

3.5 ARABIC (503)

The following papers comprised the KCSE Arabic examination of 2014:

- 503/1: Listening Comprehension and Dictation
- 503/2: Grammar, Comprehension and Composition
- 503/3: Orals

3.5.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

Table 13: Performance of candidates in Arabic(503) for the last four years

Year	Paper	Candidature	Max. Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2011	1	862	20	11.61	5.78
	2		60	33.36	12.49
	3		20	15.87	3.17
	Overall		100	60.84	21.44
2012	1	3,692	20	7.30	5.31
	2		60	25.09	12.91
	3		20	14.30	3.79
	Overall		100	46.52	19.92
2013	1	3,495	20	9.50	5.11
	2		60	31.23	10.94
	3		20	14.73	3.63
	Overall		100	55.37	17.66
2014	1	4,078	20	10.48	4.95
	2		60	28.93	11.40
	3		20	13.43	3.88
	Overall		100	52.75	17.97

The following observations can be made from the above table:

- i) There has been a drop in the means of all the papers.
- ii) Paper 1 and 3 failed to discriminate between the candidates with high facility and those with low facility in the language. This is evidenced by the low standard deviation realized in the two papers. Perhaps this can be attributed to subjectivity, especially in paper 3.
- iii) The overall subject' mean has dropped slightly from **55.37** in 2013 to **52.75** in 2014. However the specific paper means, as well as the subject mean is moving towards normal mean.

The following is a summary of analysis per paper.

3.5.2 Arabic Paper 1 (503/1)

The paper demanded that the candidates listen to recorded comprehension and dictation passages then answer questions.

Weaknesses

It was observed that:

- Some of the candidates were not able to comprehend the passage.
- Many candidates could not infer meanings of words from the passage.
- Many candidates had challenges in questions requiring application skills.
- Many failed in the dictation; they could not write complete sentences.

Advice to teachers

There is need for students to be given more practice in listening comprehension and dictation.

3.5.3 Arabic Paper 2 (503/2)

Grammar

In this section candidates were required to exhibit their competence in basic Arabic grammar.

Weaknesses

- Many candidates are lack facility in the area of grammatical categories, such as case.
- The concept of mood is a challenge to many. They were unable to construct declarative statements.
- Many candidates did not understand the concept of functional categories of a sentence. They were unable to identify for instance, predicate in a sentence.

Advice to teachers

Students should be exposed to more practice through structured exercises.

Comprehension

Candidates were required to read the comprehension and answer the questions. Many candidates understood the questions and answered correctly.

Advice to teachers

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

Composition

Candidates were expected to write one functional composition and one other.

Weaknesses

Some candidates still had challenges in writing a friendly letter.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should train students on all types of functional writing.

3.5.4 Arabic paper 3 (503/3)

The paper required the candidates to read passages loudly and answer questions.

Weaknesses

- Some candidates were not able to answer correctly.
- Some candidates did not understand the question, hence they gave incorrect responses.
- Many candidates have problems with pronunciation due to mother tongue interference.
- Majority of candidates are unable to spell words correctly.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should put more emphasis on the following language skills:

- Speaking/Oral skills
- Reading
- Pronunciation
- Writing