

2016 VCE Languages oral examination reports – Second languages

The following information applies to the oral examination for all Victorian and CCAFL second language studies.

Teachers and students are advised to read this entire report, not just the language-specific section, as it contains general information about the second language oral examination.

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

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Bosnian
- Chin Hakha
- Chinese Second Language
- Chinese Second Language Advanced
- Croatian
- Dutch
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- French
- German
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- Korean Second Language
- Macedonian
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- Romanian
- Russian
- Serbian
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- Spanish
- Swedish
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese
- Yiddish

General comments

The Languages oral examination assesses students' knowledge and skill in using spoken language. The oral examination is divided into two sections:

- Section 1 – a seven-minute Conversation: This section consists of a general conversation about the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations.
- Section 2 – eight-minute Discussion: The student, in no more than one minute, will indicate to the assessors the subtopic chosen for Detailed Study and engage in a seven-minute discussion of the Detailed Study. The Discussion assesses students' skills in presenting information and exchanging ideas and opinions.

The choice of subtopic for the Detailed Study is very important. It must be a topic that can be studied for 15 hours in class and for which sufficient resources can be found in the language. It must also be a topic that lends itself to a seven-minute discussion, in which ideas, opinions and facts can be expressed. A topic to which students can relate at a personal level may enable them to become more familiar with the content and vocabulary needed, and thus be more skilled to support and elaborate on information, ideas and opinions.

The introduction should not simply be a report, but should give assessors an indication of the area of discussion. It is essential that students understand the purpose of this time is to briefly introduce their chosen subtopic. Texts can be mentioned during the ensuing discussion.

The study design states that, 'In order for the student to be able to explore their subtopic 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'. It is important that students and teachers select materials for the Detailed Study carefully so that students are exposed to a variety of views. The type of texts used by students should vary in complexity and be in the target language so that students can become aware of key vocabulary related to their subtopic.

Students are reminded that they must be prepared to use language spontaneously in **unrehearsed** situations. Texts should be used to support, expand on and explore the subtopic. In Languages oral examinations, the assessors' primary aim is to ascertain both the student's grasp of the language and their knowledge of a topic. Students should be instructed that assessors may ask a range of questions for which students may not be as well prepared – that is, some unexpected aspects of their area of study. Students are not expected to be 'experts' and be able to answer all questions asked; they are expected to have learnt strategies in order to respond to the type of questions asked. It would be valuable for students to learn phrases such as, 'I have not studied this aspect of the topic, but I think...', 'I don't know, but I feel'..., 'I can discuss....' and 'I am not sure about this question or topic but I know....'.

Some students expected to be questioned on what they had read and/or heard rather than engage in a discussion using their texts to support their ideas and opinions. The focus of the Discussion is to discuss and explore the subtopic and aspects of it that are covered in the texts studied. Students needed to come to the examination prepared to discuss and explore ideas and opinions by using and referring to the texts studied and making links between the texts. Students should be able to draw on the texts they have studied and relate them to the language-speaking community.

Students need to be familiar with the terminology and vocabulary of the oral examination in the target language. Students are reminded that they also need to use the correct register. The setting of the examination is formal and students need to use appropriate language and avoid the use of colloquial terms. Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Language Study Design* for further information regarding the oral examination.

Students can support the Discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps, elaborating on them and stating why they considered them to be important. This is often a useful prompt. The support material must be free of all but minimal writing, including only a heading, name or title.

The assessment for both the Conversation and the Discussion is divided into three sections: communication, content and language. The assessment criteria and descriptors are published in the *Assessment Handbook* on the VCAA website. It is important that all teachers and students are familiar with the criteria and descriptors and that students use them as part of their examination preparation. This will help students to engage in a lively and interesting exchange with assessors. Although there are similarities between the assessment criteria for the Conversation and Discussion sections of the examination, the criteria assess two very different aspects of performance.

The performance of students in the oral examination indicated that those who were well prepared were able to demonstrate their abilities and proficiency in the language. In contrast, students who were insufficiently prepared lacked confidence, particularly in the Discussion.

Students are reminded that dictionaries and electronic communication devices are not permitted in the oral examination. Please refer to the specific language study design or the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information on approved materials for the Language oral examination.

2016 VCE Arabic oral examination report

General comments

It was evident that students were well prepared for the 2016 Arabic oral examination, and they performed well. Students and teachers need to be aware of the examination requirements as prescribed in the study design.

A small number of students managed to make themselves understood, despite poor pronunciation.

In the Conversation, students must be prepared to converse on topics related to their personal world, including school, family and future aspirations. Some students had little to say unless they were prompted by assessors' questions. This gave the impression that they were unprepared.

Many students gave in-depth answers and were confident about using a range of structures and vocabulary. While students must learn material for the different sections of the oral examination, it is how well they internalise and master it to present in the examination that contributes to their success.

The topics and subtopics chosen for the Detailed Study should reflect Arabic life and culture, and be suited to each student's interests. This year students presented a variety of different topics. Some students lacked the linguistic ability to tackle their topic. Care should be taken with the choice of subtopic for the Detailed Study.

During the examination the assessors may ask questions for which students are not well prepared. Students need to develop strategies for handling unexpected questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The characteristics of a high-scoring performance included thorough and sophisticated preparation of prescribed topics (such as family, studies and plans for the future). Some students moved easily between topics and displayed a lively interest in communicating with assessors.

Many students presented content of a very high standard. These students were able to expand on their comments and introduce new, pertinent ideas.

A small number of students used poor sentence structures, omitted verbs or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures, most notably the use of different verb formats (e.g. past and future). While many students competently used complex grammar, others used pre-learned, overly complex expressions that did not fit well with their true level of language competency.

Section 2 – Discussion

General comments on the Detailed Study

- Students with high scores summarised their topic and provided effective references to their resources.
- Some students lacked basic knowledge related to their topic and had difficulty sustaining the Discussion for the duration of Section 2.
- Students should choose topics that they are comfortable with.
- Students must clearly indicate the subtopic chosen for the Detailed Study.
- Some students were unable to elaborate on or defend their ideas. In addition to being familiar with their topic, students could practise possible questions and answers so that they can expand on their themes. Many students gave confident responses.
- Some students provided information that demonstrated a command of the topic. Other students had not prepared adequately for this part of the oral examination.
- Students are reminded that specific details and clear opinions give substance to the discussion about their topic.
- Students with high scores used a wide variety of structures. Other students used simple and/or predictable language.

Topics that worked well included ones that:

- focused on a student's own interests
- required analysis and offered the opportunity to take a stance.

Topics that worked less well included ones that:

- were purely descriptive
- were superficial and did not provide students with opportunities to highlight their opinions
- allowed students only to 'present a topic' rather than engage in a discussion.

Common errors included:

- an inability to move the Discussion forward
- lack of preparation for the structure of the examination.

2016 VCE Armenian oral examination report

General comments

The standard of the exchanges and the effort students put into their preparation for the 2016 Armenian oral examination were impressive. Students were familiar with the format and structure of the examination and spoke in a confident and sophisticated way.

Vocabulary, fluency and expression were of a very good standard. Pronunciation was accurate, with clear and audible utterances, crisp consonants and correct intonation and stress. Students were able to engage with the assessors using the correct register and appropriate constructs.

Discussion topics were well prepared. There was evidence of substantial research utilising multiple sources in all topics studied in this section. Students used rich vocabulary and gave responses that were both logical and spontaneous. There was little evidence of rote-learned responses.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

A wide range of topics was covered in the Conversation, including students' personal background, family structure, current studies, hobbies, career aspirations, travel plans and experiences, current employment and future plans. Some students also commented on relatives overseas and their family's migration experience. Students were comfortable with the exchanges related to their personal situation, schooling and subject selections as well as recreational activities and entertainment pursuits. All students engaged with the assessors confidently. Responses were direct, highly relevant and spontaneous. Students demonstrated a strong sense of self-awareness and reflection, and it appeared that they could have continued for much longer than the allocated time for this section.

Students used an excellent range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and expressions accurately and appropriately. Culturally appropriate use of language was evident; for example, my family (*ընտանիքս*), which is reserved for the father or head of the family in Armenian culture, and our family (*մեր ընտանիքը*), which is used by other family members such as the mother and children. Sentence structure, pronunciation, register and expression were very good (for example, addressing elders in the distinct plural form), and the depth, breadth and complexity of the conversation, especially in response to open questions, was satisfactory. A good standard of grammar was demonstrated. Students used the correct tense and appropriate declension in sentence construction; for example, use of the locative case (*ներգոյական*) in Eastern Armenian (*դպրոցում, դաշտում*).

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics for the Detailed Study were varied, including the Armenian Genocide and its significance to the Armenian nation and the Diaspora, the invention of the Armenian alphabet, the Pan-Armenian Games, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, The Ministry of Diaspora's 'Ari Doon' program, and the formation and structure of the Armenian community in Melbourne, focusing on the links between Armenia and the Diaspora. Students were very well prepared and had mastered their chosen subtopics. Students utilised a rich array of sources for research, and this thorough preparation enabled students to respond to open-ended questions. Students also influenced the direction of the Discussion by clarifying or elaborating on answers.

Students demonstrated comfortable body language, good expression and sentence construction. They also demonstrated an affinity with the topic area and had mastered most of the subject matter. This was evidenced by the excellent answers given to questions, both in the content and quality of language used. Probing questions were handled spontaneously, logically and linguistically correctly.

2016 VCE Bosnian oral examination report

General comments

Students were well prepared for the 2016 Bosnian oral examination and were able to communicate in a confident, appropriate and creative way.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students responded promptly and accurately to a variety of questions, presenting a good range of information with confidence.

However, assessors needed to prompt some students to support the flow of the Conversation.

Some students did not use the correct formal register ('Vi') when addressing assessors.

Communication

Most students responded with appropriate intonation, stress and tempo. However, some students gave minimal answers and waited for questions from the assessors instead of expanding on their own answers.

Students should be prepared to use sophisticated sentence structures and correct pronunciation.

Content

Many students presented an interesting range of information, opinions and ideas when speaking about their personal world.

Some students struggled to communicate their views, and offered a limited range of information.

Students should be prepared to elaborate on their opinions as assessors will sometimes prompt students to justify their answers.

Language

In general, students demonstrated their language skills by applying correct sentence structures and appropriate style and register.

Some students made errors with case agreements between two words.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students presented a wide range of information from a number of sources. They succeeded in demonstrating depth and breadth in the use of vocabulary and presented relevant facts in an interesting Discussion.

Some students presented a limited range of information, and this hindered the flow of the Discussion.

Communication

Students who were thoroughly prepared interacted well with assessors, moved the Discussion forward and were able to correct mistakes.

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'... instead of using simple phrases such as, 'I did not pay attention to this part'. Students need to be prepared to give answers to unfamiliar questions.

Many students supported their Discussion with posters containing images or maps, and this worked well.

Content

The majority of students were very well prepared for the Discussion and presented topics that were carefully researched, rich in detail, insightful and well communicated. They used complex sentences and correct grammar, delivered excellent presentations on their topic and were able to engage in an in-depth discussion.

Language

Some students needed to pay more attention to sentence structures and be ready to go beyond using basic grammatical structures only. Students should pay attention to verb conjugation and agreement, and to the building and agreement of participles (such as *radni glagolski pridjev*, which has three genders).

In Bosnian language, there must be an agreement among grammatically related words. Different words like adjectives and nouns within a structure often rhyme like in feminine and neuter genders in nominative cases (for example, singular: *brza rijeka*, *ugodno društvo*; *brze rijeke*, *ugodna društva*). The masculine gender has the same characteristics in the plural (*uspješni sportisti*).

