2023 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced written external assessment report

General comments

Students generally demonstrated good understanding of the requirements and structure of the 2023 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced examination. Most students completed all sections of the paper adequately.

Students who scored highly demonstrated a strong understanding of the specific requirements of each task and were able to address all points appropriately. Students who did not score well did not include enough details in their responses. Students should take every opportunity during the year to improve their skills in interpreting questions and analysing information from the texts given.

In Section 1, students who scored highly demonstrated sound understanding of the listening texts by answering most of the questions accurately in both English and Chinese. Those who did not score well showed inadequate understanding of the key information, a lack of details in their responses and occasionally incorrect English grammar and word choice, which interfered with meaning. A small number of students erroneously wrote their answers in English in Part B, instead of in full sentences in Chinese as required.

In Section 2, students who scored highly demonstrated great understanding of both listening and reading texts. Their responses reflected an excellent command of grammar, extensive vocabulary, accurate spelling and comprehension of the texts; a majority of students performed well in the extended response in Part B, where they were required to incorporate ideas from the reading text and an image into an evaluative newspaper article.

In Section 3, the choice of questions included some familiar topics commonly studied in Units 3 and 4, which allowed students to present a good range of information, ideas and opinions in their responses. The topics chosen by students were evenly distributed. Students are encouraged to read the essay tasks carefully to make sure they fully understand the requirements of the topic they chose. A small number of students could not complete the essay due to time management.

Students are advised to consolidate their knowledge of Chinese grammar, prescribed characters expected at the VCE level, and develop a sound understanding of styles of writing and text type features. Students should make good use of the reading time and pace themselves well during the examination. It is vital for all students to familiarise themselves with the format of the written exam to ensure they complete all questions in a timely manner.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers, or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

This section assessed the students’ capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of the listening text (a dialogue). Most students did well in Question 1a. and Question 1b.; however, some students gave multiple activities for each day when they were asked to identify just one activity Mary could participate in each day. Students are advised to consult their dictionary for the key words if they are not sure about the translation in English, for example: 药房 (pharmacy)，合唱 (chorus)，油画 (oil painting) etc.

Question 1a.

* Her father had a surgery last year and he needs to take four or five / a few kinds of medication/tablets every day.
* The medications are very expensive. / The medical expense is huge.
* This pharmacy in the shopping centre sells cheaper medication.

Question 1b.

* There is no longer a bookstore in the shopping centre. / The one in the shopping centre had to close down.
* Mary loves/enjoys visiting / going to bookstores, to read and buy books.
* Mary loves interacting/communicating/talking with the bookshop assistant/staff, but she can no longer do it.

Question 1c.

* Monday: oil painting or choir (listing two activities or using ‘and’ did not receive credit)
* Tuesday: calligraphy/penmanship
* Wednesday: choir/chorus/ singing in groups / singing band / band (‘going to see doctor with the father’ was not accepted)
* Thursday: Chinese painting
* Friday: swimming

Part B – Listening and responding in Chinese

In this part of the examination students were assessed on their understanding of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information from the text in Chinese. The information presented in the responses needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Full marks were awarded for responses that included all the relevant information from the text and were expressed clearly in Chinese.

Students generally performed well in this part; however, some of the key points were missing and some of the key Chinese characters were misspelled. For example, 幽静 is not 优静 (quietness)；培养 is not陪养 (companionship).

Question 2a.

任何四个 (Four of the following):

* 古书院多建在幽静秀丽/安静美丽/漂亮的地方。(Most of the traditional academies were built in peaceful/quiet and beautiful places.)
* 其建造风格和园林设计都别具特色。Traditional academies have distinctive construction styles and garden designs. （both parts）
* (古书院虽历经千年），但人们还可以看到其原貌。(Although the traditional academies have been around for thousands of years, people can still see their original appearance/looks.)
* 古书院一年四季有着不同的风景,还有大量的名人字画/名人词画。(There are different colours and sceneries throughout the year, as well as a large number of calligraphy works and paintings from famous people.)
* 有各种文化主题活动，如汉服，中医养生等文化活动。(Various culture-themed activities such as Han costume, maintaining health and wellbeing by using Chinese medicine etc.)

Question 2b.

