

## **2014** **Oral examination for second language studies**

The following information applies to the oral examination for all Victorian and CCAFL second language studies. Refer to specific first language examination reports for information regarding oral examinations for first language studies.

Teachers and students are advised to read this entire report as it contains general and specific information about the Languages oral examination.

The Chief Assessor for each study has provided comments on the quality of student performance in the oral examination for each language and this information can be accessed directly by clicking on the links below.

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Bosnian
- Chinese Second Language
- Chinese Second Language Advanced
- Croatian
- Dutch
- Filipino
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hebrew
- Hindi
- Hungarian
- Indonesian Second Language
- Italian
- Japanese Second Language
- Khmer
- Korean Second Language
- Macedonian
- Maltese
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Romanian
- Russian
- Serbian
- Sinhala
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese
- Yiddish

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The oral examination is divided into two sections: a seven-minute Conversation and an eight-minute Discussion. Following the Conversation, the student gives a one-minute introduction to the topic chosen for the Detailed Study and engages in a seven-minute discussion of the Detailed Study. In both the Conversation and the Discussion sections of the oral examination, students are assessed according to the assessment criteria published on the VCAA website. Students should become familiar with the assessment criteria for both sections of the oral examination.

Although there are similarities between the assessment criteria for the Conversation and Discussion sections of the examination, the criteria assess different skills. In the Conversation section, the student needs to interact with the

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assessors about familiar aspects of their personal world. In the Discussion section, students need to present information, exchange ideas, express their own opinions and advance the discussion.

In preparing for the oral examination, students are advised to practise their oral skills regularly and develop confidence in using the language in impromptu situations. It is recommended that they practise the skills required for the Conversation and the Discussion at length in the classroom and in other real-life situations where they learn to gain confidence in interacting with others.

During the year, students are required to spend approximately 15 hours of class time analysing and discussing a range of texts for their Detailed Study. Students should select topics and sub-topics together with their teachers in accordance with the VCE study design for the language.

The following information on the Detailed Study is provided in all second language study designs:

The Detailed Study should enable the student to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the language-speaking community through a range of oral and written texts in the target language related to the selected sub-topic. This will enable the student to develop knowledge and understanding of, for example, historical issues, aspects of contemporary society or the literary or artistic heritage of the community. The texts which form the basis of this study might include feature films, short films, short stories, songs, newspaper articles, electronic texts, documentaries, music, painting and oral histories. The length of texts selected will vary depending on the type of text, its density and level of complexity. In order for the student to be able to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth to meet the relevant outcomes, it is suggested that a range of at least three different kinds of text are selected. These might include aural and visual, as well as written texts.

While students develop understanding of content for the different sections of the oral examination, the capacity to internalise and master it to present in the examination also contributes to their success and provides evidence of their communication skills. Students who recite large amounts of irrelevant, pre-learned material and who ignore the key words in the questions may not score well.

Students are reminded that assessors may ask a range of questions for which they may not be as well prepared. Although students are not expected to be 'experts' or be able to answer all questions asked, they are expected to have learnt strategies in order to respond to these types of questions. It would be valuable for students to learn phrases such as, 'I have not studied this aspect of the topic, but I think...' and 'I don't know, but I feel...'. Students should also note that questions are not asked in a predetermined order. Students should also be able to seek clarification when necessary during the examination.

In 2014, high-scoring performances in the Conversation included a thorough and sophisticated preparation of familiar conversation topics such as family, school and leisure activities, and plans for the future. The use of brief personal stories and anecdotes allowed students to use more informal turns of phrase and vocabulary as well as a variety of structures and tenses.

In the Discussion it is important that students adhere to the one-minute time limit for the introduction and that they avoid speaking unnaturally fast if they think their introduction will be longer than one minute. During the one-minute introduction students are required to present the topic and sub-topic they have selected for study.

As part of the Discussion students are expected to make reference to the texts they have studied. Assessors will ask students to talk about the texts they have used to prepare for the oral examination. Students will not be penalised if they do not identify the texts they have studied in their introduction, but they must be prepared to identify them and discuss them during the discussion that follows. It is essential that students understand that any ideas mentioned in the introduction may be discussed in the ensuing seven-minute discussion.

In 2014, some students studied a limited range of texts, which did not provide sufficient opportunity to explore the topic presented or relate aspects of the discussion to their texts. When studying their texts, students should consider what examples they might use from these texts, and how they might explain different issues based on the information and concepts presented.

It is important that students do not concentrate primarily on general statements related to the topic but prepare a range of aspects more intensively. Specific comments about examples and points in the texts studied provide richer content and greater depth.

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The recommendation that students use at least three texts is a means of giving the students a deeper understanding of their chosen topic. The study of texts is of limited benefit to students if they do not understand these resources, or if the information is not relevant to their topic. In 2014, many students should have included more specific details and opinions to lend more substance to the discussion. Well-prepared students were able to summarise their topic and make effective and interesting references to their texts. Low-scoring students often seemed unable to elaborate on or defend their ideas. Many students made good use of excellent resources, often linking them and the topic to their own interests.

It is useful for students to learn to anticipate questions based on their introduction and to elaborate on their topics by practising questions and answers. This will enable students to build confidence and to provide responses that contain more than an extension or repetition of a basic response. This stated, there were many confident and well-rehearsed responses.

It is important for students to remember that in the Discussion they not only need to present facts about their chosen topic but also provide their opinions and advance the discussion.

Although students need to prepare their chosen sub-topic individually, students' preparation should be monitored and they should be provided positive critical guidance to address weaker points.

Good topics this year often focused on a student's own interests and lent themselves to valuable interaction with the assessors. They also required analysis and offered the opportunity to present and justify opinions. Some topics were purely descriptive or superficial and did not provide students with opportunities to highlight their opinions or engage in a discussion.

The use of visual material assisted some students to remain focused on the discussion, and served as a prompt for students as to what to say next.

Visual materials are only allowed as part of Section 2. Students should not rely heavily on information and pictures on the visual materials they have brought to the examination. The discussion should flow and continue without constant reference to the visual material. Students may support the Discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps but these support materials should contain only minimal amounts of text.

Language-specific comments follow.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The quality of most students in the 2014 Arabic oral examination was excellent and it was evident that they were well prepared. However, students and teachers need to be aware of the study design and the examination requirements as prescribed as some students were not aware of the Detailed Study.

Some students communicated well despite poor pronunciation. Poor pronunciation negatively affected many students' communication strategies and capacity to link with assessors.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students are encouraged to advance the Conversation, but should be careful not to dominate it. Some students had little to say unless they were prompted by questions from the assessors. This gave the impression that they may not have adequately prepared for the examination. Students need to be prepared to have a conversation about the topics and not just provide minimal answers. For example, if a student is asked to describe their school, instead of describing the physical attributes of the school by using lists of words (such as 'big' and 'nice'), they could provide information about other aspects of the school that may be of interest, such as an interesting anecdote about a recent incident or positive and interesting activities that are not necessarily academic.

Many students gave in-depth answers in various parts of the general conversation. These students were confident and able to use a good range of structures and vocabulary within a viable context.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

The topics and sub-topics chosen for the Detailed Study should reflect Arabic life and culture and should be suited to each student's ability and interests. The topic chosen should allow the student to express some personal interest and be appropriate to their level of knowledge. The complexity of some topics challenged some students and affected the language they used. The sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures needed to convey the complexity of some topics was beyond them, and consequently they struggled in this section of the examination.

Many students communicated very effectively but often stopped after providing only one or two sentences. This may have mistakenly given assessors the message that the student required the assessors' support. Most students moved easily between topics and displayed a lively interest in communicating with the assessors.

Other students did not know how to advance the discussion. Some students used poor sentence structures, omitted verbs or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures; the most notable errors were students' use of incorrect verb tenses. There was often good use of complex grammar, although at times students mistakenly used overly complex expressions that did not fit in very well with their true level of language.

High-scoring students provided both general opinions and their own opinions that, in turn, effectively demonstrated their command of the topic. However, some students had only prepared their topic very superficially; further ideas, specific detail and personal opinions were needed to explore topics more thoroughly and give the Discussion more substance.

Many students made good use of excellent resources, often linking them and the topic to their own interests. High-scoring students were able to summarise their topic and make effective, even interesting, references to their resources.

There was a lack of depth and understanding of historical factors of some topics. Low-scoring students repeated information and had little material to discuss. Students and teachers should choose topics that provide the opportunity for depth of study and scope for students to present their opinions.

Low-scoring students tended to list resources but were clearly not familiar with them. Others used resources that were not in Arabic and so did not benefit from learning from these resources. Students are strongly advised to study resources in the target language as these provide extra opportunities to learn language.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Students were very well prepared, confident and at ease with the 2014 Armenian oral examination. Vocabulary, fluency and expression were of a very good standard. Students were able to converse clearly and confidently using appropriate constructs and the correct register. Grammar use was of high standard. Students used rich vocabulary and gave logical and spontaneous responses.

Discussion themes were well prepared and there was evidence of extensive research in all topics studied.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students covered a wide range of topics. Some students commented on relatives overseas and their family's migration experience. Most students performed better in Section 1 than in Section 2.

Students were well rehearsed in describing their personal situation, schooling and subject selections, as well as recreational activities and entertainment pursuits. Most students engaged the assessors confidently. Responses were direct, highly relevant and spontaneous.

Students were able to present a wide range of personal issues, such as their current situation in academic, social and familial arenas. Responses were relevant and in sufficient depth to allow further discussion and opinions to be presented.

Students gave culturally appropriate responses, especially in response to open questions. Grammar was a noteworthy improvement, as students easily coped with the correct conjugation and declension in sentence construction – a clear delineation between thinking in Armenian and thinking in English.

High-scoring students used a larger vocabulary in their sentence structures, especially in response to open questions. These students used sophisticated grammatical constructs with the correct tense and gender, also using the appropriate case, and keeping their sentence construction free of anglicisms.

Voice modulation and projection were very good. Consonants were crisp and diphthongs were uttered with an acceptable glide. The speed of delivery and intonation resulted in free-flowing conversation, with ample opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

The sub-topics covered this year included the Armenian Genocide, the establishment of the Armenian-speaking community in Melbourne, the All-Armenia Fund and reconstruction work in Armenia after the earthquake of 1988, as well as the links between Armenia and the Diaspora.

Most students engaged the assessors confidently, as they had clearly anticipated some of the questions, and were capable of carrying the Discussion forward.

It was evident that students had worked hard to present a detailed and in-depth introduction to their Detailed Study. Students also influenced the direction of the Discussion through clarification or elaboration of answers.

It was clear students had built an impressive bank of vocabulary and grammar related to the other sub-topics.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

In 2014, students performed equally well in both parts of the oral exam, the Conversation and the Discussion.

Most students paid attention to detail, began with the appropriate greetings, and used appropriate language when referring to the assessors and explaining their topics and sub-topics. It was obvious that students had prepared well in order to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

In the Conversation section, students talked about themselves and their families, friends, plans for the future, schools, pets, music, travel, sport or art competitions, aspirations, current interests and employment. In the Discussion section, students presented their chosen Detailed Study topic in depth. As in previous years, some students chose to present information about Bosnian and Herzegovinian architecture, cities, art, famous artists and famous sportspeople.

