



## Oral component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

All students were very familiar with the assessment criteria in both sections of the oral examination. The chosen topic for the discussion was 'The Dutch Masters: Vermeer and the Delft School.' A particular area of strength this year was the outstanding research students had generally undertaken to prepare their topic. They were able to speak fluently, in depth and enthusiastically on their topic. Common areas of weakness were a lack of grammatical accuracy and poor use of more complex structures by some students. Most students, however, had obviously enjoyed studying and preparing a very challenging and stimulating topic.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were able to demonstrate a high level of fluency and accuracy in this section. They were willing to expand on their answers from the topics of home life, family and friends and interests and future aspirations. A few students were able to go well beyond the required responses and expanded extensively on a range of topics. These students were very fluent, used a wide range of vocabulary and made only a small number of grammatical errors. Students who were not as fluent displayed errors such as the incorrect use of tenses, incorrect word order, incorrect genders, anglicisms and, in the case of a small group of students, quite basic errors in pronunciation. A common error was that the Dutch words for school subjects were often not known.

#### Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of 'The Dutch Masters: Vermeer and the Delft School' was an excellent one and allowed students to research and prepare the topic in depth and with great interest. Only a few students had difficulty with this topic and were not able to answer or discuss their responses in detail. These students had not prepared sufficiently and did not have a sound knowledge of the subject. They made numerous linguistic errors in their Dutch and generally lacked communicative competence.

Some students this year obtained full marks or close to full marks and were able to discuss their topic in great detail with confidence and with linguistic fluency. Good eye contact, voice and tone variation, body language, skill in presentation and the use of more complex grammatical structures all contributed to some outstanding performances.

## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students were generally familiar with the requirements for the listening, reading and writing sections of the examination paper and performed consistently well in their written Dutch. Some responses to questions in Dutch lacked depth and sufficient detail. In the case of Paper 3: Writing in Dutch, a number of students did not expand well on their chosen topic and their writing did not adequately reflect the topic. Some students were also penalised for not adhering to the set word limits.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1: Listening and responding

Generally students were able to select and use relevant information from the five spoken texts; however, many students included irrelevant information in their written responses or were not able to express themselves clearly in Dutch. Where two or more marks are allocated to a question, students must ensure that they give two or more reasons/answers in their response.

In Text 2 the words *de provincie overheid* were often not recognised as being the local authority or the County Council. Questions on Text 3 were particularly well answered by students. For Text 5, students were asked to name four things which Elisa had learnt from the trip but some students only named two or three.



Students' control of language was varied, with some demonstrating their linguistic ability by using clear and accurate expression while others failed to use more complex grammatical structures or a broad range of vocabulary in their written answers. A few students used only the most basic Dutch constructions with numerous language errors and this resulted in a loss of marks.

## Section 2: Reading and responding

### Part A

Many students were able to understand, select and use the correct information accurately and coherently in their responses. In Text 6, Question e., a few students did not give the required four reasons for why Frieda Meijer had mixed feelings regarding the piercing shop in Amstelveen. Text 7 was generally well done, but again a few students did not give a sufficient number of points in their answers to Questions c. and d. Some students seemed to have misunderstood some of the questions.

### Part B

In this section some students completely ignored the set word limit. The text type was a note and many students wrote well over or under the required length of 150–200 words (even up to 300 words), which meant they lost valuable marks. Students must adhere strictly to the set word limit. Students generally used the information given in the text as a basis for their written response.

Grammatical and spelling errors were numerous, particularly with regard to word order, adjective endings, incorrect vocabulary, gender, plurals and verb and subject agreement.

## Section 3: Writing in Dutch

Of the four topics offered, all topics were chosen by some students, with Questions 9 and 10 proving to be the most popular. Again in this section a few students did not adhere to the word limit of 200–250 words in Dutch.

Students produced some interesting and original writing which provided excellent reading; however, a few did not adhere to the text type. Students must ensure that they respond to their chosen question in the correct text type and format; for example, a letter needs a place, a date and a suitable introduction and ending. Students must also develop their topic logically with a beginning, middle and conclusion.

A number of students had excellent control of language and were able to incorporate more complex linguistic structures and draw on a wide range of interesting vocabulary and idioms. Other students had not consolidated their grammatical structures and subsequently their written style contained a large number of basic errors.

Following is a list of some common spelling errors. The correct spellings are given in brackets. *Do (doe), zein (zijn), nieuws (nieuws), zecht (zegt), hope (hoop), ik vindt (vind), ligt (licht), meeten (meteen), weeten (weten), s' nachts ('s nachts), zavonds ('s avonds), de schuldt (schuld), moeilijk (moelijk), all (al), ales (alles), well (wel), will (wil), still (stil), group (groep), idea (idee), Australia (Australië), luek (leuk), betje (beetje), eideren (iedereen), stad (stad), tijd (tijd), gebeurtenis (gebeurtenis), geek (gek), straand (strand), oek (ook), afkoolen (afkoelen), genooch (genoeg), keizen (kiezen), mischein (misschien).*

Some students misspelt words that could be found in the texts and should therefore have been copied straight from the text. These included: *speelterein (speelsterrein), verassing (verassing), and daagboek (dagboek).*

Other common errors included:

- gender errors such as *het (de) grond, de (het) rotkind, het (de) dag, de (het) idee* and *de (het) land*
- incorrect use of personal pronouns and possessive adjectives; for example, *ik zie jou* and *ik zie jouw boeken*
- adjective agreement; for example, *een leuke (leuk) idee* and *een kleine (klein) feestje*
- subject and verb agreement; for example, *wij ga (gaan), de mensen heb (hebben) gehoopt, ik heef (heb) gezien* and *hij ben (is) moe*
- incorrect past participles of both regular and irregular verbs; for example, *vertelled (verteld), gerhad (gehad), gebouwen (gebouwd), geleest (gelezen) and gebleeft (gebleven).*

Grammar and spelling need to be revised and practised on a regular and consistent basis. *En* (and) and *een* (a, an) should also be thoroughly revised as these seemed to present numerous problems for students.