' incorrect attempts:

#### Question 1

- wrong preposition – *year of studies*
- wrong answer – *end of education*

#### Question 2

- exceeded word limit – *first year of semester*
- use of ordinal number – *the 1st year*

#### Question 3

- wrong spelling – *gain volentering experience*
- wrong answer – *gain opportunity*

#### Question 4

- wrong word choice – *learn new cultural*
- wrong spelling – *learn new cutulre*

#### Question 5

- wrong word leading to distortion – *safe money*
- wrong answer – *part time work*

#### Question 6

- wrong answer – *learn civil skills*
- not imperative form – *improves CV*

### PART II

Answers ranged from a few correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The objective questions seemed to be the easiest for the candidates as most of them could answer all the questions correctly. For Questions 9 and 10, candidates are required to write the letter of the answer.

### PART III

Answers ranged from a few correct answers to all inaccurate attempts. The inaccurate attempts were mainly writing more words than is required, poor comprehension of the short text, poor paraphrasing, grammatical and spelling errors. This section proved to be the most difficult for most candidates as only a handful of them managed to answer all the questions correctly.

The following are some examples of the candidates' inaccurate attempts:

#### Question 15

- repeat word given in the stem – *body language, facial expression and voice*
- wrong spelling – *body languest / fasial expression*

**Question 16**

- wrong spelling – *boderm/bothered*
- gibberish words – *standing boarderm*

**Question 17**

- inaccurate structure – *been training hairstyle*
- wrong preposition – *properly trained for/with/by different styles*

**Question 18**

- missing gerund – *what customers want and need*
- subject-verb agreement error – *become a good listeners*

**Question 19**

- repeat word given in the stem – *cash rewards and medals*
- wrong word leading to distortion – *goodies bags*

**Question 20**

- distortion in meaning – *has provided the safe*
- exceeded word limit – *controlled the traffic on the highway*
- wrong use of tenses – *blocking road/close the road*

**PAPER 800/2 (Speaking)****General Comments**

Most of the questions fell between the range of moderately easy to moderately difficult, indicating that the demands of the questions and options were accessible and manageable to the majority of the candidates. The booklets were direct and worded simply and concisely to facilitate comprehension.

**Specific Comments**

The strengths of proficient candidates were as follows:

- Able to fully utilise the time given to them in both tasks.
- More proficient candidates were able to develop the points well, providing an in-depth discussion that was sustained and displayed maturity of thought.
- Able to make connections between the task and their personal experiences, as well as current issues and general knowledge
- Able to use complex structures accurately, as well as high command of vocabulary.
- Able to not only convey their own views but to justify, convince and persuade.
- Showed a high level of confidence and fluency in their presentation and discussion.
- Candidate could understand what was being said and could respond, impromptu, to viewpoints raised.

The weaknesses of less proficient candidates were as follows:

- Prone to writing out full sentences for Task A, and would generally be unable to sustain communication.
- Unable to string together a group of words to create simple accurate sentences.
- Unsuccessful groping for words, hesitations and lack of confidence.
- Many grammatical errors in their language use also hampered intelligibility.

## PAPER 800/3 (Reading)

### Answer Key

Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key
1	B	16	B	31	A
2	A	17	B	32	B
3	C	18	A	33	C
4	A	19	C	34	D
5	A	20	B	35	C
6	A	21	A	36	B
7	B	22	A	37	D
8	A	23	C	38	C
9	A	24	C	39	B
10	C	25	A	40	C
11	B	26	B	41	D
12	C	27	B	42	D
13	A	28	C	43	D
14	C	29	A	44	A
15	A	30	D	45	B

## PAPER 800/4 (Writing)

### General Comments

The tasks given are challenging and appropriate for the pre-university level. They meet the test specifications and measure the language ability of university students as candidates were assessed on their mastery of not only grammatical and rhetorical devices, but also of conceptual and judgmental elements for writing. The ability to analyse and synthesise information (for Question 1), and the ability to discuss, explain and justify viewpoints as well as to link ideas to the topic convincingly (for Question 2) are skills at post-intermediate to advanced level of writing. The topic given was familiar to the candidates and it demanded knowledge of the topic, maturity of thought, analytical-reasoning thinking, ability to present a stand and thoughtful planning.

### Specific Comments

#### Question 1

The task requires candidates to analyse, synthesise and organise required information from given non-linear texts into a coherent report. It demands the ability of candidates to analyse the types of transportation used by university students to return home at the end of each semester in Figure 1

and link it to the reasons that influence their choices given in Table 1 and, write a report of not more than 200 words. It also requires the candidates' ability to provide accurate data from Figure 1 and link this information to Table 1, hence determining the relationship between the percentage of university students using different types of transportation to return home (2012–2015) and the reasons for choosing the different types of transportation.

The bar graph and the table are clear and not complicated. The level of difficulty is moderate. The years given are the same for both visuals. The data given is not too complex. There are only four types of transportation for four different years from 2012 to 2015 and five reasons that influenced their choice are given. The use of percentage to denote the quantity of students proved challenging for the candidates.

## Question 2

The question requires candidates to discuss whether family has the biggest influence on one's character. For this question, candidates are given the liberty to agree, disagree or partially agree with the statement and substantiate their viewpoints with explanations and suitable examples. In disagreeing, they are allowed to offer reasons why family does not have the biggest influence on one's character. The nature of the question clearly requires candidates to have a stand and to be able to defend that stand throughout the essay. The task and topic are familiar to the candidates. Though a very direct and familiar topic, it can be very challenging as it tests candidates' ability to express viewpoints maturely, effectively and relevantly and, support them with well-justified reasons.

## EXPECTED ANSWERS

### Question 1

Candidates were expected to analyse and compare the salient key features given in both visuals. Data and time frame used must be accurate. In addition, candidates were expected to be able to use accurate and appropriate trend words. They were also expected to include the four elements of an analysis—key features, trend, time frame and data, and to be able to use the correct subject reference.

The candidates were required to perform the following abilities:

- To analyse Figure 1: the types of transportation used by university students to return home at the end of each semester, and Table 1: the reasons that influence their choices. The candidates were expected to use trend words such as 'increased', 'decreased', 'remained unchanged', 'the lowest', 'the highest', 'the largest', and the 'same'.
- To synthesise/link the relationship between the percentage of university students using different types of transportation to return home (2012–2015) and the reasons for choosing the different types of transportation, hence, the use of linkers such as 'probably due to', 'because of', 'with', 'despite' and 'although' are required.
- To organise the required information (all three key features) into a coherent report.
- To present the information concisely in 150–200 words with correct subject reference, accurate data support and clear reference of years.

