2023 VCE Greek written external assessment report

General comments

In 2023 students responded well to most sections of the VCE Greek written examination. Students who scored highly displayed very good comprehension skills and an ability to identify the required information from the aural and written texts. These students demonstrated an excellent command of the language and an ability to use a broad range of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures.

Overall, students should be exposed to a variety of listening and written passages so that they can develop the appropriate skills. It is important that they take notes during both the listening and reading sections as this will assist them in providing accurate answers. Some students did not do this. They should also practise highlighting important points in written passages and key words in the questions, to ensure that they respond correctly and that they do not repeat the same points for two different questions. Students need to understand the different requirements of a ‘what’ and a ‘how’ question.

There is no need for students to repeat the question in their answer because it is time consuming and they lose writing space, which may give them the impression that they have given a very detailed answer when, in fact, they have omitted points. In general, students need to remember that the number of marks in a question usually equates to the number of points required in the response.

Students should also develop the skill of writing in complete sentences with correct syntax and spelling, so that they can address the instructions given to them in specific parts of the examination such as Part B – Listening and responding in Greek.

Another skill that students need to develop throughout the year is time management, as some students appeared to have run out of time to adequately complete Section 3.

More time should be devoted in class on the characteristics of text types and styles of writing, with a focus on language (spelling, grammar, expression and vocabulary) to enhance students’ writing.

Common errors were:

* errors with common verbs such as the verb ‘must’, which often was written incorrectly as ‘πρέπεις, πρέπουμε, πρέπαμε’ etc. instead of ‘πρέπει᾽.
* errors with verb tenses in general – θα πήρα το κινητό μου instead of the correct θα πάρω το κινητό μου (I would take my mobile)
* errors with the use of articles: η Έλληνες (the Greeks) instead of the correct οι Έλληνες, στη γυμνάσιο instead of στο γυμνάσιο (the high school), η δημοτικό σχολείο instead of το δημοτικό σχολείο (the primary school), ένα οθόνη instead of μία οθόνη (a screen)
* errors in the use of adjectives: πολύ όμορφη εστιατόριο (very pretty restaurant instead of the correct πολύ όμορφο εστιατόριο, πολλές βιβλία (many books) instead of πολλά βιβλία
* using the incorrect Greek word, when words seem to sound similar: κοντές φίλες (short friends) instead of the correct κοντινές φίλες (close friends), εξoχικό (holiday house) instead of εξωτερικό (overseas), ‘λαγούς’ (rabbits) instead of ‘λαούς’ (nations)
* use of anglicisms: using ήμουνα αργά στην τάξη (I was late to class) instead of the correct πήγα αργά στην τάξη (I went late to class), πήγα στο Γυμνάσιο σχολείο (I went to high school) instead of πήγα στο Γυμνάσιο
* making up Greek words into English, such as writing ‘monopatia’ instead of ‘footpaths’
* confusing the letters of the Greek alphabet: δημάσαι instead of the correct θυμάσαι (you remember), ήχερα instead of ήξερα (I knew), ήρφα instead of ήρθα (I came).

Specific information

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

This section assessed the students’ capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts.

Most students provided accurate answers based on the aural text. However, some students in Question 1c. only mentioned the days and time the dance lessons take place, but did not specify that they take place in the evening or specifically during the school holidays, or wrote one wrong day.

Question 1a.

Eleni is reluctant to participate in the traditional Greek dance lessons because:

* she feels she already knows how to dance Greek dances
* she doesn’t have time for other activities.

Question 1b.

The reasons Dimitri gives to convince Eleni that they should participate in the traditional Greek dance lessons are (five of the following):

* they will learn about Greece’s rich culture / learn dances from different parts of Greece
* they will learn about the history of each dance, musical instruments and costumes
* they will have fun/relax
* they will exercise
* they will create new friendships / socialise / go to the cafeteria with other participants
* they will speak the Greek language.

Question 1c.

The lessons take place:

* every Tuesday from 6.00 pm till 8.00 pm / in the evening
* every Thursday at the same time
* during the school holidays.

Part B – Listening and responding in Greek

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 Greek. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in Greek were awarded full marks.

Some students were not able to find all the required points and then convey them accurately in Greek. In Question 2a. they did not understand that according to the passage Theodorakis wrote music for the opera, ballet, theatre and films, not poetry or lyrics. Many students were also not able to identify that Theodorakis wrote the music for poems of famous Greek and non-Greek poets, or that he combined Greek poetry with popular music. In Question 2b. a number of students did not express correctly in Greek that he tried to restore friendship between various nations. Some students who understood the passage and identified points did not read the question carefully and placed some of the answers under the wrong question.

Students must note that this section of the examination requires students to respond in complete sentences in Greek.

Question 2a.