2016 VCE Chin Hakha oral examination report

General comments

Overall students performed well in the 2016 Chin Hakha oral examination. This was the first oral examination for the study. All students were well prepared for both sections of the examination and appeared to be aware of the assessment criteria.

Most students had researched their Detailed Study thoroughly and were able to speak confidently without needing to be prompted by the assessors. They used sophisticated vocabulary, grammar and expressions such as *ralzam*, *ringawn*, *pumpululh*, *arhmultuk*, *hla ngaih*, *khuhchih*, *Mirangca*, *kanan*, *pawngkam zohkhenhnak*, *sianginn ah ka cawnmi hna cu* and *zeitin dah ralzam ah ka rak i can*.

In contrast, some mid-range and lower-range students gave prepared answers and struggled to cope with unexpected questions, which limited the flow and progress of the Conversation or the Discussion. Their performance was affected adversely because they had not mastered common vocabulary and grammatical structures needed.

Errors occurred in lack of agreement between the article and noun *ka* and *kan* (for example, *a rak ra khomi cu pahra ka si* instead of *a rak ra khomi cu pahra kan si*, *tuah kan huammi pawl cu* instead of *tuah ka huammi pawl cu*), *a* and *an* (for example, *a ka ti* instead of *an ka ti*, *an kan ti* instead of *a kan ti*, *kan huammi* instead of *ka huammi*), *a si* and *an si* (for example, *ka huammi cu ... cu pawl cu a si*, *ka huammi cu ... cu pawl cu an si*), *a si* and *si* (for example, *si ko* instead of *a si ko*, *si* instead of *a si*).

Students who do not understand a question should ask for clarification rather than pause for long periods. They should not resort to irrelevant rote-learned material when in difficulty and should attempt to interact with the assessors at all times.

Pronunciation, intonation and stress were well handled by most students.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students had prepared well for this section. They were generally able to go beyond the required responses and seemed well rehearsed about their personal world. The Conversation enabled students to speak confidently on aspects such as home and school lives, personal interests, travel and hobbies.

Low-scoring students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying, elaborating on and defending their opinions and ideas. Students must prepare adequately for the Conversation and ensure that they are ready to expand on their ideas. Some students were not well prepared for this section.

All students need to be aware that they need to carry the Conversation forward with spontaneity by elaborating and expanding on their ideas.

Section 2 – Discussion

Generally, students researched their subtopics thoroughly and had detailed knowledge of their resources. Most students were able to support their opinions by referring to the texts they had studied. Students dealt with a wide range of aspects and this made the Discussion interesting.

The majority of students spoke fluently in the Discussion, expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions and supporting them with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied. They used a wide variety of accurate language and vocabulary that enhanced their performance and had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Only a few students displayed a limited ability to advance the Discussion due to a lack of preparation. These students found it difficult to link with assessors and provide the required reasons, opinions and examples in support of their topic. They lacked basic repair strategies and were only able to present a satisfactory range of information.

The choice of subtopics and resources is very important and should cater for the students' language ability as well as their interests. In addition, topics need to provide students with the opportunity for elaboration on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence.

A few students brought visual material to support the chosen subtopic. This was a useful prompt, especially for low-scoring students, because it enabled a stimulating discussion and the expression of worthwhile ideas and opinions.

2016 VCE Chinese Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Many students demonstrated thorough preparation for the Conversation. They were able to interact with the assessors and demonstrate effective communication and repair strategies. They provided extensive responses to the questions asked, confidently moving the exchange forward. A number of students engaged the assessors with eye contact and appropriate body language. However, there were some students who relied too heavily upon rehearsed responses and this interrupted the flow of interactive conversation when extra information was required in an answer. In addition, some students answered quickly, not waiting to hear the complete question. It is vital that students listen very carefully to assessors' questions and respond relevantly and appropriately.

Many students used an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions. However, there were some notable errors. The following are some of the examples (the correct version is given in brackets):

- 两个狗 (两只狗 or 两条狗/two dogs), 六个课 (六门课/six subjects), 两只朋友 (两个朋友/two friends), 我是一位好动的人 (我是一个好动的人/I'm an energetic person)。我学汉语学了几个年了 (我学汉语学了几年了/I've been learning Chinese for several years)。
- 我常常打羽毛球在学校 (我常常在学校打羽毛球/I often play badminton at school)。他比我一点儿高 (他比我高一点儿/He is a little bit taller than me)。我将来养了一只狗 (我将来会养一只狗/I'll have a dog in the future)。在中国旅游有很多意思 (在中国旅游很有意思/It's fun to travel in China)。她有蓝色的很大眼睛 (她有蓝色的大眼睛/She has big blue eyes)。我不对数学有兴趣 (我对科学没有兴趣/I'm not interested in science)。我学物理, 也化学 (我学物理, 也学化学/I learn Physics and Chemistry as well)。我和妈妈常常一起吃咖啡 (我和妈妈常常一起喝咖啡/My mum and I often have coffee together), 我们常常不旅游 (我们不常常旅游/We don't travel very often)。我上五课在学校 (我在学校上五门课/I'm learning five subjects at school)。

Some students needed to improve their four tones in order not to mispronounce 商科 (commence) as 上课 (attending class), 聪明 (smart) as 出名 (to become well known), 43 岁 (43 years old) as 13 岁 (13 years old), 影响 (influence) as 印象 (impression), 戏剧 (drama) as 喜剧 (comedy), 武术 (martial art) as 舞狮 (lion dance), 澳洲 (Australia) as 欧洲 (Europe), 晚上 (in the evening) as 网上 (online).

Students also needed to have a good knowledge of the expressions or Chinese sayings used in their Conversation. If assessors ask students for the meanings of expressions or sayings, students should be able to give an appropriate explanation to show their understanding.

Section 2 – Discussion

In the Discussion, many students were able to answer questions well and had sufficient knowledge to maintain an even flow of discussion. High-scoring students were able to direct the discussion

and make interesting contributions. Some students needed to improve their communication strategies during their interaction with the assessors, including knowing how to ask for clarification when they are not sure of a question. Visual materials often worked quite well as they helped the student to develop answers and sustain the discussion. However, some students relied heavily on their visual materials, which prevented them from having an effective discussion with the assessors. Students need to be aware that if they have brought any supporting material with them, this material should not have Chinese characters or Pinyin on it, apart from a label or a heading. Refer to the *VCE Chinese Second Language Study Design* for more information on the oral examination.

The range of topics chosen by students was broad and interesting. Good topics included:

- 虎门硝烟/Opium Combustion in Humen Town
- 荷花/Lotus
- 中国笛子/Chinese Flute
- ‘奔跑吧，兄弟!’/‘Hurry up, Brother!’ (This is one of the current entertaining shows in China. The students’ research was focused on the Chinese traditional culture reflected in this popular show).
- 送礼/To Give a Present
- 南京云锦/Nanjing Cloud-Pattern Brocade
- 中国高铁/Chinese High-Speed Rail.

While unusual Detailed Study topics often capture students’ interest, it is important that these topics are suitable. Topics should also be selected to ensure that the student is able to focus on the knowledge and skills associated with the Detailed Study.

In order for students to perform at a higher level, assessors may ask one or two challenging questions in the Discussion to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic chosen.

Pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo are also assessed. High-scoring students maintained a smooth conversational flow. Some students’ pronunciation was good but their intonation could be improved. Several students spoke too quickly, beyond a normal conversation pace, especially when they were introducing their topic. It is very important that students present their introduction clearly so that the assessors are able to ask questions appropriate to the chosen topic.

2016 VCE Chinese Second Language

Advanced oral examination report

General comments

In general, the standard of performance in the Discussion was much better than in the Conversation.

Students who performed to a high standard were well prepared for the oral examination. They were flexible in their thinking and used an accurate and wide range of vocabulary. Some students linked their researched topics to aspects of their own lives.

The biggest overall concern was regarding speaking volume and pace. Students need to note that speaking loudly and quickly does not always mean that they are communicating better than when they speak slowly and clearly.

For both the Conversation and Discussion, students scored the highest for Criterion 1 – capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively, and the lowest for Criterion 4 – range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who communicated with confidence, showed fluency in their delivery and responded appropriately to unexpected questions received high marks.

Many students seemed to approach the Conversation as more of a casual conversation as their comments lacked an adequate level of content and their range of vocabulary was limited.

Some students presented a short speech and neglected the conversation aspect, struggling to interact naturally and not allowing the assessors an opportunity to engage in the conversation. Students should note that if they attempt to give a prepared speech, assessors may interrupt them to ensure that it is a conversation.

Some students displayed their knowledge of advanced-level vocabulary and idioms but these were often irrelevant to the context. Other students had simply memorised words without fully understanding their meanings and, when asked, they could not explain or elaborate on the information.

The most notable errors were the use of inappropriate expressions, unclear expressions and misunderstood phrases. Examples included:

- 用和蔼形容家庭 – using friendly terminology when referencing family situations should be ‘和睦, 和谐’
- 学习之余的时候 – when I’m free/while I’m free. There’s no need to double up and use ‘的时候’
- 成绩退让 / 让步 – results fall back, fall behind. It should be ‘退步’

- 我孤僻 – lonely, not solitary/withdrawn. It should be ‘孤独’
- 音乐设备发达 – music set up is well equipped, not developed. It should be ‘齐全 / 完善’
- 用雄伟形容秦始皇 – ‘splendid’ should not be used to describe people; for example, First Emperor Qin.

Some misused adverbs and verbs included:

- 常常都会跟我说 – often/always, using doubled adverbs
- 有空时和家人出家 – when I have free time, I go out with family. It should be ‘外出 / 离家’

If students use complex vocabulary and grammar when presenting their prepared content but cannot use the same level of complex language when responding to questions, it does not reflect their true ability.

Some students gave an excessive quantity of information, which made it difficult for the Conversation to continue in a natural way. Others spoke too slowly and this hampered their ability to communicate fluently and effectively. Some students had very little to say unless they were prompted by the assessors.

Some students mixed the English language with Chinese language; for example, ‘参加 party’ (to participate in a party).

Some students gave their name and/or their school’s name, which was not necessary.

A few students repeatedly spoke about the same aspect or same thing with increasing complexity, which showed a good range of vocabulary but a lack of content as students struggled to summarise the focus of the content.

Section 2 – Discussion

High-scoring students completed thorough preparation of the topic. The Discussion flowed logically, with students demonstrating their full understanding of the background information and knowledge of the chosen topic.

Many students used ancient literary expressions rather than modern communicative expressions. Some topics utilised ancient written language and students mispronounced the ancient language. Students should consider their language levels when choosing topics, and to avoid complex literary words that are difficult to pronounce.

Certain topics were not related to Chinese culture or language; for example, Lotus flowers and Malaysia. A more relevant topic would have been ‘Chinese people or language in Malaysia’.

Topics that worked well included:

- 论语 (尊敬之道, 学习之道, 交友之道, 理想之道) – the analects of Confucius
- 算盘 (起源, 结构, 文化, 现状) – Chinese Abacus
- 中国的网络语言 (形成发展, 利弊, 个人评价, 社会评价) – Chinese internet language.

The following topics required a more logical sequencing and structuring of ideas, wider scope and/or more narrowed focus:

- 麻将 – mahjong (起源, 反思——过度沉迷于麻将的思考 / 恶果 / 赌博的坏处, 海外影响)
- 莲花 – lotus flower (生长习性 / 种类; 使用 / 药用价值; 文化涵义; 散文, 画作)
- 茶馆 – tea house (历史, 南北差异, 茶艺)
- 顾绣 – gu embroidery (历史发展, 衰落, 复兴; 代表人物; 特点; 文化传承)
- 桂戏 – local folk drama.