### Question 2

The nature of the question clearly requires candidates to have a stand and to be able to defend that stand throughout the essay. The topic, which is on unemployment among graduates, is a very common one and many candidates were able to relate to it. If candidates failed to give a good response, this is most probably due to their poor language proficiency and not so much on their ability to provide relevant points. On the whole, Question 2 is also considered as thought provoking. Thus, mature and proficient candidates should be able to present their viewpoints reasonably well.

Whichever opinion or stand the candidates take, they are expected to justify their viewpoints by giving logical reasons, explanations and examples. In terms of development of ideas, the elaborations should not only be convincing and clearly linked to the topic, but they should also support the stand. Furthermore, the voice should be assertive, yet persuasive enough to engage and compel the reader to be in agreement with the writer. The use of language should be consistently accurate and appropriate to the task, content and intention. Moreover, clarity as well as cogency of expression and vocabulary should be used appropriately to express the subtleties of meaning. Ideally, three well-developed points should be given in support of the stand, and the essay should be written in not fewer than 350 words.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN CANDIDATES' ANSWERS

### Question 1

#### STRENGTHS

- Candidates attempted to respond to the task.
- Candidates were aware of the task as many were able to provide elements required such as a title, introduction and analysis which ranged from weak, inaccurate to clear ones.
- Many candidates were able to identify and analyse a few key features in Figure 1 and attempt was made to link information from Figure 1 to the activities given in Table 1.
- Candidates generally made an attempt to adhere to the number of words permitted and many of the answers also showed some evidences of planning. For example, paragraphs and the use of discourse markers.
- The following table provides the strengths of the candidates' answers:

Title	Most candidates provided a title although it may not have captured the information given in both the visuals.
Introduction	Many candidates provided a complete introduction of the visuals although this introduction was often lifted from the titles given for both the visuals in the question paper.
Overview	There was attempt to provide an overview.
Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidates are aware that they need to analyse data given in both the visuals.</li> <li>2. There was clear attempt to link the visuals.</li> <li>3. Simple analysis prevailed in most answers.</li> <li>4. Synthesis was attempted but many candidates created inaccuracies due to illogical linking or linking the wrong years.</li> </ol>
Conclusion	There was an attempt to provide conclusion. At times, the overview was found in the conclusion.
Planning	There was evidence of planning in candidates' answers. Paragraphs were used and structure was seen.
Language	Many candidates were able to present their analysis using modest language. Single word errors (SWEs) were found in many scripts. Subject-verb agreement (SVA) errors, prepositional errors, and wrong word form were noted. The use of discourse markers (first, next, similarly) were noted too. Simple structure, although repetitive, were used by many candidates.

**WEAKNESSES**

- Candidates exceeded number of words allowed (more than 200 words).
- Missing time frame/years in the title, introduction and overview.
- Inaccurate overview.
- Overview was missing in many scripts.
- Overview was misinterpreted as analysis (highest and lowest number).
- The words ‘Generally’ and ‘Year’ were missing in the overview, thus creating inaccuracy.
- Assumptions were committed when candidates failed to report reasons for choosing different types of transportation among university students.
- Wrong use of trend words – ‘fluctuation’.
- Candidates did not link information, i.e. separate analyses of Figure 1 and Table 1.
- Narrative or descriptive essay on university students using different types of transportation to return home at the end of every semester.
- Wrong subject reference.
- Candidates created distortions when the word ‘percentage’ was absent in analyses.

The following table provides the weaknesses of the candidates’ answers:

Title	No title or poorly worded titles were given with a big number without the time frame.
Introduction	<p>Many introductions did not meet the standard requirements – they contained irrelevancies, superfluous and inaccurate (or missing) information.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Figure 1 shows percentage of university students used for (inaccuracy) different types of transportation (bus, train, plane and taxi) to return home in 2012–205 while Table 1 presents reasons for choosing different types of transportation among university students. [35 words]</li> <li>2. Visuals show the types of transportation used by university students to return home at the end of each semester and the reasons that influenced their choice (the adverb, ‘respectively’ was missing). [26 words. Many scripts have this problem.]</li> <li>3. Transportation was shows it is very importen to our lives, it’s because easy to travel intercity to intercity. As university student, transportation was main choice to their movement as well. [irrelevant information; not the expected introduction]</li> </ol>
Overview	<p>Many overviews were inaccurate and distorted. Examples are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From that, we can know reasons are influenced on types of transportation used by university students. [attempted overview – missing time frame and adverb]</li> <li>2. In general, bus recorded highest amount type of transportation especially for the reason for choosing [distortion].</li> <li>3. The reasons for choosing different types of transportation will influence the numbers of different types of transportation used by the students from 2012 to 2015.</li> </ol>



Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyses of Figure 1 information were inaccurate mainly due to wrong subject reference (WSR) and use of trend words in passive voice. Analyses of Table 1 were hardly seen – most candidates merely listed the reasons or described them.</li> <li>2. Syntheses were inaccurate mainly because preceding sentences contained inaccuracies.</li> <li>3. Various disturbing errors, which include blatant inaccuracies, distortions and assumptions, have been found.</li> </ol>
Conclusion	Sometimes not found due to response exceeding word limit.
Planning	Haphazard presentation.
Language	Various disturbing language errors found.

## Question 2

In general, candidates responded to the task, although these responses differed in terms of quality. Very few responded well by giving reasons which were matured. Most candidates gave modest opinions.

The question ‘family has the biggest influence on one’s character’ should provide plenty of ideas and materials for candidates to combine their current experience with their prior knowledge to give their opinion. However, the candidates’ weak language proficiency proved to be an obstacle as their focus was only on family and the roles of each family member, from the parents to the siblings and relatives such as grandparents, uncles/aunties and cousins. Therefore all points pertaining to this is confined to the benefits of a close knit family and they were not able to show how the family influences the character of the family members.

Generally, most of the candidates had difficulty in presenting their viewpoints, and the ideas presented lacked maturity and planning. Often, there were simplistic ideas, superficial discussion or repetitive statement/phrases and general examples. The ideas were not developed and the link was not made clear. Therefore, the discussion lacked depth and was not interesting at all. It was very challenging for the average and weak candidates because many of the candidates did not have the language proficiency, examples and justifications to effectively discuss the issue.

Most candidates’ language proficiency was of modest ability and they were not able to structure their sentences well. Many of them had problems with word order causing intended meaning to be distorted. A few had first language interference as literal translation from the mother tongue to English could be seen. There was also a lack of concrete logical details in the discussion. Discussion of ideas were superficial, at times lacking in focus due to scarcity of knowledge. There was no variety of sentences due to candidates’ limited vocabulary. As for the weaker students their poor mastery of the language hampered their efforts to formulate ideas and justify them. Glaring errors such as direct translation, inconsistent pronoun reference and major errors in structures caused meaning to be blurred. They also gave very general and shallow statements without specific or real-life examples.