任何六个 (Six of the following):

* (方便人们在那里学习中国传统知识），增强文化自信。 (People can conveniently learn traditional knowledge there and enhance their cultural confidence.)
* 推动传统文化教育的发展。 (Promote the development of traditional cultural education.)
* (有利于动员全民阅读），建设书香社会。(Motivate the nation to read and build a literary society.)
* 带动了文化和旅游业的结合。(Promote the integration of culture and tourism.)
* 更好地传承品行教育和知识追求的书院精神。(Pass on the academy’s spirit of moral education and knowledge pursuit.)
* 为培养人才和(教学)研究起了很大的作用。(Play a great role in cultivating talents as well as teaching and learning research.)
* 推动文化和学术交流。(Promote cultural and academic exchange.)

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

In Part A, students responded to one reading text and one listening text on the topic of global citizenship. They needed to demonstrate their capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of the texts.

Most students performed well in Part A, particularly with questions related to either listening or reading alone; however, some students struggled with the combined questions, indicating a lack of practice. Question 3e. proved to be challenging for some students as they needed to summarise the key information from both the reading text and the listening text. Those who included accurate and specific information achieved higher marks. Students are reminded to read the questions carefully and accordingly include details in their response to demonstrate their thorough understanding of the texts.

A small number of students seem to have misread the keywords of Questions 3c. and 3d., giving answers to the wrong question. Students should avoid ‘double dipping’ by giving the same answer to different questions.

Question 3a.

* the increasing/growing impact of globalisation
* the demand for sustainable/progressive/continuous development in all aspects/areas (not globally).

Question 3b.

* Initially, the Chinese found it difficult to implement.
* They thought that being a citizen of the world conflicts with being a citizen of one's own country.
* Ordinary people/civilians feel that they do not have the financial means/money to support their children to become global citizens.

Question 3c.

* Kindergarten
* In addition to selecting traditional texts such as the ‘Three Character Classics’ / San Zi Jing (pinyin must be correct), kindergartens / early childhood education also included a series of picture books on world citizens.
* Primary and secondary schools
* No longer focused only on grades/marks/results but also emphasised practical ability/pragmatism / hands-on activities.
* Asked/allowed students to become all-rounders / develop in all aspects.
* Tertiary
* In addition to studying professional/specialised knowledge, university students are also required to cultivate competence and values in experiential activities.

Question 3d.

Any three of the following:

* Australia has become more tolerant / highly accepting (not ‘forgiving’) because of its multiculturalism / multiple cultures.
* Individuals are permitted to have multiple/dual nationalities.
* Everyone / females, males / people young and old are presenting themselves as citizens of the world.
* Global citizenship has become an important part of the curriculum / been adapted or included into the education system.

Question 3e.

Eight of the following:

* Kindergarten kids found/discovered from pictures/books the cultures of the east, west, north, south, and all different parts of a country.
* Primary and secondary school students participate in tree planting and forest protection (on weekends).
* Participate in volunteering programs (during the school holidays).
* While learning, students build respect between humans and nature, and between humans/peers.
* Graduate students from university support/participate in international medical activities and cultural/educational activities.
* Promote the spirit of world citizenship through the unity/combination/mixture of knowledge and action.
* Students participate in speeches in assembly and class discussions/conversation (to become empathetic global citizens).
* Watch videos / view recordings.
* Wrap/prepare holiday gifts or bring/donate daily necessities/items (to let students know there are still areas where food and clothes are insufficient).

Part B – Reading and responding in Chinese.

Students were required to demonstrate understanding of the stimulus texts and to address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the text/texts that was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

The reading texts included a visual stimulus. High-scoring responses successfully incorporated information from the visual stimulus.

Responses were assessed holistically according to the assessment criteria and the expected qualities published on the VCAA website. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language accuracy; however, language accuracy was an important expected quality that was considered in the assessment.

It was possible to achieve a high score for this question without exceeding the specified word/character limit, which is shorter than the limit specified for Section 3.

Many students performed well in part B, where they were required to write an article for a Chinese newspaper evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of ‘Huddling for Retirement’.

Question 4

Text type: Newspaper article

Kind of writing: Evaluative

Audience: General public

Key points students may have included in their responses (students needed to form four topic sentences from the ten key points below to include two advantages and two disadvantages:

利 (Advantages):

* 每天一块儿出去锻炼身体如走路和打太极。(exercising together every day, such as walking and doing Taiqi)
* 换班做饭，三餐又可口又有营养。(taking turns making delicious and nutritious meals)
* 如爸爸红光满面，妈妈看起来年轻了/精神状态或健康有所改观。(improved health and state of minds; Li Hai’s dad looks great/healthy and mum looks younger)
* 每天种菜和干一些轻松的农活。(living a happy life; growing own veggies and doing light farm work)
* 图片信息: 像聚会/过得很开心/很热闹。(having a party / living a happy or jolly life / lively)

This last point is from the image and needed to be included.