Many students demonstrated a high capacity to use effective communicative strategies to carry the Conversation forward with spontaneity and to maintain the discussion. These students responded confidently to questions, provided logical, well thought-out responses and expressed highly relevant and interesting ideas and opinions. Some students presented highly complex and detailed information on their sub-topics in the Discussion.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

High-scoring students demonstrated thorough preparation and an ability to advance the Conversation effectively. They were able to elaborate on their responses using a broad and accurate range of vocabulary and grammar. The effectiveness of the exchange with the assessors was further enhanced by the clarity of their expression.

Mid-range students generally demonstrated the ability to communicate with the assessors, providing a good range of information; however, at times they lacked the ability to effectively elaborate on their ideas and opinions. These students often required support from the assessors in order to develop the discussion. They sometimes relied on retelling the content of their chosen texts rather than using them to support their ideas. The language structures used were satisfactory but often did not extend beyond simple vocabulary and tenses.

Low-scoring students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas.

Students should focus on the main ideas they wish to discuss, providing opinions and well thought-out arguments. Students who were well prepared and used complex sentences and correct grammar delivered excellent presentations on their topic. Some students should have paid more attention to sentence structures and moved further from basic grammatical structures. The most frequent errors were with verb conjugation and agreements such as *ona je bio* instead of *ona je bila*. Attention must be directed to the building and agreement of participles (such as *radni glagolski pridjev*, which has three genders).

On some occasions students resorted to anglicised words.

The highest-scoring performances included a thorough and sophisticated preparation of familiar conversation topics such as family, school and leisure activities and plans for the future.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

It is important for students to limit themselves to around one minute for the introduction (focus of the Detailed Study).

In general, the majority of students presented a wide range of information from a number of sources, and demonstrated the ability to confidently defend their personal opinions and original ideas. Many texts selected for the Detailed Study enabled students to develop a good understanding of the topics. The sources included newspaper articles, documentaries, music, short films, literary works, electronic texts and interviews.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Some students had an effective interaction with the assessors and used good repair strategies. They confidently moved the exchanges forward while providing extensive responses to the questions asked. However, some students could not use the language spontaneously to handle less predictable questions or to respond with sufficient depth.

Students should not assume they will be asked the same questions that were asked in practice oral examinations. To allow students to show their language ability, assessors may challenge them by asking questions that require extra information or sophisticated responses. In this situation, students need to listen carefully to the assessors and respond relevantly and appropriately.

Some students were quite concerned when assessors interrupted them at various points. Students should have understood that the assessors' interruption was not because they had answered incorrectly, but because the assessors were interested to know more about a comment or that they would like to change the general flow of the conversation.

Some students gave interesting responses and engaged the assessors by using eye contact and appropriate body language. Some students enjoyed using idiomatic Chinese phrases and proverbs, which not only sounded impressive but also fully reflected their appreciation of Chinese culture.

Most students were able to express themselves clearly by using accurate language, an excellent range of vocabulary and complex structures. However, some students need to pay attention to the accurate use of the measure words.

High-scoring students showed consistent use of style and register and were able to rephrase when necessary; however, some students struggled when using complex sentence patterns. Some students used Chinese idioms appropriately.

It is important that students understand the key words or phrases in the questions in order for them to respond relevantly and appropriately. Students should allow assessors to ask further questions, as the Conversation is an exchange rather than a student's own mini-presentation. Some students need to improve their four tones and intonation in order to express themselves more vividly and effectively.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

The majority of students gave a clear indication of which aspects they had covered and would like to discuss; however, some of the topics were very broad. Each aspect in these topics could have been used as a sub-topic. With such a breadth of information to cover, students sometimes found it challenging and frustrating to answer the assessors' questions even though these questions were appropriately asked. There were also some students who relied on rote-learned information and were unable to link texts they had studied. These students often struggled to continue when interrupted by assessors and were hesitant in responding to assessors' questions.

The choice of topic and texts is critical. They should contain enough material of sufficient depth for an eight-minute discussion and allow for reflection on the topic. There should be reasonable scope of discussion, ideas, opinions and critical comment. The topic should be appropriate for the level of maturity and language of the students. Less proficient students struggled a great deal when the topic was too difficult, too complicated or too profound for them; it seemed that they were trying to express ideas that they had not really grasped. Some topics required knowledge of the historical background, and this should have been considered during the development of the Detailed Study. Some of the good topics in 2014 were: 造纸术 (The Variant of Paper Making), 圆明园 (Yuanmingyuan), 盆景 (bonsai), 算盘 (abacus), 梅花 (plum blossom) and 中医 (traditional Chinese medical science).

The Discussion section is quite different from the Conversation section. The language used in the Discussion is less predictable as there are many new and unfamiliar words in the resources used by the students. Students should not only master these words but also practise using them in discussion. There were many occasions when students used sophisticated words and expressions in their introduction but were frequently unable to hear and understand them when they were used by assessors.

Some assessors experienced difficulty understanding what students said, especially the names of the sub-topic and some unfamiliar words students used in the Discussion. It is important that students practise the pronunciation of these difficult words in order to express themselves clearly. Some students' pronunciation was good, but their intonation could have been improved.

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**Languages: Chinese Second Language Advanced**

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students prepared well and spoke fluently. Some students were able to advance the conversation and respond properly to unexpected/further questions.

Some students asked for feedback on their oral performance, assessors' comments or an indication of their marks at the end of the examination; however, this was not appropriate. Students are reminded that assessors will not talk about the performance/marks.

Most students engaged well with the assessors during the conversation. They listened carefully to questions and their responses were adequately related to the topics. It is important for students to wait until the assessor has finished asking a question before responding. It is not wise to assume what the content of the question is after hearing just a few words. It is also not advisable to rely on rote-learned material.

Eye contact is an important element of oral communication; however, a few students did not make eye contact with the assessors during the examination.

Students performed less well on Criterion 2 than on Criteria 1 and 5. The capacity to support or elaborate on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence is crucial.

Though fluency was evident, content presented by students was not always relevant.

Students need to be aware that the oral examination format for Chinese Second Language Advanced is the same as it is for Chinese Second Language; however, it is different from Chinese First Language. A few students talked about their Detailed Study as though it were a presentation. When the assessors attempted to stop them from doing so, some students responding negatively, telling the assessors not to stop them, to let them finish, etc.

A few students gave responses that did not answer the assessors' questions.

Generally, students' vocabulary and grammar was quite good. Some stronger students used idioms and alternative vocabulary appropriately. A few students attempted to use many idioms or proverbs but not always appropriately. There is no point using many idioms and proverbs if they do not suit the conversation and/or if they are not used correctly.

Some examples of the misuse of language or grammar included '学校和蔼可亲', '将来时', '感起了兴趣', etc.

On average, of the 10 criteria, students scored highest on criterion 4.

It is important that students understand that the Conversation is more than just a test of their Chinese-speaking skills. Students often neglected using certain alternative phrases and linking grammar patterns to shape their speech. It is important that students are able to self-correct errors.

Some students were able to demonstrate an awareness of appropriate style and register, using respectful forms for older generations and speaking modestly about their own strengths.

Students' pronunciation of the following terms requires improvement: 时间 to 实践; 棍子 to 君子, etc.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students chose impressive social issues for discussion, such as Children stay behind in rural agricultural areas (中国农村留守儿童) and Jiang Yong Writing (江永女书).

The following is a good example of how a Detailed Study topic was broken down into the main areas for discussion.



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Chinese jade culture (中国玉文化) —

- 1. Variety and discernment of jade (种类与鉴别)
- 2. Its cultural connotations (其文化内涵)
- 3. Jade and health preservation (玉与养生)
- 4. Jade's use within Chinese culture (玉在中国文化中的运用)

Students need to be aware that although they may choose topics on subcultures, some television shows such as 康熙来了, 中国好声音 might not provide enough depth of cultural and language information for discussion. Some topics were too narrow to allow an expansion of content; for example, Tai He Palace (太和殿) 香港茶餐厅的小吃 / 美食.

Most students were able to understand the questions and respond using their research.

Some students tended to recite the content and were silent when they were asked questions that were unexpected. Students are expected to voice their opinion on the topic and support their views or arguments with relevant information.

Students performed least well on criterion 7.

A few students did not prepare the content of their Detailed Study. When asked about the researched topic, they mentioned only the title of the topic, for example, Confucius 孔子, and did not expand on it.

Students should choose a topic suited to their language level. When preparing their Detailed Study, students need to consider the range of information that can be discussed in seven to eight minutes.

In terms of criterion 9, students would benefit from being able to apply a range of grammar patterns in their speech. They should consider using terms such as 'although', 'not only', 'but also', 'as long as', 'since', 'prefer to' in their discussion. Often, students neglect using alternative phrases and linking words to shape the content of the Discussion. It is also important that students are able to self-correct errors.

## **Oral component**

Students communicated well on a range of general topics, including Croatian culture. Students were well prepared and responded readily to assessors' questions. Students were familiar with everyday Croatian vocabulary and expression and performed with confidence.

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

In Section 1, most students showed a very good level of understanding and gave relevant and meaningful responses to questions. They easily maintained the Conversation with the assessors, volunteered wide-ranging replies and carrying the exchange forward with minimal support. Some students gave minimal answers and waited for the assessors' next question, rather than expanding on their response. Students need to be encouraged to practise and develop language for a variety of purposes, so as to be able to converse on a variety of topics. On the whole, students used good repair strategies and were able to quickly recognise and correct their mistakes.

Well-prepared students used appropriate vocabulary and correct grammatical forms to express their ideas. Some students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most notable errors included cases and case agreements, as well as the third person plural present tense. A number of students had difficulty using correct word order in sentences with negative reflexive verbs; for example, *ja ne se bojim* instead of *ja se ne bojim*.

Some students were confident in expressing themselves using complex sentence structures and had a broad vocabulary, enabling them to convey thoughts with semantic precision. Students need to be encouraged to work towards acquiring a greater variety of vocabulary and better grammatical structures, as this would assist them to have a more productive exchange of ideas with assessors.

Clarity of expression, speed of delivery, voice projection and modulation was generally very good. Occasional difficulty with the pronunciation of some unfamiliar words occurred, as well as some interference from the English language.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

A small number of students had not prepared sufficiently for the Discussion section of the examination. They lacked facts about their topic and were not able to engage in a meaningful exchange of ideas with assessors. Such students waited for the next question to be asked, which led to pauses, repetition or rephrasing.

High-scoring students presented well-researched, clearly structured and insightful information about their chosen topic.

Some students used a good variety of vocabulary and grammar, but others tended to use simple sentence structures when using a narrow range of vocabulary. Students need to be reminded to regularly learn new words in order to be able to articulate their view with semantic adequacy.

Low-scoring students struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure. They used generic words or expressions and fillers devoid of informative value; for example, *to ti je lijepo*, *to ti je fino*, *je*, *i onda*, *da*, *je*. The most frequent errors included cases, agreements and the third person plural present tense.

A number of students struggled to pronounce some words correctly, indicating that further improvement is needed.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students were able to maintain and advance the Conversation very well, but some had considerable difficulty with sentence structures. Some consistent errors were *ik heb gebleven* (*ik ben gebleven*), *ik heb gewoont* (*ik heb gewoond*) and *ik heb met de fiets naar school gegaan* (*ik ben met de fiets naar school gegaan*), and these errors were repeated throughout some students' performances. There were many errors in the use of *het* and *de*; for example, *het boot* (*de boot*), *de huis* (*het huis*) and *de zusje* (*het zusje*).

