

2018 VCE Greek written examination report

General comments

In the 2018 VCE Greek written examination, students responded well to most sections, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the examination structure and most of the different types of writing required. Very few students responded in the wrong language. Students who scored highly provided correct responses for all sections of the examination and exhibited good comprehension skills and an ability to identify the required information from the aural and written texts.

It was noted that many students underlined the key words in the question; however, they needed to ensure that they responded to these in their answer. Students needed to take greater care when responding to questions that asked how a specific person 'convinced', 'is concerned' or 'benefits' and answer about that person only.

Some students wrote down most of the information of the aural texts as their answer rather than responding to the specific questions; other students wasted time rephrasing the question in their answer, perhaps at the expense of writing down all the required points. Students should be aware that the number of lines provided and the number of marks allocated for a question can be used as a guide to the length of the required response. If students find the space insufficient, they can use the space below the lines to complete their response; however, anything written in the note-taking space cannot be assessed.

Students should include dictionary practice not only in their examination preparation, but also throughout the year, to prevent incorrect interpretations of words. For example, in Section 2, Question 4 some students translated *σύγχρονη αρχιτεκτονική* as 'synchronised architecture' instead of 'contemporary architecture' and translated *πολιτισμός* incorrectly as 'politics'. Students also should use the correct meaning of the word that suits the context, for example, although *μεταφορά* can mean 'transition', in the context of the text it meant 'transport'.

Another important skill that needs to be developed is time management, as some students appeared to have run out of time to adequately complete Section 3 – Writing in Greek.

Greater focus is needed on language to ensure that students have knowledge of all aspects of grammar as outlined in the study design, as well as an extensive vocabulary.

Some areas of concern were:

- failure to use accents or to use accents correctly
- failure to use the word *πολύ* correctly in all its forms, as well as spell and/or use common words correctly (*μέλλον επικοινωνίας* instead of *μέσο επικοινωνίας*)
- errors with homophones (*πιος* instead of *ποιος*)
- errors with words that sound similar (*χώρα* instead of *χώρο*, *φυλή* instead of *φίλη*)
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives in gender, case and number (*άλλες ανθρώπους*)

- confusing verb tenses
- use of anglicisms or English syntax (*αυτό δεν θα έπαθε σε χρόνια να έρθουν*)
- confusing some Greek letters, for example, χ with ξ and φ with β.

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 Part A – Answer in English

In general, students performed well in this section, providing answers that were accurate and based on the texts provided. For Question 1, however, some students wrote down points that the other person said in the conversation. For example, Question 1b. was asking how Yiannis convinces his parents and Question 1c. about Zoe's concerns, not the other way around. In Question 1c. some students wrote about traffic, even though the question specified 'apart from road safety'.

Text 1

Question 1a.

Yiannis says that cycling is safe because:

- you have to wear a helmet
- there are many (safe) bike tracks in the city.

Question 1b.

Yiannis convinces his parents to allow him to use a bicycle because:

- it is good for his health/exercise
- they do not need to take him to school/he can ride to school
- he does not have to take public transport.

Question 1c.

Zoe's concerns regarding cycling are:

- the (cyclist) breathes harmful pollutants
- he is exposed to the weather elements
- he arrives at his destination sweaty.

Text 2

Most students understood the text and responded well. Although Question 2a. was answered well, some students included other information that was not relevant to the question, such as how dogs benefit from human company. Many students found Question 2b. challenging and could not name two techniques that were used to convince the listener. Writing 'statistics' or 'a persuasive technique' without an explanation or example was not enough.

Question 2a.

People benefit from adopting stray dogs because:

- it will give endless love and devotion
- it will help overcome worries and daily stress
- it will provide company/companionship/friendship

- it will fill them with positive energy
- it will model to children the value of giving/looking after others.

Question 2b.

