



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The majority of students spoke confidently during their 2008 oral assessment. All students used the initial and final greetings and gestures in the appropriate manner.

In the Conversation section most students demonstrated a sound ability to engage in spontaneous conversation about themselves and other topics.

Students were very well prepared for the Discussion section; the sub-topics were varied and well-analysed, and most students responded well to the criteria for the task. However, a few students exceeded the time limit.

Section 1 – Conversation

In this section, assessors and students engaged in a conversation about the students' personal experiences. Most students spoke clearly about themselves and were able to engage effectively with the assessors. They demonstrated good communication skills and used repair strategies when needed. Some students' pronunciation was as good as that of a native speaker of the language. The majority of students used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar. The assessors noticed the use of certain expressions during the exchange that raised the standard, including '*mort min mohhi*', '*harrigni f'dan l-impjeg*', '*nsib il-motivazzjoni*' and '*jekk il-Bambin irid*'.

Only a few students made grammatical mistakes and confused tenses and genders. They had difficulty moving the conversation forward as their range of vocabulary was limited. Therefore, they could not express themselves very clearly. Students are advised to converse in the language whenever the opportunity arises, for example, when at home with family. It is becoming easier and less expensive to communicate with family members in Malta through the use of modern technology. Students should consider this medium to improve their proficiency in the language.

The panel of assessors was satisfied with the level of skill the majority of students demonstrated in the oral examination and wishes to congratulate the teachers for preparing them so well.

Section 2 – Discussion

This year the topic chosen for Discussion was 'The Knights of St. John'. This topic was a good choice as it gave students the opportunity to research different events that occurred during this era. This topic offered an amount of sub-topics that accommodated a range of interests and perspectives.

The majority of students had researched their topic in depth. They used a variety of resources from which they gathered information. Some students performed very well because of the quality of their research and the opinions they expressed when asked hypothetical questions. However, some students demonstrated a lack of in-depth research and could not give spontaneous answers to questions. Some good sub-topics included 'Jean de la Vallette', 'Il-Karnival' and 'Il-Kavalieri bhala Infermiera'. Students should not choose sub-topics that are too broad as it is difficult to provide a thorough summary in an eight-minute time frame.

Some students rote-learned the whole presentation even though it has been recommended in previous Assessment Reports not to do so. The purpose of this section is for students to express opinions, answer questions and demonstrate understanding of the language. Students also need to ensure they remain within the time limit. A significant number of students exceeded the time limit, which forced the assessors to close the discussion before completion.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students' performances in the written component of the 2008 Maltese examination varied. Several students wrote essays that were significantly longer than the required length of 250 words. Students need to include only a short introduction, a body where ideas, opinions or plots are sequentially set and argued, and a conclusion to summarise these points.



Section 1 – Listening and responding

The majority of students did well in this section. Some students found Text 2 rather challenging and either answered incorrectly or did not give a complete answer. All students followed instructions and used the language that they were asked to answer in.

Part A – Answer in English

Students listened to five recorded conversations in Maltese and then had to answer two questions in English. The majority of students did well in this section.

Text 1

Question 1a.

18–24 year olds

All students answered this question correctly.

Question 1b.

All of:

- good pay
- free travel
- free accommodation.

Many students included all three answers while other students answered only one or two points correctly.

Question 1c.

Both of:

- irregular hours
- a contract to stay for two years in Malta.

Most of the students answered this question correctly, while a few gave one correct point.

Text 2

Question 2a.

The winning rabbit was hers but had another person's name on it.

This question confused most of the students and only a small percentage gave the correct answer.

Question 2b.

All of:

- he suggested asking Fufu the rabbit who its owner was
- he asks her to move on before the Minister arrives
- he laughed.

None of the students included all three answers. Some students included two correct answers, some one or none.

Question 2c.

She had a digital camera photo of Fufu showing the black spot behind its ear and another on its nose.

All students answered this question correctly.

Question 2d.

He told her that he is not an expert and that she had better see the judges.

All students answered this question correctly.

Text 3

Question 3a.

To clean and beautify the village



Most students answered this question correctly.

Question 3b.

Both of:

- that he mostly sat in the office
- he was out with the workers as he had to make sure all equipment functioned well.

Almost all of the students gave the correct answer.

Question 3c.