Mikis Theodorakis’s contribution to Greek music was (five of the following):

* έγραψε διάφορα είδη μουσικής (he wrote many music genres)
* έγραψε (συνθέσεις) για όπερες και μπαλέτα (he wrote music compositions for opera and ballet)
* έγραψε μουσική για το θέατρο και για τον κινηματογράφο (he wrote music for the theatre and for films)
* έγραψε τη μουσική για ποιήματα μεγάλων Ελλήνων και ξένων ποιητών (he wrote music for the poems of famous Greek and non-Greek poets)
* ένωσε την (ελληνική) ποίηση με τη λαϊκή/ελληνική μουσική (he combined Greek poetry with popular/Greek music)
* ίδρυσε μία ορχήστρα με την οποία έδωσε συναυλίες σε όλη την Ελλάδα (he founded an orchestra with which he gave concerts all over Greece).

Question 2b.

Apart from music, Mikis Theodorakis’s other contributions were:

* ήταν συγγραφέας (κοινωνικών και φιλοσοφικών βιβλίων) (he was a writer of social and philosophical books)
* έγραψε ποιήματα (he wrote poems)
* αγωνίστηκε για την ειρήνη (he fought for peace)
* αγωνίστηκε για τα ανθρώπινα δικαιώματα (he fought for human rights)
* προσπάθησε να συμβάλει στην αποκατάσταση φιλίας μεταξύ διαφόρων λαών (he tried to restore friendship between various people/nations).

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

A number of students displayed a sound understanding of both the reading and listening texts and answered most questions accurately. It is important that students underline the key words in the question to ensure that they respond to them specifically, as some students understood the reading passage well, but entered their responses under the incorrect question or repeated the same answer in two questions.

Some students translated words incorrectly: in Question 3a. the name of Stavros (Niarhos) became ‘a cross’; in Question 3c. ‘πολιτιστικό κέντρο’ (cultural centre) became political centre or a civilised centre. A few students referred to Vamvakou as an island.

In Question 3d. a number of students added their own points about recycling and atmospheric pollution. Some students did not point out specifically that it was the hotels that minimised the use of plastics or wrote that hotels became more economical rather than ecological. Other students wrote that people ‘take care’ of trees instead of ‘planted’ trees. The word ‘λιμάνια’ (ports) was often misunderstood to be ‘λίμνες’ (lakes).

Question 3e. required students to complete the table, where some answers were provided. All blank spaces needed to be filled with answers to gain full marks. Some students wrote that Athens has one hundred million people living there instead of millions of people. Others added their own means of transportation to Athens and Vamvakou, writing that people get there by airplane, train and bicycle, perhaps because they did not understand that the table required them to specifically focus on what the text stated about the transport used.

Question 3a.

The factors that contributed to the ‘Vamvakou Revival’ were:

* young people coming up with the idea / making plans to revive Vamvakou village
* (young) people presenting their plans to the Stavros Niarhos Foundation
* the Stavros Niarhos Foundation providing large financial assistance / gaining financial assistance.

Question 3b.

The goals of the ‘Vamvakou Revival’, according to the text, were reached by:

* increasing the number of people living there permanently
* increasing the number of visitors who stay longer
* improving the infrastructure of the area
* developing businesses/jobs/services.

Question 3c.

The initiatives that were put into place to attract more people to Vamvakou were (three of):

* the school building already converted to a cultural centre (with robotics and IT)
* the organised events (such as theatrical and musical performances)
* (offices) have internet connection
* outdoor activities / activities such as cycling.

Question 3d.

The area of Athens achieved sustainable tourism when it:

* addressed the issue that tourists had to discover places in a way that benefited nature and people
* opened new paths for walking and cycling in order for people to visit ancient monuments and nature
* planted trees (where there were bush fires)
* had the hotels there, which minimised the use of plastics and thus disposed less plastic rubbish / had hotels there, which became more ecological / had many ports catering for tourists who own ships / many ports (for tourists to moor their boats).

Question 3e.

The differences between the Vamvakou village and the area of Athens were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Vamvakou village | Area of Athens |
| Population/permanent residents | 9 people (numbers slowly increasing) | Already has millions of people living permanently |
| Status of tourism | Trying to attract tourists / 200 visitors in the past | Has thousands of tourists |
| Condition of atmosphere/environment | Village has a clean atmosphere | In Attika they are taking measures to improve the environment / environment is not clean |
| Status of businesses | Need businesses to establish there / create jobs | Already has many companies / many jobs for people |
| Pace of life | Life is peaceful / slower pace of life | Life is fast and busy |
| Transport to the place | People can only get there by car | Tourists can moor their own boats (at the many existing ports) / can get there by boat |

Part B – Reading and responding in Greek

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

Student 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 limit, which is shorter than the limit specified for Section 3.

Overall, most students understood the information in the blog on Spartathlon. However, some students wrote their response as an informative piece, copying down information from the blog, rather than identifying the main relevant points and then manipulating language to successfully convince the readers of a youth sport magazine that Spartathlon should also be included as an Olympic sport.