Students made a number of errors with the Dutch names of school subjects; for example, they used 'maths' instead of *wiskunde*, 'geography' instead of *aardrijkskunde* and 'politics' instead of *politiek*. Students need to learn the Dutch names of school subjects. The Dutch names of countries should also be learnt; for example, *Nederland*, *België* and *Frankrijk*.

For some students, word order often presented a problem; for example, *ik ga naar Nederland in juni* (*ik ga in juni naar Nederland*) and *nu ik woon in Coburg* (*nu woon ik in Coburg*).

Word order when using the modal was also often incorrect; for example, *ik wil vanavond gaan naar de bioscoop* (*ik wil vanavond naar de bioscoop gaan*) and *ik moet mijn huiswerk maken in de woonkamer* (*ik moet mijn huiswerk in de woonkamer maken*). Another recurring error was the use of anglicisms or partial anglicisms, such as dentist (*tandarts*), wavy hair (*golvend haar*) and een job (*een baantje*). Students should remember that if they are unsure they may ask the assessors for clarification (*Zou u mij het woord voor ... kunnen geven?*).

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students prepared excellently for the Discussion. This preparation could be seen in their fluent and interesting observations of the study. Their use and command of Dutch seemed to be slightly better in the Detailed Study, although some students were not sure of their facts in some cases. Some students still had a limited range of vocabulary and needed a little support; others needed more support.

The vocabulary for the Detailed Study about Annie M.G. Schmidt was quite specific; some students were unable to draw on this vocabulary, as they had not prepared for the topic sufficiently. Students need to learn the specific vocabulary related to their Detailed Study, so they can apply it in their Discussion of the topic.

Some students had poor control of tenses. One noticeable error was the lack of verb and subject agreement, for example, *Annie en haar man woonde* (*Annie en haar man woonden*) and *Annie en Fiep schreef* (*Annie en Fiep schreven*). Another error was the incorrect use of the plural form; for example, *twee broeren* (*twee broers*) and *drie hoeds* (*drie hoeden*).

A noticeable error was the incorrect inflection of adjectives, particularly with a neuter noun; for example, *een nieuwe boek* (*een nieuw boek*) and *een prachtige gedicht* (*een prachtig gedicht*). A common mistake was not remembering that Dutch collective nouns always take a singular verb (in English, this is not compulsory); for example, *de familie gaan* (*de familie gaat*) and *de groep luisteren* (*de groep luistert*).

## **Oral component**

Overall, students performed well in both sections of the Filipino oral examination. Students were able to converse effectively in Filipino and were able to establish rapport with the assessors through their use of the language. Although there were mistakes, these were minimal and students were able to use repair strategies. Students showed confidence in the use of vocabulary. The use of visuals was helpful also to students when explaining their chosen topic.

In the Discussion section, some students presented their Detailed Study comprehensively. It was evident that these students had taken the preparation of their topic seriously, as they were able to explain and discuss their chosen topic. They also appeared to have sincere interest in their chosen topic. However, some students did not present their Detailed Study comprehensively. These students seemed less well prepared and less enthusiastic about their topic.

The following is a list of successful topics.

- Ang Mga Makabagong Imbensyon (Water Hyacinth Harvester)
- Religion (Iglesia ni Kristo)
- Internet in the Philippines (Wattpad)
- Transportation in the Philippines
- Education in the Philippines
- Social Networking (Jejemon)
- Mythical Creatures (Aswang, Kapre, Manananggal)
- National Symbols
- National Artists

Some chosen topics were limited or too narrow.

Students may benefit from being given a wide range of topics to choose from, and for them to select a topic and sub-topic that interests them. This will assist with students being engaged with the topic. It would also motivate the students to learn more about topics that interest them and to invest appropriate time for preparation.

## **Oral component**

Students' spoken French language skills were of a high standard. Students communicated well and knew how to advance the conversation and the discussion. Good performances involved questions being answered and elaborated on, and the exchange moving forward through an association of ideas.

Overall, students were better prepared for the Discussion than the Conversation.

## **Section 1 – Conversation**

High-scoring students developed their ideas in original ways. For example, to describe their family, they went beyond giving the names and ages of family members. They talked about relationships and family activities and their answers showed originality.

Some students answered using simple vocabulary and sentence structures instead of offering more detailed information.

## **Section 2 – Discussion**

High-scoring students had a good knowledge of a wide topic. These students were well prepared and able to articulate opinions.

Poor performances comprised much rote-learning and little deep learning. Visual aids were helpful if they were relevant to the topic and when students were able to integrate them into the Discussion. They were not of value when students did not talk about them. Some topics had no link to French culture.

Some students were asked questions on their chosen topics and replied with, 'I did not study this question'. Students must ensure that they research their topics thoroughly and that they are well prepared.

Verbs and tenses caused problems for some students. Often the infinitive was used instead the conjugated verb. The use and correct forms of tenses such as present perfect, imperfect, conditional and future were problematic.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

In general, students completed their Conversation competently and demonstrated a very good level of preparation and practice. Many students responded appropriately to assessors' comments and questions. Competent students were able to think ahead when responding and included more than one theme in their answers; for example, the student's response about favourite subjects at school developed into a conversation about activities that they enjoy in their leisure time, or a description of part-time work led to revealing their aspirations and hopes for future occupations or their opinion on the work that a sibling or parent undertakes.

Students should avoid responding primarily with short phrases, infinitives or single words – even if this would be the natural answer if one were to have this conversation in a normal social setting. Instead, students should aim to demonstrate how much German they can use competently and how easily they are able to maintain and advance a conversation. For example, when asked *'Was machen Sie gern, wenn Sie Freizeit haben?'*, a student should avoid answering *'Tennis spielen, Freunde treffen, nicht viel, ich habe keine Freizeit!'* It would be better to answer, *'Obwohl ich gerade nicht so viel Zeit habe, da ich oft für meine VCE-Fächer lernen muss, gehe ich gerne mit Freunden in die Stadt, wo wir vielleicht einen Film sehen oder ins Kino gehen. Am meisten gefallen mir lustige Filme, weil ich mich dann so richtig entspannen kann. Manchmal kommen auch Freunde zu mir und wir spielen am Computer oder machen zusammen Musik. Ich hoffe, ich habe nach den Prüfungen mehr Zeit, um mehr Musik zu machen. Ich möchte gern in einer Band spielen nächstes Jahr und Musik studieren.'* The student could then link to the next topic.

It was obvious that some students had not adequately prepared and practised responses on some of the typical themes for conversation; for example, *Familie, Schule, Freizeit, Zukunft, Freunde, Austausch nach Deutschland, Sport oder Musik* and *Nebenjob*.

Assessors tried to encourage students to explore their personal opinions, their feelings and possible options available to them, with questions such as:

- *Welches war das beste Jahr für Sie an der Schule?*
- *Was würden Sie gern an Ihrer Schule ändern?*

Questions like these encourage students to produce a range of grammatical structures (conditional, future tense, past tense, etc.) and allow students to move beyond predictable responses and demonstrate their real skill in the language.

Students should listen carefully to the assessors' questions and ask for clarification if they are not sure they have understood what was asked. Marks are not deducted for the use of repair strategies nor for clarification of questions. In the 2014 exam, some students mistakenly answered questions that were looking for interpretation with a *Ja/Nein* response; others gave a factual (past tense) description when the question was looking into possibilities and future plans or suggestions.

The oral examination was a formal context, thus assessors always addressed the student with the formal *Sie*, never *du*, and students should have addressed the assessors formally too. Some students, however, confused the formal pronoun *Sie* with the plural pronoun *sie* and answered inappropriately, despite the context of the question. Students often needed more practice with the relevant possessive pronouns, whether in the formal *Sie* context or third person *er / sie / (plural) sie*.

Common expressions were generally used accurately, but some otherwise competent students appeared to have a total disregard for gender and accuracy with case endings.

Many students need more practice in the use of irregular verb forms in the past tense, as well as in the correct use of *haben/sein* with past participles. Common verbs were generally used accurately, but more complex and less common verbs were too frequently used incorrectly.

During the Conversation, students are generally asked a range of questions, such as asking them to look back to earlier times, to look forward to plans and possibilities in the future, and to consider some hypothetical situations. Students should try to include such grammatical structures as the past tense (perhaps including the pluperfect, as appropriate), the future tense and the conditional tense.

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Students increasingly used, often inappropriately, the expressions ‘okay’ or ‘X ist Spaß’. While the word ‘okay’ is indeed becoming more common in German, its use is not exactly the same in the two languages. Students should also be aware that the oral examination is not a casual conversation with a couple of friends in the school ground, but a conversation with two adults, who they do not know, in a formal context. The choice of words to express that something is ‘good’ should not be narrowed to the repetitive use of ‘okay’ and ‘das ist Spaß’.

Students should consider learning some ‘filler’ expressions, to allow them a moment to think after a question has been asked. They should understand that they are not always expected to launch straight into a longer response, especially when a challenging question has been posed.

Fulfilling Criterion 5 involves more than simply accurate pronunciation. Appropriate stress, intonation and tempo in Standard German are also considered when awarding a mark. Students need to consider how quickly they speak. Speaking very slowly to ensure every word is grammatically correct is not the desired practice; on the other hand, competent speakers need to be wary of speaking steadily faster, beyond a normal conversational pace. Students also need to be careful with how individual syllables of words are stressed in German – this is often relevant when a German word is very similar in English, but the stress is different. Likewise, longer words, including the titles of some school subjects, require practice to ensure accuracy, as does thinking through a sentence to determine which word would naturally be stressed. Australian students need to be very careful of the common Australian upward inflection at the end of a sentence, where German speakers would more typically use downward intonation.

## Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of Discussion topic presented teachers and students with the opportunity to explore aspects of German-speaking culture and issues through texts. Some students presented themes such as migration, *Atomkraft* or *Nationalidentität*, for which there is a wealth of material to explore. Some students presented quite individual topics, often following their own interests or experience, such as the relationship between Jewish people and the Germans today and in the past, and the German ‘*Kunstlied*’ in the Romantic era. Students who presented topics that held a high level of personal interest or personal involvement for them tended to score highly, as the student’s experiences and background knowledge led to richer discussion and to responses where the student was able to display their knowledge of (and interest in) the topic.

It is very important to ensure that the selected topic offers several aspects that can lead to discussion and that the resources provide a wide range of points. Preferably, the selected resources should not deal with very similar or the same facts. Seven minutes is a very long time to try to maintain a discussion if the information, opinions and ideas are based on insufficient resources.

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they prepare sufficient content for the Discussion. Students should talk through the aspects they wish to discuss with parents or other students and adults, so that they can begin to anticipate what questions might be asked and to think about how they might respond to different paths of consideration. If a student does not like a topic, they will not gain additional marks by telling the assessors they disliked the topic – it is up to the student to take responsibility for their own material.

Sometimes, students wanted to impart a lot of information in one sentence and ended up stumbling through concepts, sometimes even becoming incomprehensible. If students want to present several aspects of an issue, they should practise strategies to present each point logically, possibly using vocabulary structures such as *zunächst*, *zum Schluss*, *schließlich*, *noch dazu*, *und auch*, *daher*, *deswegen* and *allerdings*.

Many students struggled with the use of key vocabulary. Revision of the accusative or dative endings and the gender of many key nouns seems to be needed.

