2023 VCE Dutch written external assessment report

General comments

Students were generally familiar with the specifications for the written examination. Students who achieved high scores were able to identify relevant information from the aural and written texts and to give well-structured and detailed responses that addressed the questions effectively. They demonstrated an excellent command of the language and used a broad range of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures.

Over the course of their study, students should engage consistently with Dutch language by reading books, watching films, listening to the radio, following the news and more. This will allow them to develop correct spelling and sentence structure, and become familiar with idioms and vocabulary, among other benefits. It is also recommended that students write and converse in Dutch, for example with friends, family or each other.

Students should aim to complete several previous Dutch written examinations to become familiar with the examination format and requirements. This will also help students to practise their time management.

It is important to note that students should read the question carefully to understand the exact nature of the task. In Sections 1 and 2, students are advised to note the number of marks allocated to each question, as well as the visual prompts, such as tables and bullet points, provided. These are an indication of how many answers the student should provide for each specific question. Students should use a variety of listening and reading materials to improve their comprehension and their note-taking skills.

For language to be of a higher level, students should focus on spelling, grammar, expression and vocabulary. Common errors included the following:

* gender confusion, with the definite articles for ‘the’, de and het being applied incorrectly and adjective inflection for neuter nouns being incorrect, for example een grote huis instead of een groot huis (a large house)
* syntax errors, with sentences structured in ungrammatical or confusing ways, particularly the position of verbs in complex sentences
* confusion between en (and) and een (a/one)
* confusion between pronouns and possessive adjectives, for example uw (your) instead of u (you)
* spelling mistakes of various kinds, especially:
* double consonants/vowels, for example jaaren instead of jaren (years) and renen instead of rennen (run)
* use of g/ch, for example ligt instead of licht (light)
* words ending in d/t, for example voorbeelt instead of voorbeeld (example)
* insufficient grasp of tenses, evident in overuse of present tense or errors in conjugation and word order when using future and past tenses.

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 – Listening and responding

It is important that students use their time well to take notes. However, anything written in the note-taking space is not used in assigning marks.

Part A

Students who scored highly were careful to understand the requirements of each task and provided responses that met each criterion.

Most students handled this section well. Some responses were too short and did not receive full marks, as they did not include key words such as ‘passengers’, ‘the food’ or ‘genetic modification’.

Text 1

Question 1

Aspects of the cruise the narrator found less enjoyable were:

* rude passenger
* allergic reaction (to food)
* smelly water/foul air
* gloomy/depressing weather.

Text 2

Question 2

The five correct statements were:

* Leiden had more than 10,000 inhabitants in 1574.
* The Burcht was built on a constructed hill.
* The museum is worth visiting.
* Leiden was besieged by the Spanish army in the 16th century.
* Leiden has an annual celebration on 3 October.

Text 3

Question 3

The existing and potential technologies that can reduce plastic waste and the description of how each technology works were:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Technology** | **How it works** |
| genetic modifications of microorganisms  | microorganisms ‘eat’ plastic |
| development of biodegradable ‘plastic’ made from natural materials | ‘plastic’ breaks down |
| aquatic drone/water robot | collects and removes floating debris in water |

Part B

Students were assessed on their understanding of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information from the text in Dutch. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in Dutch were awarded full marks. Answers in English did not receive any marks.

Text 4

Question 4

Students scored well on this question. Some students did not receive full marks because they did not provide all relevant information, for example ‘fun/educational **for families**’.

Relevant answers included:

* evenement is gratis toegankelijk (event is free to attend)
* veel verschillende kunstvormen vertegenwoordigd (wide variety of art forms represented)
* geweldige kans om lokale kunstenaars te ondersteunen/deel te zijn van de gemeenschap (great opportunity to support local artists/be a part of the community)
* leuke en leerzame dagje uit voor gezinnen (fun and educational day out for families).

Text 5

Question 5

Students found this question more challenging. Many students included only two to three points in their answer or referenced a point with a single word or phrase that did not show the relevance to the question.

Relevant answers included:

* Ze is niet geïnteresseerd in bedrijfskunde/studeerde het niet op school/ze moet haar interesses volgen. (She is not interested in business/did not study it at school/she should follow her interests.)
* Er zijn veel andere banen die goede arbeidsvoorwaarden/een goed salaris bieden. (There are plenty of other jobs that have good benefits/offer a good salary.)
* De zakenwereld is competitief/genadeloos. (Business is competitive/cut-throat.)
* Het zal moeilijk zijn om een veilige baan te vinden in de zakenwereld. (It will be difficult to find a secure job in business.)
* Ze zal straks misschien ongelukkig zijn. (She might be unhappy later on.)

