2022 VCE Armenian oral external assessment report

General comments

Students were assessed on their knowledge and skills in using spoken language. The examination had two sections – a conversation of approximately seven minutes, during which students conversed with the assessors about their personal world, and a discussion of approximately eight minutes.

In both sections, students were assessed in these areas:

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

Students who engaged in higher-scoring conversations and discussions:

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

All students in 2022 were quite well prepared with a majority of Western Armenian speakers. All students used the culturally appropriate register consistent with Armenian social norms, for example the plural form of personal pronouns for teachers and elders, such as դուք (you), ձեր (your) and ձեզ (you), throughout the examination.

Students performed confidently and attained a high standard in their performance in most areas. Candidates were well prepared in both sections of the examination and demonstrated competence and fluency in the language. Students were ready to steer the conversation or discussion by taking the initiative and offering clarification or asking questions to engage with the examiners. The subtopics for the discussion were well-researched and students offered a range of information, opinions and ideas. Their responses to questions were presented clearly and logically with a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to their chosen subtopic.

Section 1 – Conversation

Assessors engaged with each student in a general conversation about the student’s personal world, for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. This year most students were well prepared on different aspects of the conversation and scored highly in content, communication and language. They demonstrated an ability to present a range of information, opinions and ideas which they communicated readily and confidently and with a range of mostly accurate vocabulary and structures.

Communication

All students engaged confidently with the assessors with direct, highly relevant and spontaneous responses. Students were comfortable in describing their personal situation, schooling and subject selections as well as recreational activities. Most students responded to questions, elaborating on opinions with reasons and carrying the conversation forward with ease. There was a strong sense of identity, self-awareness and belonging to the Armenian community among most students.

Content

A broad range of topics were covered in the conversation, including family composition and background, current studies, career aspirations, hobbies, travel plans or experiences, part-time employment and career choices. Most students responded to questions appropriately with relevant information and ideas. They elaborated on aspects of the conversation and made some interesting observations.

Language

Assessors commented on the depth, breadth and complexity of the conversations. Students should continue to use the correct form of irregular declensions with the commonly used nouns of kinship, for example հօրս, մօրս, քրոջս, եղբօրս (my father, mother, sister, brother) instead of հայրիկիս, մայրիկիս, քոյրիկիս, եղբայրիս (my father, my mother, my sister, my brother). Self-correction, clarification and elaboration indicated excellent preparation, awareness and application of repair strategies and confidence to influence the direction of the conversation. As with previous years, students can always improve on vocabulary and declensions including irregular forms.

Section 2 – Discussion

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

Students performed better in the discussion due to more extensive preparation and mastery of their chosen subtopic~~s~~. Students utilised a rich array of sources for research, and this enabled them to answer open-ended questions confidently.

Communication

Students responded to open questions clearly and logically. Students had an affinity with their chosen subtopic, which enabled them to elaborate on information, opinions and ideas with evidence and reasons. Probing questions were handled correctly by the students enabling the discussion to flow smoothly.

Content

Topics for the detailed study included the invention of the Armenian alphabet in 301 CE and the work of the Holy Translators, the ‘definitely endangered’ status of Western Armenian as a language by Unesco, the Armenian Genocide and its significance for the Armenian nation and diaspora, the Pan-Armenian Games, the Hayastan All Armenian Fund and its worldwide current fundraising efforts, the tree planting initiative in Armenia, the formation and structure of the Armenian community in Australia and the links between Armenia and the diaspora. Students were well prepared to describe in some depth the multiple phases of Armenian migration and the establishment and growth of the Victorian Armenian community, churches, schools and organisations. The majority of the students were able to elaborate on their responses providing relevant and interesting information, ideas and opinions. Students who were less prepared presented limited information, and were not able to clarify and defend ideas and opinions.

Students can improve on content by further reading and viewing news items related to current issues in the diaspora and Armenia, for example, the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Armenian Church in Melbourne, the blockade of Artsakh and the humanitarian crisis unfolding.

Language

Students who engaged in high-scoring discussions used complex and sophisticated vocabulary and structures that were highly accurate and appropriate. Their pronunciation was clear and accurate, with audible utterances, crisp consonants and appropriate intonation, stress and tempo. The vocabulary range used was quite extensive without any anglicisms. Students who presented a limited range of information, ideas and opinions used simple vocabulary and structures and often their pronunciation was not accurate. Students are encouraged to practise the use of a range of vocabulary and the appropriate declensions to improve overall communication.

More information

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