2016 VCE Croatian oral examination report

Students were generally very well prepared for the 2016 Croatian oral examination and showed a high level of competency in the language. It was evident that they had used a wide range of resources in their examination preparation, demonstrating a commitment to language learning.

Section 1 – Conversation

The Conversation section of the examination required students to communicate on a variety of general topics about their personal world; for example, family, friends, school, career aspirations, leisure time and hobbies. A familiarity with everyday vocabulary and expressions helped students to perform to a high standard in this section.

Communication

The majority of students were able to convey their views with ease and confidence. They used broad vocabulary and appropriate grammatical forms, and could express their opinions using complex sentence structures. However, some students provided minimal responses to questions asked and waited for the next question. Students are encouraged to expand on their responses to demonstrate their grasp of the language.

On the whole students demonstrated good repair strategies and were able to quickly recognise and correct their mistakes.

Content

While students generally presented an interesting range of information and opinions, it is important to remember that good vocabulary is a basis for effective conversation, and therefore students should aim at broadening their vocabulary while preparing for the examination.

Language

In general students used a wide range of vocabulary, structures and expressions in an appropriate way. However, some students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most frequent errors included cases, case agreements between two words and the third-person plural present tense (*ljudi idu*). It is recommended that students review the cases for numbers (*dvije brate*).

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students were very well prepared for the Discussion section of the oral examination and engaged fully with assessors in a conversation about their chosen topic.

Some students supported the discussion with posters containing images and maps, which proved very helpful.

Communication

Students who were thoroughly prepared interacted well with assessors, moved the discussion forward with their own input and were able to correct their mistakes. Some students were unable to communicate their opinion precisely or elaborate on their responses in greater detail.

Content

Topics that proved to be an excellent choice were ones that engaged students' interest or were part of their personal involvement. In the latter instance students' presentations were enriched with personal experiences and photographs.

Some students were not able to explain significant aspects of their chosen topics such as: 'Does it have links with Croatian culture?' or 'Why is it important to Croatian culture?' Students are encouraged to approach their topics with an understanding of the wider Croatian culture in mind.

Language

Most students used an excellent range of vocabulary and could express themselves in a grammatically accurate way. Some students presented their topic well but struggled to discuss their subject freely as they lacked adequate vocabulary or the proper sentence structures. This led to incorrect words such as *deklaracija* (you can go on a boat trip) or English interference (9 *degriza*, *obstrukcija* [obstruction]).

Students are reminded that it is not culturally appropriate to use the second-person singular when describing actions to someone unknown or to a senior person; for example, *Kad ideš u Dubrovnik* (when you go to Dubrovnik).

The most frequent mistakes included cases and prepositions in some expressions; for example, *festival traje za četiri dana* (festival lasts for four days).

2016 VCE Dutch oral examination report

General comments

Students showed an excellent understanding of the requirements of the oral examination. Students communicated well with assessors and demonstrated that they had researched their topics thoroughly. The Detailed Study was well prepared and well researched, and many students used complex and culturally appropriate vocabulary. They articulated their ideas and opinions very well and repair strategies were used effectively when necessary. However, there were numerous grammatical and vocabulary errors in the oral examination.

Students should know and be able to correctly pronounce the subjects they are studying at school.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students generally engaged in a lively conversation with the assessors. Their eye contact and body language were excellent, and they often showed that they were enjoying the oral examination.

However, there were some common problems with grammatical and syntactical structures, which included:

- Dutch word order
- anglicisms
- the difference between *na* and *naar*
- incorrect inflection of adjectives; for example, *een mooi huis*, *het mooie huis*
- tenses used incorrectly
- incorrect gender; for example, *het* and *de*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students expanded readily on their chosen topics and had obviously researched and read widely. Other students had to be prompted many times. This was largely due to the fact that they had not researched their topic sufficiently and consequently were not able to expand adequately in enough depth.

The linguistic errors made in the Conversation also applied to the Discussion.

Students who scored highly were able to reply fluently and in-depth to more searching questions and to expand on their responses.

2016 VCE Filipino oral examination report

General comments

Most students demonstrated fluency in the language in the 2016 Filipino oral examination. They conversed spontaneously with assessors and were able to elaborate on their answers to assessors' questions. However, in the Discussion, some students struggled to elaborate on their topics, paused frequently and expressed their ideas in a vague way, with little or no evidence of research. In both sections of the examination, low-scoring students had difficulty explaining their ideas in sufficient detail and did not use appropriate vocabulary. A few students could not translate some words in Filipino and used the expression 'sa English *po*' followed by the word in English. Some students mispronounced words starting with '*P*' as '*F*'; for example, '*Pista*' was pronounced as '*fiesta*' which is English. Another common error was that some students used the conjunction 'so' instead of '*kaya*'.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The students conversed well and responded readily to assessors' questions, applying repair strategies where necessary. Some answered only what was asked and waited to be prompted to elaborate or expand on their answers.

Students' fluency in the language enabled them to communicate effectively.

Topics used for conversation were families, studies, friends, household chores, unusual experiences, future plans and interests.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students presented their Detailed Studies well and some used visual materials such as maps and pictures to support the Discussion. Most students introduced their researched topics succinctly. Students answered assessors' questions readily and elaborated on their responses. However, some students did not express their points of view succinctly. Most students were articulate in discussing their topics and few students waited to be asked further questions before expanding on their topics. However, it was evident that some students had not completed in-depth study or research of their topic. In-depth study on the topic to be presented and exposure to conversation and discussion activities will assist students to perform more effectively.

Topics included social issues, history, public figures, customs and traditions, and places.

2016 VCE French oral examination report

General comments

In general students demonstrated very good oral competence and confidence in using the language. However, many students' grammar required improvement, in particular with adjective agreements, use of prepositions and tenses.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored well for the Conversation readily extended their ideas and were engaged in the conversational exchange. They answered questions that were phrased in a variety of ways and were able to think on their feet.

Assessors can ask very different types of questions within the limits of the topic. The wording of questions is never the same for all students since each assessor communicates in a different manner and may have a different way of phrasing a question. Students who did well were never put off by a different phrasing, were spontaneous in their answers and provided relevant responses. Students should not merely learn answers by heart and hope that the assessor asks 'the right question'. Students should remain flexible and be able to adapt their answers to fit the questions.

Students should also be prepared to use a variety of tenses. While most questions require the present tense, students should also be able to answer questions in the past and future tenses. For instance, students should be able to correctly describe activities they did in the perfect tense when they answer the following questions: '*Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait le week-end dernier ?/ pendant vos dernières vacances ?*' or in the future, '*Qu'est-ce que vous ferez après vos examens ?/ l'année prochaine ?*'.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students who presented an excellent Detailed Study usually had three resources based on different text types; for example, a film, an article and a website. They were able to talk about the topic in depth by showing links between the different resources in order to explore the topic. Topics based on only one resource should be avoided because it is likely that the student will not have sufficient information to maintain the Discussion. Although there is no such thing as a bad topic, the key to a good Discussion is the technique and the angle used to develop the topic. If the topic is informative, such as Louis XIV, Brigitte Bardot, Yves Saint Laurent, La Provence or Le Congo, students are confined to describing their topic and relating simple facts. Topics such as La Chanson française or Le Cinéma français were too broad and descriptive to allow students to give opinions and discuss ideas. With very broad topics, discussions tended to remain superficial, with no clear focus.

On the other hand, students who presented their topics in an evaluative manner had the opportunity to develop a line of argument and discuss the topic in depth. For instance, topics such 'The theme of immigration in modern French cinema' or 'The impact of May 68 on French society' gave students the opportunity to develop a meaningful discussion with the assessors. It is important that students are able to discuss ideas and opinions in this section of the examination.

2016 VCE German oral examination report

General comments

Students were very well prepared for the German oral examination, and responses to general questions were well practised. Students effectively responded to questions about a range of topics related to their personal world.

Repair strategies often needed further attention, especially indicating the need for thinking time or asking for clarification. This includes linking phrases and words to compare, contrast or clarify ideas. (*Ja genau, einerseits/andererseits, jedoch, dennoch, auf der einen/anderen Seite*).

Higher-scoring responses included instances when students were able to share some of their individual personality and interests, such as special hobbies, reasons behind subject choices or unusual experiences.

Students need more practice in the use of 'Sie', as it is inappropriate to address assessors using 'du'. Confusion occurs when assessors ask personal questions using 'Sie' and students respond with 'sie'. Some students seem to mix up the three different forms of the personal pronoun. 'Sie' (you) is the polite form used when talking to strangers, 'du' (you) is used when talking to people one knows very well (family and friends) and 'sie' (they) cannot be used instead of 'you'.

Students are often surprised when 15 minutes have passed, and want to say more. Therefore, students should practise conversing for seven minutes in class, so they can better judge how much/how little to say on an aspect.

Common errors included:

- use of the incorrect case after prepositions (especially after prepositions such as *zu/mit/für*)
- inaccurate pronouns for nouns, reflecting the gender of the original noun (*mein Hund = er*)
- word order (second/last position for verb)
- subject–verb agreement, avoiding vague use of infinitives only
- inappropriate ending on articles regardless of gender (*mein/e Vater, mein/e Lehrer*)
- subtle differences between words (*sterben/töten, Gymnasium/Gesamtschule/Hochschule*)
- correct singular verbs/pronouns for nouns like *Familie/Klasse/Gruppe*
- verbs taking 'sein' in the perfect tense
- when using *Spaß*, students should use '*ABC macht Spaß*' not '*ABC ist Spaß*'
- overuse of 'okay'
- future tense and use of passive voice. Not all questions can be answered in the present tense
- Students need to be clear about when to use 'werden' and when to use 'bekommen'
- pronunciation such as *u/ü*, (for example, *wurde/würde* – a mistake that distorts meaning).

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

It is valuable for students to practise responding to typical questions, but it can be easy to slip into a recital of facts. Descriptions can be rote-learned, but if students choose to rote-learn their ideas, they should be prepared to present them in a spontaneous manner as a conversation and not a recital. Intonation, stress and tempo are assessed under 'Clarity of expression'.

Students should build opinions/ideas on Conversation themes and include these in their responses. For example, reasons why they chose school subjects, challenges of part-time jobs when doing VCE, what do students/parents think, etc.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students should be prepared to respond to a range of different questions about the topic.

Students should expect to be asked to link their topic to German-speaking communities, Australia or current events. For example, 'Link the topic "Migration to Europe/Australia in 2016/2017" to the current world political environment' or 'Link "Sport in der DDR" to "Sport in the Australian or modern German context"'.

Some students' resources needed additional clarification; for example, students might have explained questions asked in an 'Umfrage' or interview. Likewise, giving a short outline of the content of articles and reports can be valuable to help assessors understand individual perspectives of materials studied.

The use of and reference to suitable materials is fundamental to effective Discussions. Materials on most topics are available on the internet; students should select resources that demonstrate variety and a range of concepts. However, some resources may be outdated, simplistic or not relevant to a topic. Likewise, a cartoon or photo might offer an excellent comment on a topic, but is inadequate as a major resource and is better used as a supplement to more comprehensive resources.

Students should practise appropriate vocabulary for quoting resources, referring to a resource and linking concepts or resources. For example, *laut meinem Bericht, im Gegensatz zur Umfrage...*

Students should practise explanations of key words or phrases, which may include social/political/historical background (*Gastarbeiter/Atomkraft/der kalte Krieg*, etc.).

2016 VCE Greek oral examination report

General comments

Students performed well in the 2016 Greek oral examination. It was evident that most students had prepared thoroughly and were familiar with both the language and the specific requirements of the two sections of the examination.

