2022 VCE Serbian 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 approximately seven minutes, during which students conversed with the assessors about their personal world, and a discussion of approximately eight minutes.

In both sections, students were assessed in these areas:

* communication (the capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively)
* content (relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas in the conversation and their capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on their chosen subtopic in the discussion)
* language (the accuracy of their vocabulary and grammar, the range and appropriateness of their vocabulary and grammar, and the clarity of their expression).

Students who engaged in higher-scoring conversations and discussions:

* demonstrated an excellent level of understanding by responding readily and confidently, used highly effective repair strategies, and carried the conversation forward with spontaneity
* presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas clearly and logically with highly relevant responses, were able to clarify, elaborate on and defend opinions and ideas very effectively, and demonstrated excellent preparation for the conversation and of their subtopic
* used sophisticated vocabulary and structures accurately and appropriately, and were usually able to self-correct
* used an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions, and consistently used highly appropriate style and register
* had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

In 2022 most students performed well in both the conversation and the discussion. They scored highly in both sections, demonstrating a high level of preparation and in-depth study.

Section 1 – Conversation

Assessors engaged with each student in a general conversation about the student’s personal world, for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations.

Students were well prepared for this section of the examination and most were able to carry the conversation forward without needing much support. They talked about topics that were relevant to their personal world and were able to provide a range of information and opinions in a sequential order, clearly and logically. The majority of students were able to elaborate and give opinions very effectively, using a range of appropriate vocabulary, complex sentence structures and expressions.

In 2022 most students scored highly in all three criteria.

Communication

Students demonstrated very good communication skills by responding with confidence and providing explanations, examples and clarification when required. This indicated that the students were well prepared across all parts of their presentation including family life, hobbies and future aspirations. This allowed them to be able to readily elaborate on any segment of their presentation.

Areas for improvements include:

* becoming familiar and comfortable with words that are often used in different subtopics of the conversation
* practising repair strategies
* lead-in statements that respond directly to the assessors
* being familiar with the terminology used to express a point of view.

Content

Students were able to present personal information in depth, focusing on interesting family facts, such as the origins of their grandparents and comparing lifestyles in Australia and overseas, including food, education and nature. They were able to express their views on the topic they spoke about with confidence. In addition, the majority of students mentioned the lockdown period as a barrier to visiting places, family and friends, which prevented them from talking about recent leisure activities.

Areas for improvements include:

* preparing for more elaboration on any points discussed with the assessors. For example, when presenting information about ancestors and family origins, students could include some interesting facts about the place and lifestyle, compare past and present generations and express views about this
* practising conversing about a wide range of possible subtopics that reach beyond the above suggested examples. For example, when talking about future aspirations, they could discuss their choices and reasons for the intended pathways, and justify their decision by citing their research on the topic. For example, ‘I would like to study nursing because I find this industry very interesting and rewarding. Also, there is a high demand for skilled nurses, which will enable me to secure sustainable employment not only in Australia but anywhere in the world’.

Language

Students demonstrated good skill in using appropriate vocabulary relevant to the content they presented. In addition, their pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo showed that they had practised well. Conversations that scored highly showed competence in a variety of tenses, applied modal constructions accurately and used some examples of the subjunctive. Students who did not score well demonstrated a limited vocabulary, employed a limited range of expressions and used limited language structures.

Areas for improvements include:

* expanding vocabulary to elaborate on the statements made using connectives such as: зато што (because of), из тог разлога (for that reason / as a result of)
* paying more attention when using formal register, for example, using personal pronoun ‘Vi’ instead of ‘ti’ when addressing assessors.

Students were able to reflect on their experiences as language learners, giving a variety of reasons why they were studying Serbian. Students who scored highly indicated what was most challenging/rewarding about learning this language, using sophisticated terms and idioms to explain their thoughts.

Areas for improvements include:

* expanding vocabulary. For example, instead of listing family members in a simple sentence, Ја имам једног брата (I have one brother), students could expand the sentence to describe that family member by using adjectives or complex sentences, for example, Ја имам старијег/млађег брата, који обожава фудбал (I have an older/younger brother who loves football).
* being careful when using personal pronouns – all cases and genders, singular and plural – and present tense verb endings, past participles and word order, in particular the placement of the verb.

Students who were well prepared had very clear pronunciation and intonation and did not rush with their responses, pacing their presentation, which allowed for a demonstration of good intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvements include being careful when providing rushed responses as they can appear rote-learnt and are often unclear. Students should speak with a measured pace, which gives them time to pay attention to the more unusual Serbian sounds and the specific intonation of the language. The key strategy is to practise regularly with other students and teachers to improve fluency and pronunciation, increase spontaneity and gain confidence.

Students should note the following language issues.

