3.5 ARABIC (503)

The Arabic paper (503) for the year 2020 was tested in three papers namely;
503/1, 503/2 and 503/3

Paper 1 (503/1) tested listening comprehension skills and dictation. The paper has two sections:

Section 1 comprised five recorded passages and three listening comprehension questions for each passage. The section carries 15 marks.
Section 2 comprised a dictation with a total of 5 marks.
The paper carries a maximum of 20 marks.

Paper 2, (503/2), tested reading comprehension, grammar and writing skills. The writing skills were tested in both creative and functional writing. The paper has two sections:
Section one tested grammar and reading comprehension
Section 2 tested letter writing and essay writing. The paper is marked out of 60 marks.

Paper 3, (503/3) tested the oral skills of the candidates. Part 1 is a reading passage with its questions orally answered, whereas part 2 is an oral conversation drawn from selected topical issues. The maximum mark for the paper is 20.
The cumulative score of the three Arabic papers is 100 marks.

3.5.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

Table 13: The table below shows the performance of candidates in Arabic (503) 2017 - 2020

Year	Paper	Candidature	Max. Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2017	1		20	5.34	4.11
	2		60	27.26	11.06
	3		20	14.87	4.01
	Overall	6224	100	48.25	16.99
2018	1		20	5.91	4.56
	2		60	28.96	11.43
	3		20	12.5	4.5
	Overall	6792	100	47.13	18.44
2019	1	7,834	20	7.53	5.193
	2	7,836	60	23.67	11.558
	3	7,833	20	12.87	4.528
	Overall	7,859	100	43.77	19.19
2020	1	8,069	20	9.57	5.09
	2	8,119	60	31.65	11.97
	3	7,898	20	13.66	4.47
	Overall	8,136	100	53.75	18.93

The following observations can be made from the above table:

i) The overall subject mean for the year 2020 is 53.75. This is an improvement from the year 2019 where the mean stood at 43.77. The standard deviation for the year 2020 stands at 18.93.

ii) The candidature has been rising steadily from 2015. In the year 2020, it is noted that 8,136 sat the Arabic paper.

iii) A noticeable improvement was registered in all the three Arabic papers; the mean for 503/1, 503/2 and 503/3 improved from 7.53 to 9.57, 23.67 to 31.65 and 12.87 to 13.66 respectively.

ANALYSIS PER PAPER

3.5.2 Arabic Paper 1 (503/1)

Listening comprehension and dictation.

The paper registered a slight improvement compared to the performance in 2019. The mean of the paper is average and this improvement could be attributed to the fact that learners are being exposed to listening comprehension passages.

Requirement

Candidates were required to listen to five recorded comprehension passages and then answer three questions on each passage on the answer booklet provided. In addition, they were to listen to a dictation and then write their responses on the same booklet.

Weaknesses

It was observed that:
- The dictation part is still a matter of concern as many candidates performed poorly in this section. Most of the candidates did not abide by the principles of Arabic writings by overlooking the diacritical marks in Arabic writing (ـث ـف ـن -ي). Some candidates could not differentiate between the two types of Hamza (ء) in writing.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should give learners extra practice on listening comprehension questions as well as testing their speed in answering questions from recorded materials. Exercises in dictation should also be given to learners. Vocabulary should be enriched to enable the learners write Arabic words correctly.

Expected responses for the dictation part:

١. قم من النوم في الصباح الباكر.

٢. كيف تراجع دروسك؟

٣. اللبيب يفهم بالإشارة.

٤. السيارة مسرعة جداً

٥. لماذا تتعب نفسك بمثل هذا العمل.

3.5.3 Arabic Paper 2 (503/2)

Section 1

Part 1: Grammar

In this Part, candidates were required to exhibit their competence in basic Arabic grammar.
Most of the candidates performed well in grammar. However, more practice on some specific aspects of grammar like the supplementary diacritics *(tashkiil)* is required.
Some candidates could not give the correct *tashkiil* for some sentences.

Requirement

Candidates were required to give the correct *tashkiil* at the end of some given words as per the Arabic rules of grammar.

Weaknesses

It was observed that:
Most of the candidates could not give the correct *tashkiil* for some of the given words. Candidates confused *tashkiil* for changeable and unchangeable nouns in Arabic.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should give learners extra practice on *tashkiil*. Exercises on how to deal with unchangeable nouns in Arabic with regard to *tashkiil* should also be given to learners.

Expected responses for Question 3 of Section 1:

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س3- شَكِّلْ مَا تَحْتَهُ خَطٌّ.

(أ) ذَهَبْتُ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ.

(ب) شَرِبَتِ الْبِنْتُ الْمَاءَ.

(ج) رَسَمْتُ عَلَى لَوْحَةٍ خَضْرَاءَ

(د) وَصَلَ الْمُسَافِرُ إِلَى بَلَدِهِ.

(هـ) لَمْ يَصِلِ الْمُدِيرُ إِلَى الْمَدْرَسَةِ بَعْدُ.

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Part 2: Comprehension

Requirement

Candidates were required to read a comprehension passage and respond to questions on the passage. Most of the candidates were able to give the correct responses to the comprehension questions.

Advice to teachers

Teachers to enhance reading and comprehension skills through exposing candidates to different types of passages.

Section 2

Letter writing and composition

Requirement
Candidates were expected to write an official letter and a composition.

Weaknesses

- Some candidates could not write the letter as per the guidelines for letter writing in Arabic.
- Many candidates lacked the correct vocabulary to use in writing the composition.
- Use of punctuation marks in Arabic is still a challenge to most of the candidates.

Advice to teachers

- Teachers should train students in both creative and functional writing.
- Arabic vocabulary and sentence formation should be enhanced.
- Learners should practice more on punctuation.

3.5.4 Arabic Paper 3 (503/3)

Oral examination

This is an oral paper where the candidate is required to:
- Read a written passage loudly.
- Answer questions from the given passage orally.
- Answer general questions orally.

Weaknesses

- Some candidates were not conversant with the topics tested, hence were unable to give correct responses.
- Some candidates did not understand the questions hence they gave incorrect responses.
- Many candidates have problems with pronunciation due to mother tongue interference.
- In the general questions, many candidates could not use the gender cases correctly particularly for dual and plural forms

Advice to teachers

Teachers should put more emphasis on the following language skills:
- Speaking//Oral skills
- Reading, especially extensive reading
- Pronunciation
- Writing

Generally, the papers were balanced in terms of the skills tested as per the the chief examiner's reports.