High-scoring students listened to questions carefully and responded appropriately and with spontaneity. They used sophisticated vocabulary, grammar and expressions such as *το μήνυμα της ελευθερίας και ελπίδας, η αντίδραση του ελληνικού λαού*.

In contrast, some mid-range and lower-range students at times gave prepared answers and struggled to cope with unexpected questions; this limited the flow and progress of the exchange. Their performance was affected adversely because they had not mastered common vocabulary such as *πρέπει, χρειάζομαι, μεταχειρίζομαι*, and grammatical structures needed. Errors occurred in the following areas:

- lack of agreement between article and noun (*ένα οικογένεια, η κορίτσια*) or noun and adjective (*μερικές έλληνες, πολλά χαρά*)
- lack of agreement in a phrase between the article, adjective and noun (*ο αθάνατος πνεύμα, ένα καλές σχέσεις*)
- incorrect use of the nominative case (*οι συγγραφές*) or the genitive case (*της συμμαθητών μου*)
- inability to distinguish between continuing past and simple past tense (*έπαιζα* instead of *έπαιξα*)
- incorrect syntactical structures due to translating expressions from English and confusion of words that sounded similar (*πολιτισμός*)
- incorrect stress (*ανθρώποι*).

Students who do not understand a question should ask for clarification rather than pause for long periods. They should not resort to rote-learned material when in difficulty and should attempt to interact with the assessors at all times.

Pronunciation, intonation and stress were well handled by most students.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students had prepared well and practised effectively for questions about their personal worlds. They discussed and developed more than one aspect with some breadth and depth. They elaborated on their statements by giving reasons, examples and evidence, presenting an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas.

Low-scoring students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas. Students must prepare adequately for the Conversation and be ready to participate in a general conversation about their personal world.

Some students were not as well prepared for this section. Students need to be aware that they should be able to advance the Conversation. They should not provide one-sentence answers and expect assessors to continue asking questions.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students spoke confidently in the Discussion, expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions and supporting them with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied. Many engaged in original thinking, making valid comparisons between texts and proposing alternative viewpoints. They used a wide variety of accurate language and vocabulary that enhanced their performance and had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. They were able to anticipate questions and at times were able to advance the Discussion with interesting comments.

Only a few students displayed a limited ability to advance the Discussion due to a lack of preparation. These students found it difficult to link with assessors and provide the required reasons, opinions and examples in support of their topic. They lacked basic repair strategies and were only able to present a satisfactory range of information.

The choice of subtopics and resources is very important and should cater for the students' language ability as well as their interests. In addition, topics need to provide students with the opportunity for elaboration on information, ideas and opinions with reasons, examples and evidence. Some low-scoring students attempted to present topics that were beyond their linguistic abilities and this had a negative effect on their performance.

Some students brought visual material to support the chosen subtopic. This was a useful prompt, enabling a stimulating discussion and expression of worthwhile ideas and opinions.

2016 VCE Hebrew oral examination report

General comments

Students' familiarity with and command of the Hebrew language was very good. Generally they demonstrated a good ability to converse with the assessors in Hebrew. Students were required to demonstrate depth of content, to communicate spontaneously, to use an accurate and broad range of vocabulary and to show an awareness of the different registers of the language.

Each section of the examination began with a basic and informative question–answer exchange, from which developed open-ended questions that demanded analytical and evaluative skills.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored highly demonstrated an ability to develop and broaden their response to questions relating to their personal world. For example, when asked about their family, they extended their remarks to include special family outings. When discussing their school, they elaborated on their comments by suggesting improvements. When asked about their plans for the future they justified the ideas behind their choices.

Students who were less attentive to the nuances of the Conversation gave prepared answers, thereby limiting the depth, spontaneity and relevance of the exchange. This reduced their ability to achieve high scores.

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics for the Detailed Study were relevant and interesting, and this enabled students to be involved in the Discussion enthusiastically. Students supported the Discussion with a wide variety of resources, which included written texts, newspaper articles from the internet and personal interviews.

The highest-scoring students used their research materials as a springboard to deepen and broaden their discussion about the topic. Students who understood the unique style of each resource were able to formulate an original opinion on the topic under discussion.

Some students who had used resources that were beyond their linguistic ability gave prepared answers and did not score well.

Common mistakes included:

- command of the future tense

"מה תעשה כשתסיים את בית הספר?" "אני הולך לישראל"

"איך אתה מגיע לבית ספר?" "אני לרכוב על אופניים"

- agreement of noun and adjective, singular and plural and gender

רחובות טובות. מלים עצובים, חדשים. בית ספר מיוחדת. שפה חכם.

- distinction between feminine and masculine pronouns, and singular and plural

הם מתנדבת. היא אנשים. הצבא היא.

- use of verbs

הפועל עושה מחליף לעתים קרובות מידי פעלים קיימים כמו: מבשל, לומד, מטייל ועוד.

- frequent use of conjunctions

כל-מיני, כאילו, וכאלה, כזה.

- use of numbers

שני/שתי, שלוש/שלושה וכ"ה.

- confusion between words of a similar meaning or sound.

לנסוע - לנהוג, לשמוע - להקשיב, רגשות - הרגשה, מיוחד - מאוחד, וכ"ה.

2016 VCE Hungarian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were able to link well with assessors, maintain the conversation and provide a range of information. They used good repair strategies and a variety of vocabulary and grammar.

Some students' use of grammar required improvement as the case ending *-ba/-be* or *-hoz/-hez* was interchanged; for example, somebody '*iskolához jár*' instead of the correct '*iskolába jár*' or '*moziba jár*'. Students often tried to directly translate from English to Hungarian, resulting in the incorrect use of grammar and tenses; for example, '*népítáncot csinálom*' instead of '*néptáncolok*'. Another error was '*kicsi rokonok*' instead of '*kicsi a család*'.

Some students confused the indicative verbal form with that expressing command, using *-suk/-sük*; for example, *mondhassuk* instead of *mondhatjuk*.

Students often gave the subjects they are studying in Year 12 in English and not in Hungarian. Students should be familiar with the correct Hungarian names and pronunciation of their subjects; for example, *Számтан, Angol, Magyar, Irodalom, Művészetek*, instead of Mathematics, English, Hungarian, Literature, Arts.

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

Students sometimes had problems with possessive suffixes. The suffixes are added to the same word base as plural *su,-k* instead of the accusative suffix *-t*. For example, students used '*meqlásuk*' when it should have been '*meqlátuk*'.

Students did not understand how the possessive suffixes needed to be added to words ending in a vowel, namely: *-m, -d, -ja, -nk, -tok, -tek, -tök, -juk, -jük*. For example, *szobám, szobád, szobája, szobánk, szobátok, szobájuk*.

Students also did not understand how to correctly emphasise the identity of the possessor – where the owner of the possession is stressed, then personal pronouns are added; for example, *Az én szobám, a te szobád, az ő szobája, a mi szobánk, a ti szobátok, az ők szobájuk*, not '*magam szobám*' (sic).

Some students lengthened words ending in the short vowels, i.e. *a/e* lengthened to *á/é*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Some students prepared their topics and communicated the information well. They used the internet, encyclopedias, and information from family members and other sources. Some relied too heavily on personal information instead of reading written articles. It is important to note that Wikipedia is not always a reliable source of information.

Students were able to answer questions asked; however, sometimes assessors needed to rephrase a question. This year many topics were on famous Hungarian historical figures, such as Rejtő Jenő, Szent Györgyi Albert, Nagy Imre and Mindszenty Hercegprímás.

Pronunciation in some cases was inexact; the 'T' sound was either weak or 'swallowed'. Intonation was sometimes very level or even ascending, rather than descending at the end of the sentence as the case is in Hungarian. The 't' of the accusative was sometimes omitted.

Students should rely less on rote-learning and practice more for free conversation.

2016 VCE Indonesian Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

This 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 able to maintain a conversation with the assessors. High-scoring students were adept at elaborating on all questions and speaking spontaneously. However, many students simply focused on key words and failed to answer the questions asked; for example, some students gave a prepared answer to the question, '*Apa yang anda pelajari selain bahasa Indonesia?*' when the question was, '*Apa yang anda pelajari di kelas bahasa Indonesia?*'

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

While very able students showed a range of well-developed ideas in comprehensive detail, students who were inadequately prepared had difficulties answering questions. It is important that students are provided with opportunities to practise answering as wide a range of questions as possible in as much detail as possible.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

High-scoring students showed a strong command of a range of sentence structures and vocabulary. However, many low-scoring students did not use the correct vocabulary or correct grammar. Common errors included *kita/kami*, *menarik/tertarik* and *adalah/ada*. Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with correct verb forms of the passive voice, particularly in the first-person structure, to avoid mistakes.

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

A wide range of vocabulary and sentence patterns were used accurately by high-scoring students. While the correct use of the informal and formal language remains problematic, particularly the use of *pikir/punya*, it is important that students familiarise themselves with a wider range of vocabulary. Repeated words such as *ada/jadi/mempunyai* should be avoided and replaced with appropriate synonyms.

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Well-prepared students enunciated clearly and demonstrated quick understanding of similar sounding words such as *suka/sukai/sukar*. Students are encouraged to pay close attention to their tempo and intonation when speaking Indonesian.

Section 2 – Discussion

This 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 and were able to engage in a meaningful exchange with the assessors. Some students struggled to explain concepts such as globalisation and its impacts on young people. Many students lacked the necessary vocabulary to carry on the exchange effectively.

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

Well-prepared students provided comprehensive answers supported by the texts studied. The choice of topics is very important. Topics that are evaluative in nature offer opportunities to explore ideas and opinions and can stimulate discussion on aspects of Indonesian-speaking communities. The resources used should be as varied as possible.

Criterion 8 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Errors with using verb forms were common, as was the accurate position of the auxiliary when using the passive voice. Students who were exceptionally well prepared were able to manipulate the vocabulary and grammar with well-controlled precision.

Criterion 9 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

High-scoring students had access to an extensive range of vocabulary and grammar. This enabled them to easily understand the questions asked. Their answers were free from repetition and the vocabulary used was precise.

Criterion 10 – Clarity of expression

A lack of preparation by many students affected their fluency, particularly in tempo and intonation. Students are encouraged to refine their delivery through consistent practice using the question-and-answer technique, providing short as well as long answers.

2016 VCE Italian oral examination report

General comments

In 2016 the majority of students understood the requirements of the examination and were adequately prepared. They were able to demonstrate a good level of understanding and an ability to communicate and link well with assessors. Students who achieved excellent overall results were those who could converse and discuss all aspects of the examination in a thorough and highly communicative manner.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who achieved high scores linked effectively with the assessors and did not rely on memorised knowledge. They exhibited an ability to discuss all aspects of their personal world, elaborated on responses and gave examples and reasons for their ideas and opinions. These students listened carefully to the questions asked and gave highly relevant responses. Their answers included an excellent range of vocabulary and structures that were used accurately and appropriately with excellent clarity of expression.

Students are expected to discuss and elaborate on a broad range of topics as listed in the study design. Students who performed poorly presented a limited range of ideas and information and had difficulty elaborating on their responses, reflecting inadequate preparation. These students also had limited control of simple structures and made many intrusive errors; for example, not conjugating verbs (*io andare a fare shopping*), incorrect auxiliary in past tenses (*io ho andato*), incorrect use of piacere (*io piace il calcio*), incorrect use of definite articles (*la mia madre, la problema, la tema*). Furthermore, it is expected that students demonstrate full control of vocabulary and expressions. Students are advised to avoid asking assessors how to say a particular word or phrase in Italian.