Some students had excellent repair strategies and could ask for clarification effectively, especially as more unusual aspects of a topic were explored. Students could start by considering some synonyms to describe aspects of their topic, for example:

- *interessant* – *entscheidend* – *erforderlich* – *beeindruckend* – *bemerkenswert*
- *wertvoll* – *wichtig* – *zentral* – *bedeutend* – *beachtenswert*
- *ausgezeichnet* – *hervorragend* – *großartig* – *einmalig* – *einzigartig*
- *ich mag* – *mir gefällt...* – *ich finde es interessant*, *dass...* – *mich interessiert’s*, *dass...*

Often, Discussion themes involved some quite complicated vocabulary or specific terminology that can be quite difficult to pronounce and to achieve effective intonation with. Students should practise typical sentences using these key words or find simpler ways to express more complicated concepts. This is especially the case for weaker students, who often stumbled through key vocabulary for their Discussion topic.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

The majority of students were well prepared and communicated effectively with assessors. They maintained and advanced the exchange with some spontaneity and expanded effectively on aspects of their personal world such as family, school, leisure activities and plans for the future.

Some very able students who spoke Greek fluently and correctly did not seem to be aware of the communication criterion that requires them to respond ‘readily’ and carry ‘the discussion forward with some original input’. These students provided one-sentence answers, expecting assessors to ask further questions. Students should be reminded of the criteria and the importance of the points should be emphasised.

While the able students displayed an excellent range of vocabulary and used grammatical structures accurately, weaker students had a more limited vocabulary and at times relied on anglicisms (*το γκάρντεν*) or used English words (*πήγα holidays* and, in particular, the word *like*) to carry the conversation forward.

All students controlled simple grammatical structures well. The following common problems with grammatical and syntactical structures need to be addressed:

- errors with the common verbs *με αρέσει, χρειάζομαι, προσπαθώ, μαθαίνω, διαβάζω* and *πρέπει*, especially the active and passive voices
- incorrect stress of words (*οι γύναικες*)
- lack of agreement between article and gender (*ένα αδελφή, ο μητέρας*)
- lack of agreement between article and noun ending (*τα κήπα*), especially with the plural form of nouns and adjectives (*άλλες έλληνες, πολλά ώρες*)
- incorrect use of the nominative case (*είδα ο μπαμπάς*) or the genitive case (*της φίλων μου*)
- inability to distinguish between the continuing past and simple past tense (*έπαιζα* instead of *έπαιξα; παντρέψει* instead of *παντρεύει*)
- incorrect use of words (*εκ μέρων* instead of *εκ μέρους*)
- use of English words (*πήγα holidays*) and anglicisms (*η μπόσι μου*)
- errors with translating expressions from English (*από του μπαμπά μου της δουλειά, δεν πάντα κάνειis*).

High-scoring students displayed an excellent range of vocabulary and used grammatical structures accurately. Low-scoring students had a more limited vocabulary and often used the wrong word (*καφενείο* instead of *καφετερία*).

Students should endeavour to speak Greek outside school when possible, listen to Greek radio programs and watch Greek television programs. Listening to well-modelled Greek spoken by native speakers may also have a positive effect on students’ language development.

Most students spoke with correct pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo; however, students should pay greater attention to intonation when using new and unfamiliar vocabulary.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students had visited places such as Melbourne’s Immigration Museum (which linked directly to the sub-topic of ‘Migration’) as part of their Detailed Study. These students were able to describe the place in detail and express feelings and opinions on what they saw. These hands-on experiences assisted them to provide ‘relevant responses’ and also to ‘clarify, elaborate on and defend opinions and ideas effectively’.

The following types of grammatical and syntactical errors should be addressed.

- knowledge of genders of the common words *ο μητέρας, μία ξενοδοχείο* and *έχω αδέλος*
- lack of agreement between article and noun (*τα πιάτες, ένα αδελφή, στο Αμερική*)
- mistakes with the use of the correct words such as *διαφορές* and *διάφορα*, and *στην τελεία* instead of *στο τέλος*
- mistakes with the correct tense of verbs (*έχει παντρέψει* instead of *έχει παντρεύει; επισκέψω* instead of *επισκεφτώ*)
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives (*η απόφαση ήταν εύκολο, υγιεινό ζωή, μερικές μετανάστες, αρχαίες άνθρωποι, πολλούς δουλειές*)
- incorrect use of the genitive case (*το μήνυμα, το τραγούδι*)



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- mistakes in expression such as *το αρέσει πάρα πολύ, πολλά καλούς βαθμούς στο σχολείο*

Well-prepared students used a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures, as well as some sophisticated expressions appropriate to the chosen topic. It was clear that these students had built a vocabulary bank from which they could draw their answers.

Low-scoring students struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure; they often used a limited range of vocabulary.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students demonstrated an excellent ability to maintain the Conversation; however, they were less able to advance it appropriately. Some students needed support to respond promptly; in these cases, hesitations and lack of confidence were apparent. Other students needed support to maintain an ongoing exchange with the assessors, rather than producing unstoppable monologues. An effective communication should allow for both sides to interact at ease.

At times, the reduced capacity to elaborate was the result of a narrow knowledge of vocabulary; at other times, it seemed to result from an over-reliance on rote-learning. The latter caused repetition, which hindered the depth of the Conversation. The over-reliance on rote-learning became more of an issue when students were asked to express their own opinion but could only recite prepared texts and were, therefore, unable to shift direction spontaneously or follow any new direction led by the assessor.

It is important that students answer the assessor's question rather than try to manipulate the question in order to provide an answer that is close to another answer they have prepared in advance. For example, if students are asked to talk about their reading habits, it is not sufficient to promptly state they do not read and then to quickly move on to talk about their love of basketball. Shifting the topic of conversation or steering it too much towards one direction (for example, towards a book about an elite sportsman, then towards sport as the chosen hobby and finally sport as the choice of future career) does not constitute an effective advancement. The information provided by the student must be relevant to the topic of the conversation.

High-scoring students were able to provide thoughtful and genuine responses, even after saying that they haven't really thought about the question previously.

Students displayed a high level of grammatical accuracy. Grammatical errors did not affect the meaning and were mostly in the areas of agreement, preposition use and verb conjugation. Some words were borrowed from English and were presented in the wrong context.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students presented interesting topics and managed to select a very good variety of resources, enabling a broader discussion. However, some students were able to provide only general introductory sentences about their resources, without elaborating on the complex way in which the resources complement each other or how they relate to the broader theme of their choice.

High-scoring students were able to provide evidence from the study of the resources to defend their opinions. Some students were challenged by the requirement to express their own ideas and justify the reasons for the resource selection – one short sentence did not provide necessary depth. It should be noted that if a picture or a biography of an individual is one of the resources, students should be able to expand beyond a memorisation of dates and the main events in their life. Pictures and images should preferably stand on their own, presenting a visual message that can be elaborated upon.

Similarly, some students chose to discuss a figure or a place to which they have a personal connection. Although such personal links can provide a meaningful affiliation, it does not replace the need to be able to contextualise this individual perspective within the broader theme of the cultural aspect. Some students were unable to expand on the discussion to include different points of view and this resulted in them defending, somewhat argumentatively, one narrow opinion. It should be noted that the Detailed Study is an opportunity to evaluate in an inquisitive manner aspects of the Hebrew-speaking culture. Students who narrowed their discussion in such a way were unable to expatiate beyond a single point of view.

## **Oral component**

Some students achieved high scores in both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the Hindi oral examination. They used a variety of appropriate vocabulary and very good sentence structures with good clarity of expression, such as प्रेरणा-स्रोत, हिन्दूत्व, जागृत्व, आत्म प्रशिक्षण, and good sentence structures such as प्रतीत करवाया, योग्य समाधान निकालना चाहती हैं, अंधकार को दूर किया and धर्म प्रचारक बनी.

However, some students did not perform well, especially in the Discussion section, where they had very limited information. These students often required support from assessors. Some students were unaware of the exam procedures and did not have suitable resources. Students who did not perform well struggled with Criteria 4 and 5 in the Conversation section and Criteria 9 and 10 in the Discussion section. In order to improve in these areas students could practise reading aloud. Students are reminded that they must speak in Hindi only during the oral examination.

Some students struggled to express their ideas or find appropriate words in order to convey their opinions. They also had difficulty with pronunciation and intonation. For example, चित्रकाल करना should be चित्रकारी करना, उन्होको, भी should be उनका भी, घाथो should be गाथो, भंधन should be बंधन, समुदाय should be समुदाय and तंदरुस्त खाना है should be पौष्टिक खाना है.

## **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students presented a very good range of information. They were able to maintain and move the Conversation forward. Most students were also able to express their ideas and opinions in depth. They were ready to answer unexpected questions with fluency, using a range of vocabulary. Students' pronunciation, tone and the use of colloquial phrases and idioms were excellent.

## **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students were able to discuss their chosen topic easily. It was evident that they had studied the topic thoroughly and could respond to assessors' questions with confidence. These students achieved high scores on all of the criteria. Most students selected a Detailed Study topic from the sub-topics History and traditions, Arts and entertainment, Lifestyles, Social issues and Environmental issues. The most popular topic was Famous people. Students used a large variety of resources such as the internet, books, interviews, posters, leaflets, maps and statistical information such as graphs and pie charts.

## **Oral component**

In the 2014 Hungarian oral examination, students showed language skills that ranged from average to excellent.

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

#### **Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively**

Students communicated clearly and were able to answer all open-ended questions. They used a range of vocabulary and grammar appropriate for the context, task and audience.

#### **Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas**

The range of information given about family, work and leisure was usually satisfactory. Strong students showed fluency, while others needed prompting or for questions to be rephrased.

Students are reminded that they should not give their name or their teacher's name during the oral examination.

#### **Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar**

Grammar needed further attention in some cases. Often the case ending *-ba*, *-be* or *-hoz*, *-hez* was interchanged; for example, somebody *iskolához jár* instead of the correct *iskolába jár*.

Students often tried to translate literally from English to Hungarian, resulting in the incorrect use of grammar and tense – *csinálom gitárt* instead of *gitározni tanulok*.

The 'T' of accusative was often omitted; for example, *Számtant tanulok* instead of *matematikát csinálok* or *a magyar nyelvet tanulom*, not *csinálom*.

#### **Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

Vocabulary and grammar was not always appropriate. Students often gave subject names in English and not in Hungarian. Students should be familiar with the correct Hungarian name and pronunciation of their subjects.

Students did not appear to be aware of the correct use of the formal and informal, often addressing the assessor in the familiar second-person singular, which is not the correct social convention in Hungarian.

#### **Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression**

Pronunciation in some cases was inexact – the 'T' sound was either weak or 'swallowed' altogether and the 'R' sound fared similarly. Intonation was sometimes very low level or even ascending, rather than descending at the end of the sentence, as is the case in Hungarian.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

#### **Criterion 6 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively**

Generally, students were well prepared and able to express opinions clearly. They used good repair strategies when necessary.

A few students were hesitant, stumbled over words and idioms, and needed prompting. Sometimes students repeated statements instead of elaborating on them.

#### **Criterion 7 – Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic**

Students should rely less on rote-learning. It is important for students to practise and be well prepared for both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the oral examination.

#### **Criterion 8 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and Criterion 9 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

Somewhat limited vocabulary was evident in some cases.

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As in previous years, definite and indefinite numerals were used with plural nouns. In Hungarian, the numeral expresses the multiplicity, so there is no need for plural nouns. Correct case endings and idiomatic expressions should also be given attention.

Students did not seem to know some of the modifying suffixes; for example, instead of *csináltam tenis*, the simple *teniszezni* would do, keeping in mind that many such transformations exist in the language. Some students struggled with similar sounding words; for example, *történet* instead of *történelem*. *Történet* means story; *történelem* means history.