Text 6

Question 6

Students had difficulty identifying all the relevant information in this text. Many responses were repetitive and wordier than they needed to be.

Relevant answers included:

* selecteer personeel met levenservaring (choose staff with life experience)
* training voor personeel (training staff)
* rooster consequent hetzelfde personeel in en op dezelfde tijd (roster same staff consistently and at the same time)
* selecteer geschikte lokaties (waar mensen sociaal afgezonderd zijn) (choose suitable locations [where people are socially disconnected])
* vind caissières die menselijk contact waarderen (find cashiers who appreciate contact with people)
* de lokatie van de kletskassa’s in de supermarkten moet makkelijk te vinden zijn (the location of the chat checkouts in the supermarkets should be easily found).

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Students were assessed on their understanding of general and specific aspects of the reading texts. The information students included in their responses needed to be relevant to the question.

Part A

Text 7

Question 7

Marks awarded for this question were spread across the full range. Students found it difficult to identify the specific points, rather than summarising the entire text.

The princess’s duties were:

* take press photos with royal family every two years
* attend various ceremonies during king’s coronation
* play leading public role at Koningsdag/King’s Day celebrations
* give many official addresses/speeches.

Text 8

The information students included in their responses needed to be relevant to Questions 8a. and 8b., respectively. Students are reminded to read the questions carefully. Question 8a. asked for reasons and Question 8b. asked for benefits. For example, the answer ‘Ensures water for population growth’ is a benefit and therefore not a relevant answer for Question 8a.

Question 8a.

Reasons for the recent construction of the desalination plant were:

* water scarcity due to the millennium drought
* fears that big cities might run out of water.

Question 8b.

Ways the plant benefits people around the state included the following:

* The plant can supply one-third of the city’s water needs.
* The plant provides water during droughts/low rainfall periods.
* Water from the plant can be sent to other catchment areas.
* The plant ensures water for population growth (in the face of climate change).

Part B

Text 9

Question 9

Students were asked to read the advertisement about fostering a pet and write a persuasive formal letter to the animal shelter requesting to a foster a pet. Students were directed to include ways in which they did and did not meet the criteria for fostering. It was expected that characteristics of a formal letter would be successfully applied and that the writing would be personal and persuasive. The fostering criteria that students met or did not meet could include the following:

* love animals
* have space at home
* seeking temporary pet
* trying to do good deeds
* house is suitable/safe
* can handle animals with health/behavioural issues.

Students who received high marks elaborated on points from the advertisement to personalise them, asked questions and used formal language (e.g. u rather than jou for ‘you’) naturally.

Lower-scoring responses simply summarised the points from the advertisement without adding any personal context. Some lower-scoring responses did not discuss the fostering criteria that the student did not meet and therefore did not fully meet the requirements of the task.

Section 3: Writing in Dutch

In this section of the examination, students chose one of two questions, each requiring a different text type and a different style of writing: an evaluative report (Question 10) or an imaginative story (Question 11). Both questions were attempted by students, with an even spread between the questions.

Generally, students demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of the task and made correct use of the required kind of writing and text type for each of the questions.

The highest-scoring responses demonstrated excellent language skills and developed the chosen topic with interesting and creative ideas enhanced by a wide range of vocabulary and idiomatic phrasing.

Students are advised to practise writing extended responses within a specified timeframe. Students also need to ensure that they address the specific audience, purpose and text type required.

Question 10

Students were asked to respond to the news that the Dutch language would no longer be offered as a subject in Australian schools by writing a report for adult readers of a Dutch newspaper, evaluating whether Dutch should continue to be taught.

High-scoring responses were consistently written in a formal register, evaluating reasons both for and against teaching Dutch. Key issues for lower-scoring responses were repetition of only one or two points and arguments that did not evaluate reasons both for and against’. These responses lacked depth and showed a limited ability to organise ideas coherently.

Question 11

In Question 11, students were asked to write an imaginative story for young adults about something strange they noticed at a tennis match.

Imaginative stories can be difficult to craft satisfactorily in a short period of time. However, most students who chose this question produced very imaginative stories, showing an appropriate awareness of the characteristics and requirements of this type of writing. These students made a good attempt at creating a logical narrative, maintaining interest, building up to a climax and reaching a satisfactory resolution.

Responses by students who scored highly included the following characteristics:

* short-story format (e.g. title)
* use of creativity and imagination to entertain readers
* a strong sense of context (physical surroundings and atmosphere)
* appropriate language such as adjectives, adverbs and so on
* varied sentence lengths to add to overall effect, desired atmosphere or emotion
* a clear narrative arc – beginning, climax and resolution.