Section 2 – Discussion

In 2016, students presented a wide range of topics for discussion. The students who scored highly in this section demonstrated excellent preparation and a very high level of understanding. They responded readily and appropriately, elaborating on their responses and carrying the Discussion forward with relevant information and ideas. These students were able to effectively link and demonstrate the relevance of their resources to the topic being discussed. The choice of topic and the quality of texts used contributed to the effectiveness of the exchange. In addition, they were able to manipulate an excellent range of sophisticated vocabulary and expressions accurately and appropriately.

Students who experienced difficulty in this section presented a limited range of information about their topic and were unable to elaborate on their responses for a variety of reasons, including: choice of topic (some topics prevented in-depth exploration), inadequate resources (lack of variety, which did not allow students to advance the Discussion or explore different aspects of the topic) and lack of comprehensive knowledge of resources. Lack of accuracy and a limited range of

vocabulary and structures prevented these students from communicating effectively. Performance was also hindered by poor pronunciation of key vocabulary associated with the chosen topic.

2016 VCE Japanese Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students prepared well for the 2016 Japanese Second Language oral examination. They had a good understanding of the prescribed topics and were able to present appropriate responses to many questions. Many students spoke with good pronunciation, intonation and tempo.

High-scoring students listened closely to each question and gave relevant responses. They carried on the Conversation effectively, often presenting original and interesting facts and personal opinions. They were able to include sophisticated vocabulary and various sentence patterns in their answers.

Mid-scoring students were able to maintain the Conversation, presenting relevant information. Most were able to use simple sentence patterns and vocabulary in their responses. However, they should have included more complex grammatical patterns and used them accurately.

Many low-scoring students were only able to give short answers and needed support in order to continue the Conversation. They had limited vocabulary and made frequent errors in the use of particles, tenses and adjectives.

A considerable number of students had difficulty pronouncing *katakana* words such as オーストラリア (Australia), メルボルン (Melbourne), サッカー (soccer), ホスト (host) and フットボール (football).

Students are encouraged to practise appropriate responses to a range of questions with common interrogatives. Many students had problems when they were asked with どう (how) and どんな (what kind of). For instance, the question 今年 VCE の勉強はどうでしたか。 (How were your VCE studies this year?) presented problems for some students, who responded by listing all the subjects they studied. Others said たのしかったです。 (It was enjoyable.) or たいへんでした。 (It was hard.). Students should be able to give more detailed information such as what they particularly enjoyed or did not enjoy and the reasons for this response. In addition, some personal reflection on this time could have contributed to a high-scoring answer.

Words not known by some students this year included:

楽器 (musical instruments), じきゅう (hourly pay), じゅぎょう (lesson), おなじ (same), わかい人 (young people), きょうだい (siblings), とくい (good at), にがて (bad at), 週に何かい (how many times a week) and 外国語 (foreign languages).

Section 2 – Discussion

Students presented a wide range of themes and issues, and some familiar and some new topics. These included クラブ活動 (Club activities in Japanese schools), きゅう食 (School lunch), コンビニ (Convenience stores), 食生活のへんか (Change of eating habits), キャラベン (Kyaraben), りそうのび人 (Ideal beauty), こんかつ (Marriage activities), お一人様 (People living and doing things alone) and せんきょ年れいのひきさげ (Voting age in Japan was lowered).

Students are encouraged to find current and recent information when preparing the Detailed Study and should avoid generalising or stereotyping.

High-scoring students had clearly studied their topics in-depth using a variety of source materials. When they were asked それをかいけつするためにどうすればいいと思いますか。 (how to solve problems on these issues), some students went beyond just giving information from resources and presented their own interesting ideas about how to resolve issues.

Mid-scoring students were generally able to maintain the Discussion, presenting a range of information about their topic. However, they needed to explore the topic in-depth in order to support their ideas and opinions.

Low-scoring students often seemed to recite a learnt response regardless of the question posed to them, and this prevented them from engaging in meaningful discussions. Some students who chose sophisticated topics found it difficult to handle unfamiliar complex language from the resources. Some students demonstrated a lack of preparation for their chosen topics.

Some students replied repeatedly with しつもんは分かりますが日本語でせつめいできません。 (I understood the question but can't explain it in Japanese). This was not an answer to the questions.

2016 VCE Khmer oral examination report

General comments

In general, students were well prepared and maintained a high standard in both the Conversation and the Discussion. Students demonstrated an excellent ability to present relevant information and an excellent range of opinions and ideas with reasons and examples. However, a few students had some difficulty in applying accurate grammar and vocabulary, their pronunciation was unclear and they used the inappropriate register. Some students needed to elaborate further on their opinions and ideas and avoid repetition of words or sentences.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students covered a wide range of topics such as personal background, family, current studies, future career, hobbies, travelling, part-time employment, household chores and sports. The majority of students interacted with assessors confidently, and responses were direct and spontaneous. A few students gave minimal responses and waited for the assessors' next questions, rather than expanding on their responses. Students should be encouraged to expand on their responses to advance the Conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

In the Discussion section, students' chosen topics were varied and very informative, which showed that most were well prepared and had studied a variety of sources. They were competent and able to give specific examples with reasons to support their topic and could expand on their topic without being prompted. Some students who seemed unprepared and had memorised the subtopic for discussion became stuck during the Discussion and needed prompts to continue. These students presented their topics without a clear structure and ended their topic without conclusion. To enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately in the oral examination, thorough preparation, practice and rehearsal are vital.

High-scoring students were those who responded well to open questions, impressed assessors with original thoughts and were able to elaborate on and defend their opinions and ideas.

Low-scoring students had difficulty sustaining the Discussion. They presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas. Students are required to demonstrate understanding of their chosen topic by using appropriate vocabulary and topic-specific terminology. Students should not depend on rote-learned materials; students who did so often experienced difficulty in advancing their Discussion topic and needed prompts to continue. The tempo of these students' responses was too slow, which indicated a lack of preparation.

In general, students prepared their topic for Discussion very well and were able to respond to all questions asked. They used a wide range of vocabulary, structures and expressions in an appropriate way. However, a few students used inappropriate terminology such as the following

(The correct words or phrases are given in brackets): អគារចាស់ជាង (អគារចាស់ប្រទេស), អគារប្រាមអ្នកក្រីក្រ (អគារប្រាមបង្កាត់ភាពក្រីក្រ), វិស័យអប់រំ (វិស័យអប់រំ), ធ្វើឱ្យកង្វះ (ធ្វើឱ្យខ្វះ), ធ្វើការដំណើរ (ការធ្វើដំណើរ), ភាពអំពើពុករលួយ (អំពើពុករលួយ), អ្នកគ្រងមើល (សូមអ្នកគ្រប់គ្រងមើល). Some students' pronunciation was unclear; for example, សួល (ស្រួល) ឆើន (ច្រើន). Effective communication requires clarity, well-selected vocabulary and natural flow of speech.

2016 VCE Korean Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students prepared for and performed well in the 2016 Korean Second Language oral examination.

Communication

Students' communication skills in spoken Korean were assessed in terms of engaging with the audience, repair strategies and body language. High-scoring students commonly displayed confidence and seemed relaxed. Those students were able to carry their conversation spontaneously and used appropriate body language such as eye contact, gestures and facial expressions. Some students were hesitant or spoke too softly. Students are reminded to maximise their expressiveness in order to enhance their communication skills.

Content

During the Conversation, most students were able to share their ideas and experiences for various topics; however, some low-scoring students gave short answers and were unable to provide supporting evidence. In some cases, they responded with prepared answers that were irrelevant to the questions asked.

Language

Overall students' Korean language skills were impressive in terms of grammar, vocabulary and expression; however, some students used informal language, which was inappropriate for the examination setting. Some examples of inappropriate words were 초딩 수준 (childlike), 끌어서 (repeated) and 까먹어서 (forgot).

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

During the one-minute introduction, various subtopics were presented, such as 갈등 (conflicts), 우정 (friendships), 통일 (unification) and 의사 소통 (communication). Students are reminded to maintain a natural flow during the introduction.

Content

Most students were well prepared for the discussion on their chosen subtopic; however, a number of students did not clearly state what their subtopic would be about. These students tended to heavily emphasise the underlying issues or background instead. As a result, the Discussion began with uncertainty. Students are also reminded to present correct names during the Discussion. For example, when talking about authors, students should take care to present their names accurately. When referring to the studied texts, high-scoring students produced effective responses by including a lot of detail.

Language

For this criterion, students' overall performance level was quite high. Some high-scoring students displayed outstanding language skills during the Discussion. They were able to control their voice, tempo and stress during the one-minute introduction. They skilfully maintained their normal pitch, tempo and pronunciation in order to maximise the clarity of their expression. Students are reminded that it is important to pronounce the ending word of each sentence clearly. For example, 제가 좋아했습니다 (I liked it) sounded like 제가 좋아해서 ... (I like ...) if the ending word was incomplete.

2016 VCE Macedonian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students generally linked well with assessors. High-scoring students were able to provide sustained responses to all questions and to speak spontaneously and naturally about their personal world. They not only shared information, they expressed ideas and opinions, and provided examples and reasons. They included sophisticated vocabulary and varied sentence patterns in their answers, and were able to self-correct when necessary.

Low-scoring students gave short answers, waited for more questions to be asked and paused frequently. They were not prepared for unexpected questions and needed to be prompted by assessors. Their pronunciation was unclear or incorrect, and the influence of English on intonation, stress and tempo was evident. Subject–verb agreement, word order and the gender of nouns were problematic, and vocabulary was limited; this adversely affected the flow of the Conversation and general fluency.

Students are reminded that there is no penalty for using repair strategies or for seeking clarification. Students should learn expressions that assist them to seek clarification; for example, *Ne ve razbrav, Ne mi e jasno, Povtorete ve molam, toa ne e vo ramkite na moeto ispituvanje*.

Students should anticipate that assessors may ask one or two unexpected/higher-order questions about their topic to allow students to perform at a higher level.

Section 2 – Discussion

Some topics are definitely more suitable than others for the Detailed Study; festivals are not good topics if all that is given is a description. Biographies do not work well in this section if all that is discussed is a timeline of the person's achievements. Topics should allow for the expression and development of ideas and opinions. Students should be encouraged to use expressions such as *mislam deka, spored mene, se zacudiv koga, se vooduseviv koga, mi znaci mnogu...* Students should avoid topics that are purely informative and descriptive.

A topic that worked well was Musical Instruments. In this topic, as well as a description of the instruments, there was also a discussion of the role of the instruments today, changes made to them over the years and how they were made. A high level of personal interest and involvement in a topic can assist with success. It is important that students choose topics that require analysis and offer the opportunity to take a stance.

Using visual materials such as photographs or maps was acceptable; however, students are advised to use these materials as a springboard for broader discussion, rather than focusing only on the materials themselves. Visual materials should facilitate the discussion but should not be the sole focus.

Students need to give a one-minute introduction at the beginning and mention the topic they have chosen for their Detailed Study.

Students should use expressions such as: *vsusnost, sekako deka, vo sporedba so, nasproti, kako na prime, od edna strana...od druga strana, osven toa, megjutoa, vo zaklucok...*

Students need to show evidence of preparation for the Discussion and be prepared to refer to the resources studied.

2016 VCE Maltese oral examination report

General comments

Most students performed well in the 2016 Maltese oral examination and demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the examination requirements. A wide range of competence was evident in students' performances. High-scoring students demonstrated mastery of the language through a range of structures and vocabulary. However, some students lacked confidence and gave simple answers when more sophisticated language was required.