## Criterion 10 – Clarity of expression

Pronunciation varied. The ‘T’ was generally weak and the ‘R’ was more like an English ‘R’, not the rolling Hungarian ‘r’.

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**Languages: Indonesian Second Language**

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

The Conversation section was assessed according to the following criteria.

#### **Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively**

The majority of students were well prepared and were able to hold a conversation with the assessors. High-scoring students were able to provide sustained responses to all questions. The ability to respond at length to unexpected questions and to be able to speak spontaneously was a feature of the highest-performing students. Many students did not listen carefully to all parts of questions asked and were often too reliant on rote-learned answers; for example, some students gave a prepared answer to the question *Ibu dan bapakmu bekerja sebagai apa?* when the question was *Apakah ibu dan bapakmu bekerja?* Additionally, some students did not answer questions directly.

#### **Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas**

High-scoring students added breadth and depth to the conversation with an excellent range of information, and were also able to express opinions and ideas. Students who relied on pre-prepared answers were often only able to give very short and simple responses to questions that they had not prepared for. Students are reminded that sustained responses are expected to all questions.

#### **Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar**

High-scoring students showed a strong command of different sentence patterns, including active and passive sentences. Many low-scoring students did not use the correct vocabulary for school subjects or for university courses. Common errors were the omission of *akan* in responses relating to the future, the inaccurate use of *adalah* and *kapan/ketika/kalau*. Many students also made mistakes by using *menarik* instead of *tertarik* when referring to their interest in Indonesian culture.

#### **Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

High-performing students used a wide range of sentence patterns in their responses; however, some students' attempts at using complex sentence patterns was often inappropriate, forced and unnatural. Low-scoring students were unable to use more than the simple sentence structures expected at junior levels. The range of vocabulary and grammar required at this level is outlined on pages 14–16 of the *VCE Indonesian Second Language Study Design*.

#### **Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression**

Students who had prepared well were able to respond in a tempo appropriate for a conversation. Common errors in pronunciation were with the word *bekerja*, which was often pronounced as *berkerja*, and *berberapa*, which was said instead of *beberapa*. Shorter and correct vowel sounds were often required with words such as *ibu*, *satu* and *universitas*. Another common error was in words like *mengunjungi*, *sangat* and *ingin*, where a soft 'g' sound is required. Some students did not sound as though they were speaking Indonesian due to a very pronounced and inaccurate rising intonation in their sentences.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

The Discussion section was assessed according to the following criteria.

#### **Criterion 6 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively**

High-scoring students showed a full understanding of all questions. Students are reminded to practise answering questions that are phrased slightly differently in order to ensure that they fully answer questions. Many students had a limited knowledge of their topic despite the expected 15 hours of class time that they should have completed on their Detailed Study topic.

#### **Criterion 7 – Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic**

There were some new and interesting topics presented this year. High-scoring students spoke on topics that enabled them to provide opinions and ideas. Some topics selected did not enable students to engage in a discussion, as there was no scope for opinions or ideas to be presented. Some topics did not have an Indonesian focus, as required. Students and teachers are reminded that all topics must explore the language and culture of Indonesian-speaking communities and be

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based on a sub-topic related to one or more of the prescribed topics in the *VCE Indonesian Second Language Study Design*.

## **Criterion 8 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar**

Errors with using the *me-* or *di-* forms of words were common. Some students did not appear to be familiar with all of the vocabulary used in their one-minute introduction. Accuracy with the language is more difficult to achieve when speaking spontaneously, and some students found this very challenging.

## **Criterion 9 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

High-scoring students were able to use their texts effectively to generate a sophisticated level of language. They were also able to develop a command of key language relating to their topic to be used in their own responses, such as being able to freely change between the *me-*, *di-* and *pe-an* forms of relevant vocabulary.

## **Criterion 10 – Clarity of expression**

The mispronunciation of anglicised words, such as *industri*, *nasional* and *energi*, were common errors. Many low-scoring students were unable to accurately pronounce words from their one-minute introduction. The tempo of many students' responses was too slow and indicated a lack of preparation.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

The highest-scoring students prepared familiar conversation topics thoroughly and with sophistication. Students who performed well were able to competently and freely draw upon personal experiences and reflections to add substance to the Conversation. These students elaborated on their ideas capably, through the use of a wide and accurate variety of language expressions and structures.

Many students demonstrated the ability to maintain the Conversation by linking effectively with assessors and responding readily and confidently to questions. Some students needed support in advancing the Conversation, while others relied on assessors to prompt them for responses.

The higher-scoring students elaborated on their ideas and were able to clarify them by using reasons and examples to justify their comments. They provided details or information about their interests; for example, books, films and other pastimes. However, while many students gave a good range of information, they often had difficulty clarifying and defending their opinions and ideas. Some students provided a limited range of information and did not appear to have prepared adequately in order to maintain the Conversation.

Students who had control of the grammatical structures required for the examination were well equipped to express themselves and communicate successfully and competently. These students demonstrated the ability to use sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately, producing conversations of quality and merit. Many students, however, displayed control only of more simple structures and did not attempt to enhance their communication through more complex structures. Some students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most notable errors were with verb conjugations, agreements and use of tenses.

Very few students demonstrated an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions with sophistication. Students should have worked on a wider range of structures and vocabulary in order to enhance the quality of their communication as this would have assisted them to produce a more sustained and coherent argument. The majority of students limited themselves to using a narrow range of tenses and vocabulary, and this affected the quality of their responses.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students communicated effectively by responding readily and advancing the exchange by providing original input, confidently and capably carrying the Discussion forward. These students needed minimal or no support in this section of the examination. Other students demonstrated a good level of understanding and were usually able to advance the Discussion despite some hesitations and pauses. Low-scoring students encountered difficulties due to a limited level of understanding. These students were slow to respond and lacked repair strategies.

High-scoring students demonstrated excellent preparation of their Discussion topic. These students were able to clarify and support their ideas and opinions through the use of their chosen texts. They were able to expand on their points of view by using evidence gained from their selected resources. However, many students presented information about their topic but lacked the ability to explore it in depth and provide opinions on their theme. They had limited knowledge and mastery of their texts, and this hindered their overall performance. Ideas needed to be developed with a much clearer form of contention and thought with better linking to resources. Some students presented discussions that were often fragmented, and therefore information was not presented in a logical manner. It was clear in these cases that the student had not prepared adequately for the Discussion.

Many resources being presented were very outdated. It is recommended that new resources that would support these topics are sought. Furthermore, choosing more substantial texts would allow students more opportunities to thoroughly explore the themes and issues of the Detailed Study.

Students who had prepared thoroughly were able to enhance the Discussion through use of accurate and sophisticated vocabulary and grammar. They demonstrated excellent control of structures, expressions and vocabulary. Many students used simple vocabulary and grammatical structures, limiting themselves to the use of the present, past and imperfect tenses only. These students often did not attempt a more elaborate use of structures and vocabulary, and therefore their language was predictable.



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High-scoring students were able to incorporate a wide, sophisticated and appropriate range of grammatical structures and vocabulary, which allowed them to discuss their topic in great detail. It was clear that these students had developed an extensive vocabulary bank through a thorough analysis of their resources. The majority of students, however, had a more limited range of vocabulary, structures and expressions, which prevented them from presenting their ideas in a more sophisticated manner. Low-scoring students relied on rote-learned language and often struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure; consequently they used ordinary vocabulary or waited to be prompted by the assessors.

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**Languages: Japanese Second Language**

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students generally performed well in the Conversation section. The use of personal stories and anecdotes allowed students to use a variety of structures and vocabulary.

Most students demonstrated a very good level of understanding, communicated effectively and performed well on Criterion 1. High-scoring students interacted well with assessors, listening closely to each question and presenting relevant responses. Low-scoring students needed to provide more extensive responses to the questions in order to carry the Conversation forward spontaneously and effectively.

そして、それから、その後で、それに、そのうえ、ですから and でも are useful words to help the Conversation flow and become more interesting. Some students repeated なぜなら at the beginning of each sentence, but this was not appropriate. Students could have used other connectives such as から、ので、だから to add a variety of patterns to their answers.

It is important that students understand interrogative words such as どう、どうして、なぜ、だれと、どのぐらい、どうやって and respond to questions appropriately.

Criterion 3 emphasises the importance of accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and was the criterion for which students scored the lowest.

Many students were able to include a range of grammatical structures in their responses. However, they were often inaccurate. The most notable errors were with particles, tenses and the use of adjectives; for example, い/な adjectives in the negative and past form, and joining two adjectives such as やさしくておもしろい and べんりでやすい.

Students are encouraged to pay attention to the use of もらう/あげる、より/ほう、から/ので and あまり/ぜんぜん/よく. There were many mistakes in the use of time words, such as 一年、二年前、週に（3）かい、きょ年, and counters for people and pets. Students should be able to give people's ages and level of school years（中学三年生）correctly. Some students had difficulty with katakana words.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students did not present their introduction clearly. This resulted in a number of problems in the Discussion. The assessors asked students which aspect of their topic they wanted to discuss so that they were able to ask questions that were appropriate to the chosen topic.

It was evident that many students had enjoyed researching their topic and had prepared an excellent range of aspects to discuss. They were able to advance the Discussion by providing extensive information about their topic and used their resources to support their opinions and ideas.

Mid-range students generally demonstrated a good understanding of questions and the ability to communicate with assessors, presenting a range of information. However, at times they lacked the ability to effectively elaborate on their ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence.

Some students, after naming their resources (an internet article or a website), had very little information to add, demonstrating that they had not prepared adequately for the Discussion.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students demonstrated an excellent ability to carry the conversation forward, and presented relevant information and an excellent range of opinions and ideas with reasons and examples. They used a variety of words, grammatical structures and expressions accurately. However, a few students struggled to elaborate on and support their opinions. Students should avoid using words if they are unsure of the meaning or pronunciation.

High-scoring students demonstrated thorough preparation and an ability to advance the Conversation effectively for questions about home life, family and friends, school, interests, travel, sports and future aspirations. They were able to elaborate on their responses using a broad and accurate range of vocabulary and grammar. The effectiveness of the exchange was further enhanced by students responding in full sentences with relevant information.

Mid-range students generally demonstrated the ability to communicate with assessors, providing a good range of information; however, at times they lacked the ability to effectively elaborate on their ideas and opinions. These students often required support from the assessors in order to advance the Discussion. The language structures used were satisfactory, but some students were not familiar with some vocabulary and used terminology without proper understanding of the meaning. A small number of students needed to expand their vocabulary and use the appropriate register.

Low-scoring students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas. This indicated a lack of preparation. It is essential that students prepare adequately for the Discussion. Students are required to demonstrate their understanding of their chosen topic by using appropriate vocabulary and topic-specific terminology. Students should not use rote-learned material out of context; students who did so were often unable to advance the exchange and needed prompts to continue.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

After the introduction of the Discussion topic, students should not need prompting from assessors in order to continue. Most students gave presentations that were too long and assessors needed to interrupt them. While it is very important for students to anticipate and prepare for potential questions, students need to remember that the oral examination involves a conversation and discussion, not a presentation of a monologue.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students maintained an interesting conversation with assessors, often presenting their personal experiences. Their performances displayed thorough preparation of the expected conversation topics. Most students were able to use a variety of vocabulary, structures and expressions.

