

## Oral component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The oral examination assessed the students' ability to communicate in Greek. It was divided into two parts: a seven-minute conversation, and an eight-minute discussion that comprised a one-minute introduction and a seven-minute discussion of the Detailed Study.

The assessment for both parts was divided into three sections: communication, content and language. It is important that students are familiar with both the specific requirements of the examination and the language associated with it. The Conversation and Discussion are assessed according to the following criteria.

#### Communication

- capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively
- clarity of expression

#### Content

- relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

#### Language

- accuracy of vocabulary and grammar
- range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Details regarding the assessment criteria are published on the VCAA website <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)>.

Although the Conversation and the Discussion criteria are similar, they assess different skills. In the Conversation section, students needed to speak and interact with assessors in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner about familiar aspects of their personal world.

In the Discussion section, students needed to present information and exchange ideas, opinions and information on a topic relating to the Detailed Study. Strong language and linguistic skills, including an extensive vocabulary, are expected in the Discussion and many students were well prepared. Students supported the Discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps, elaborating on them and stating why they considered them important. This was often a useful prompt, especially for weaker students, enabling a stimulating discussion and expression of worthwhile ideas and opinions. Support material needs to be free of all but minimal writing such as headings.

Some students were not adequately prepared to advance the exchange during the Conversation. These students were not able to elaborate on ideas and opinions or give reasons and examples to support their comments. Students should ensure that they are adequately prepared for the conversation.

Students need to be able to use language spontaneously to handle unrehearsed situations in the oral examination and cannot rely on rote-learned information. It is important that students practise responding to questions that are asked in different ways and answering unrehearsed questions for both sections of the examination. Students who already speak Greek fluently must prepare adequately for both parts of the examination. When students are not sure, they should answer with a phrase like 'I am not quite sure but I think that ...'

Students should be given written instructions and explanations about the oral examination in Greek so that they become familiar with the terminology and vocabulary required. Simulated oral examinations during class, with two assessors where possible, may assist students to become more familiar with the format and requirements of the examination.

The setting of the examination is formal, and students need to use appropriate language and avoid the use of colloquial terms. Students should be advised to use the correct formal register. When addressing one or both assessors, students should use the polite form (second person plural).

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section 1 – Conversation

#### Communication

Most students were well prepared and able to hold a conversation for seven minutes. They were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and expand effectively on aspects of their personal world, successfully discussing more than one topic and developing more than one aspect of the topic with some breadth and depth. They were able to go beyond simple responses and build on the assessors' comments by expressing opinions. They needed minimal support and had good repair strategies.

Students should listen carefully to all words in the assessors' questions to ensure that they address what they are being asked and give relevant responses. They should not respond in a rushed manner. They should focus on giving a clear response that displays correct pronunciation and intonation. If they do not understand the question, they should ask for clarification, and not respond with what appears to be a memorised answer. Students should practise reflecting on their own experiences and develop good repair strategies. They need to be able to self-correct and avoid lengthy pauses.

Most students were able to express their ideas with clarity, paying particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

#### Content

Most students were well prepared and able to speak fluently about areas such as home life, family and friends, school, interests and future aspirations. They were able to add breadth and depth to the conversation, and support and elaborate on their statements with an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas.

It is vital that students be well prepared to elaborate on their responses by giving reasons, examples and evidence, and that they do not resort to Anglicisms and rote-learned material. Rote-learning can disrupt the natural flow of the conversation and prevents students from responding to questions they did not anticipate. Students are reminded that assessors will use what the students say as prompts for further conversation. For example, if the student says that they participated in an educational program in Crete, they should be prepared to discuss it.

#### Language

Student performance on this criterion continues to be the weakest, although simple grammatical structures were controlled well by all students. Students should come well prepared with a good knowledge of the vocabulary they will need as this part of the examination is on familiar topics. This remains a problematic area for some students. For example, some students did not know the Greek words for school subjects, saying *φυσιολογία* or *κάνω ψυχολογικά* instead of *ψυχολογία* or *κάνω ψυχολογία*. The use of *δάσκαλος* instead of *καθηγητής* continues to be a common error, despite this being a word that students are likely to use in this part of the examination.

The most successful students displayed an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures that were used accurately, whereas weaker students had a more limited vocabulary. Speaking Greek outside of school, listening to Greek radio, watching Greek TV programs and listening to well-modelled Greek from adult native speakers, where possible, may assist students to develop an enriched vocabulary.

Basic grammatical and syntactical errors need to be addressed, including:

- saying *πρέπεις, πρέπω, πρέπουν, χρειάζω, προσπαθάνω, αρέσω* instead of the correct words *πρέπει, χρειάζομαι, προσπαθώ* and *με αρέσει*
- incorrect stress (for example, *οι ανθρώποι, οι φίλεναδες*)
- lack of agreement between article and gender (*η μπαμπά, ένα γειτόνι μου, η μικρή κορίτσι, ένα τηλεόραση*)
- lack of agreement between article and noun ending, especially with the plural form of nouns and adjectives (*οι άνθρωπους, τους ώρες τους εστιατόριους*)
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives (*πολλούς καταστροφές, ο αδελφός μου έχει φίλοι*)
- overuse of the nominative case (*είδα ο άνθρωπος* instead of the correct case *είδα τον άνθρωπο*)
- incorrect use of the genitive case *του φίλος μου, της γυναικών*
- incorrect use of the active and passive voices; for example, *ονειρεύω* instead of *ονειρεύομαι, τους λυπούσε* instead of *τους λυπήθηκε, χρειάζω* instead of *χρειάζομαι, τα έχω μαθαίνει* instead of *τα έχω μάθει*
- inability to distinguish between continuing past and simple past tense (*αγάπησα* instead of *αγαπούσα, διάβαζα* instead of *διάβασα*)

