2021 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced oral external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 Chinese Second Language Advanced oral examination assessed the *VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced Study Design 2020–2024* and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the [VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced examinations webpage](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Chinese-Second-Language-Advanced.aspx). Students and teachers are also reminded that [a series of videos](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/RevisedSecondLanguageOralExaminationVideos.aspx) has been produced to help with preparation for the oral examinations.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

* students may be asked a variety of questions of varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in an order different to that anticipated by students
* assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
* assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
* normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Most students performed well in both the conversation and discussion. They were able to show their understanding by responding to questions with relevant and timely responses. Responses that scored highly demonstrated high levels of preparation. Students showed a capacity to easily maintain a conversation about their ideas and opinions. Students were able to use complex sentences and provide explanations, examples or evidence about issues.

Examinations can be tense for many students. Learning and practising calm composure would help students prepare for the oral examination.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Section 1 of the examination involves a general conversation between the student and two assessors about the student’s personal world and their interactions as learners with Chinese language and culture. It is an organic conversation about the student’s personal world.

Conversations that scored highly demonstrated good preparation. Students performed with confidence and a clear, organised, logical, flowing delivery, demonstrated thorough preparation without rote learning and responded to unexpected questions with calm composure.

Students should try to:

* be proactive or better prepared rather than seeking continuous guidance from the assessors
* speak at a normal pace rather than rush their responses to include more content
* keep eye contact with the assessors
* avoid using English expressions
* avoid using internet buzzwords or local idioms without further elaboration
* use appropriate body language and gestures
* prioritise points/content/aspects that they want to present.

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the conversation, the student is required to discuss their chosen subtopic and the supporting visual material they have brought with them.

The specifications require the student to explore aspects of the subtopic including information, opinions and ideas. It is important to consider the choice of subtopic and supporting image carefully when preparing for this section of the examination. Images that include rich information provide more opportunities for students to offer a greater depth and range of information, ideas, opinions and reflections on the subtopic. While the quality of the visual stimulus was not assessed, students who selected images that were easy to share with the assessors found it easier to communicate their ideas.

Students are reminded that it is not the image that is being assessed, it is the quality of the discussion based on the image. They should therefore select an image that can be integrated adequately into a discussion about their selected subtopic.

Discussions that scored highly demonstrated good preparation. Students presented their views clearly and effectively and elaborated on a wide range of aspects relating to their subtopics. They also demonstrated their capacity to use the image to support their discussion of the subtopic effectively, referring to the image as appropriate during relevant parts of the discussion.

Students are advised to choose subtopics of particular personal interest. Some students chose subtopics that were too challenging or broad. When asked questions that required comparing and evaluating, they had difficulty sustaining the discussion.

Students should:

* practise before the examination
* try to present their image in a format large enough to share easily with the assessors. NOTE: the image is not assessed
* use the image to support the discussion. The image should relate to the content of the discussion
* aim to be fluent when speaking
* aim to provide answers with a broad range of ideas and information and be prepared to go into some depth with their answers
* elaborate on complex information and defend ideas and opinions clearly and logically with highly relevant responses.

Well-prepared students had a deep understanding of their chosen subtopic. They integrated their own perspectives and unique insights into the discussion.