Some students demonstrated an excellent level of communication by skilfully linking with assessors. These students were able to carry the conversation forward with spontaneity by responding readily and confidently. They also used effective repair strategies such as asking for clarification or self-correcting when necessary.

Most students presented a good range of relevant information, opinions and ideas. High-scoring students were able to elaborate on their responses by using additional reasons, examples or evidence and clarified their responses well when questioned by assessors.

Most students had good control of vocabulary and grammar. However, some weaker students made frequent and intrusive errors by using incorrect words or sentence structures. These students often spent a longer amount of time to trying to think of a correct word to use.

Some students used an excellent range of vocabulary and structures. These students were able to produce sustained responses with a clear progression of ideas by using appropriate words. They also consistently used highly appropriate style and register.

Students were assessed on pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. High-scoring students demonstrated:

- clear pronunciation
- good use of intonation and stress
- natural speed of delivery.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students presented a well-prepared introduction and displayed a good understanding of the aim of the Detailed Study by exploring and comparing various aspects of their chosen texts. Students selected a range of sub-topics for their Detailed Study.

High-scoring students spoke confidently and demonstrated their appreciation of a chosen sub-topic. They were able to interact with assessors by giving prompt responses and express opinions.

Most students demonstrated good understanding of their Detailed Study. High-scoring students exhibited thorough preparation. These students presented highly logical information and ideas and skilfully supported them with detailed evidence from the texts studied.

Some students' use of vocabulary and grammar was impressively accurate. They demonstrated their capacity to express their responses using different structures. These students were also able to self-correct when necessary.

A number of students made errors by using informal language during the Discussion. Students should be reminded to maintain formal language throughout their oral examination.

Students' responses were assessed on basic features of speaking such as pronunciation, intonation and tempo of delivery. Some students' tempo of delivery quickened as they presented the introduction to their Detailed Study. It is important for students to maintain consistency in tempo of delivery throughout the examination.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

In the 2014 Macedonian oral examination, many students displayed a high level of preparation and good communication skills. However, most students needed to be prompted by assessors during the examination and did not take the initiative to lead the Conversation. Most students connected well with the assessors, were able to talk about their hobbies and subjects with great confidence, and were highly informative.

Students scored lowest on Criterion 3, and there were errors in gender and tenses throughout the examination. Students need to be better prepared in understanding grammatical concepts and should practise them thoroughly. A few students had correct vocabulary and grammar.

The range of appropriate vocabulary and grammar was broad and varied, with some students using very simple structures and some able to use complex sentences with linking devices. Vocabulary was mostly well learnt and put into practice, except in the instances when Macedonian words were substituted by English ones.

Although some difficulty with pronunciation was evident, students' clarity of expression was very good.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Topics for Detailed Study should be carefully chosen and culturally relevant. Content should be thoroughly researched; it should equate to 15 hours of study.

Students needed to understand that assessors will interrupt them during the Discussion. Some students had difficulty with the introduction to the topic and sub-topic.

Students should know how to respond spontaneously to questions. Some students weren't able to respond to questions once the Discussion moved from what they had expected. Students need to adhere to their topic more closely and concentrate on the performance. Students should be prepared to respond to questions during the exam and to elaborate and give detailed explanations. Those who were not thoroughly prepared did not answer the questions well. A few students had very good communication and understanding of the material presented and there were some examples of well-prepared students who responded to questions well.

Most students needed prompting but some showed excellent speaking skills. Excellent performances included a high level of communication skills and understanding. These students had an excellent range of vocabulary and used it accurately.

Some students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most notable errors involved gender agreement and verb tense.

## **Oral component**

Students demonstrated a mixed level of proficiency in their oral skills. Students need to practise the language in the classroom on a regular basis to gain confidence in oral communication. Teachers need to create suitable opportunities in class where students listen to the spoken language; for example, YouTube clips, SBS Maltese news and programs, extracts from DVDs, class debates and discussions.

Excellent Section 2 discussions were where the student interacted with the assessors and answered more complex questions confidently. In other cases, communicating in the language proved quite difficult and the assessors often had to use prompts to continue the exchange. Students should develop their own opinions on the texts and practise answering a variety of likely questions. Further topics for the Detailed Study that could be explored include Recent Social Changes in Maltese Society, Malta's Entry in the European Union and Tourism – its impacts on the island.

Students greeted the assessors correctly both at the start and the end of the examination.

Students generally used linguistic elements accurately; for example, verb conjugation, agreements and the correct use of tenses. In some cases, limited vocabulary and poor knowledge of language structures slowed the flow of conversation.

It is essential for students to remember that they need to keep within the time limit and be prepared to discuss and expand on ideas mentioned in the introduction. While it is important for students to prepare extensively for the examination, rote-learning large amounts of information will only render the discussion a monologue and not an interesting exchange.

The main topic studied for this year was Maltese Folklore and Traditions. It is useful for students to prepare adequately by anticipating questions and practising answers, elaborating on their themes.

Students had researched well, in some cases providing relevant factual information, and showing evidence of good research skills and the ability to expand ideas. Specific details and opinions gave the discussion more substance. In other discussions, this was covered to a lesser degree.

Students were assessed on their capacity to use a good variety of vocabulary and more sophisticated language structures rather than simple and predictable language.

Overall, most students spoke clearly with correct pronunciation. At times, however, lack of confidence resulted in the discussion becoming slow-moving and less cohesive.

**2014**

**Language: Persian**

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Generally, students performed well on the 2014 Persian oral examination.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students were able to carry on an effective conversation, although some students needed to use a wider range of vocabulary. The most common errors in the Conversation involved the use of English vocabulary.

Students who were less well prepared found it difficult to extend beyond ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers and were unable to answer in more detail. It was evident that some students had rote-learned information and presented it without any modification, which detracted from their performance.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Students should choose a sub-topic for their Detailed Study that is relevant to Persian communities and focus on using the Discussion to demonstrate aspects of Persian language and culture. Some students chose sub-topics that did not relate to the prescribed topics and consequently missed out on marks even though they were well prepared. Low-scoring performances mostly occurred when students chose unsuitable sub-topics.

Students should have adequate knowledge of their sub-topics so that they can elaborate on their responses to questions.

Some students needed significant support to carry the Discussion forward. Those students who had prepared with care performed well in this section of the examination.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Students generally performed very well in the 2014 Polish oral examinations. There were some outstanding performances and it was evident that most students had thoroughly researched their topic for Discussion.

In most cases students used vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate to the setting and register. Some errors occurred, but these did not interfere with the intended meaning. Most students were able to correct their mistakes using effective repair strategies.

The most common grammatical mistakes involved the declination of nouns and adjectives (*zamek wawelskiego*), verb conjugation and the use of inappropriate informal language when addressing assessors (*wiesz*).

All students pronounced key vocabulary and utterances with sufficient sound, clarity and stress and responded appropriately to requests for clarification. Many students adopted good communicative strategies, such as eye contact, and use of body language and facial expressions.

Most students used visual aids to support their presentation. If students' support materials contain photographs, then it is important that students know about the person(s) or place(s) shown.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

The manner of delivery in both sections was generally very good. Overall, the accuracy and level of appropriateness in relation to the use of vocabulary, grammatical structure and pronunciation were also very good.

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students participated effectively and confidently in conversations with changing topics and managed topic changes well.

Students demonstrated a very good or an excellent level of understanding of assessors' questions and responded with a relevant and wide range of personal information or opinions. They opened the conversation appropriately using greetings or questions.

Most students were able to sustain the dialogue by using appropriate interaction strategies as required; for example, taking turns, giving feedback, seeking clarification or asking follow-up questions. They used some common idiomatic expressions accurately.

The level of language used was good, and students demonstrated very good skills in self-correction. Although the majority of students were very confident, few students were able to advance the conversation adequately, which restricted their ability to deal with the content and interact with the assessors. These students had limited vocabulary and used inappropriate grammatical structures.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

The majority of students delivered a well-structured and coherent presentation on their Detailed Study. This year the most popular topics were Polish places and Polish people.

Students had used a variety of sources when researching their Detailed Study (the internet, Wikipedia, books, essays, magazines, family members and personal diaries from visits to Poland). Students who used appropriate and detailed resources, such as essays and articles, performed at a high level. A small number of students, after naming their resources, did not have adequate information to add, which suggested that they had not prepared in sufficient depth for the Discussion.

Most topics were introduced successfully and many were very well developed. Many students were well prepared for the Discussion on their chosen topic and were open and eager to express their own knowledge and opinions.



# **2014 Examination Report**

Most students had a good range of vocabulary, structures and expressions, but some students could have worked towards producing a greater variety of vocabulary and better grammatical structures. This would have assisted them to produce a more sustained and more coherent argument.

In most cases, students used an appropriate format that was structured with a clear sequence of introduction, content and conclusion. They delivered clear facts, statements or viewpoints with substantiation if required.

Most students linked their main ideas logically and cohesively and responded to questions appropriately.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

In this section, students should be able to communicate using a wide range of vocabulary, interchange between tenses easily and successfully address all five assessment criteria. The highest-scoring students demonstrated quite a good knowledge of Portuguese and they had prepared their topics well. These students were able to express their comments in detail and interact well with the assessors. On the other hand, weaker students were not as competent in the language and struggled often throughout the examination. Their answers were, at times, minimal, showing lack of knowledge of the language.

Some students used sophisticated vocabulary and grammar, while others used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most common errors were made with verb conjugations, subject/verb agreements and tenses.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students prepared their topic very well and, as a result, they responded to leading questions well.

Most students were well prepared and produced confident responses during the Discussion, giving their opinions and ideas freely. They were also able to carry the Discussion forward. A few students were unable to defend their ideas and opinions. They presented a superficial discussion of the topic and waited for the next question.

High-scoring students were able to elaborate and provide opinions that displayed some depth of information on all the resources mentioned. Others students were not able to do so. As advised in the study design, students should use at least three sources to ensure they have enough information.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

In general, students performed well in the 2014 Punjabi oral examination. Some students were fluent in spoken Punjabi and were confident and focused during the Conversation and the Discussion. Others had difficulty in pronunciation and expression, due to a lack of preparation.

Students are advised to follow the study design for the selection of Detailed Study topics. It is important that students have enough content to carry on seven minutes of conversation about their personal world and eight minutes about their Detailed Study topic. Students are reminded that materials brought to support the examination should contain only minimal writing, and that they should not rely on this information during the examination.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

During the Conversation, students were expected to communicate with assessors in Punjabi about aspects of their personal world. There were some strong opinions and thoughts about aspirations and plans for the future. Many students engaged with the assessors for the required amount of time and were prepared for longer discussion. Other students were poorly prepared and not able to offer their opinions, and some students struggled to respond appropriately due to gaps in their preparation.

Some students translated phrases literally from English, which resulted in a different meaning, with the English expression evident. A few students spoke some phrases in Hindi, rather than Punjabi. A number of students provided responses using both Hindi and English words, without realising or without implementing any repair strategies.

A small proportion of students were well prepared, and they were exceptional in expressing their answers. These students were excellent at carrying on the conversation with confidence and sharing their viewpoints.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

There was a wide variety of topics chosen for the Discussion, ranging from Punjabi culture, religion, social issues, arts and entertainment, and historical landmarks.

During the examination, it was evident that some students put a great deal of effort into finding relevant information, which was also of high quality. Unprepared students were unable to elaborate on their responses. Students are reminded that they must choose a topic within their Punjabi-speaking capabilities, and to sufficiently research and prepare their chosen topic prior to the examination.

