2024 VCE Armenian oral external assessment report

Refer to the [Armenian study design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/armenian/Pages/Index.aspx) and [examination criteria and specifications](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Armenian.aspx) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.

The majority of students confidently engaged with the assessors and performed at a high standard in most areas. They demonstrated fluency and spontaneity in both sections of the examination. Particularly pleasing was the students’ ability to seek clarification from and acknowledge assessors when answering questions. This feature added more depth to the engagement with an ensuing genuine flexible dialogue as the outcome.

Sentence construction was sufficiently complex and sophisticated where appropriate. Pronunciation was mostly clear, audible and accurate with audible utterances, crisp consonants and appropriate intonation and stress. Discussion topics were well researched and well prepared overall. The vocabulary range used was quite extensive without borrowing any foreign words and most responses had no unnatural pauses.

Section 1: Conversation

What students did well

In the 2024 examination, students:

* engaged in a general conversation about their personal world, for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. Topics for the conversation revolved around current studies, career aspirations, family composition and background, hobbies, travel plans or experiences, driving lessons, pets, likes and dislikes, part-time employment, and participation in community activities such as sport, scouts, dance and related events
* provided a range of relevant information, ideas and opinions with an appropriate depth. There was a strong sense of identity, self-awareness and belonging to the Armenian community, which reflected students’ perseverance to complete Armenian in VCE
* clarified, elaborated on and defended ideas and opinions. All student responses remained relevant, offering a range of information, ideas and opinions. For example, many students elaborated on their desire to visit Armenia as a way to strengthen their ties to their homeland; those born in the diaspora were able to defend the notion that their homeland was a validation of their identity, upbringing and belonging and that without these bonds, language would be harder to maintain in distant Armenian communities
* demonstrated an excellent level of understanding by responding readily and communicating confidently, and carrying the conversation forward with spontaneity. Responses displayed significant depth, breadth and complexity of conversation
* responded confidently and were able to advance the conversation, including the use of appropriate repair strategies as needed. Self-correction, clarification and elaboration indicated excellent preparation, awareness and application of repair strategies and the confidence to influence the direction of the conversation
* used appropriate vocabulary
* used appropriate grammar and sentence structures.  Students are encouraged to continue the use of the correct form of irregular declensions with the commonly used nouns of kinship, for example, հօրս (my father’s), մօրս (my mother’s), քրոջս (my sister’s), եղբօրս (my brother’s) instead of հայրիկիս (my father’s), մայրիկիս (my mother’s), քոյրիկիս (my sister’s), եղբայրիս (my brother’s)
* used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

* practise answering a range of questions to be able to advance the conversation
* practise using more complex sentence structures and syntax. For example, Ընդհանուր առմամբ դպրոցը յաջող տարի մը անցուցի: (Overall, I had a successful school year)
* build vocabulary specific to the student’s personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners. For example, learning the names of school subjects, sports, hobbies and social activities in Armenian.

Section 2: Discussion

What students did well

In the 2024 examination, students:

* clearly introduced the focus of their subtopic, alerting assessors to any objects brought to support the discussion of the subtopic. Topics for the detailed study included the invention of the Armenian alphabet in 301 CE and the work of the Holy Translators; the ‘definitely endangered’ status of Western Armenian as a language by UNESCO; the Armenian Genocide from 1890 to 1923 and its significance to the Armenian nation and diaspora; the Pan-Armenian Games; the Hayastan All Armenian Fund and its current worldwide fundraising efforts; the tree-planting initiative in Armenia; the formation and structure of the Armenian community in Australia; and the links between Armenia and the diaspora
* demonstrated in-depth knowledge of their subtopic.  Students were well prepared to describe in some depth the multiple phases of Armenian migration and the establishment and growth of the Victorian Armenian community, churches, schools and organisations
* used the image to support the discussion on the subtopic. Students used a rich array of sources for research, and this enabled them to answer open-ended questions confidently
* communicated effectively with assessors throughout the discussion. Students responded to open questions readily and clearly, displaying an awareness of their topics. Probing questions were handled correctly with additional information, justification or explanation. It was clear that students had put in much effort and commitment to present for the oral examination
* used appropriate vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures. As the impact of technology, climate change and artificial intelligence evolves, vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures also need to develop. It was pleasing that student responses used the correct Armenian forms կայք (website), առցանց (online), որոնել (search), կլիմայի փոփոխութիւն (climate change), արհեստագիտութիւն / թեքնաբանութիւն (technology) and արհեստական բանականութիւն (artificial intelligence) when referring to sources of information and digital resources to preserve the endangered Western Armenian language
* used appropriate grammar and sentence structures
* used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

* avoid listing facts without expressing a point of view, or presenting general knowledge as research. For example, ‘The Armenian alphabet was invented in 406 AD. In my opinion this unified the Armenian nation and saved it from assimilation with neighbouring cultures and nations’
* practise using repair strategies. For example, sentences such as Կը ներէք նորէն սկսիմ որով սխալեցայ: (Forgive me, allow me to start again as I made a mistake)
* practise pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Students could practise both regular and irregular declensions such as դպրոցիս (my school’s), մօրս (my mother’s), հօրս (my father’s).