2022 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced oral external assessment report

General comments

Students were assessed on their knowledge and skills in using spoken language. The examination had two sections: a conversation of up to seven minutes and a discussion of approximately eight minutes.

In both sections, students were assessed on these areas:

* content and communication:
* relevance, depth and range of information, ideas, and opinions
* capacity to elaborate and reflect on information, ideas, and opinions
* capacity to interact with assessors; and
* effective communication
* language
* appropriateness of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures
* clarity of expression including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Students who performed well remained calm, listened to questions carefully and responded to questions adequately. They also communicated information, ideas and opinions confidently and carried the discussion forward with spontaneity.

However, students are encouraged not to twist assessors’ questions deliberately or respond with rote-learned or prepared content.

Recommendations:

* to foster their own capacity to interact with assessors with quick-wittedness, students should listen carefully to the unexpected questions and think about how to respond
* to communicate naturally, maintain eye contact instead of staring at the back of the picture or elsewhere
* for the sake of efficiency, it is better to go straight to the topic when answering the questions and avoid unnecessary foreshadowing.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

This section was a general conversation between the student and the assessors about the students’ personal world and their interactions with the Chinese language and culture as learners. Students were able to support their personal reflections by referring to any of the relevant subtopics studied in class from the prescribed theme ‘The individual’ and the prescribed theme ‘The Chinese-speaking communities’.

Students who engaged in higher-scoring conversations:

* spoke naturally, using unpretentious language, coped with ease and used a rich variety of vocabulary
* applied conversation skills to allow a logical flow, and pronounced clearly with accurate intonation, stress and tempo.

Ares for improvement include:

* practising listening skills and responding with spontaneous answers using flexible thinking / nimbleness of mind, avoiding rote-learned answers.

Content and communication

Most students demonstrated an excellent level of understanding by communicating with spontaneous confidence.

* students provided an excellent range of information, ideas, and opinions clearly and logically with highly relevant responses
* students clarified, elaborated on and defended information, ideas and opinions very effectively

Students should always try to speak as naturally as possible and maintain an appropriate pitch and volume.

Areas for improvement include practising repair strategies, such as pauses, rephrasing or asking the assessor to start again.

Language

Most students used sophisticated vocabulary and expressions accurately and appropriately.

Students need to pay attention to:

* avoiding casual or English expressions as much as possible. (Some students used inappropriate internet language or catchphrases: words such as ‘ok’, ‘um’ and ‘nubility (niubi; brilliant)’ appeared during the examination)
* misplacing sentence components, such as ‘I learned the spirit of reading from my parents’ (‘Cultivate the habit of reading’ is more appropriate: 养成阅读的习惯) and ‘I like to play mischievous jokes’ (the verb ‘open’ is inappropriate: 开恶作剧)
* listing many facts without specific examples. For example, the introduction of the person as ‘rigorous, meticulous, very introverted and hardworking’, followed by a series of words describing the other person, but not following through to give specific examples to illustrate certain character traits ascribed to them.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students discussed their chosen subtopic and their supporting visual material, which had to be related to either the prescribed theme ‘The Chinese-speaking communities’ or the prescribed theme ‘The world around us’. The focus of the discussion was on exploring aspects of the subtopic, including information, opinions and ideas. Students were expected to respond to questions on their subtopic and supporting visual image.

Students who engaged in higher-scoring discussions:

* provided an excellent range and depth of information, ideas and opinions with an original perspective on the subtopic
* elaborated on complex information and defended ideas and opinions clearly and logically with highly relevant responses
* used the image skilfully to support the discussion on the subtopic. The students did not just hold their picture in their hands; they were able to link their answers with the content on the picture from time to time
* when leading their discussion topic, could incorporate the image skilfully to their focus and discuss the core content of their research.

Among the cultural subtopics, students chose more topics on ‘The world around us’ this year, such as advanced technology and migration.

Topics such as ‘Changes in women's clothing in the Tang Dynasty’ are very interesting. Unlike the traditional introduction of a specific type of clothing, it introduces the changes in clothing in an era, including the different characteristics of each stage, the reasons for the changes and their impact.

Most students’ pictures met the requirements and effectively supported the discussion.

Areas for improvement include practising correct tone marks and adequate tempo (not speeding up unnecessarily).

Content and communication

Students stayed on topic and elaborated on ideas by using related yet appropriate vocabulary and expressions with ease.

Discussions could be advanced if students could provide depth to their subtopic in a logical and original manner. Students who scored highly tended to use their supporting images creatively and effectively.

Topics that keep pace with the times include ‘internet language’, ‘Douyin 抖音’ and ‘China's education involution中国教育内卷’. When choosing these types of topics students need to understand their full context, for example exactly when did they emerge, whether they changed over time and why they are especially popular among certain groups of people. Students should try to deepen their subtopic by referring to cultural significance, such as representing the social background of the time and the influence of the changing process of the times.

Language

Apart from those students who followed the instructions from the criteria and performed outstandingly, students are encouraged to pay attention to making sure their language and expression flow logically, instead of scattering information/opinions randomly without providing linkages and sequential consequences.

More information

Refer to the [VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced study design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/chinese-secondlanguage/Pages/ChineseSecondLanguageAdvanced.aspx) and [examination criteria and specifications](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Chinese-Second-Language-Advanced.aspx) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.