### STRENGTHS

- Candidates understood the requirement of the question and were able to provide some relevant points. Most candidates were able to provide relevant points and there were attempts to elaborate the points with simple and relevant examples.
- Writing conventions were evident in many scripts; introduction, stand, thesis statement, topic sentence and conclusion.

- There were a few candidates who displayed very confident use of language. Appropriate phrases, idioms and low frequency words were used, and their arguments were compact and precise.

#### WEAKNESSES

- Although the topic is familiar to the candidates they were not able to provide good answers. Many candidates were unable to clearly show how ‘Family has the biggest influence on one’s character.’
- Discussions generally were shallow and immature. Although there was some evidence of planning in most of the candidates’ answers, many of them were unable to express their ideas coherently and effectively. Arguments to support their stand were tainted with grammatical errors and meaning was often distorted. This may be because of their lack of vocabulary and content knowledge on the issue being discussed.
- The tone at times was inappropriate as some candidates ended on an advising mode.
- In terms of language use, only simple sentence structures and high frequency words were used by most of the candidates. There were some scripts where language was incomprehensible. Generally, it was noticed that many candidates made serious language errors such as using wrong choice of words, spelling errors, SVA errors and pronoun errors.
- There were candidates who did not give an introduction to their essays. Many started off by stating their stand and immediately moved on to elaborating their points. Even if an introduction did exist, it was abrupt and too short. Even conclusions were short and abrupt.
- Other areas of weaknesses:
  - Focused more on advising parents and family members.
  - There were gaps in the discussion. The examiners had to read between the lines to understand what the candidate was trying to say.
  - Candidates did not state their stand clearly.
  - Choice of vocabulary was mainly simple.
  - Spelling errors were noted.

# MUET SESSION 2 (2019)

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

For Session 2 2019, 54 904 candidates sat for the test.

The performance of the candidates for each paper, 800/1 Listening, 800/2 Speaking, 800/3 Reading, 800/4 Writing, and the subject, 800 MUET, according to bands is as follows:

Band	800/1		800/2		800/3		800/4		800	
	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage
6	4.70	4.70	0.13	0.13	0.99	0.99	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03
5	15.33	20.03	3.10	3.22	8.51	9.51	0.74	0.75	3.33	3.36
4	22.33	42.36	18.50	21.72	20.54	30.05	8.90	9.65	20.92	24.28
3	16.26	58.62	48.32	70.05	32.16	62.21	51.40	61.05	40.37	64.65
2	24.00	82.63	25.28	95.33	29.89	92.09	34.60	95.65	31.17	95.82
1	17.37	100.00	4.67	100.00	7.91	100.00	4.35	100.00	4.18	100.00

SESSION 2

## CANDIDATES' RESPONSES

### PAPER 800/1 (Listening)

#### General Comments

#### PART I

The task demands the ability to discern and reconstruct required information from a given text to note form. The listening text is a talk on friendship. The items ranged from short-answer questions, to table-completion and multiple-choice questions.

#### PART II

The task demands the ability to listen to an interview on reading habits among Malaysians and a reading project called 'Mall Libraries'. The items were of multiple-choice questions whereby candidates are needed to assess every option before choosing the best answer.

#### PART III

The task demands the ability to follow a mixture of texts; a documentary, a report and a news item. The documentary is on cucumber. The second piece is a report on cultivating responsibility among children. Finally, the news item is on ecotourism. The items consisted of short-answer questions whereby the candidates were required to answer within a five-word limit for each question.

## Specific Comments

### PART I

Answers ranged from all correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The inaccurate attempts could either be due to writing more words than is required, inability to rephrase correctly, spelling errors leading to a change in meaning, partially correct information, missing required information and wrong information. There were candidates who made no attempt to answer some of the questions.

The following are some examples of the candidates' incorrect attempts:

#### Question 1

- wrong spelling – *happinest*
- exceed word limit – *health and overall well-being*

#### Question 2

- redundancy – (as bad as) *damaging as smoking*

#### Question 3

- 'to' + infinitive error – *to lives longer*

#### Question 4

- wrong spelling – *chear/chiir us up*
- wrong preposition – *cheer us out*

#### Question 5

- wrong sentence structure – *can enhanced out willpower*
- omission of words – *increase \_\_\_ success (our chances of)/learn \_\_\_ understand responsibility (to)*

#### Question 6

- wrong spelling – *relaytionship*
- wrong answer/distortion – *breakouts of relationships*
- wrong parts of speech – *lost of loved ones*

### PART II

Answers ranged from all correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The objective questions seemed to be the easiest for the candidates as most of them were able to answer at least four out of six questions correctly. For Questions 9 and 10, candidates were required to write the letter of the answer.

### PART III

Answers ranged from a few correct answers to all inaccurate attempts. The inaccurate attempts were mainly writing more words than is required, poor comprehension of the short text, poor paraphrasing, grammatical and spelling errors. This section is relatively the most challenging part for most of the candidates as only some managed to answer all the questions correctly.

The following are some examples of the candidates' inaccurate attempts:

#### Question 15

- wrong spelling – *minerels*

**Question 16**

- wrong spelling – *anzyma/eczyrna*
- omission of conjunction ‘and’ – *sunburn, eyebags*
- wrong use of noun and verb / noun and adjective – *sunburnt*
- wrong spelling of compound nouns – *eye bags*

**Question 17**

- distortion in meaning – *handle their/the responsibility*
- wrong sentence structure – *learn to handling responsibility*

**Question 18**

- exceed word limit – *value of cooperation and team work*
- wrong spelling of compound nouns – *team work*

**Question 19**

- wrong use of noun and verb / noun and adjective – *top tourists destination / top tourism destination*
- omission of word “top” – *tourist destination*

**Question 20**

- wrong answers – *parrot gliding/wild water rafting/paradiving*
- wrong spelling of compound nouns – *para gliding/bird watching*

**PAPER 800/2 (Speaking)****General Comments**

The topics were generally suitable for the level of candidates – young adults and pre-university candidates. Most of the questions were relevant to the scope of the candidates’ daily life, and/or general knowledge. The questions and options were accessible and manageable to the majority of the candidates.

**Specific Comments**

The strengths of proficient candidates were as follows:

- Able to use the time given to them for both Tasks A and B.
- The proficient candidates were able to develop the points well, providing an in-depth discussion that was sustained and displayed maturity of thought.
- They were able to make connections between the task and their personal experience, as well as current issues and general knowledge.
- Displayed the ability to use complex structures accurately, as well as a high command of vocabulary, to not only convey their own views but to justify, convince, and persuade.
- Showed a high level of confidence and fluency in their presentation and discussion.
- Their speech was easily intelligible and they showed good interaction skills such as responding to viewpoints raised, initiating new topics for discussion, drawing conclusions from differing perspectives, negotiating to arrive at a consensus, etc.