Well-prepared students showed a good understanding of Punjabi vocabulary and grammar rules. Other students mispronounced phrases or misused words, demonstrating a lack of preparation or a lack of understanding of aspects of the Punjabi language.

Most students provided responses that showed a range of appropriate vocabulary and grammar, although a few students used English or Hindi words in their responses and struggled to find alternative Punjabi words.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

The highest-scoring performances were the result of a thorough preparation of familiar conversation topics such as family, school and leisure activities, and plans for the future. Referencing personal stories and anecdotes offered students the possibility of using a variety of structures, vocabulary and tenses.

Most students showed a very good level of understanding, communicated effectively and performed well. Some students gave minimal answers and waited for the assessors' next questions. Special attention should be paid to the effectiveness of communication and repair strategies.

Some students produced elaborate sentences in terms of sentence structure and vocabulary. Some students used poor sentence structures, displaying only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures; the most notable errors occurred in the use of verb tenses and agreements.

Most students had a good range of vocabulary, structures and expressions. Some students, however, answered superficially or in monosyllabic sentences, which restricted their ability to deal with the content of the Conversation.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Some students were thoroughly prepared and produced confident responses during the Discussion, drawing on related ideas that moved the Discussion forward. The responses that these students produced demonstrated that they had clearly anticipated some of the questions and were capable of carrying the Discussion forward. Low-scoring students could not support their arguments, and remained on a superficial level of discussion, waiting for the next question to be asked.

Some students presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas to cover their chosen topic and were able to maintain and move the Discussion forward. Most of the information presented was relevant and significant enough to add weight to the argument. Most students were also able to express their ideas and opinions, and provided reasons when asked to substantiate them.

Some outstanding students were exact in their use of vocabulary and grammar, which was impressive. On average, students used a good variety of structures but often the language was simple and predictable, with occasional grammatical inaccuracies (for example, incorrect agreement between the subject and predicate).

Some students used an excellent range of vocabulary, as well as some sophisticated expressions appropriate to the chosen topic. It was clear that these students had built a vocabulary bank from which they could draw their answers. Low-scoring students struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students demonstrated good knowledge of grammar and an extensive vocabulary. A few students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structure; the most notable errors involved verb conjugations and agreements and the incorrect use of tenses; for example, «...или чё-то такое (что-то такое)», «Я хочу стать режиссер», «...интерес к другому человека», «...не хотят ребенок», «между Австралия и Россия», «...играла в скрипку», «...я учусь математику, физику», «...учусь на врачом» and «...через неделю я готовил борщ».

Most students used accurate and varied vocabulary. Some students, however, used words that were not appropriate in the given context; for example, «...не хотя этого» (не желая), «...проводить время с друзьями» and «...перестать криминировать друг друга». Common mistakes included the incorrect use of third-person pronouns, incorrect noun endings, incorrect stress and the use of anglicisms; for example, «...я делаю информатику», «...делать безопасность», «...пойду на инженера», «...мы живем православную жизнь», «...я увлекаюсь машина», «...я себе увлекаюсь спортом», «...я взял год от школы», «...делать безопасность», «...вначале мы пошли в Америку», «...по моему взгляду» and «...на сей день» (сейчас).

Students should be encouraged to build an appropriate word bank and consolidate their knowledge of grammar functions. Common mistakes included the inappropriate use of vocabulary; for example, «...там было много искусства», «...деньги работают» and «...захаживает за мной» (ухаживает за мной), as well as the incorrect use of grammar; for example, «...каждую ночь я занимаюсь сидеть на компьютере» and «...он встречает разные звери».

Students experienced only minor problems with pronunciation, stress and tempo, but more focus is needed on Russian intonation patterns as some students tended to use English intonation patterns when speaking Russian; for example, using rising intonation at the end of affirmative sentences.

Other mistakes included incorrect pronunciation; for example, «...шас» (сейчас), «...помоч» (помощь), «...я взял воду» (ударение на втором слоге) and «... я перешла в старшую школу» (ударение на втором слоге).

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students demonstrated a variety of vocabulary, grammar and expression in the Discussion. They used vocabulary and grammar that was appropriate to the context, in the appropriate style and register.

Students should pay further attention to the following issues and mistakes.

- incorrect agreement; for example, «...это меняющийся мир» and «...делиться все его тайны»
- sentence structure; for example, «...Он побольше люблю рисовал женщины», «...они учить искреннюю дружбу» and «... работали по полям»
- word formation; for example, «...они пытаются (пробуют), но пока не получится», «...как наши корни проживают – это очень интересно» and «...русская женщина надета в костюме»

The range of topics chosen by students was wide and interesting. The following are some of the topics and sub-topics chosen.

#### **1. Environment**

- Global shortage of fresh water
- Global disappearance of forests

#### **2. Influential people in Russia**

- Controversy in the character of the Tsar Nikolai II
- The role of Peter the Great in the Russian history
- The influence of Nureyev's ballet on world ballet
- Pavel Tretyakov
- Rasputin's influence on the Russian Empire

# **2014 Examination Report**

## 3. Russian traditions

- Traditional Russian cuisine
- Should Russians celebrate military rituals and victories?
- Russian alternative medicine.
- Is it important for migrants to learn the Russian language?

## 4. Art

- Russian cartoons versus American cartoons
- Russian women and traditional Russian folk costumes

## **Oral component**

The overall quality of students' communicative skills in conversation and discussion was impressive. It was evident that they had prepared thoroughly and had a very good understanding of the presented topics.

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

A high-scoring performance included thorough and sophisticated preparation of familiar conversation topics. Students spoke confidently about themselves, their families, migrating to Australia, comparing the education and lifestyles of Australia and Serbia and expressing their opinions.

The majority of students presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas, covering a variety of topics relevant to their personal life. From family life to hobbies, travelling, sport, music, literature and further aspirations they were able to maintain the conversation, and inform assessors of these aspects of their personal life.

Most students demonstrated a very good level of understanding of the topics covered in the Conversation and were able to link with the assessors, effectively and flawlessly carrying the conversation forward. Weaker students were able to provide sufficient information but the depth and expression of their opinions were limited.

Most students used good sentence structures, ranging from semi-complex to complex and including the appropriate grammatical structures. A small number of students used simple sentence structures, demonstrating limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most notable errors were with prepositions and conjugation agreement.

Most students had an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions. A variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures were displayed throughout the Conversation. Some weaker students demonstrated a limited range of vocabulary due to insufficient preparation.

Most students had a good pronunciation, intonation and tempo. The clarity of expression, speed of delivery, voice projection and modulation was generally very good.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Excellent topic choices for the Discussion included historical events, and famous Serbian dignitaries and their achievements.

Most students were thoroughly prepared and gave confident responses. They readily provided answers to the questions raised about the topics. Most were able to provide opinions that displayed depth of information on all the resources mentioned.

After naming their resource(s) (an internet article, documentaries, books or websites), some students had very little information to add, demonstrating that they had not prepared adequately for the discussion. They lacked the ability to defend their ideas as they relied on rote-learned material and needed support from the assessors.

Some students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and grammar, which was impressive. Some students used an excellent range of vocabulary that was relevant to the topic, along with some technical terminology that was sophisticated and appropriate.

Other students used poor sentence structures, displaying only a limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. These students sometimes struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure; consequently they often used simplified language.

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students were well prepared for the Conversation.

Some students used a very limited range of words. These students may benefit from reading more books in Sinhala in order to improve their vocabulary.

Most students demonstrated a good to very good level of understanding and carried the Conversation forward with little hesitation and few pauses. There were also some excellent performances that fulfilled all requirements. There were only a few instances where students needed support in order to carry the conversation forward and/or lacked the ability to use repair strategies. Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the examination requirements by referring to the study design.

Most students provided sufficient information during the Conversation. However, there were some instances where students did not give sufficient evidence to support their statements. The more competent speakers were able to give their own ideas and opinions as well as providing information.

Most students used accurate vocabulary but there were a few instances of inaccuracy in grammar, specifically in the use of tenses. Students' range of vocabulary and grammar requires improvement. Except for a few instances where a sophisticated range of vocabulary was used, students tended to demonstrate a very limited range of vocabulary. Some students repeated words and used inappropriate style and register.

The majority of the students demonstrated a good level of pronunciation and intonation. However, pronunciation, intonation, tempo and tone still require improvement for some students.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students were well prepared and had completed sufficient research to present information in the Discussion. A range of appropriate topics were selected from the chosen themes. Most students carried out the Discussion very effectively, with confidence and without any support. A very good level of understanding of the topic was demonstrated by most students, who responded readily and appropriately to the questions. A few excellent students contributed original outputs with relevance to the topic.

In most instances students provided a range of information and were able to clarify and elaborate on this information by referring to the resources. They presented their own ideas and opinions and justified them with reasoning.

Most students used accurate vocabulary and grammar in presenting the information. There were a few instances where the sentence structure was not accurate and students were unable to self-correct.

The range of vocabulary used was very limited, and there were only very few instances where competent students used a sophisticated range of vocabulary with highly appropriate style and register. Most students were aware of style and register, but it was not very well demonstrated. In general, it was very simple and ordinary vocabulary and consequently, very simple sentence structures.

In general students demonstrated an average level of intonation, stress and tempo and a very good level of pronunciation.



## **Oral component**

The majority of students demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements of the 2014 Spanish oral examination. Although most students observed the appropriate greeting conventions when interacting with the assessors, students should be reminded that appropriate greetings are an important cultural aspect.

## **Section 1 – Conversation**

In Section 1 students covered all topics as specified in the study design. They also included reasons why they wished to continue studying Spanish and its possible use in future pursuits. This part was done well.

Students need to be reminded of the importance of upholding a conversation, as they need to maintain an appropriate exchange of ideas in order to demonstrate their capacity to connect with the assessors. Students should expect to be asked a wide range of questions during the examination. They need to answer the assessors' questions, rather than deliver a prepared speech about the topic. There were instances where students provided a response that did not answer the question they were asked. Students must listen carefully and respond appropriately. A natural flow in the dialogue is required and students should ask for clarification if they don't understand a question.

Many students used accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures and there was very little English interference. Most students conjugated verbs accurately; however, when the subjunctive mood was required, many students used it incorrectly. Students should be advised to practise the use of verbs, moods and tenses during the year.

Students are required to advance the conversation and link with the assessors. Students should expand the conversation with comments and descriptions rather than, for example, just giving the number of people in their family. If necessary, assessors will prompt students with phrases such as 'Could you elaborate on ...', 'Tell us about ...' or 'Comment on ...' in order to help students to demonstrate their ability to communicate with appropriate content and the correct use of language.

## **Section 2 – Discussion**

Topics students studied included:

- Food from Latin America and Spain
- Art and entertainment
- Hispanic culture through the eyes of painters; for example, Frida Kahlo
- Human rights and social problems
- Music as a form of popular expression
- The immigration of Hispanic people to the USA, including the pros and cons of being an illegal migrant.

Students needed to ensure that they provided additional comments on their sub-topic rather than simply retelling the material they had studied. This may have involved, for example, explaining how the issues in a film or novel related to the topic they were discussing. The assessors were interested in the student's opinions and ideas about the texts studied.

Most students demonstrated the use of a good range and variety of vocabulary and proper grammatical structures. However, some students occasionally used an inappropriate style and register. In addition, students were expected to comply with the cultural formalities of the language, such as the use of '*usted*' when addressing the assessors.