Most students researched and prepared well for the Discussion. They used various resources such as books, interviews, video clips and online resources to gather information. Students who performed well answered unexpected questions with confidence and advanced the exchange by giving their own personal opinions rather than repeating ideas from texts. Students should be able to readily answer unexpected and challenging questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students showed a commitment to language learning and communicated in a confident, effective and appropriate manner. They spoke with enthusiasm about family, school life, work, hobbies and plans for the future. The majority of students used a variety of vocabulary, grammatical structures and expressions accurately. High-scoring students presented relevant information and expressed their opinions and ideas by supporting them with details and reasons. Pronunciation of the language ranged from very clear to poor. Some students frequently hesitated during the exchange and had difficulty in applying the correct vocabulary and grammar needed to expand their ideas. Low-scoring students provided insufficient information and relied on the questions posed by assessors to advance the Conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, students were well prepared and gave interesting responses. A popular topic for Detailed Study was World War II. This topic allowed for personal experiences as it reflected on the hardships endured by the Maltese people during a difficult period in the country's history. Students obtained firsthand information through interviews of relatives. The subtopics were quite varied, although there was some overlap with students researching the same subtopic. The majority readily provided the list of resources used. The use of visual material (for example, a picture) helped students to organise their ideas in a sequential manner. Students used a wide range of grammar and vocabulary correctly. Some students demonstrated advanced linguistic skills when they used expressions such as *l-ghagin kien qiesu lussu* and *il-hazna tal-ikel naqset*.

High-scoring students were familiar with the resources and often responded well to open-ended questions, expressing their own personal opinions. They showed competence in their use of grammatical structures, vocabulary and pronunciation. They were confident in their presentation and spoke at the appropriate tempo. Although able to communicate at a satisfactory level, mid-

range students did not demonstrate the ability to explore the information in depth by providing their own opinions.

A few students struggled to sustain the Discussion, as it was evident that they had a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying and elaborating on ideas and opinions.

An important aspect of the Discussion is for students to show how well they can use the researched information to establish and support their own opinions. They need to analyse the available resources and use these to form their own opinions. Only a few students were able to demonstrate the ability to advance the Discussion by showing originality in supporting their opinions.

2016 VCE Persian oral examination report

General comments

The overall performance of students in the 2016 Persian oral examination was satisfactory. In general, most students had good communication skills and were able to talk about a wide range of topics. It is important that students respond to the questions fully and elaborate on their answers. To achieve high scores, students must invest more time in preparation for the oral examination. Students should also be assisted in selecting their Detailed Study topics and ensuring that they have sufficient content for discussion.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

In this section, most students demonstrated a very good level of understanding of the topics covered and were able to engage with the assessors effectively. They demonstrated a good level of preparation and practice. Most students had very good pronunciation, intonation and tempo.

High-scoring students listened to each question carefully and used an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. They also avoided rote-learned responses and elaborated on ideas and questions.

Low-scoring students gave prepared answers and struggled to cope with unexpected questions. They needed some assistance and support to carry the conversation forward. Some students made a few errors with the Persian names of subjects studied at school. The most common errors involved the use of English vocabulary.

Section 2 – Discussion

There was a range of topics for the Detailed Study and some students had an excellent knowledge of their prepared topic. Most students demonstrated a good level of intonation, stress and tempo, and a very good level of pronunciation.

High-scoring students clearly demonstrated interest in researching the topics. They performed well due to the use of a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Low-scoring students lacked depth of knowledge of their chosen topic and thus the discussion with these students was limited. It was evident that some students had not practised enough and relied only on their limited knowledge or experiences.

Most students chose topics that met the requirements of the *VCE Persian Study Design*, but there were still a few students who chose inappropriate topics.

Most students used the internet as their main source of information. Other appropriate resources must be used to enable students to present opinions and ideas that they can defend effectively. Some students brought objects such as posters to enhance the discussion of their topics.

2016 VCE Polish oral examination report

General comments

Students generally performed very well in the 2016 Polish oral examination. The majority of students were familiar with the expectations of the oral examination and presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas. All students brought visual materials in order to support the Discussion, and most used them effectively. Many students adopted good communication strategies, such as eye contact, body language and expressive presentation.

Specific information

Overall the manner of delivery in both sections was generally very good. In most cases students used vocabulary and grammatical structures that were appropriate to the setting and register. Some errors occurred, but these errors did not interfere with the student's intended meaning.

Section 1 – Conversation

High-scoring students were able to engage confidently in conversations about family and friends, their interests, part-time jobs and aspirations, and carried the Conversation forward spontaneously and with minimal support. Although the majority of students were very confident in this section, not all students were able to advance the Conversation adequately, which restricted their ability to deal with the content and interact with the assessors. They gave minimal answers and waited for the assessors' next questions.

Students should be encouraged to practise familiar topics thoroughly, present their personal opinions and ideas, and give examples and details about these topics, rather than presenting superficial information only.

The most common mistake was the use of inappropriate informal language when addressing assessors (*ty* instead of *pani*). Some students used limited or incorrect vocabulary; for example, *poszłem do Polski*, colloquial *ciuchy* instead of *ubrania* or when asked '*Jakie potrawy lubisz? - Co to jest potrawy* (What is *potrawy* [food]?)'. The most common grammar mistakes were noun and adjective declination, verb conjugation, and a lack of agreement between the gender of nouns and adjectives.

Section 2 – Discussion

The most popular topics used for the Detailed Study were *Wielkopolska – Kolebka Polskosci* and famous Polish people. Students used a variety of sources when researching their topic for Discussion.

Most topics were introduced well and the majority of students delivered a well-structured and coherent presentation. However, it is important for students to ensure that they have prepared sufficient content to be able to discuss their chosen subtopic with the assessors within the required time. Many students were open and eager to express their own knowledge, viewpoints and opinions, while others concentrated mostly on relating facts or information and did not give their

opinions. Students should choose topics that they are comfortable with and that suit their linguistic ability. Some students were unable to provide information about the visual material they had brought to support the Discussion.

Most students had a good range of vocabulary, structures and expressions, but some could have worked towards producing a greater variety of vocabulary; for example, *zabytki* (historical buildings) instead of *stare budynki*, and better/proper grammatical structures (for example, *to było jutro* – it was tomorrow), which would have assisted them to produce a more sustained and more coherent argument. It would be beneficial for students to master the vocabulary/expressions related to their chosen subtopic; for example, saying dates correctly: 1940 should have been *tysiąc dziewięćset czterdziesty* (a thousand nine hundred forty) instead of using the form used in English, *dziewiętnasty czterdziesty* (nineteen forty).

2016 VCE Portuguese oral examination report

General comments

Overall, students showed a reasonable level of confidence throughout the oral examination. Some students' performances were outstanding, but there were also those who struggled during the examination.

Students must be fully aware of the criteria for both components of the oral examination and understand that both sections are exchanges and not merely question/answer sessions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

High-scoring students demonstrated the capacity to discuss familiar topics. These students were able to express themselves in detail and interact well with assessors. On the other hand, low-scoring students were not as competent in the language, struggling throughout the examination on basic concepts and showing a lack of knowledge of language use.

Most students showed a very good level of understanding, communicated effectively and were able to maintain the Conversation. Other students provided short answers and waited for the assessors to ask further questions.

High-scoring students presented detailed information, stated opinions and confidently expanded on their ideas. Low-scoring students were not able to expand on their ideas and often gave short responses.

High-scoring students used accurate vocabulary and grammar. Most grammatical errors involved verb conjugations, subject/verb agreements, and the use of pronouns and prepositions. Most vocabulary errors were related to false friends.

Most students used a good range of vocabulary structures and expressions. Some students were able to use sophisticated vocabulary as well as complex grammar structures; however, low-scoring students used very basic vocabulary and poor sentence structures.

Overall, the majority of students used a good level of pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Section 2 – Discussion

Overall, students did not perform as well in the Discussion as they did in the Conversation. Some students had prepared their topic well. However, some students did not have sufficient information on their topic.

Many students relied heavily on visual materials. These students were not able to engage with the assessors and focused on their visuals rather than the discussion.

Some students struggled to deal with unexpected questions. Students are advised to have appropriate strategies in place to deal with a possible scenario in which they don't know or have forgotten an answer.

Students generally produced confident responses during the Discussion, giving their opinions and ideas. High-scoring students were able to carry the Discussion forward. A few were unable to defend their ideas and opinions and discussed the topic superficially and waited for the next question.

High-scoring students were able to elaborate on ideas and provide opinions that displayed some depth of information. Other students did not have sufficient linguistic capacity or knowledge of the topic in order to maintain the discussion.

2016 VCE Punjabi oral examination report

General comments

Generally, students were well prepared for and performed well in the 2016 Punjabi oral examination. They were aware of the examination structure and of culturally appropriate greetings when addressing assessors on entering the examination room. Students understood assessors' questions and communicated effectively with them.

A variety of Detailed Study topics such as historical events, famous people, current issues in the Punjabi community and festivals were chosen by students. Well-prepared students exhibited a good command of Punjabi language. These students were able to confidently elaborate on their viewpoints, and some provided very good reasons and examples for their chosen topics for Detailed Study. Some students struggled to engage with assessors and required prompting and clarification when they did not understand a question.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

During the Conversation, students responded confidently to assessors' questions and used culturally appropriate language. They were able to elaborate on their viewpoints when they discussed home life, school, friends and future aspirations. A few students did not fully understand some questions and required assessors to reword a question more than once. Some students used English and Hindi language. Students are reminded that they should not use English in the oral examination. A few students used repair strategies, but others had difficulty using repair strategies or they struggled to find appropriate words in Punjabi.

Common mistakes in Hindi vocabulary included the following Hindi words: सास (instead of ਸੱਸ), से जाती हूँ (instead of ਸੌਂ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹਾਂ), चेहली (instead of ਚਿੱਲੀ), लैग (instead of ਲੋਕ), ਘੁਮਨੇ ਜਾਤੇ ਹੈਂ (instead of ਘੁੰਮਣ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ).

Section 2 – Discussion

Students presented a variety of topics and subtopics for the Detailed Study. Some well-prepared students demonstrated an ability to analyse and evaluate their research topics creatively. They were also able to highlight their personal opinions about issues related to their topic. Some students' speech flowed well and they gave culturally appropriate answers and strong opinions. However, some students' knowledge of their Detailed Study lacked depth and breadth, and these students resorted to rote-learned material. Students who had not prepared well were not able to continue the Discussion for the appropriate length of time and struggled to comprehend and answer questions related to their chosen topic.

A few students did not mention a Detailed Study topic. Students should be assisted with the selection of a topic for the Detailed Study, and are encouraged to read and become familiar with the requirements of the oral examination.

2016 VCE Romanian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

All students were well prepared and performed to a high standard in the 2016 Romanian oral examination. Most students understood the assessors' questions and were able to formulate relevant responses. On the whole, they demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately.

The majority of students presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas, covering a variety of topics relevant to their personal lives. These topics included family life, hobbies, travelling, sport, music, literature and future plans. Students were able to maintain the Conversation by responding confidently and spontaneously, and by using the correct pronunciation and intonation.

High-scoring students developed their ideas in original ways. For example, when conversing about plans for the future, they went beyond just naming their chosen profession, adding supplementary information about family traditions, job opportunities and future employment trends, making interesting comments and associations. They also used complex sentence structures, a wide range of tenses and appropriate grammatical structures, and were able to self-correct when necessary.

Low-scoring students were able to provide sufficient information that was generally relevant, but used ambiguous structures occasionally (*am fost și un an înainte, să știm așa, n-ar investa*). The most frequent grammatical errors were disagreements between nouns and adjectives (*al doilea resurs, unul din lucrările, românii sunt prietenos, mulți mătuși, multe munte, munți frumos*), expressions translated from English incorrectly used in Romanian (*să facă decizia corectă*, correct form *să ia decizia corectă*) and incorrect use of definite articles (*oceanurile, naturi*).