The weaknesses of less proficient candidates were as follows:

- Prone to writing out full sentences thus unable to sustain communication once they had read aloud their last written sentence.
- Lack of general knowledge in some of the candidates.
- Displayed their comparative lack of proficiency through their lexical choices and simpler, less complex language structure.

- Speech was frequently marked by unsuccessful groping for words, hesitations and lack of confidence.
- Candidates were not be able to utilize turn-taking and conversations strategy, and would merely take turns speaking.

### **PAPER 800/3 (Reading)**

#### **Answer Key**

Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key
1	C	16	A	31	D
2	B	17	B	32	C
3	A	18	B	33	A
4	A	19	B	34	D
5	C	20	A	35	B
6	A	21	A	36	B
7	B	22	A	37	B
8	A	23	B	38	D
9	C	24	B	39	C
10	B	25	A	40	B
11	B	26	A	41	C
12	C	27	C	42	A
13	C	28	C	43	B
14	A	29	C	44	B
15	A	30	B	45	A

### **PAPER 800/4 (Writing)**

#### **General Comments**

The tasks given are challenging and appropriate for the pre-university level. They meet the test specifications and measure the language ability of university students as candidates were assessed on their mastery of not only grammatical and rhetorical devices, but also of conceptual and judgmental elements for writing. The ability to analyse and synthesise information (for Question 1), and the ability to discuss, explain and justify viewpoints as well as to link ideas to the topic convincingly (for Question 2) are skills at post-intermediate to advanced level of writing. The topic given was familiar to the candidates and it demanded knowledge of the topic, maturity of thought, analytical-reasoning thinking, ability to present a stand and thoughtful planning.

## Specific Comments

### Question 1

The task requires candidates to analyse, synthesise and organise required information from given non-linear texts into a coherent report. It demands the ability of candidates to analyse the number of medals won by four universities (2018) in Figure 1 and link it to the factors influencing athletes' performance in the same year given in Table 1, and write a report of not more than 200 words. It also tests the candidates' ability to provide accurate data from Figure 1 and link this information to Table 1, hence determining the relationship between the number and/or types of medals won by four universities and the factors influencing athletes' performance in the 2018.

Language and terms used in question 1 are generally apt for non-linear analysis writing. It contains high-frequency words which candidates should be able to understand and as such enables candidates to analyse and discuss the key features. The terms used in the bar graph and the table are simple enough, common and straightforward. The vocabulary used in the question is simple and common. Some examples are 'gold', 'silver', 'bronze', 'medals', 'universities', 'factors', 'influencing', 'athletes' and 'performance'. However, the subject reference 'the number of medals won by four universities' posed a difficulty to candidates as many of them failed to write the subject reference correctly, thus, resulting in distortion.

### Question 2

The question requires candidates to discuss whether urbanisation has brought harm to society. For this question, candidates are given the liberty to agree, disagree or partially agree with the statement and substantiate their viewpoints with explanations and suitable examples. In disagreeing, they are allowed to offer reasons why urbanisation does not bring harm to society. The question was straightforward and candidates should be able to respond correctly using at least 350 words. The vocabulary used in the question is common but may be specialised, which is why the definition for the word 'urbanisation' is given. The other keywords, 'has brought', 'harm' and 'society' should not pose any difficulty. The instructions for the task are very direct and absolute. Candidates should be able to understand the task. Although the topic is relevant and appropriate for all levels and backgrounds of the target groups, it requires students' critical thinking and maturity to discuss the question effectively and convincingly.

## EXPECTED ANSWERS

### Question 1

Candidates were expected to analyse and compare the salient key features given in both visuals. Data and time frame used must be accurate. In addition, candidates were expected to be able to use accurate and appropriate trend words. They were also expected to include the four elements of an analysis—key features, trend, time frame and data, and to be able to use the correct subject reference.

The candidates were required to show the following abilities:

- to analyse Figure 1: the number of medals won by four universities (2018), and Table 1: the factors influencing athletes' performance in the same year. The candidates were expected to use trend words such as 'increased', 'decreased', 'remained unchanged', 'the lowest', 'the highest', 'the largest', 'the same'.
- to synthesise or to link Figure 1 to Table 1, and show how the number of medals won by the respective universities in 2018 was influenced by the factors influencing athletes' performance in the same year.

- to organise the required information (all three key features) into a coherent report.
- to present the information concisely in 150–200 words with correct subject reference, accurate data support and clear reference of years.

## Question 2

The nature of the question clearly requires candidates to have a stand and to be able to defend that stand throughout the essay. The topic, which is on the harm urbanisation has brought to society, is a very common topic and many candidates were able to relate to it. If candidates failed to give a good response, this is most probably due to their poor language proficiency and not so much on their ability to provide relevant points. On the whole, Question 2 is also considered as thought provoking. Thus, mature and proficient candidates should be able to present their viewpoints reasonably well.

Whichever opinion or stand the candidates take, they are expected to justify their viewpoints by giving logical reasons, explanations and examples. In terms of development of ideas, the elaborations should not only be convincing and clearly linked to the topic, but they should also support the stand. Furthermore, the voice should be assertive, yet persuasive enough to engage and compel the reader to be in agreement with the writer. The use of language should be consistently accurate and appropriate to the task, content and intention. Moreover, clarity as well as cogency of expression and vocabulary should be used appropriately to express the subtleties of meaning. Ideally, three well-developed points should be given in support of the stand, and the essay should be written in no fewer than 350 words.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN CANDIDATES' ANSWERS

### Question 1

#### STRENGTHS

- Candidates attempted to respond to the task.
- Candidates were aware of the task as many were able to provide elements required such as a title, introduction, overview (attempt), analysis, synthesis and conclusion. As for this session, the candidates were analysing data provided for one year (2018), so the issue of missing years or referring to the wrong year did not happen for this sitting.
- Many candidates were able to identify and analyse a few key features in Figure 1, and attempts were made to link information from Figure 1 to the reasons given in Table 1. The analysis lacked flow as candidates chose data at random. Most focused on the highest, lowest and same number of medals.
- Candidates generally made an attempt to adhere to the number of words permitted, and many of the answers also showed some evidences of planning. For example, paragraphs and the use of discourse markers. There was structure even in the weak scripts.
- The most evident strength was noted in many candidates' ability to provide an accurate title, introduction, overview and conclusion.
- The following table provides the strengths of the candidates' answers:

Title	Most candidates provided a title although it may not have captured the information given in both the visuals.
Introduction	Many candidates provided a complete introduction of the visuals although this introduction was often lifted from the titles given for both the visuals in the question paper.



