2020 VCE Arabic oral examination report

General comments

2020 was the first year this study was delivered according to the newly accredited VCE Arabic [Study Design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/german/Pages/Index.aspx) 2020–2024 and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the [specifications for oral examinations](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Arabic.aspx), available on the VCE Arabic examinations webpage of the VCAA website. Students and teachers are also reminded that a [series of videos](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/RevisedSecondLanguageOralExaminationVideos.aspx) has been produced to help with preparation for the oral examinations; these are also available on the VCE Arabic examinations webpage of the VCAA website.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

* students may be asked a variety of questions of varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one students anticipate
* assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
* assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
* normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Some students were not aware of the examination requirements and assessment; these requirements are set out in the study design and the exam specifications as outlined above.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Section 1 of the examination involved a general conversation between the student and the assessors about the student’s personal world and their interactions with the Arabic community and culture.

The characteristics of a high-scoring performance included thorough and sophisticated preparation of information, ideas and opinions related to the prescribed theme of ‘The Individual’.

Some students moved easily between sub-topics and displayed a lively interest in communicating with assessors.

Many students presented content of a very high standard. These students were able to expand on their comments and introduce new, pertinent ideas.

Some students used poor sentence structures, omitted verbs or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures, most notably the use of different verb formats (for example, past and future). While many students competently used complex grammar, students who used overly complex expressions that did not fit well with their true level of language competency did not score as highly.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students who scored highly in the Discussion gave a clear indication of what their chosen subtopic was and how the image they provided related to it. The inclusion of specific details and clear opinions gave substance to discussion of the subtopic. Some students presented sub-topics for the Discussion that lacked details and did not reflect adequate preparation.

The sub-topic and the supporting visual material must be related to a sub-topic under either the prescribed theme ‘The Arabic-speaking communities’ or the prescribed theme ‘The world around us’. The focus of the discussion will be on exploring aspects of the sub-topic, including information, opinions and ideas. The student will be expected to respond to questions on the sub-topic itself and the supporting image that they have brought with them.

Many students gave confident responses, although some were unable to elaborate on or defend their ideas. In addition to being familiar with the key ideas in their subtopic, students could practise anticipating possible questions and responses to their ideas and opinions so they can expand on these during the discussion.

Some students provided a range of relevant information that demonstrated their command of the subtopic. Other students were not adequately prepared for this part of the oral examination.

Students with high scores used a wide variety of structures. Other students used simple and/or predictable language.

Common errors included a lack of preparation for the structure of the examination.