All of:

- recycled some rubbish
- organic waste turned into fertilisers
- production of methane gas, which was used as a source of energy
- a park with flowers and trees for shade
- a park for children to play.

Only a small number of students included all five points. Some students included four correct points, and some had two or three correct points.

Part B – Answer in Maltese

Text 4

All students did very well in Questions 4a. and 4b. In Question 4c., answers varied from two correct to none correct.

Question 4a.

Sara had just obtained her driver's licence.

All students gave the correct answer.

Question 4b.

He offered to help his daughter buy a car.

All students gave the correct answer.

Question 4c.

Both of:

- he had often admired/fallen in love with expensive cars, but had never bought any
- Sara's car cost more than he and his wife earned in a year.

Many students included both points in their answers. Others had one correct answer.

Text 5

Question 5a.

Four out of:

- she has been collecting for a long time (since primary school)
- she has more than one million stamps
- she has complete collections of animal, Olympic Games and Christmas stamps
- she has won prizes from philatelic societies
- she has friends and relatives collecting for her and uses the Internet for acquiring more stamps.

Many students included four answers, while others included two or three.

Question 5b.

Both of:

- the stamp which came out when King George VI gave Malta the George Cross
- it had the King's signature on it.



The majority of students included two correct answers, while others gave only one correct answer.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 6

In this section students had to demonstrate their comprehension of a written text in the Maltese language. Question 6a. confused most students. The students seemed to better understand the more complex questions.

Question 6a.

Next year is the second centenary of the Parish Church.

Not all students gave the correct answer despite the text being very clear.

Question 6b.

Any five of:

- the village band: the good musicians had all left
- the instruments were old
- the uniforms were old
- the street decorations needed lots of work
- there were safety issues about the fireworks
- the club did not have enough money.

The majority of students included five correct statements.

Question 6c.

All of:

- start early, in January instead of June
- make a list of all the people who could help her – friends, relatives, neighbours
- hold a meeting and ask for ideas
- allocate tasks to different people.

Almost all of the students responded correctly to this question.

Text 7

Question 7a.

Any three of:

- large shops
- more cars
- marinas in the place of public beaches
- modern ferries.

The majority of the students included three correct answers.

Question 7b.

All of:

- are they (the Maltese people) happier now?
- how can the ordinary Maltese compete with foreign millionaires for cost/prices of goods?

Many students understood the question and included both points. A small number of students included only one correct answer.



Question 7c.

Any two of:

- did not have to get up early as there were several ferry crossings
- the sea was calm and clear
- the crossing took less than an hour.

All students answered this question correctly.

Question 7d

All of:

- he met his childhood friend Salvu/saw a familiar face
- he was invited to stay at his place for the rest of the week (and met the whole family)
- Salvu's daughter (he discovered) lived not far from him in Australia.

Some students included three correct answers, while other students only included two.

Part B – Answer in Maltese

Question 8

In this question students had to write a formal letter to the president of an association describing their suitability for the position, and why they should be selected. A number of students demonstrated good knowledge of the conventions of letter writing and included two formal addresses. Some students, however, did not show understanding of the conventions of letter writing.

Some students produced a piece of writing that showed sequential ideas and sound arguments, as well as the inclusion of complex language structures. Some students failed to reply to each request of the advertised job. These students needed to first understand the requirements of this type of writing and answer accordingly. Their writing did not show enough depth in the treatment of the task and often the arguments were weak or ideas too repetitive.

Section 3 – Writing in Maltese

This year there was a balance in the choice of writing topics by the students. Each question attracted students – to the delight of the assessors. Quite a number of students exceeded the word limit of 250 words, often by a significant level. A few students, on the other hand, wrote extremely short essays (approximately 150 words).

Question 9

Students had to write a review of a holiday on a cruise liner for a young people's travel magazine. Some good language expressions used were '*kulhadd iqqarras wiccu*' and '*tirrilassa*'.

Question 10

For Question 10, students had to write an imaginative piece of writing about finding themselves on a planet in space in the year 2200. This piece was to be for a school short story competition.

Question 11

Students were required to write an evaluative report for club members about key issues discussed at an International Youth Health Conference. Key points to be included were how effective the speakers were and what consensus was reached.

Question 12

For Question 12, students had to write an article for a newspaper advertising a campaign to save water.