Overview	There was attempt to provide an overview, and many succeeded in providing a complete and accurate overview. Perhaps, as the data given only related to one year (2018), it prevented candidates from creating distortion or inaccuracy in their overviews which commonly happened in previous sessions.
Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidates were aware that they needed to analyse data given in both the visuals.</li> <li>2. There was clear attempt to link the visuals.</li> <li>3. Simple analysis prevailed in most answers (highest, lowest and the same number of medals).</li> <li>4. Synthesis was attempted but many candidates made errors by providing adjectives to the factors, for example, 'good coaches' and 'insufficient training hours'.</li> <li>5. Candidates were aware of the formula for analysis and synthesis.</li> <li>6. Generally, it is noted that candidates understood the nature of the task and focused on the salient information provided in the visuals. For example, candidates started their answer by analysing 'the highest number and the least number'.</li> </ol>
Conclusion	There is an attempt to provide a conclusion. At times, the overview was found in the conclusion.
Planning	There is evidence of planning in candidates' answers. Paragraphs were used and structure was seen. Most candidates provided three paragraphs.
Language	<p>Many candidates were able to present their analysis using modest language. Single word errors (SWEs) were found in many scripts. Subject-verb agreement (SVA) errors, prepositional errors, wrong word form were noted. The use of discourse markers (first, next, similarly) were noted too.</p> <p>Simple structure, although repetitive, were used by many candidates. For example, most sentences started with 'University A....', 'University B....'</p>

#### WEAKNESSES

- Candidates exceeded number of words allowed (more than 200 words).
- Missing time frame/years in the title, introduction and overview.
- Inaccurate overview.
- Overview was missing in many scripts.
- Overview was misinterpreted as analysis (highest and lowest number).
- Candidates did not link information, i.e., separate analysis of Figure 1 and Table 1.
- Assumptions were committed when candidates failed to link the factors influencing athletes' performance to the number of medals won.
- Wrong use of trend words – increase/decrease.
- Narrative or descriptive essay on university students winning medals at a sports event.
- Wrong subject reference.
- Candidates created distortions when the word 'percentage' was used in analyses.
- The following table provides the weaknesses of the candidates' answers:

Title	No title or poorly worded titles were given with a big number without the time frame/year.
Introduction	<p>Many introductions did not meet the standard requirements – they contained irrelevancies, superfluous and inaccurate (or missing) information.</p> <p>Introducing only one visual, usually Figure 1 only.</p>

Overview	Many overviews were inaccurate and distorted.
Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyses of Figure 1 information were inaccurate mainly due to wrong subject reference (WSR) and use of trend words in passive voice. Analyses of Table 1 were hardly seen – most candidates merely listed the reasons or described them.</li> <li>2. Vague point of reference is also common in many answers.</li> <li>3. Misinterpreted the data wrongly using percentage.</li> <li>4. Syntheses were inaccurate mainly because preceding sentences contained inaccuracies.</li> <li>5. Various disturbing errors, which include blatant inaccuracies, distortions and assumptions, were found.</li> <li>6. Ranking the universities.</li> </ol>
Conclusion	Sometimes not found due to response exceeding word limit.
Planning	Haphazard presentation.
Language	Various disturbing language errors found.

## Question 2

In general, candidates responded to the task, although these responses differed in terms of quality. Very few responded well by giving reasons which were matured. Most candidates gave modest opinions.

The question ‘urbanisation has brought harm to society’ should provide plenty of ideas and materials for candidates to combine their current experience with their prior knowledge to give their opinion. However, the candidates’ weak language proficiency proved to be an obstacle as their focus was only on urbanisation or moving from rural areas to the city. Therefore, all points pertaining to this is confined to the benefits/advantages and disadvantages of living in a city and they were not able to show how urbanisation has brought harm or has not brought harm to society.

Generally, most of the candidates had difficulty in presenting their viewpoints, and the ideas presented lacked maturity and planning. Often, there were simplistic ideas, superficial discussion or repetitive statements/phrases and general examples. The ideas were not developed and the link was not made clear. Therefore, the discussion lacked depth and was not interesting at all. It was very challenging for the average and weak candidates because many of the candidates did not have the language proficiency, examples and justifications to effectively discuss the issue.

Most candidates’ language proficiency was of modest ability. They were not able to structure their sentences well and many of them had problems with word order causing intended meaning to be distorted. A few had first language interference as literal translation from the mother tongue to English could be seen. There was also a lack of concrete logical details in the discussion. Discussion of ideas were superficial, at times lacking in focus due to scarcity of knowledge. There was no variety of sentences due to candidates’ limited vocabulary. As for the weaker students their poor mastery of the language hampered their efforts to formulate ideas and justify them. Glaring errors such as direct translation, inconsistent pronoun reference and major errors in structures caused meaning to be blurred. They also gave very general and shallow statements without specific or real-life examples.

## STRENGTHS

- Candidates understood the requirement of the question and were able to provide some relevant points. Most candidates were able to provide relevant points, and there were attempts to elaborate the points with simple and relevant examples.
- The conventions of writing were evident in many scripts; introduction, stand, thesis statement, topic sentence and conclusion. Even the weaker students were able to present some relevant information required although they grappled poorly with the language.
- There were a few candidates who displayed very confident use of language. Appropriate phrases, idioms and low frequency words were used, and their arguments were compact and precise.
- Other strengths noted are:
  - Candidates had three or more points with some development and examples.
  - Planning was evident—each paragraph discussed different points.
  - Candidates made a stand and provided thesis statement.
  - Candidates discussed and elaborated three points which are consistent with the stand taken.
  - Candidates gave relevant examples – e.g., urbanisation brought harm in terms of higher cost of living, poverty, environmental degradation, and poor health, or if candidates disagreed, they stated points such as better education, better facilities and more jobs.
  - Candidates showed the ability to use appropriate vocabulary and varied sentence structures.
  - Mechanics of writing were seen in many scripts.
  - Attempt was made even if answers were vague or filled with multiple language errors.

## WEAKNESSES

- Many candidates were unable to clearly show how urbanisation brought harm or benefits to the society. They were able to state the reasons for moving but could not link to the ‘harm’ or ‘benefit.’
- Discussions generally were superficial and lacked depth. Points given were very predictable such as getting jobs, more schools and colleges, more shopping malls or, if they choose ‘harm’, the points were culture shock, pollution and crime.
- Although there was some evidence of planning in most of the candidates’ answers, many of them were unable to express their ideas coherently and effectively. Arguments to support their stand were tainted with grammatical errors and meaning was often distorted. This may be because of their lack of vocabulary and content knowledge on the issue being discussed.
- The tone at times was inappropriate as some candidates ended on an advising mode.
- In terms of language use, only simple sentence structures and high frequency words were used by most of the candidates. There were some scripts where language was incomprehensible. Generally, it was noticed that many candidates made serious language errors such as using wrong choice of words, spelling errors, SVA errors and pronoun errors.
- There were candidates who did not give an introduction to their essays. Many started off by stating their stand and moved on immediately to elaborating their points. Even if introduction did exist, it was abrupt and too short. Even conclusions were short and abrupt.
- There were misinterpretations of the key word ‘urbanisation’ in the given statement. Among the various misinterpretations are as follows:
  - It is an adjective that qualifies the noun ‘people’ as in ‘urbanisation people live in cities...’
  - It is a place as in ‘urbanisation is a place young generations love to stay...’
  - It is a verb as in ‘Younger generations love to urbanisation to rural areas... and ...when people urbanisation from rural areas to cities, ...’
  - It is something people do as in ‘When people do urbanisation, they face new thing.’
  - It is a trend as in ‘Young adults like to follow urbanisation. They think being urbanisation will make you look awesome.’