- incorrect use of words κάνουμε τους βαθμούς instead of χάνουμε τους βαθμούς, είμαι χαριμένη instead of είμαι ευχαριστημένη
- using English words (θα πάω στο city, να πάω holidays)
- using Anglicisms such as το τηλεβίζιο, στο γιάρι
- translating expressions from English; for example, από της αδελφής μου της δουλειάς.

## Section 2 – Discussion

### Communication

Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Greek Study Design* for more information regarding the oral examination. Teachers and students should note that ‘Following the Conversation the student will indicate to the assessor(s) the sub-topic chosen for detailed study and, in no more than one minute, briefly introduce the main focus of their sub-topic, alerting assessors to any objects brought to the support the discussion’ (*VCE Greek Study Design*, page 31).

Most students used the one-minute introduction appropriately. They stated the focus of the sub-topic, highlighting the issues and perspectives they would be exploring and steering assessors towards areas they could discuss with confidence and strength. However, some students simply named their topic and then began retelling the content of the texts they had studied. These students had often not formulated their own opinions on the sub-topic.

In the seven-minute discussion that followed the introduction students demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of their chosen topic. Most students spoke confidently and were skilled in expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions, supporting them with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied. They used a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures and had a high degree of interaction with the assessors. They were able to advance the discussion with interesting comments and at times were even able to lead the discussion. The criterion ‘Clarity of expression’ was addressed well by most students.

### Content

Students are expected to have dedicated 15 hours of class time to the Detailed Study and to have been exposed to a variety of resources from which they can draw in their discussion.

Good sub-topics ‘should enable the student to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the Greek-speaking community through a range of oral and written texts in Greek related to the selected sub-topic’ (*VCE Greek Study Design*, page 24). Sub-topics should reflect the interests and abilities of the class, as well as those of individual students, so that students will be more likely to express ideas and opinions and defend them effectively. Sub-topics must also cater effectively for all students’ linguistic ability.

### Resources

Students are more likely to be inspired to take an active part in the discussion if they understand the resources and are interested in the material studied. Resources need to contain material of sufficient depth to allow discussion on several aspects of the topic and to give students the opportunity to express ideas and opinions. They should suit the linguistic ability of the students and correspond specifically to the chosen sub-topic. Interviews, articles, short stories, films, poems, songs and pictures, for example, can all be used successfully.

Studying a large number of texts superficially and then merely listing them in the Discussion does not enable students to support and elaborate on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples, evidence and/or new ideas.

The selection of resources that present similar information does not allow the discussion to develop to the required depth. Very factual texts, or texts that are too short or too simple, should be avoided as they may not allow students to develop and express ideas and opinions, and the discussion may lack breadth and depth.

It was apparent this year that many students had enjoyed their Detailed Study as they were able to speak enthusiastically about their sub-topic. Only a small number of students showed little active interest in their chosen sub-topic and relied on rote-learned passages that retold the plot of the texts studied. These students needed a great deal of support from assessors as they were not able to respond to questions they had not anticipated.

When preparing for the oral examination students may find it useful to:

- make notes, summarising the sources
- write down how chosen texts relate to one another, rather than seeing them in isolation



- attempt to find common examples and ways to compare themes/issues
- have an in-depth knowledge of the texts by analysing them and having a variety of things to say about them
- develop their own opinions on the texts. For example, when referring to a poem, they should not simply give a summary of the content, but should be able to examine and discuss the themes of the poem and express and defend their own opinion
- be prepared to give original opinions and discuss and justify them, rather than just repeat ideas from texts or discuss the topic broadly
- practise a wide range of answers to a variety of likely and less likely questions, as this may help students to improve their performance and avoid pre-learned material.

### Language

Students should have mastered the vocabulary and syntactical structures associated with their chosen sub-topic. They should be able to use a broad range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and expressions accurately and appropriately.

Most students presented an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions. They had good knowledge of the vocabulary required and the correct grammatical structures. Some students did not have the range and depth of vocabulary required to carry the discussion forward. These students were unable to deal with the variety of questions asked and to demonstrate good repair strategies when in difficulty.

Grammatical and syntactical errors that need to be addressed are as follows.

- Students should not make mistakes such as *το αρέσω αυτό το ποίημα* when they know that they are likely to refer to the poem as one of the resources.
- Students should know the specific vocabulary needed for their sub-topic and not make mistakes such as *άλλες μετανάστες, τα δικαιώμα της γυναίκας, το κλαρίνι, τα μουσική εστιατόριους, το κουλτούρες*.
- Students should know the genders of the key words, learn to use a variety of adjectives correctly and not make mistakes such as *διάβασα μια κείμενο, αυτό το περίοδο μετανάστευση, έχουμε βλέπει ένα έργο*.