



GCSE

Bengali

8638/LF Listening (Foundation)

Report on the examination

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Introduction

The number of students enrolled in Summer 2025 GCSE Bengali Listening (Foundation Tier) was 109. It was pleasant to see that some students were able to understand a significant part of the questions that they had heard and could respond well to the questions. However, a handful of students could not understand a few simple words. In Section B, some students struggled to understand questions written in Bengali, although most able students scored highly. Some students were not aware of some vocabulary, and as a result, the questions were challenging for them. Only a few students wrote their answers in the wrong language. The number of students not attempting questions was fewer. Teachers can guide students by encouraging them

- to attempt all questions.
- to read all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B.
- to underline keywords that have been highlighted in the rubrics/questions.
- to listen to the question numbers in Section B, as these are announced in Bengali.
- to signpost Section B as it requires answers in Bengali.
- to check questions with words where they might have asked for a particular perspective or the most relevant option to choose.
- to identify the questions that have two or more parts to answer from the same utterance

Section A

Questions 01-02

Questions 01 and 02 were multiple-choice questions that were about the age of marriage. The performance on this section was quite good. By and large, students have answered them correctly. The majority of the students answered the questions correctly.

Questions 03

Question 03 described Suhaan, who was discussing his ambitions. This question type was an open-ended format. Students found this question comparatively difficult. Several students found this question challenging and were unable to score high.

Questions 04-09

Question 04 was about listening to a report on social media content. Most of the students answered this section correctly.

Questions 05 to 07 were about food preference, and very few students answered all the questions in this section correctly. A few students struggled to understand or misinterpreted question 07. Although orange is the correct answer, students mentioned green, purple, or bright as answers.

Question 08 was based on the residents talking about the local environment. It was a two-marked question and posed difficulty. This question discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said. Many students struggled to understand what needs to be done to tackle the environmental problem.

Question 09 was about an announcement at the Bangla Mela. This question comprises a gap-filling task. Performance in this section was mixed.

Questions 10-12

Questions 10 -12 were designed to challenge the most able students, with answers in English, and two key points were to be found in one recorded speech. The question was based on a radio program about a local area report. Most students found this section challenging as they could not score high. Assuming that the answers from Question 10 and 11 ('homelessness' and 'poverty') were closely correlated, that might have led some students to answer "poverty" for 11 and "homeless" for 10, whereas the answer should be vice versa. As a result, those students were not able to secure their marks.

Questions 13-15

Questions 13-15 were based on listening to a teenager about their studies. Most students were successful in identifying all three correct answers and secured marks here.

Questions 16-17

Questions 16 and 17 were a conversation between two people about the advantages and disadvantages of volunteering and targeted higher levels of demand. Few students knew the difficult Bengali vocabulary such as দুঃস্থ, স্বচ্ছায়, বিনামূল্যে and দুর্বল. In this overlap section, some students attempted only one part of the question and could not secure full marks. Although some students from the foundation tier responded to both questions correctly.

Questions 18

This was a three-part question, a personalised matching type of question. The topic of this question was about future studies of three teenagers. Students were able to choose the correct answers with a high degree of success.

Questions 19

Question 19 was overlapping. The topic covered in this question was a person sharing her preference for listening to music. A few students faced a challenge in answering this question, as the confusion arose due to 'most preferred' and 'preferred'. As a result, they were unable to score.

Questions 20

In this question, students were expected to identify different timeframes. Some students managed to identify the timeframes and the relevant activities. This question discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said and those whose understanding was only partial. Many students struggled to understand river filling and the consequences. As a result, very few students scored full marks in this question. It would be beneficial for students to practice vocabulary and events described in different tenses.

Section B

Questions 21

The question was about job preference. The performance on this section was satisfactory as this question was relatively testing students' having to understand complex language and then use some inference to get to the correct answer.

Questions 22-23

Question 22 was about the choice of place for having food, which was mentioned by two different individuals. Overall, the performance of these questions was mixed.

Like Question 22, the overall performance in Question 23 was mixed. This was based on the safety of using social media.

Conclusion

Evaluating this paper was both demanding and rewarding, offering valuable insights into students' response patterns. The total entry on distribution this year was 109. The mean score in the Listening Foundation component in 2024 was 18.5 with a standard deviation of 5.5. This year, the mean score is 23.1 with a slightly higher standard deviation of 6.5. The increase in Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) this year indicates that students have performed slightly better this year. However, several less able learners did not perform well on certain questions. Overall performance varied widely, with no single section standing out as universally easy or difficult. The paper was well-balanced to allow students to achieve marks in line with expectations. There were only a very few examples of unanswered or partially answered questions.

Finally, students must make sure that they make their final answer clear to the examiners by writing legibly and using the spaces provided.

If students change their minds about an answer, the final choice must be indicated to the marker and placed as near as possible to the appropriate space.

Students should give precise answers, avoiding lots of details.

It is always good to try to answer all questions.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.