弊 (Disadvantages)

* 怕别人说子女不愿意为父母养老。 (worrying that other people would think they were not willing to look after their parents)
* 还担心万一有个三长两短的，子女没法马上到他们的身边。(worrying that if anything happened to the parents, their children will not be able to come right away)
* 一旦有人生病，就没法继续抱团养老了。 (once someone became ill, the huddling retirement would be disrupted)
* 有的人不会做家务活，会做的人要受累。(if someone was not good at housework, the more capable ones had to do it and became exhausted)
* 调解吵架问题。(mediating when people have conflicts).

Section 3 – Writing in Chinese

In this part of the examination, students were given a choice of four questions, each requiring a different text type and a different style of writing: a personal diary entry, an informative magazine article, a persuasive speech, and an imaginative story. They were required to produce a response to one of these questions using 300–350 characters in Chinese. Their responses were marked holistically against the criteria published on the VCAA website.

Responses that scored highly demonstrated a well-structured, coherent text in fluent language that effectively addressed the chosen question. These responses often presented opinions that were well supported by strong evidence or engaging contents; Responses that did not score well presented some irrelevant information or unnecessarily long and wordy pieces of writing/responses, which is not recommended.

Students need to pay attention to the style of writing required for their chosen question. Some students who chose Question 6 wrote a persuasive piece instead of the required informative piece. When planning their responses, students should carefully consider both the range and the depth of the information required for the task. Students should also pay more attention to the correct use of proverbs or idioms, as their misuse could affect the clarity of their expressions.

Question 5

Students were asked to write a dairy entry describing their thrilling experience in a water sport competition.

Text type: Diary entry

Kind of writing: Personal

Audience: Yourself

Points students could have included:

* a brief description of the event background
* describing what has happened on water, emphasising the adventure / thrilling part
* describing the ending and personal feelings/gains/emotion etc.

Responses that scored highly described the thrilling experience vividly with fluent expressions and logical linking between sentences. Responses that did not score well tended to give a brief recount of a personal experience of a water sport, without expressing the excitement, challenge or personal gains.

Students are reminded to read the task carefully and draft a plan before starting to write.

Question 6

Students were asked to write an article for a fashion magazine, informing readers about the newly opened clothing store.

Text type: Magazine article

Kind of writing: Informative

Audience: Readers of the magazine

All three body paragraphs need to link to traditional elements. Possible points (but must mention Beijing style at least once) included:

* the location and surrounding / the traditional interior and external design
* the characteristics of the clothes in this store (link to traditional elements)
* the unique shopping experience (services relating to Chinese culture etc.)
* traditional activities hosted by the shop (celebration, costume photo taking).

Responses that scored highly described the store with rich content related to China-Chic, had fluent expressions and logical linking between sentences. Responses that did not score well tended to use a lot of persuasive language to promote the store, which read more like a persuasive article or a promotion for the store. Students are reminded to read the task description carefully and make sure they know the style of the writing.

Question 7

Students were asked to write a speech to persuade Year 11 students to pursue their real passion through further education. This was the most popular topic chosen by the students this year.

Text type: speech

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: other students

Possible persuasive points that may be include

* Pursuing passion creates enduring motivation and perseverance (to avoid time wasting/’detour’).
* Pursuing passion can make them happier / give them a sense of self-fulfilment.
* Pursuing passion can maximise one’s potential / lead to success.
* Pursuing passion can harvest professional creativity.

Students who scored highly handled the task very well, demonstrating a sound command of Chinese grammar and a vast vocabulary range. They included strong, persuasive topic sentences, highly relevant explanations and logical evidence.

Students who did not score well tended to misinterpret the topic or failed to show the logical links between the topic sentences and the evidence. Some students simply changed the topic to popular careers or further education. Students are reminded to read the task description carefully and draft a plan before starting to write.

Question 8

Students were asked to write an imaginative story about wearing smart glasses for a day in 2043.

Text type: story

Kind of writing: imaginative

Audience: school community

Possible points students could have included:

* Anything exciting, or with drawbacks and humour, based on the knowledge of technology.
* The story must include intelligent features of smart glasses that are not currently available.
* The functions of smart glasses must be extraordinary.

Responses that scored highly successfully conveyed significant and original information relevant to the task, with a strong focus on science and technology. They demonstrated good command of the language to describe the story with rich imagination. Responses that did not score well lacked imagination and the story was predictable. Students are advised to draft their stories well and allow themselves plenty of time to complete the story.