- It is a place or system as in ‘... in the urbanisation is a townscape that build middle of the city there a lot of shortcut and backlane...’
- It is the same as migration as in ‘...in urbanisation, people move to other country for better life...’
- It is people as in ‘Urbanisation is the people that who choose to get the another life.’
- The word ‘urbanisation’ or ‘urban’ means ‘villages’/‘illegal immigrants’ from various neighbouring countries.
- Other area of weaknesses:
  - There were gaps in the discussion. The examiners had to read between the lines to understand what the candidate was trying to say.
  - Candidates did not state their stand clearly. Many stated ‘harm’ and went on to provide the benefits of ‘urbanisation’.
  - Candidates also had a distorted idea of who are the rural people as many viewed them as nomads who are uncivilized or cavemen who still hunted for their food. Some also viewed rural people as those who are marginalised, uncultured and uneducated.
  - Choice of vocabulary was mainly simple.
  - Spelling errors were noted.

# MUET SESSION 3 (2019)

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

For Session 3 2019, 66 017 candidates sat for the test.

The percentage of the candidates for each paper, 800/1 Listening, 800/2 Speaking, 800/3 Reading, 800/4 Writing, and the subject, 800 MUET, according to bands is as follows:

Band	800/1		800/2		800/3		800/4		800	
	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage	%	Cumulative Percentage
6	12.10	12.10	0.10	0.10	0.28	0.28	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
5	24.90	37.00	3.14	3.24	7.29	7.56	0.55	0.55	3.03	3.03
4	22.08	59.08	25.35	28.59	25.40	32.97	9.89	10.44	28.63	31.66
3	11.83	70.91	52.75	81.34	36.52	69.49	53.21	63.65	42.35	74.02
2	13.82	84.73	16.63	97.97	25.31	94.80	33.80	97.45	22.42	96.43
1	15.27	100.00	2.03	100.00	5.20	100.00	2.55	100.00	3.57	100.00

## CANDIDATES' RESPONSES

### PAPER 800/1 (Listening)

#### General Comments

#### PART I

The task demands the ability to discern and reconstruct required information from a given text to note form. The listening text is a talk on Robin Sharma's life lessons. The items ranged from short-answer questions, to table-completion and multiple-choice questions.

#### PART II

The task demands the ability to listen to an interview about safety in the playground. The items were of multiple-choice questions whereby candidates needed to assess every option before choosing the best answer.

#### PART III

The task demands the ability to follow a mixture of texts; two documentaries and an article. The first documentary is on car boot sales. The second piece is an article about the Nobel Prize. The last documentary is on anime. The items consisted of short-answer questions whereby the candidates are required to answer within a five-word limit for each question.

## Specific Comments

### PART I

Answers ranged from all correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The inaccurate attempts could either be due to writing more words than is required, inability to rephrase correctly, spelling errors leading to a change in meaning, partially correct information, missing required information and wrong information. There were candidates who made no attempts to answer some of the questions.

The following are some examples of the candidates' incorrect attempts:

#### Question 1

- wrong use of article – *Robin Sharma is a author*
- wrong answer leading to distortion in meaning – *rock star/celebrity*

#### Question 2

- wrong spelling – *lives lesons/solutons*

#### Question 3

- wrong spelling – *offer your sit*

#### Question 4

- omission of word 'funny' – *watch movies*

#### Question 5

- exceeded word limit – *always carry a book with you*

#### Question 6

- wrong spelling – *think happy taughts*
- wrong answer leading to distortion in meaning – *think happy folks*

### PART II

Answers ranged from all correct answers to all incorrect attempts. The objective questions seemed to be the easiest for the candidates as most of them were able to answer at least four out of six answers correctly. For Questions 12 and 13, candidates were required to write the letter of the answer.

### PART III

Answers ranged from a few correct answers to all inaccurate attempts. The inaccurate attempts were mainly writing more words than is required, poor comprehension of the short text, poor paraphrasing, grammatical and spelling errors. This section is relatively the most challenging part for most of the candidates as only some managed to answer all the questions correctly.

The following are some examples of the candidates' inaccurate attempts:

#### Question 15

- omission of verb – *unwanted items/extra money*
- wrong use of article – *raise the money*
- wrong sentence structure – *raised the fund*
- making wild guesses – *sprinkling (spring clean)*

**Question 16**

- wrong spelling – *comuniti center*
- wrong sentence structure – *opening places*

**Question 17**

- wrong spelling of science subjects – *piece/fiziks*
- using a comma instead of a conjunction – *physics, chemistry*

**Question 18**

- exceeded word limit – *with a medal and a diploma*
- nonsensical answer – *by gala bank*

**Question 19**

- omission of preposition – *millions fans*
- wrong spelling – *internasional/langguages*

**Question 20**

- nonsensical answer – *drama and horror*

**PAPER 800/2 (Speaking)****General Comments**

On the whole, the questions are suitable for Pre-U students. Questions for both Tasks A and B were appropriate for assessing MUET candidates, within their understanding and general knowledge. Candidates were able to discuss and interact with each other.

**Specific Comments**

The strengths of proficient candidates were as follows:

- Able to fully utilise the time given to them for both Tasks A and B.
- Able to develop the points well, providing an in-depth discussion that was sustained and displayed maturity of thought.
- Able to make connections between the task and their personal experiences, as well as current issues and general knowledge.
- They used the preparation time to write notes in point form rather than creating full sentences, and used the presentation time to elaborate on the notes.
- High level of confidence and fluency in their presentation and discussion. The group discussion was usually highly interactive as the candidate could understand what was being said and could respond, impromptu, to viewpoints raised.
- Their speech was easily intelligible and they showed good interaction skills such as responding to viewpoints raised, initiating new topics for discussion, drawing conclusions from differing perspectives, negotiating to arrive at a consensus, etc.