The techniques used in the announcement to convince listeners to adopt stray dogs included the following:

- appeals directly to the audience through use of second-person singular
- emotive or persuasive language (e.g. 'poor little things')
- use of the slogan
- use of metaphor (e.g. 'your heart will break')
- use of numbers to highlight the issue

Part B – Answer in Greek

Students needed to take more care with their responses in this section. In Question 3a. many students wrote down all the information they heard, which did not respond specifically to the question. The question asked them to name how the island of Kalymnos was affected by sponge diving, but many students wrote about the 'σκάφανδρο' and the diving school, which referred to the effect on sponge divers and not the island. In Question 3b., most students found the four points, but some wrote that synthetic sponges are better than natural sponges so they did not gain any marks.

Text 3

Question 3a.

The occupation of sponge diving has affected the island of Kalymnos in any six of the following ways:

- *η οικονομία του νησιού εξαρτιόταν από τους σφουγγαράδες* (the economy of the island depended on the sponge divers)
- *σχεδόν όλες οι οικογένειες είχαν ένα σφουγγαρά* (nearly all families had a sponge diver)
- *οι άντρες έλειπαν από το νησί και από τις οικογένειές τους για πολλούς μήνες* (the men were absent from the island and their families for many months)
- *όταν επέστρεφαν ανάπηροι, δεν μπορούσαν να στηρίξουν οικονομικά την οικογένειά τους* (when divers returned disabled, they could not contribute financially to their families)
- *η εισαγωγή των συνθετικών σφουγγαριών κατέστρεψε την οικονομία του νησιού* (the introduction of synthetic sponges destroyed the economy of the island)
- *αυτό είχε σαν αποτέλεσμα την αύξηση της ανεργία* (the destruction of the economy led to an increase in unemployment)
- *το επάγγελμα του σφουγγαρά έκανε το νησί ξακουστό* (the occupation of sponge diving has made the island well known).

Question 3b.

Synthetic sponges differ from natural sponges in any four of the following ways:

- *τα φυσικά σφουγγάρια έχουν μεγαλύτερη διάρκεια ζωής* (natural sponges have a longer time span)
- *τα φυσικά σφουγγάρια δε διατηρούν μυρωδιές* (natural sponges do not retain smells)
- *τα φυσικά σφουγγάρια είναι πιο απορροφητικά* (natural sponges are more absorbent)
- *τα φυσικά σφουγγάρια είναι πιο μαλακά και χαλαρώνουν πιο πολύ το σώμα* (natural sponges are softer and relax the body more)
- *τα φυσικά σφουγγάρια κάνουν καλύτερη δουλειά* (natural sponges do a better job).

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Students understood most of the text and overall responded reasonably well to the questions. Some students, however, translated straight from the passage and did not respond specifically to the questions, while others added their own information. For example, in Question 4c. they wrote what Renzo Piano did, although the question required them to specifically explain how ‘technology’ is used in the National Library to promote Greek culture. Many students used the wrong word in Question 4d.; they wrote that the *Εθνική Λυρική Σκηνή* supports the arts by enabling ‘young people to showcase/show off their talent’ instead of ‘cultivate/develop’ their talent. For Question 4f. a number of students found the points, but did not include the word ‘free’.

Text 4

Question 4a.

The two things that are successfully combined in the buildings of Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center are:

- modern architecture
- green technology.

Question 4b.

The meaning of the word *δωρεά* in the context of the text is:

- donation (the Center was donated to the Greek state)
- the cost of building the Center was covered by the Niarchos Foundation
- the cost of its operation for five years was covered by the Niarchos Foundation.

Question 4c.

The new National Library of Greece uses technology to promote Greek culture by:

- maintaining important historical documents with technological methods
- saving the documents electronically/digitised
- connecting to other libraries in Greece and internationally
- providing spaces with the most modern means of communication.

Question 4d.

The *Εθνική Λυρική Σκηνή* supports the arts by:

- providing educational seminars for music and dance
- being a suitable place for performances
- helping talented people to cultivate their talent.

Question 4e.

The Stavros Niarchos Park serves the community as:

- a green space for Athens
- a space for cultural activities
- a place to relax/enjoy the view
- a place for recreational sport.

Question 4f.

The four measures that have been taken to ensure the participation of visitors are:

- free tours
- free activities/space for everyone
- free educational activities for school and university students
- free transport (from the city centre) to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center.