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics for the Discussion included historical and cultural personalities or individual topics related to students' interests or experiences.

Most students had prepared thoroughly and gave confident responses. They were usually able to logically formulate their responses with reasons, examples and opinions. They used a wide variety of accurate language and vocabulary that enhanced their performance. Most students were also able to clarify information and offered detailed opinions with arguments from the selected resources, therefore demonstrating very good preparation of the topic.

Some students tended to focus on relating facts and information, and had difficulty sustaining the Discussion. After naming their resources, these students presented a good range of information, but they needed some support to elaborate on their ideas and carry the Discussion forward. This indicated a lack of preparation. Students are reminded that they should not rely solely on rote-learned material.

High-scoring students used an excellent range of vocabulary and accurate grammatical structures. Low-scoring responses were characterised by grammatical errors, and a lack of fluency, depth of research and elaboration. These students struggled with both syntax and vocabulary. Some common errors used in their structures were:

- the incorrect use of the subjunctive in the active voice (*să învață, să arată, să descifre, să vorbește, să face*) and in the reflexive voice (*să se împacă, să antrenează*)
- incorrect form of words (*ordonul* correct form *ordinul*, *ungerii* correct form *ungurii*, *nuroarea numărul trei* correct form *cea de-a treia noră, ferme* correct form *ferme*)
- disagreement between subject and predicate (*cum a zis oameni, resursele este, nu merge semafoarele, îmi place muzică, a fost inspirați*).

The most frequent vocabulary error was the use of the noun 'topic' (Romanian translation 'subiect', 'temă') incorrectly used in Romanian as 'topica' to introduce the Discussion (*topica pe care am ales*, correct form *subiectul pe care l-am ales/tema pe care am ales-o, subtopica care am ales*, correct form *subtema pe care am ales-o, această topică* correct form *această temă/acest subiect*).

2016 VCE Russian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were well prepared and demonstrated their ability to discuss familiar topics, such as family, school, hobbies and future aspirations.

They linked with assessors effectively and demonstrated very good repair strategies, such as asking assessors to repeat questions or words when they required clarification. Students expressed their ideas and opinions with breadth and depth.

Many students used a wide range of vocabulary, sentence structures and expressions appropriately. However, some students found it challenging to respond to questions that involved evaluation and analysis of information. They experienced difficulties when they were asked to compare different ideas, justify their choices, agree or disagree with opinions, and explain and come to a conclusion.

Typical errors involved using anglicisms. For example:

- *выходить в сити*
- *делать разные вещи*
- *делаю certificate*
- *брать математику*
- *платить особое внимание*
- *не входит в фикальные предметы.*

Typical errors also involved the incorrect use of case endings. For example:

- genitive case: *один из дети, около две тысячи студенты*
- instrumental case: *пользоваться неоднократные уважения, интересуюсь во всем*
- accusative case: *видит святых иконов.*

Other typical errors involved the incorrect use of prepositions, including prepositional phrases with verbs. Examples included:

- *5 минут за нового года*
- *интересоваться в этой сфере/ во всем.*

Typical errors involving the incorrect use of reflexive verb forms included:

- *играться на компьютере*
- *профессия хорошо оплачивает.*

Students' attention should be drawn to the appropriate use of register and style. Some incorrect use of register included:

- *китайка*
- *пацаны*
- *Чехов - комедиант.*

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students linked well with assessors and carried the Discussion forward with minimal assistance. They were able to justify their responses with good reasons, examples and opinions, and used text references appropriately.

However, the choice of topics varied and some were not well chosen for the Discussion. Students are advised to consult with their teachers when selecting their Detailed Study topic.

Students demonstrated knowledge of the materials used, reflected on their topics, dealt with questions with ease and expressed their opinions and views with confidence.

Some topics were based on the rendering of factual material without issues suitable for discussion. Such topics do not allow students to carry the Discussion forward or elaborate on their views and opinions.

Some topics did not match the student's linguistic skills, and students had a limited range of vocabulary that did not allow them to carry the Discussion forward effectively.

Language problems included:

- incorrect use of sentence structures, especially complex sentences (*причина, следствие, результат*)
- subject-verb agreement
- noun collocations
- direct translation from English.

Often students used the inappropriate register and style.

Advice to students

- Students are advised to select topics with issues suitable for discussion.
- Students should be able to contribute to the Discussion by providing original ideas, not memorised chunks of information.
- Students are advised to prepare a wide range of vocabulary.
- Students should develop skills in evaluating and analysing ideas and concepts.

2016 VCE Serbian oral examination report

General comments

It was obvious that students had prepared very well for the 2016 Serbian oral examination. The overall level of performance in the criteria of content, language and communication was very good.

Students were encouraged to respond to a range of question styles and types in both sections of the examination, involving use of a range of tenses, such as the past, present, future and conditional.

Some students struggled to answer questions that were not phrased using familiar structures and would generally ask for clarification or repetition of questions to ensure they had understood the words correctly.

While students are encouraged to advance the exchange during the Conversation and Discussion and present their ideas fluently and with confidence, it is also important to understand that assessors will ask questions and may interrupt students at times. Students should anticipate some difficult questions in each section of the examination that will allow them to demonstrate their ability and perform at a higher level.

Students need to take every opportunity to practise speaking Serbian outside of school and listen to well-modelled standard Serbian as this will assist them to perform more effectively in both sections of the oral examination. It is important that students have sufficient time to prepare their topics.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students presented familiar topics very thoroughly with some original and interesting facts and personal opinions.

Students were often asked questions considering possibilities and alternatives to encourage the use of the more complex structures such as the conditional, pluperfect and future tense.

Most students were well prepared, able to maintain and advance the exchange, and expand effectively on aspects of their personal world. They were able to discuss more than one topic related to their personal world and develop more than one aspect with breadth and depth, expressing opinions effectively.

A small number of students struggled with core vocabulary on familiar topics and misused gender and case when describing common themes. Anglicisms such as 'like', 'shopping centre' and 'univerzitet' instead of '*fakultet*' were observed in a few instances as well as slang or dialect; for example, '*myde*', '*ohđak*', '*he*'.

Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of subtopics and resources is very important and should cater for the students' language ability as well as their interests.

A range of topics about famous Serbian dignitaries (past and present) was presented, and most students presented the material skilfully and engaged well with assessors. They used a very good range of vocabulary, sentence structures and expressions with both simple and complex grammatical structures. Well-prepared students had a high degree of interaction with the assessors. They spoke confidently and were skilled in elaborating on ideas and opinions, supporting them with appropriate evidence from the texts studied. They advanced the Discussion by using a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Some students were unprepared. They had not mastered the range and depth of vocabulary required to carry the Discussion forward, and they were unable to deal with the variety of questions asked or demonstrate good repair strategies. These students had not formulated their own opinions on the subtopic and found it difficult to express and discuss them effectively. Students cannot rely solely on rote-learning and must invest more time in preparing for the oral examination using appropriate resources to enable them to present opinions and ideas that they can defend effectively.

2016 VCE Sinhala oral examination report

General comments

Students were very well prepared for the 2016 Sinhala oral examination and there were a few excellent performances. In most instances, students' preparation was demonstrated by the confidence with which they communicated.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

Most students were very well prepared and readily responded to questions. Students should make every effort to answer the questions asked and not change the topic if they have not prepared well.

Content

The information on various areas of the Conversation was presented well. In most instances students elaborated on their opinions and supported them with evidence.

Language

There were many instances where students used a wide range of highly sophisticated vocabulary. They took the opportunity to use stress and changed tone and tempo appropriately. In general, appropriate vocabulary was used with good pronunciation and sentence structures. There were a few instances where culturally appropriate register was not used when referring to parents.

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

Students selected a wide range of topics and subtopics for the Detailed Study. In most instances it was evident that they had completed thorough research on their selected topic. Their answers were spontaneous and they provided information that was appropriate to the questions asked. There were only a few instances where assessors needed to ask many questions in order to continue the Discussion.

Content

Most students presented a wide range of information and supported facts by referring to the resources and expressing their opinions where appropriate. Some students were able to advance the exchange and discuss the topic in great depth. Well-prepared students engaged well with assessors, providing appropriate information in response to questions asked. Rote-learning was evident only in a few responses.

Language

Most students used an excellent level of appropriate and sophisticated vocabulary and complex sentence structures to express their ideas and opinions. There were a few instances where assessors needed to prompt students with appropriate words in order to complete sentences. Very high-scoring students demonstrated the use of tone and intonation to stress important facts and their opinions.

2016 VCE Spanish oral examination report

General comments

The overall quality of students' communicative skills was impressive. It was evident that they had prepared thoroughly. All students observed the appropriate greeting conventions when interacting with assessors, which is an important aspect of the Hispanic cultures.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

In this section students covered a range of topics: family, friends, school, pets, music, travel, sport, hobbies and future aspirations.

Students needed to maintain an appropriate exchange of ideas in order to demonstrate their capacity to connect with the assessors. Students needed to answer assessors' questions. There were a few instances where students provided a response that did not answer the question they were asked. Students must listen carefully and respond appropriately. Students must avoid pre-learned responses and ask for clarification if they are not sure they have understood. Marks were not deducted for the use of repair strategies or for clarification of questions.

Many students carried the Conversation forward and elaborated on their ideas and opinions. However, a few students had little to say and gave one-word answers, despite being prompted to elaborate on their response. This gave the impression that they had not adequately prepared for the oral examination.

Many students used accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures and there was very little English interference. Students generally displayed a high level of grammatical accuracy. Grammatical errors did not affect meaning and were mostly in the use of prepositions and verb conjugation. Most students conjugated verbs accurately; however, when the subjunctive mood was required, many students used it incorrectly. Students should revise verb conjugation, moods and tenses when preparing for the oral examination.

Most students had an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions. However, some students demonstrated a limited range of vocabulary. Errors that require further attention include:

- *soporta* was incorrectly translated as 'support'. Support in Spanish is *apoyo*, from the verb *apoyar*. *Soporta* is from the verb *soportar*, *sinónimo de aguantar*.
- *Ridiculoso* is not correct Spanish, it should be *ridículo*.
- *Yo me gusta* is incorrect. It should be *a mí me gusta*, or simply, *me gusta*.
- *Un perra* instead of *Una perra* (gender agreement between article and noun).
- *Los personas* instead of *las personas*.
- Use of *ser* and *estar*. *al final todo será bien* should be *al final todo estará bien*.
- the correct use of the subjunctive: *No creo que sea* instead of *No creo que es*.

- *Ojala pueda* instead of *Ojala puedo*.
- The use of *ser* or *estar* presented some confusion.
- *El problema* instead of *la problema*.
- *El tema* instead of *la tema*.

Students are advised to practise speaking Spanish outside school when possible, listen to Spanish radio programs and watch Spanish television shows, movies or internet clips.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, students were well prepared and demonstrated a good level of intonation, stress and tempo, and a very good level of pronunciation.

Examples of the topics students studied were:

- The future of marriage
- The immigration of Hispanic people to the USA.

Most students presented interesting topics and a good variety of resources. Many students communicated effectively by responding readily and advancing the exchange by providing original discussion and ideas, and were able to carry the Discussion forward. They were able to elaborate on their points of view by using evidence gained from their resources. However, some students presented information about their topic but lacked the ability to explore it in depth. It is important to emphasise that the Discussion involves reference to the texts studied for the Detailed Study.

Some students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and grammatical structures. However, some students displayed a limited understanding of grammatical structures.

2016 VCE Swedish oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were well prepared, able and willing to converse about the topics of family, school, interests/hobbies, future plans and ambitions. High-scoring students capably demonstrated that they understood the importance of maintaining and advancing the exchange with spontaneity and enthusiasm, and needed little, if any, prompting. Such students 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.