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| --- | --- |
| Incorrect use | Correct use |
| Using the dates is influenced by English and the incorrect declension, e.g. Рођена сам на петнаест март, две хиљаде и шесте године.  | Рођена сам петнаестог марта, две хиљаде и шесте године. (I was born on 15 March 2006.) |
| Use of dialect, e.g. Мој ђед је рођен у Требињу.  | Мој дјед (деда) је рођен у Требињу. (My grandfather was born in Trebinje.) |

Section 2 – Discussion

Each student gave a one-minute introduction of their subtopic to their assessor, who then engages the student in a discussion exploring their subtopic. Students also provided assessors with any objects, such as photographs, maps or diagrams, brought to support the discussion. The discussion was an opportunity to explore aspects of the language and culture of communities in which Serbian is spoken and the student was expected to make reference to the texts studied.

In 2022, students chose a range of subtopics, including famous scientists (Nikola Tesla, Mihailo Pupin, Mileva Maric), writers (Desanka Maksimovic, Dusko Radovic, Branislav Nusic), athletes or historical figures (Marko Kraljevic).

Students demonstrated a high level of preparedness for the examination and generally used photographs as their visual props to support the discussion. This worked very well as it helped the students calm their nerves and boost their confidence; it made the discussion more vivid and dynamic and improved the structured delivery of the content. It also gave assessors more opportunity to ask questions and develop a more effective exchange. Resources were chosen carefully, which led to students providing a good range of interesting ideas and opinions and backing them up with good examples or evidence from texts.

In 2022 most students scored highly in communication and content, while language was their weakest area.

Communication

Students demonstrated an excellent level of understanding of their chosen subtopic. Students who scored highly were able to explain, expand and give opinions on their subtopic, and move the conversation forward confidently. This led to engaged and interesting discussions. The selection of a suitable subtopic was important because it enabled students to present enthusiastically, reflecting their interest in it.

Areas for improvements include:

* expanding vocabulary and being able to elaborate on the terms used in the discussion
* being careful when using unfamiliar terminology, especially technical terms, which may lead to misunderstanding and incorrect use in sentence structure.

Content

Students demonstrated a high level of preparation and were experts in their subtopic. They could explain, expand and give opinions, and move the conversation forward confidently. They offered extra information and insights and had the vocabulary to do this effectively.

Areas for improvements include:

* expanding vocabulary to use idioms and expressions relevant to the topic. When talking about sport and providing details of achievements, expressions such as прваци света, светски шампиони, најзуженији играч (world champions, champions, most valuable player / MVP) should be taken into consideration to be used in Serbian and not in English or in a simple sentence structure such as Они су били први у свету. Он је добио MVP (They were first in the world. He got MVP)
* being careful when use using terminology but not being able to elaborate on it.

Language

Students that scored highly used broad vocabulary and many appropriate phrases to reflect and express opinions. They showed competence in using past tenses to describe what they had studied and recount effectively other past events. Some students used the image to introduce the subtopic, explaining its relevance, then expanded on the subtopic before coming back to the image to illustrate a particular point.

Areas for improvements include:

* expanding vocabulary relevant to the subtopic and using more sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structures that are expected for the selected subtopic. This is particularly important when selecting scientists such as Nikola Tesla or Mihailo Pupin, where specific terminology is expected to be used
* being careful when using dates and ordinal numbers and ensuring they follow the correct declension rules (e.g. Милева Марић је рођена 7.12.1875.године [Mileva Maric was born on 7.12.1875])
* using chronological sequence of events with the past tense and connectives (e.g. После завршетка основне школе [Following the school completion]) to advance conversation.

Students used the language confidently and had excellent pronunciation, tempo and intonation, indicating well-rehearsed and practiced strategies used in preparation for the examination.

Areas for improvements include being careful when using unfamiliar terms when unable to elaborate on them. For example, Мотор на наизменичну струју је измислио Никола Тесла, а Едисон је имао једносмерну струју (AC was invented by Nikola Tesla while Edison had DC).

Students should note the following language issues:

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| --- | --- |
| Incorrect use | Correct use |
| Dates and numbers declension, e.g. Никола Тесла је рођен тачно у поноћ између девет и десет јул хиљаду осамсто педесет шест годинa у Смиљану.  | Никола Тесла је рођен тачно у поноћ између деветог и десетог јула хиљаду осамсто педесет шесте године у Смиљану. (Nikola Tesla was born exactly at midnight between 9th and 10th July 1856 in Smiljan.) |
| Noun declension, e.g. Она је завршила школа у Нови Сад.  | Она је завршила школу у Новом Саду. (She finished school in Novi Sad.) |
| Verb tenses, agreements, declension and conjugation, e.g. Његов мама је био веома талентован жена.  | Његова мама је била веома талентована жена. (His mum was а very talented woman.) |

More information

Refer to the [VCE Serbian study design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/serbian/Pages/Index.aspx) and [examination specifications and sample materials](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Serbian.aspx) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.