Part B – Answer in Greek

Most students found the required five points in their response. Students who scored highly were able to manipulate the language in a creative manner in order to answer the question; however, students who did not score well relied simply on the language used in the text. Some students did not understand the last point that students themselves should not be asked to help serve the food and wash the dishes. Students should take care to use the correct word provided in the question as the email was about *κατασκήνωση* and not *στρατόπεδο*.

Text 5

Question 5

In the future the school needs to do the following in order to ensure a more enjoyable camp for all students:

- *Να μην γίνεται η κατασκήνωση το χειμώνα* (the camp should not take place in winter)
- *Να έχει η κατασκήνωση καινούργιες/καλές εγκαταστάσεις /με θέρμανση και με καλά στρώματα* (the camp should have new/good facilities with heating and good mattresses)
- *Οι τουαλέτες να είναι κοντά/ να μην είναι μακριά* (the toilets should be close/not far away)
- *Το προσωπικό να είναι έμπειρο /το προσωπικό πρέπει να οργανώνει κατάλληλες δραστηριότητες για την ηλικία των μαθητών* (the staff should be experienced/the staff should organise activities appropriate to the age of the children)
- *Να μην είναι υποχρεωμένοι οι μαθητές να βοηθούν καθημερινά /με το σερβίρισμα του φαγητού και το πλύσιμο των πιάτων* (students should not be required to help daily/serving food and washing dishes).

Section 3 – Writing in Greek

In this section of the examination, students could choose one of five questions, each requiring a different text type and a different kind of writing: an article (informative), a report (evaluative), a script for a speech (persuasive), a journal entry (personal) or a story (imaginative).

Students were assessed according to the following criteria:

- relevance, breadth and depth of content
- appropriateness of structure and sequence
- accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Students attempted all five questions. The journal entry (Question 9) was the most popular, followed by the report (Question 7). The least popular question was the script for a speech (Question 8). In this section of the examination, the areas of weakness demonstrated in responses were lack of paragraphing, inappropriate use of tenses and problems with grammar and vocabulary.

It is important that students practise writing in Greek extended responses of different genres in the specified time limit. A few students did not complete their response or wrote a very short response.

Question 6

For this question, students had to write an article for a sports magazine. They had to choose a sports event they attended recently and provide a number of reasons explaining what made it particularly unforgettable.

The small number of students who responded to this question demonstrated varying degrees of success. While there were some excellent responses, some students did not elaborate on their ideas efficiently as they did not explain specifically what made the event unforgettable and did not organise the writing as an article.

Question 7

Students had to write a report for a local newspaper and evaluate how social media affects people. They had to identify and elaborate on two advantages and two disadvantages of social media.

Most students answered this question well and structured the writing clearly as a report. They evaluated two advantages and two disadvantages and included evaluative language, including third-person expressions such as 'on one hand' and 'on the other hand'.

Question 8

For this question, students had to write the script for a speech that they would deliver at the next school assembly and provide a number of convincing arguments to persuade fellow students that 'Voting is not only a right but also a responsibility for all citizens'. They had to give reasons why voting is a right of people, but also explain why it is a responsibility for everyone to vote.

Few students chose this question. Most responses lacked depth and the writing was not organised as a speech through the use of structure (opening, conclusion, etc.).

Question 9

For this question, students had to write a journal entry commenting on a friend's support and trust and explain why the friendship is so important to them. They could describe times when they needed their friend's support and recall instances when they trusted their friend with something.

Most students answered this question well as they were familiar with writing journal entries. Few students did not observe the text type conventions or explain and recall in depth instances when their friend supported them.

Question 10

For this question, students had to imagine that someone they know has won a lottery and write a story to describe how this person's life has changed. Students had to explain what they did with the prize and how they were affected for the better or worse in different situations.

Some students wrote their response as an informative essay and did not include elements of imaginative writing such as a creative plot, characters, description of the setting, heightened drama or final resolution. Some only mentioned winning a lottery ticket in the last couple of paragraphs; these pieces of writing did not respond to the question effectively.