Question 4

Points that could be included in the article for a youth magazine were:

* είναι ένας υπερμαραθώνιος 246 χιλιομέτρων/ πιο δύσκολος αγώνας του κόσμου (it is an ultramarathon of 246 kilometres / most difficult race in the world)
* το Σπάρταθλον τιμά τον Φειδιππίδη/ έχει ιστορική σημασία (Spartathlon honours Pheidippidis / it has a historical importance)
* πρέπει να τελειώσει μέσα σε 36 ώρες (it needs to be completed within 36 hours)
* οι συνθήκες είναι πολύ απαιτητικές ( οι δρομείς πρέπει να τρέξουν πάνω σε χωματόδρομους, άσφαλτο, σε υψηλό υψόμετρο/ οι δρομείς χρειάζεται να τρέξουν και κατά τη διάρκεια της νύχτας) (the conditions of the race are very demanding; the athletes have to run over dirt roads, asphalt, at high altitude / athletes are expected to race during the night). Any of these three points was required.
* φέρνει μαζί αθλητές από όλο τον κόσμο (it brings together athletes from all over the world)
* οι αθλητές πρέπει να φτάνουν στο κάθε σημείο ελέγχου μέσα σε μία ορισμένη ώρα/ ο αγώνας δρόμου είναι συνεχής χωρίς διακοπή (runners need to arrive at each checkpoint before the closing time / it’s a nonstop race).

Section 3 – Writing in Greek

In this section of the examination, students chose one of four questions, each requiring a different text type and a different style of writing: a speech (personal), a review (evaluative), a report (informative) and a short story (imaginative).

Students were assessed according to the capacity to demonstrate:

* relevance of content in relation to task set
* comprehensiveness and sophistication of content
* structuring and sequencing of ideas within and between paragraphs
* accuracy and range of vocabulary and grammar
* appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar for the context, purpose, style of writing, audience and text type
* cohesiveness of writing within and between paragraphs.

All four tasks were selected by students. The most popular was the speech (Question 5).

Students need to practise writing extended responses within the specified timeframe. They also need to ensure that they address the specific audience, purpose and text type required. Students should be encouraged to write in paragraphs as this will assist them in organising their ideas effectively. Some students did not use accents or placed them in the wrong place.

Question 5

Students were required to write the script of the speech that they would present to grade 6 students about their experiences and feelings when they started high school. Elements of personal language needed to be employed, such as first and /or second person; subjective, informal language, familiar style/register and emotive language. Ideas, feelings and impressions needed to be emphasised rather than factual and objective information. Students could have mentioned how they felt about the wider choice of subjects, the larger number of teachers that specialised in specific subjects, the school building and grounds, facilities, sport opportunities and extra-curricular activities etc. The piece of writing had to be clearly recognised as a speech, employing direct speech and questions, and include title/topic, structure, content, register, style and layout.

Most students selected this topic, as they had experienced the transition from primary school to high school themselves. The responses varied, as some students did not write the response as a speech, but wrote it like a report. Some students did not include a lot of feelings and impressions which are required for a personal response and wrote it as an informative piece. Audience and purpose were not always clearly reflected in these pieces.

Question 6

Students were required to write a review for the youth section of a newspaper, after attending a new Greek club that opened up for young people, evaluating whether it is worthwhile for their peers to attend. They could identify and elaborate on the club’s location, offerings, atmosphere etc. The writing was to be clearly organised as a review through characteristics such as topic, structure, content (opinion, reaction), author (fictional name), register, style and layout.

Students who selected this topic wrote about a new nightclub for young people or a Greek club that offered a variety of Greek cultural experiences, such as learning about Greek history, participating in Greek national day celebrations and learning about traditions in different regions of Greece.

Question 7

Students were required to write a report informing the readers of the school bulletin about their experience of having participated in an experiment with their family, whereby they all abstained from using their computers and mobile phones for a week. The piece of writing needed to be clearly organised as a report through characteristics such as topic, structure (introduction, body, conclusion), content (factual), use of evidence (when relevant), author, register, style and layout.

This was the second-most popular topic, as students could relate to the effects that technology has on their lives. They were able to inform the readers of how difficult or easy it was to abstain from using computers and what they did when they needed to access information, how they communicated with others, the effect this had on their relationships with other members of the family etc. This was done quite effectively as students were able to write about how the absence of technology brought the family together and provided opportunities for sharing of ideas and bonding.

Question 8

Students were required to write an imaginative story for a children’s magazine inspired by an image depicting parents with their children and the grandparents walking along the beach. They had to create a strong sense of context (physical surroundings and atmosphere) and situation. The piece of writing had to be clearly organised as a story through characteristics such as title/topic, structure, content, author (fictional name), register, style and layout.

The responses to this topic varied. Many responses were not imaginative and did not employ elements of a short story, such as a well-developed plot, characters and descriptions of the atmosphere and setting. Some students described the image given, while others wrote about what happened prior to going to the beach. A small number of students wrote an engaging short story inspired by the image.