The weaknesses of less proficient candidates were as follows:

- Prone to writing out full sentences for Task A, and would generally be unable to sustain communication once they had read aloud their last written sentence.
- More capable limited users may try to restate the main ideas, or to list some new ones, but would normally be unable to develop the points well.
- Lack of general knowledge in some of the candidates, and this could also be seen in some of the candidates who were more proficient.

- It can be surmised that the less read or informed candidates are on current issues, the poorer the quality of their task fulfilment.
- Candidates who were less proficient mostly lacked the vocabulary and complexity in language structures. Many of these candidates were unable to string together a group of words to create simple accurate sentences.
- The less proficient candidates were less comfortable in using the language. Their speech was frequently marked by unsuccessful groping for words, hesitations and lack of confidence.

## PAPER 800/3 (Reading)

### Answer Key

Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key
1	C	16	B	31	D
2	B	17	A	32	A
3	A	18	A	33	B
4	A	19	C	34	C
5	B	20	C	35	C
6	C	21	C	36	A
7	B	22	A	37	B
8	C	23	A	38	C
9	C	24	A	39	D
10	A	25	C	40	B
11	C	26	C	41	D
12	C	27	B	42	A
13	A	28	C	43	D
14	C	29	B	44	A
15	B	30	A	45	D

## PAPER 800/4 (Writing)

### General Comments

The tasks given are challenging and appropriate for the pre-university level. They meet the test specifications and measure the language ability of university students as candidates were assessed on their mastery of not only grammatical and rhetorical devices, but also of conceptual and judgmental elements for writing. The ability to analyse and synthesise information (for Question 1), and the ability to discuss, explain and justify viewpoints, as well as to link ideas to the topic convincingly (for Question 2) are skills at post-intermediate to advanced level of writing. The topic given was familiar to the candidates and it demanded knowledge of the topic, maturity of thought, analytical-reasoning thinking, ability to present a stand, and thoughtful planning.



## Specific Comments

### Question 1

The task is easily comprehensible. It demands the ability of candidates to analyse the number of food poisoning cases in several towns in 2018 in Figure 1, link it to the measures taken to prevent food poisoning in the same year given in Table 1, and write a report of not more than 200 words. It also requires the candidates' ability to provide accurate data from Figure 1 and link this information to Table 1, hence determining the relationship between the number of food poisoning cases and the measures taken to prevent food poisoning in 2018.

Language and terms used in Question 1 are generally apt for non-linear analysis writing. It contains high-frequency words which candidates should be able to understand and, as such, enables candidates to analyse and discuss the key features. The terms used in the bar graph and the table are simple, common and straightforward. The vocabulary used in the question to depict the information in the visuals is simple and common like 'food poisoning', 'cases', 'towns', 'measures', 'taken', and 'prevent'.

### Question 2

The question requires candidates to discuss whether traditional beliefs are widening the gaps between generations. The main focus of the discussion is how and why are traditional beliefs widening the gaps between old and young generations. For this question, candidates are given the liberty to agree, disagree or partially agree with the statement, and substantiate their viewpoints with explanations and suitable examples. In disagreeing, they are allowed to offer reasons why traditional beliefs are not widening the gaps between generations. Maturity of thought and links in viewpoints are very much expected from the candidates in delivering their opinions. The question is straightforward and candidates should be able to respond correctly using at least 350 words.

The instructions for the task are very direct and absolute. Candidates should be able to understand the task. Although the topic is relevant and appropriate for all levels and backgrounds of the target groups, it requires students' critical thinking and maturity to discuss the question effectively and convincingly.

## EXPECTED ANSWERS

### Question 1

The task demands candidates' ability to analyse, synthesise and organise required information from given non-linear texts into a coherent report within the stipulated word limit (200 words). Candidates are challenged to write with accuracy of data/information, use correct language and logical connectors to link the two visuals. The subject matter is based on a familiar topic. The factors provided in the table should also be familiar to the candidates. Besides, it is also noted that the candidates are aware of the requirement of the task. For this question, the candidates were required to perform the following abilities:

- To analyse the information in Figure 1: the number of food poisoning cases in three towns and the information in Table 1: the preventive measures taken.
- To synthesise information in Figure 1 and Table 1 (showing correlations between the number of food poisoning cases and the measures).
- To organise the required information (all three key features) into a coherent report.
- To present the information concisely in 150-200 words with correct subject reference, accurate data support and clear reference of years.

## Question 2

The nature of the question clearly requires candidates to have a stand and to be able to defend that stand throughout the essay. The topic on traditional beliefs is a relatively familiar subject matter.

Whichever opinion or stand the candidates take, they are expected to justify their viewpoints by giving logical reasons, explanations and examples. In terms of development of ideas, the elaborations should not only be convincing and clearly linked to the topic, but they should also support the stand. Furthermore, the voice should be assertive, yet persuasive enough to engage and compel the reader to be in agreement with the writer. The use of language should be consistently accurate and appropriate to the task, content and intention. Moreover, clarity as well as cogency of expression and vocabulary should be used appropriately to express the subtleties of meaning. Ideally, three well-developed points should be given in support of the stand, and the essay should be written in no fewer than 350 words.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN CANDIDATES' ANSWERS

### Question 1

#### STRENGTHS

- Candidates were able to present a title, introduction, overview and conclusion with some information.
- Candidates attempted to analyse and synthesise some or a few of the key features given in Figure 1.
- Candidates made an attempt to link (synthesised) Figure 1 and Table 1.
- Candidates wrote within the word limit given (200 words).
- Candidates were able to use linkers (although, so, thus) effectively.
- Candidates used simple vocabulary and structures though these could be repetitive in nature.
- Candidates used appropriate and significant reporting voice and the passive structure, which is the appropriate structure for reporting writing. For example, 'Rose town recorded...'
- Candidates used appropriate trend words for the analysis and synthesis of data such as 'higher', 'highest', 'lowest', 'least', 'more', etc.
- Candidates made an attempt to provide an answer.
- Candidates made an attempt to analyse data given though it can be limited in nature.

Title	Most candidates provided a title although it may not have captured the information given in both the visuals.
Introduction	Many candidates provided a complete introduction of the visuals although this introduction was often lifted from the titles given for both the visuals in the question paper.
Overview	There was attempt to provide an overview and many succeeded in providing a complete and accurate overview. Perhaps, as the data given only related to one year (2018), it prevented candidates from creating distortion or inaccuracy in their overviews, which commonly happened, in previous sessions.
Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidates were aware that they needed to analyse data given in both the visuals.</li> <li>2. There was clear attempt to link the visuals.</li> <li>3. Simple analysis prevailed in most answers (highest, lowest and the same number of food poisoning cases).</li> <li>4. Synthesis was attempted but many candidates made errors by providing adjectives to the measures taken.</li> <li>5. Candidates were aware of the formula for analysis and synthesis.</li> <li>6. Generally, it is noted that candidates understood the nature of the task and focused on the salient information provided in the visuals. For example, candidates started their answer by analysing 'the highest number' and the 'least number'.</li> </ol>

Conclusion	There was an attempt to provide conclusion. At times, the overview was found in the conclusion.
Planning	There was evidence of planning in candidates' answers. Paragraphs were used and structure was seen. Most candidates provided three paragraphs.
Language	Many candidates were able to present their analysis using modest language. The use of discourse markers (first, next, similarly) was noted too. Simple structure, although repetitive, were used by many candidates. For example, most sentences started with 'Tulip town....', 'Rose Town....'

