



## Oral component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

The Victorian students who sat for the 2004 oral examination generally performed well in the two sections. The majority of students demonstrated a high level of language accuracy, often using the correct pronunciation, intonation and tempo. The quality of their responses ranged from average to very high, with the top students giving complex answers to questions posed by the assessors. A few students needed assistance to continue with the conversation; however, none of them used English words instead of Maltese to interact with the assessors.

Most students researched the topic for discussion well. The sub-topics included different historical events, trend patterns and distinguished characters who related to the migration of the Maltese people to Australia. The choice offered a variety of ideas, and most students expressed their opinions and views very well. A high percentage of the students managed to deliver interesting discussions and responded well to the task criteria. A few students had learnt most of the information by rote and found it difficult to answer questions put by the panel as they could not apply information to respond appropriately.

Students who have difficulty in speaking Maltese should be encouraged to listen more often to the spoken language (via media, music, etc.) in order to improve pronunciation and oral skills and comprehension of the language.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – General conversation

This section involved a conversation between the assessors and the students about the students' personal world. The more able students demonstrated an understanding of the task and carried the conversation forward with spontaneity. They had excellent pronunciation and intonation skills, maintained the correct tempo, and used appropriate language structures. These students supported their opinions and arguments with sound reasoning. A small number of students had difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly and sometimes assessors found it necessary to interrupt and rephrase a question in order to overcome short pauses. These students were found wanting in repair strategies, and need to develop a greater range of vocabulary and learn the correct structures of phrases and sentences. However, most students handled this section confidently.

#### Section 2 – Discussion

Most students had thoroughly researched their chosen topic. It was pleasing to see that each student had researched a different aspect of the main topic, migration, and had used a variety of resources to obtain their information. High scoring students presented the information through a series of sequential ideas and correctly answered any questions asked by the assessors. They were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively. The average scoring students did this to a slightly lesser degree, mainly because their knowledge of the texts studied was not as thorough. One student had learnt the information by rote and found it difficult to maintain an adequate level of exchange with the assessors. This student answered questions briefly and then started the presentation from the start. Students must remember that discussion is a two-way interaction and it is important to use appropriate language to link with the conversational partner. Most students kept to the time limit and used the correct greetings when leaving the room.

## Written component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Generally, students' performance in the written component ranged from medium to very high. Some students had difficulty in remembering details in Section 1 and therefore answered inappropriately. Students should listen more often to spoken Maltese so as to gain fluency and understanding of the language. In Section 2 – Part A, students demonstrated an understanding of the texts and answered most questions accurately. In Section 2 – Part B, students understood the task and gave correct responses. In Section 3, each question was attempted by one or more students. The majority demonstrated an understanding of the text type and kind of writing, and supported their arguments with good ideas.



## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section 1: Listening and Responding

#### Part A – Answers in English

##### Question 1

The statistical distribution of marks for this question was broad, with half the students gaining full marks while the others ranged from below average to poor. Some students gave only one correct answer for Question 1b.

##### Question 2

The majority of students understood this text very well and responded correctly to most questions. A few students obtained full marks while the others had one or more incorrect answer. Very few students demonstrated an understanding of Question 2b or could show recognition of the action words mentioned in the spoken text.

##### Question 3

Most students demonstrated understanding of this text, as a relatively high percentage of the questions were correctly answered. Question 3d appeared to be the most difficult question, as only two students provided the correct answer.

#### Part B – Answers in Maltese

##### Question 4

The majority of students performed quite well in this section and answered most questions correctly. A low number of students answered one question wrongly.

##### Question 5

Most students responded extremely well in this exercise and a high percentage obtained full marks. A few students had some difficulty in answering some of the questions appropriately.

### Section 2: Reading and Responding

#### Part A

##### Question 6

A small number of students gave correct responses and obtained high marks for this task. Some students gave incorrect answers because they had misread the questions or did not fully understand the text.

##### Question 7

In this question, only a small number of students demonstrated the capacity to extract all relevant information from the text. However, the majority understood most questions and answered correctly. Most students had difficulty in including all answers to Question 7c correctly.

#### Part B

##### Question 8

In this question, students had to write a formal letter to the Minister of the Environment informing him of their approval/disapproval of the closure of Sandy Beach. The majority of the students demonstrated a knowledge of this text type and the kind of writing required for the task. High scoring students organised their ideas well and used convincing reasons. They used formal and persuasive language correctly and demonstrated an extensive use of vocabulary and correct sentence structure. Average scoring students also included these skills, but to a lesser degree. In some cases, the ideas were poorly presented and the text was not cohesive. The assessors recommend that students keep in mind the purpose of the task and only include the information relevant to the task.

### Section 3: Writing in Maltese

##### Question 9

In Question 9, students had to write a speech persuading a group of Maltese artists to visit their city on their next Australian tour. The scores for this writing ranged from average to high. The high scoring students demonstrated a knowledge of the cultural events that take place in the city. Their arguments were very persuasive and the language used showed an extensive knowledge of vocabulary and syntax.

# 2004 Assessment Report



## **Question 10**

In Question 10, students had to write an imaginative story about a glass bottle found on the beach. A few students attempted this question and the majority showed creative writing skills. The writing demonstrated logical sequencing of ideas. The use of adjectives was quite effective. Most language structures were grammatically correct but the spelling was sometimes rather poor.

## **Question 11**

In Question 11, the students were required to write a report for a journal publication about the experiences of a volunteer helper who had spent six months overseas. Few chose this question, but they demonstrated a good knowledge of the requirements of the task as well as language control. The vocabulary used clearly described the nature of the experience. Ideas were sequential and flowing. Sentence structures were grammatically correct and spelling mistakes were only minor.

## **Question 12**

In Question 12, students had to argue for and against the statement 'In future most work will be done from home, not the office.' The students who attempted this question demonstrated knowledge of the requirement of this task and wrote their text accordingly. They included very valid 'for and against' points and enhanced their evaluative writing with the correct language structures and spelling.