

Oral component

The oral examination in the Revised VCE Greek study assesses student knowledge and skill in using spoken Greek in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. This is the second year of the implementation of the new examination, which consists of two sections: Section 1 – Conversation (approximately 7 minutes) and Section 2 – Discussion (approximately 8 minutes). Most students handled the two parts of the examination very well and were familiar with its structure. There was no report of any student undertaking the examination and not knowing or understanding the format of the examination or not being to some degree prepared for the detailed study and discussion.

Part 1

Students converse with assessors about the student's personal world, for example school, home life, family and friends, interests and future aspirations. Most students performed very well in this part of the assessment. They had no difficulty discussing topics of a personal nature and they were able to hold a conversation for 7 minutes. It was rare for students to spend the seven minutes conversing on one topic. Most of them covered more than one topic.

Student interaction with the assessors in this Section was very good. Students were able to hold a general conversation for 7 minutes, especially those who were well prepared. Overall vocabulary used in Section 1, was suitable and relevant, however, students still made some basic grammatical, semantic and syntactical errors, for example in gender and case; *τα οικογένεια, το μπαμπά μου, σπουδάζω 'χύμα' αντί χημεία, τους άνθρωποι, έχω ένας φίλος, τα ελληνικά παιδιά, καλό ζωή, μετανάσταση αντί μετανάστευση.*

Usage of past perfect tense, e.g. *έχω πάω*: the usage of tenses in general needs to be improved and teachers should emphasise grammar more with their students. A few students used English words while talking in the target language, e.g. *Πήγαμε στο shop, πάω στο city, Yeh, No, sorry, television, yard.* Passive and active voice need to be addressed by teachers and taken into consideration by the students. Some common mistakes were; *να παντρέψω* instead of *να παντρευτώ, έχω παίζω, τους βοηθίζουν.*

Part 2

Following the conversation students were asked to indicate to the assessors the sub-topic chosen for their detailed study, and in no more than one minute, to introduce the main focus of their sub-topic, alerting the assessors to any objects brought to support the discussion. Most students were well aware of this part and responded to the task positively.

Overall, students were able to convey information relevant to their sub-topic and performed at a good level. Some students made good use of objects, supporting their discussion with photographs, diagrams and maps. It is not necessary, although advisable, that students bring objects with them to help them with the discussion. Usually assessors ask students to explain or talk at greater length about the sub-topic and the relevance of the object. Objects would greatly help average and less successful students to prepare and perform better when assessed. Students who brought support material had something concrete to fall back on and develop ideas and opinions.

The one minute given to students to introduce their sub-topic helps not only students, but also assessors, because it determines what kind of questions and where they could take the discussion depending on the student's sub-topic.

There was a variety of sub-topics which included:

- Greek Migration
- Difficulties of the first Greek migrants
- Friendship and Relationships
- Drugs and Youth
- Gambling – Casino
- Cyprus – An unresolved issue
- Popular Greek songs (*Rembetiko*)
- Popular Greek Rock singers
- Customs and Traditions (special Greek celebrations in Australia)

Some sub-topics were very successful and others less so. The successful sub-topics were those that invited discussion, and successful students were those who were able to express ideas, presented their opinions and interacted as naturally as possible in a discussion, including asking questions of the assessors.

The choice of sub-topic is very important. Teachers should ensure that sub-topics chosen by students are broad enough to accommodate a range of interests and perspectives, so that each student can provide an individual response in the discussion. Scientific and or specialised language should not be the centre of the topic, especially for less successful students. Teachers must make sure that there are plenty of resources (reading, oral and visual resources) to accommodate the preparation of students and maximise their chances of a high result.

A few students did not discuss their sub-topics in depth or express opinions and ideas. When preparing students on their sub-topics, teachers need to consider possible questions that might be asked during the examination and practise mock discussions with students. Also, students need to think and prepare ideas to demonstrate depth in their discussion. Expressing an opinion on the sub-topic is a good way for a student to finish the discussion.

Written component

This was the second year of the revised Greek course. The Written examination consists of (1) Listening and responding, (2) Reading and responding and (3) Writing in Greek. Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of general and specific information from spoken and written texts for Sections 1 and 2. In Part A of Sections 1 and 2 students have to respond in English and in Part B in Greek. In Section 3 students are required to write one text (200–250 words) involving the presentation of ideas, information, responding to questions, e.g. in a letter and or opinions in Greek. This year students had a choice of four tasks (journal entry, formal letter of application, story, informative report about a Greek custom, a festival, a celebration or a particular tradition).

Students were very well prepared and had a sound understanding of the tasks involved. Most students achieved very good results. The level of Greek used was good.

Some students answered questions in the wrong language, which resulted in no marks for that part. Students need to be extremely careful to use the correct language where required. Very few students answered questions by including their own personal experiences, adding or ignoring information given to them either in the listening or reading material in Sections 1 and 2. There was a marked improvement in this area.

In Section 1, some students wrote their answers in the note-taking space, rather than on the examination paper itself. Students should follow instructions very carefully.

In Section 3, some students were not very well prepared in terms of writing in the appropriate text type, e.g. journal entry, formal letter of application and although the standard of their Greek was generally good they were not able to gain higher scores because they did not comply with the appropriate discourse form. It is crucial that students be familiar with the different text types to avoid being penalised on the relevant criterion.

Section 1

Part A (20 marks)

Capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts

Question 1

Three days

Question 2

The Greek migration/migration

Question 3

The Greek consul general

Question 4

- afternoon: drizzly, 16 degrees centigrade, light winds
- early in the morning: weather changes, rain and storms, rough seas.