### WEAKNESSES

- Candidates were unable to provide a complete title, introduction and overview as 'town' was missing in these elements.
- Candidates were unable to link the given visuals. Many candidates analysed the visuals in isolation or only analysed Figure 1.
- Candidates used wrong trend words such as 'remain stable' for Rose Town as the data for July and October remained unchanged (180 cases).
- Distortions were created with the use of wrong passive structure. For example, 'Number of cases was decreased...'
- Repeated structure was used throughout the answer.
- Wrong linkers were used causing inaccuracies. For example, 'The number of food poisoning cases Begonia increased to 600 in July because it took 3 measures'.
- Inaccurate interpretation of measures taken by the towns which led to distortion or assumptions such as focusing on measures not taken by a town or adding details to the measure given such as take *full* action to reduce food poisoning cases, a *good* measure was taken, *effective* measures, *ineffective* measure.
- Wrong subject reference (WSR) errors were made such as 'Tulip had...'
- Candidates did not provide data, which caused their analysis and synthesis lacked substance.
- Candidates gave inaccurate data.
- Candidates provided inaccurate time frame or missing time frame for example: 'January until October', 'the whole year', 'one year', 'within the period of four months'.
- Candidates provided inaccurate key features such as 'Town's of Tulip', 'Tulip's town', 'in the town of Tulip town'.
- Wrong trend words were used such as 'ranking' and 'percentage' (%) instead of 'number of cases'.
- Listed information such as 'The of number cases in Rose was at 200 in April and 180 in July and October'.
- Exceeded the number of words allowed.
- Spelled the towns wrongly. For example, 'Ros' instead of 'Rose'.

Title	No title or poorly worded titles were given with a big number without the time frame/year.
Introduction	Many introductions did not meet the standard requirements – they contained irrelevancies, superfluous and inaccurate (or missing) information. Introducing only one visual, usually Figure 1 only.
Overview	Many overviews were inaccurate and distorted.

Analysis and synthesis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyses of Figure 1 information were inaccurate mainly due to wrong subject reference and use of trend words in passive voice. Analyses of Table 1 were hardly seen – most candidates merely listed the reasons or described them.</li> <li>2. Vague point of reference is also common in many answers.</li> <li>3. Misinterpreted the data wrongly using percentage.</li> <li>4. Syntheses were inaccurate mainly because preceding sentences contained inaccuracies.</li> <li>5. Various disturbing errors, which include blatant inaccuracies, distortions and assumptions, were found.</li> </ol>
Conclusion	Sometimes not found due to response exceeding word limit.
Planning	Haphazard presentation.
Language	Various disturbing language errors found.

**Question 2**

In general, candidates responded to the task, although these responses differed in terms of quality. Very few responded well by giving reasons which were matured. Most candidates gave modest opinions.

Most of the candidates had difficulty in presenting their viewpoints, and the ideas presented lacked maturity and planning. Often, there were simplistic ideas, superficial discussion or repetitive statements/phrases and general examples. The ideas were not developed and the link was not made clear. Therefore, the discussion lacked depth and was not interesting at all. It was very challenging for the average and weak candidates because many of the candidates did not have the language proficiency, examples and justifications to effectively discuss the issue.

Most candidates’ language proficiency was of modest ability. They were not able to structure their sentences well and many of them had problems with word order causing intended meaning to be distorted. A few had first language interference as literal translation from the mother tongue to English could be seen. There was also a lack of concrete logical details in the discussion. Discussion of ideas was superficial, at times lacking in focus due to scarcity of knowledge. There was no variety of sentences due to candidates’ limited vocabulary. As for the weaker students, their poor mastery of the language hampered their efforts to formulate ideas and justify them. Glaring errors such as direct translation, inconsistent pronoun reference and major errors in structures caused meaning to be blurred. They also gave very general and shallow statements without specific or real-life examples.

**STRENGTHS**

- Candidates understood the requirement of the question and were able to provide some relevant points. Most candidates were able to provide relevant points and there were attempts to elaborate the points with simple and relevant examples.
- The writing convention was evident in many scripts; introduction, stand, thesis statement, topic sentence and conclusion. Even the weaker students were able to present some relevant information required although they grappled poorly with the language.
- There were a few candidates who displayed very confident use of language. Appropriate phrases, idioms and low frequency words were used, and their arguments were compact and precise.
- Other strengths noted were:
  - Candidates had three or more points with some development and examples.
  - Planning was evident – each paragraph discussed different points.
  - Candidates made a stand and provided thesis statement.
  - Candidates discussed and elaborated three points, which were consistent with the stand taken.

- Candidates gave relevant examples. Candidates were able to use appropriate vocabulary and varied sentence structures.
- Mechanics of writing were seen in many scripts.
- Attempt was made even if answers were vague or filled with multiple language errors.

#### WEAKNESSES

- One of the glaring weaknesses seen in most of the candidates' answers was the inability to provide examples of traditional beliefs. Most candidates made sweeping statements such as 'Traditional beliefs are outdated and therefore has created generation gap'. This clearly indicates that most candidates do not have sufficient background knowledge or do not have a clear idea of what traditional beliefs are.
- Traditional beliefs were interpreted as lifestyle. Hence, many candidates talked about the use of the internet, gadgets and technology.
- Many candidates also wrote about the advantages of technology and how the older generation refused modernisation.
- Conflict or widening of the gaps were mainly missing or implied.
- There were candidates who contradicted their stand.
- As many candidates grappled with poor language and lack of understanding of the requirement of the question, they wrote essays which lacked details and examples.
- Traditional beliefs were interpreted wrongly as traditional costumes, traditional games, and traditional foods.
- Off-tangent responses were on examples of traditional foods, games, and culture.
- Other area of weaknesses:
  - There were gaps in the discussion. The examiners had to read between the lines to understand what the candidate was trying to say.
  - Candidates did not state their stand clearly. Many stated 'generation gap' and went on to provide examples of situations where generation gap existed.
  - Candidates also had a distorted idea of who are the old generation as many viewed this generation as being archaic and uneducated.
  - Choice of vocabulary was mainly simple.
  - Spelling errors were noted.