Lower-scoring students needed some assistance and encouragement in order to carry the exchange forward. Some students cleverly adopted a strategy of slowing down their rate of speech, which proved effective in minimising errors without unduly impeding the flow of the conversation. However, very occasionally, lack of fluency in the language and understanding led to the presented information being somewhat disjointed, lacking in clarity and occasionally containing grammatical errors.

Section 2 – Discussion

Generally, students showed that they had prepared thoroughly for the presentation of their chosen topics and were able to respond effectively to both anticipated questions as well as questions they may not have expected. The higher-scoring students had clearly studied their topics in depth, used a good range of source material and were able to present and defend highly developed ideas and opinions using sophisticated language accurately and with conviction. In all cases the chosen subtopics were highly relevant to Swedish context and culture.

Some lower-scoring students struggled to properly use unique Swedish grammar, which is different from English grammar; for example, not observing that in Swedish the word order in some contexts is different from in English – the verb comes before the noun; for example, '*I går gick jag på bio*' not '*I går jag gick på bio*'. Another example was not always using the correct indefinite article, given that in Swedish there are two such articles – '*en*' and '*ett*' – and to use them correctly students must learn which one goes with which noun. Using prepositions correctly in Swedish often proved challenging for students.

Some students spoke a little 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.

While some lower-scoring students needed some support to be able to carry the discussion forward with confidence, most students performed well, displaying a high level of communicative skills.

2016 VCE Tamil oral examination report

General comments

It was evident that most students had prepared to a high standard for both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the 2016 Tamil oral examination, and thus they performed very well. Almost all students used the acceptable standard dialect of many Tamil-speaking countries.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students kept the Conversation relevant, provided a variety of culturally appropriate ideas and information, and supported their opinions with suitable examples. Most students demonstrated a good command of style and register, which was strong evidence of thorough practice during preparation for the examination. Some students were able to interact very well with the assessors and carry the Conversation forward. When engaged in the Conversation section, it was evident that many students' responses were rote-learned.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students had memorised their prepared subtopics for the Discussion as set speeches. Some students' tone, intonation, stress and tempo changed entirely when they started to undertake their speech after the Conversation.

Many students were able to present an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions. Most of their chosen subtopics were related to their own interests and were culturally appropriate. Students provided sound reasons for their selection of their topics.

When questions were asked, many students demonstrated an excellent level of understanding and responded readily and confidently. They could cleverly manipulate memorised ideas and information when responding to the questions; however, after answering questions, they simply continued their 'speech' from the point where they had left off. Students should not rely on memorised speeches but practise responding to impromptu questions based on their chosen topic. Students who relied heavily on memorised content did not score high marks. Some students were able to elaborate and logically defend their points of view, alerting assessors by saying, 'As I said earlier ...'

Low-scoring students also memorised their comments on the Detailed Study like speeches. When questions were asked, they gave irrelevant answers and then continued their 'speech', repeating the last sentence they had uttered before being questioned. Students needed to listen attentively to the question asked and then make every attempt to respond spontaneously. Continued practice during the year is highly recommended.

2016 VCE Turkish oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

The oral examination provided students with an opportunity to express themselves in Turkish. In the Conversation most students performed and engaged very well with assessors. They answered the questions and expressed their ideas and views clearly, as well as providing relevant information using fluent Turkish.

High-scoring students had thoroughly prepared familiar topics such as family, school and leisure activities. These students were able to demonstrate a very good level of understanding and required minimal support from the assessors. They not only maintained the conversation on familiar topics but they were also able to elaborate and expand on their responses using rich vocabulary and accurate grammar.

In this section some students made errors by including anglicisms in their Turkish expression. A few such errors included the incorrect use of past tense verbs and the habitual use of 'like' and/or 'yes'. However, students were usually able to self-correct these errors by using effective repair strategies such as '*Afedersiniz, pardon*'. The use of the two main past tense verb endings '-*dî*' and '-*miş*' were confused at times when students were talking about their experiences at school or at home.

In general, errors made in this section related to the mispronunciation of commonly shared words in English and Turkish; for example, '*üniversite*'. This error was caused by the mispronunciation of the first vowel '*ü*' and was influenced by the pronunciation of the same word in English 'university'.

Overall, students need to prepare to extend the Conversation with comments and descriptions, and express their own opinions rather than using rote-learned expressions.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were able to relate to the topics and discussed them well using appropriate language and vocabulary.

High-scoring students were able to provide details and a range of opinions, which revealed some depth of knowledge of and ideas about their selected Detailed Study topics. These students were able to present a wide range of information from a variety of sources. Some good topics included '*Gençlik Sorunları*', '*Göç*' and '*Türk-Avustralya Kimliği*'.

Low-scoring Discussions relied on much irrelevant rote-learned information, and some students lacked preparation and research on the relevant topics. Some students struggled to find the right words and accurate grammatical structures. A few students were hesitant, needed to be prompted by the assessors and often used a limited range of vocabulary and source information. Students must prepare to acknowledge the sources of their information rather than just mentioning the use of the internet.

Students should aim to provide comments and opinions on their subtopics rather than simply retelling the material they had studied. The assessors encourage students to express their opinions and ideas about a range of aspects related to their Detailed Study topic. It is useful for

students to practise a range of sample questions and responses through learning the key vocabulary in order to build their confidence and provide effective responses.

Some useful support materials included posters, photos, maps, souvenirs and charts. Students must remember not to bring in support materials containing written text with sentences and/or paragraphs in order to avoid disappointment just before the examination. Labels and titles are allowed, but cue cards or texts containing sentences are not permitted. This is also outlined in the *VCE Turkish Study Design*.

Overall, Section 2 revealed the value of thorough preparation and research of the topic.

2016 VCE Ukrainian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

In the 2016 Ukrainian oral examination students were well prepared to converse confidently about school life, leisure activities, plans for the future, family, youth issues, travel experiences and Ukrainian cultural traditions and rites. The Conversation flowed comfortably as students provided detailed, logical, and culturally and linguistically appropriate answers to questions.

All students successfully utilised effective interaction strategies. They articulated their responses clearly, maintained fluency of expression, made spontaneous comments and exhibited appropriate body language. Most students' range and accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical structures was excellent. High-scoring students used some idiomatic expressions and complex sentence structures.

Section 2 – Discussion

In this section of the examination students presented an excellent range of information with confidence and efficient use of language skills. The topics and subtopics chosen for Detailed Study were well researched and allowed for sufficient content in an effective Discussion. The resources used by students included poetry, newspaper articles, documentaries and films, personal journals, songs and literary works. The resources enabled and inspired students to discuss a variety of complex issues connected to the chosen topic, with a high level of consideration for various aspects of these issues.

Students made an excellent effort to use complex language structures, appropriate terminology and some sophisticated vocabulary. They confidently used complex expressions in their responses. High-scoring students responded readily and enthusiastically to prompts to consider issues from various perspectives. The depth, fluency and coherency of discussion were of a very high standard. Some minor errors in a small number of responses indicated the need for students to invest more time and effort into the mastering of pronunciation, stress and complex grammatical constructions.

2016 VCE Vietnamese oral examination report

General comments

Students completed the Conversation successfully and demonstrated a very good level of preparation and practice. They showed a good understanding of the oral examination requirements as prescribed in the study design.

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas covering a variety of topics relevant to their personal worlds. These topics included family life, school studies, leisure activities, travelling and future aspirations. Most students were able to maintain the Conversation but some needed support and prompting from assessors.

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. However, some students showed a lack of fluency in the language and understanding, which led to their expressions being fragmented, ambiguous and grammatically incorrect. Low-scoring students were able to produce information that was sufficient to maintain the Conversation, but some could not think of the correct Vietnamese words and used English words instead; for example, names of subjects, 'yes', 'sorry', 'university' and 'okay'.

Students should avoid responding with short phrases or single words; for example, 'có' (yes), 'không' (no). Instead, students should try to demonstrate how much Vietnamese they can use competently and that they can maintain and advance the Conversation. Some students had not prepared adequately and gave rote-learned responses.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, students were well prepared and demonstrated a good level of language skills, including intonation, tempo and pronunciation.

Most students were able to appropriately introduce their subtopics and the resources used, including textbooks, newspaper articles, documentaries, films and songs. These resources enabled students to discuss a variety of complex issues connected to their chosen topic.

Some very high-scoring students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary, grammar and sentences.

Most students displayed a high degree of accuracy of vocabulary and grammar. They also demonstrated consistent use of style and register. High-scoring students used a broad range of sophisticated vocabulary, grammar and sentences, and displayed very good control of language. Low-scoring students needed support when faced with questions they had not anticipated.

Some students found the questions in the Discussion section challenging and struggled to answer them. Students are expected to understand and express their opinions on the topic and support their views or arguments with relevant information.

2016 VCE Yiddish oral examination report

General comments

In general, the standard of student performance in the 2016 Yiddish oral examination was very high. It was evident that students were well prepared and had gained a solid grounding in spoken Yiddish, enabling them to converse freely, carrying on a conversation on a broad range of topics, rather than simply answering anticipated questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

A broad range of topics was covered in the Conversation section of the examination, including reasons for studying Yiddish, the relationship between Yiddish and identity, Yiddish literature and folk songs, the differences between primary school and high school, students' leisure-time activities, and students' hopes and plans for the future.

Overall, the capacity to communicate effectively with assessors was evident, with students demonstrating an excellent level of understanding, clear and relevant answers, and the ability to carry the Conversation forward spontaneously. In general, a very good range of information and ideas was presented, and the information and ideas were expressed, clarified, expanded upon and defended very well. However, conversations would have benefited from a greater depth of responses.

A very good control of vocabulary and grammatical structures was demonstrated, with a broad vocabulary utilised appropriately. Assessors' questions were structured to test a range of grammatical tenses and constructs, and generally accurate and appropriate responses were noted. Some grammatical errors were common, in particular, using the auxiliary verb *האָבן* in the past tense, where the correct auxiliary verb is *זײַן*. Students need to remember that the verb is generally the second clause of a sentence. Inconsistent use of articles (*די*, *דער*, *דאָס*) and non-corresponding or incorrect adjectival endings was also common. A very broad range of vocabulary, including excellent use of idiomatic expressions, was used. Students did not appear to be translating from English. The ability to think and respond in Yiddish is to be commended. Awareness of appropriate style and register was also evident in student responses. A strength of responses was the clarity of expression shown, with excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo overall.

Section 2 – Discussion

Excellent preparation for the Discussion section of the examination was evident, with relevant and meaningful texts selected. It was clear that these texts had been studied carefully. Introductions to topics and texts were fluent. In general, a broad range of information and ideas was presented. A good capacity to clarify, elaborate on and defend opinions effectively was noted. Responses were, for the most part, clear, logical and relevant. An excellent level of comprehension was apparent overall, and students gave confident and appropriate responses and generally required no support. In particular, responses to higher-order questions demonstrated a high level of understanding,

application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis, along with a comfort and ease in using spoken Yiddish. A personal relationship to the texts was apparent, with sensitive and thoughtful responses produced throughout.

In general, a very good control of vocabulary and structures was exhibited.

An excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions was evident. Responses consistently demonstrated an appropriate matching of vocabulary and grammar to the context, audience and purpose of the task. Style and register were highly appropriate overall. The assessors particularly noted the clarity of expression demonstrated. Excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo were consistently displayed.

The standard of Yiddish and the calibre of student responses were impressive. While greater attention to grammatical issues would yield even higher-scoring results, overall, the oral language skills demonstrated by Yiddish students were outstanding.