Any two of the above items for each bullet point gained 2 marks

Question 5

VCE graduates

Question 6

Restricted number of places

Question 7

Europe

Question 8

The college administration guarantees employment to its students

Question 9

The Annunciation of the Virgin and Greek Independence Day

Question 10

Celebrations end with national folk dances

Question 11

The conversation is taking place in a tourist bureau or travel agency

Question 12

Island of Mykonos

Question 13

Tinos: Historic Church of Our Lady, Mykonos: White washed houses and windmills, Syros: Famous Turkish delights

Question 14

Student concession ticket for 150 Euros

Question 15

Breakfast and dinner on board

Part B – Listening and responding

Capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts

Students need to answer all questions – bullet points with the correct information: For the PA announcement (time of the school day, (afternoon) where do the students and teacher need to go after the bell; what were the students asked to do at the end of the day); Telephone conversation: Why did Anna call George?; Long hours of study – four things that George did to help him relax; why is Year 12 the most important year for students – answer to be supported with information from the text.

Capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately

- well-sequenced sentences (full sentences where the question specifies this)
- spelling errors are slips, rather than basic errors
- appropriate vocabulary
- syntax errors are slips rather than basic.

Section 2

Part A – Reading and responding

Capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts

Question 22

Advantages: Technology makes life easier; reduces the amount of work; improves the quality of life; increases the production of goods; easier access to knowledge; communication between people is faster.

Disadvantages: increases unemployment; planet is in danger due to nuclear weapons produced by technology; humans work with machinery instead of other humans, which reduces their social skills; children instead of playing and interacting with other students in the parks close themselves up in the house, playing video games by themselves.

Question 23

The author means that knowledge is accessed through the Internet and people are communicating via e-mail etc.

Question 24

Before the invention of computers children spent their free time playing with each other outdoors in the park

Question 25

In Melbourne in 1960

Question 26

From Primary school Helen remembers: Many Greek background students; Greek background students for lunch had cheese, bread and fruit; their Greek was much better than their English in the early grades of primary school.

Question 27

Primary school teacher

Question 28

- St Helen's and St Constantine church – wedding ceremony
- they went to the park for wedding photographs
- they had a reception celebration where their non-Greek friends were impressed and had a good time.

Question 29

Any two out of the three:

- the bride steps on the groom's foot during the wedding ceremony
- they just had Greek music at the reception
- Greek food at the reception.

Question 30

Although Helen's cooking is similar to her mother's, she has added the following foods in her cooking which her husband and children like: Chinese rice, pizza, sweet sauces. She cooks mainly Greek traditional foods on special Greek celebrations, e.g. *Magiritsa*, *kourambiedes*, *koulouria*.

Part B – Reading and responding

Capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts

Students need to respond to the following:

- beautiful balcony view, green mountain with lots of cypress trees
- similar fires in Australia
- are the forests protected in Australia?

- animals and birds face extinction: How are they protected in Australia?
- recycling in Australia
- young people interested in the environment in Australia today
- comment on a serious environmental issue that Australia is facing today
- ps. when are you coming back to Greece for a visit?

Capacity to convey information accurately and appropriately

- correct format style of informal letter (place, date, salutation, greeting, body/content, farewell, signing off, register and style)
- well-sequenced sentences
- spelling and syntactical errors are slips, rather than basic errors

Section 3

Writing in Greek

Question 1

Relevance, breadth and depth of content

Covers most things the student has done with his cousin, e.g. going out, sightseeing, pictures, visiting family and friends, Australian sports, feelings about this experience, feelings about family overseas, bonding with overseas family.

Appropriateness of structure and sequence

- correct layout of text type (journal entry: date/place/time context related to an event of importance, opening (often an evaluative comment), content (information/reflection/evaluation), conclusion, register, style

Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- no major spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors
- few minor slips
- good range of vocabulary and structures
- language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

Question 2

Relevance, breadth and depth of content

Covers all aspects of the job description (after-school care program, assist with sports, reading and general supervision) outline current employment situation, personal interests and prior experience with children.

Appropriateness of structure and sequence

- clear beginning, body and end
- correct layout of the text type: address, date, salutation, reference to job advertised, body (content), farewell, signing off (fictional name), register, style, layout

Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- no major spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors
- few minor slips
- good range of vocabulary and structures
- language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

Question 3

Relevance, breadth and depth of content

Covers most of the aspects of what happened after friends came over and things didn't turn out the way you planned e.g. watch a video, have take away food, pizza and talk. Friends wanted to listen to loud music and dance, neighbours complained to the police due to noise etc. Student could unfold a story (of their imagination) if they wished.

Appropriateness of structure and sequence

- clear beginning, body and end (ideas well organised in paragraphs, good links between ideas with paragraphs)
- correct layout of the text type (story): title, structure, content, author (fictional name), register, style

Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- no major spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors
- few minor slips
- good range of vocabulary and structures
- language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

Question 4

Relevance, breadth and depth of content

Covers most aspects of a particular tradition, e.g. festival, celebration and custom that Greeks keep in Australia.

Appropriateness of structure and sequence

Covers the layout of text type: informative report: topic, structure (introduction, body, conclusion) content, style
Ideas well organised in paragraphs, good links between ideas with paragraphs.

Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

- no major spelling, grammatical and syntactical errors
- few minor slips
- good range of vocabulary and structures
- language appropriate to audience, purpose and context