**2014**

**Languages: Swedish**

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students were generally well prepared to converse about the topics of family, school, interests/hobbies, and future plans and ambitions. High-scoring students capably demonstrated that they understood the importance of maintaining and advancing the exchange with spontaneity and little prompting. They were also able to use sophisticated vocabulary and structures in presenting an excellent range of ideas, and to defend their arguments logically and clearly when challenged.

Low-scoring students often paused and needed encouragement in order to carry the exchange forward. In some cases lack of fluency in the language and understanding led to the presented information being somewhat disjointed, lacking in clarity and containing grammatical errors.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students had prepared thoroughly and were able to respond effectively to anticipated questions related to their chosen topics. Some of the highest-scoring students had clearly studied their topics in depth and were able to present and defend highly developed ideas and opinions using sophisticated language accurately and with conviction. Overall, most students performed impressively, displaying a high level of communicative skills.

Some students spoke too quickly and therefore did not score well in the criteria related to clarity, pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Students are advised to concentrate on clarity of expression in preference to quantity of information.

A small number of students relied on a limited range of prepared answers and required a great deal of support from the assessors when faced with questions for which they were not prepared.

A relatively common error was incorrect word order. Students are reminded that in Swedish the verb in certain structures should precede the noun, whereas this is not the case in the English language.

**2014**

**Languages: Tamil**

## **Oral component**

Most students were extremely well prepared for and performed well in the Discussion section of the 2014 Tamil examination; however, some did not demonstrate the same level of breadth and depth of information, ideas and opinions in the Conversation section.

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students presented information and opinions well, and were able to maintain and advance the Conversation.

However, most of the information presented did not contain enough detail; for example, வினா: உங்கள் பாடசாலையில் தகவல் தொழில் நுட்பத்தை உதாரணமாக மின்னஞ்சல் அல்லது இணையத்தளம் என்பவற்றை எவ்வாறு வகுப்பு வேலைகளிலும் பெற்றோருடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும் பயன்படுத்துகிறார்கள்?

விடை: ஓரளவுக்கு அல்லது...ம்... கடகாசியில்

In Criteria 3, low-scoring students were unable to understand some words; for example, வினா: நீங்கள் எப்படிப்பட்ட ஆள் என்று கூறுங்கள். விடை: நான் பெற்றோருக்கு ஒரே ஒரு பிள்ளை பத்தாம்வகுப்பில் படிக்கிறேன்...

Students' clarity of expression, speed of delivery, voice projection and modulation was generally very good.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

This year some students sang in the allocated time. Singing memorised songs and/or presenting 'abhinaya' (mime or gesture) is not appropriate and should not be considered for the oral examination. Students are expected to show their command of the **spoken** language and not to present memorised slabs of material.

Most students were thoroughly prepared and produced confident responses during the Discussion, drawing on related ideas that moved the Discussion forward. As students had selected sub-topics appropriate to their interests and had prepared the topic with sufficient depth, they were able to respond more ably to questions from assessors. These students had clearly anticipated some of the questions based on their introduction and were capable of carrying the discussion forward.

Most students used an excellent range of vocabulary as well as some sophisticated expressions appropriate to their chosen topic. It was clear that these students had built a vocabulary bank from which they could draw for their answers. Their responses demonstrated good breadth and depth of ideas and information. They displayed sound knowledge of appropriate proverbs and metaphors, such as:

- 'உணவே மருந்து மருந்தே உணவு'
- கொழுத்தனுக்குக் கொள்ளு இழைத்தவனுக்கு எள்ளு'
- 'ஒரு சாண் வயிற்றுக்காத்தானே எல்லாம்'
- 'மகன் தந்தைக்காற்றும'...
- உடுக்கை இழந்தவன் கைபோல...
- கல்லைக் கண்டால் கடவுளைக் காணமுடியவில்லை கடவுளைக்கண்டால்...

Some students were confused when using some words, such as those below (the correct forms are given first).

- ஆர்வம் – ஆர்வகம்
- நாடுகளுக்கு – நாட்டுக்களுக்கு
- நெய்த்தோசை – கீதோசை

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

In general, students performed very well in the Conversation section of the 2014 Turkish oral examination. Most students were able to converse with the assessors using culturally appropriate and accurate language and vocabulary. These students were able to greet and use appropriate salutations with the assessors, and they used *siz* correctly when referring to assessors.

Some students presented memorised responses on topics such as family, school and future life, and assessors needed to ask more questions in order to elicit the students' natural use of language. Some students turned English words into Turkish verbs, such as *shoplara* instead of *alışverişe*, and they also used English slang and interjections, such as 'like' and 'you know', between sentences, when providing further examples and explanations.

Students who were able to use repair strategies communicated their message and meaning more competently during the Conversation. Repair strategies should be studied and practised in class.

For some students, pronunciation was an area that needed improvement. Some students had trouble pronouncing the names of the school subjects in Turkish; some low-scoring students used English equivalents. Students should have opportunities in class to practise using a range of Turkish sounds, not only through listening but also through extensive pronunciation activities, in particular relating to the sound *yumuşak g 'ğ'*, as in *sağlık* and *Beden Eğitimi*, and fully pronouncing word endings. The rolling of 'l' and 'r' and the deletion of the final vowel at the end of words, as in *film* and *bakıyorum*, were also evident in some of the low-scoring students' conversations.

Overall, almost all students were able to move the Conversation forward and communicated appropriately and confidently.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Responses needed to show breadth and depth, as well as relevance to the topic. Some students found it difficult to use relevant vocabulary and language when discussing their topics and sub-topics. They struggled with the word order, placing the predicate or verb in the middle of the sentence.

High-scoring students were able to present their own opinions, ideas and knowledge effectively and then elaborate on these and support their views and ideas in Turkish. They presented their information and ideas confidently, and used accurate language and repair strategies during the Discussion.

As in Section 1, students who were not prepared disadvantaged themselves during the Discussion. Students need to be given adequate opportunities within the 15 hours of class time on the Detailed Study to practise discussing a broader range of ideas and views, rather than merely depending on facts and figures. Students also need to be able to talk about the range of resources they used in preparation for the Discussion.

## **Oral component**

Students who presented for the 2014 Ukrainian oral examination performed exceptionally well. They exhibited a high level of preparation and showed deep interest in various aspects of the material they had studied.

Students used effective communicative strategies and responded to questions confidently in both sections of the examination. Their responses were logical, relevant and interesting. They presented complex and detailed information on their sub-topics. They were able to support their views with examples from relevant sources and consistently used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. There were only minor grammatical mistakes and minor errors in pronunciation.

## **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students demonstrated excellent knowledge of the general topics of the Conversation. They provided relevant responses to questions about Ukrainian traditions, art, literature, contemporary and folk culture, Ukrainian cuisine, personal interests, friendship, involvement in the Ukrainian community, pets, favourite school subjects and plans for the future.

## **Section 2 – Discussion**

One topic chosen for the Discussion in 2014 was Ukraine's Orange Revolution. The topic provided an opportunity for students to look at this event from various perspectives. Most students were able to relate to the topic very well and found it interesting and engaging. They discussed some political, historical and socio-economic reasons for the Revolution and various developments since this event took place. Especially engaging discussions were developed around the sub-topic The Role of the Media in the Orange Revolution.

Students presented a wide range of interesting information from a number of sources. The sources selected for the Detailed Study enabled students to develop a good understanding of their sub-topics. Sources included newspaper articles, documentaries, music, short films, literary works, electronic texts and interviews.

**2014**

**Languages: Vietnamese**

## **Oral component**

### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Most students showed a very good level of understanding, communicated effectively and performed well in Section 1. They presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas to cover general topics and were able to maintain and move the Conversation forward. Most students were also able to express their ideas and opinions, providing reasons when asked to substantiate them.

Most students used a good range of vocabulary, structures and expressions and were able to elaborate on and defend opinions and ideas effectively. Some students displayed limited understanding of basic grammatical structures and limited use of vocabulary.

Most students had good pronunciation, intonation and tempo. Some students had soft voice projection, but overall their delivery was generally very good.

### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students were thoroughly prepared and produced confident responses during the Discussion, drawing on related ideas that moved the Discussion forward. A few students had not prepared adequately for the Discussion.

The *VCE Exams Navigator* provides information regarding approved materials and equipment for the examination and can be found on the VCAA website.

The majority of students were unable to defend or express their ideas or opinions and waited for the next question to be asked. They were able to elaborate, providing opinions that displayed some depth of their chosen topics.

High-scoring students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and grammar and used an excellent range of vocabulary as well as some sophisticated expressions appropriate to the chosen topic, while low-scoring students struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure.

## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The standard of language in the 2014 Yiddish oral examination was good. Students were expected to come prepared with a range of materials for their specific area of study and that these materials would illustrate not only a depth but also a breadth of research around the student's specific area of interest. Students were also expected to carry on a short, clear conversation on general topics – for example, hobbies, family, aspirations, and the length of time they have been studying Yiddish. Teachers and students are encouraged to check the study design for the range of possible topics about which questions may be asked.

All students made themselves understood, with many responding promptly and appropriately to the assessors' questions and prompts. Some students were exceptionally well prepared and expressed themselves fluently, without needing to be prompted by assessors. Some students self-corrected readily, which showed a good mastery of sentence construction and grammar. Others responded well to assessors' prompts. Low-scoring students could make themselves understood, although these students struggled considerably with sentence construction and grammar.

All students demonstrated good preparation and an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in conversation. Students who came from Yiddish-speaking backgrounds often expressed themselves in regional dialect and showed little awareness that this was not standard (Klal) Yiddish, but they were able to convey their thoughts and ideas notwithstanding structural weakness. The highest-scoring responses came from students who did not over-prepare and/or memorise their responses.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

Students performed the weakest in relation to Criterion 4, which focuses on the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar. Teachers and students are strongly encouraged to focus on this area. Low-scoring students struggled to construct sentences in Yiddish, even though they made themselves understood. The use of tenses – for example, *ikh gegangen* instead of *ikh bin gegangen* – was typical of an error in basic grammatical structure. Another common error was interchanging the articles *di*, *der* and *dos*. High-scoring students displayed a good foundation in language structure.

Students should be encouraged to prepare for the Conversation in varied ways – for example, writing lists of dot points and practising questions and answers with a third party – to ensure that they do not over-prepare or memorise answers to only one specific set of questions.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Students performed weakest in relation to Criteria 8 and 9, which focus on vocabulary and grammar, corresponding to the weakest area in Section 1 – Conversation. Most students chose relevant topics, but the highest-scoring responses were from students who chose topics that were personally meaningful to them. These students extended their research beyond the most obvious choices (for example, post-war immigration to Australia), and overall there was a pleasing range in topics; this may have contributed to the higher standard of performance in this section.

The highest-scoring responses were fluent and engaging and clearly demonstrated the student's excitement about the researched study. High-scoring students self-corrected and demonstrated a level of preparation and practice in conversation that was lacking in other discussions. Low-scoring responses were characterised by grammatical errors, a lack of fluency and a narrow scope of discussion that was limited to a few sources. These students struggled with both syntax and vocabulary and sometimes appeared to be transferring English sentence construction to Yiddish, rather than demonstrating a capacity to 'think in the second language'.

While low-scoring students relied on translating and transferring from English to Yiddish, the highest-scoring students demonstrated a keen ear for the cadence and idioms of Yiddish. All students demonstrated an ability to make themselves understood.