

2016 VCE Romanian written examination report

General comments

The majority of students responded well to most sections of the 2016 Romanian written examination, demonstrating a sound knowledge and understanding of both the Romanian language and of the examination structure.

Section 1 proved to be challenging for some students, whose responses lacked key information and grammatical accuracy. Some students struggled to formulate answers to a number of questions. Students who achieved a high result tended to take detailed notes. Students are advised to review their answers carefully and to make sure their answers are coherent and address the question.

Students should refer to the number of marks allocated to each question and the answer space provided as a guide to the length and depth of the required response. Students must read the questions carefully and respond appropriately.

In Section 3, most students demonstrated the ability to express interesting ideas by using correct language structures and vocabulary. However, some responses contained grammatical and spelling errors. Students should ensure that their responses are well structured, logical and cohesive, and follow the text features of the chosen question.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1 – Listening and Responding

Part A – Answer in English

General comprehension of this section was good. Students are reminded to listen to the texts carefully and formulate their answers based on the information in the text.

Text 1

Question 1

The Australian team is predicted to win the match because (three of):

- they are in very good shape
- they have different game strategies
- they will be playing at home and will have numerous supporters
- the girls are preparing for the World Championship.

This question was correctly answered by most students.

Text 2

Most students gave correct answers to the questions on this text. They identified specific information, but only some responses were awarded full marks.

Question 2a.

Advantages of using the application include (three of):

- records what you eat
- records the number of calories consumed
- recommends physical exercises to burn the calories consumed
- can be a dietary and fitness diary accessed by doctors and nutritionists
- the app and the data can be accessed for free.

Question 2b.

The application:

- monitors heartbeat and blood pressure (vital signs)
- interprets complex cardio information (and correlates it with physical activity – that is, how much physical activity has been done)
- calculates the number of calories burnt.

In order to answer this question correctly, students needed to find keywords both in the text and in the question and formulate their answers accordingly.

Text 3

Question 3a.

Bălcescu’s life experiences	Bălcescu’s writings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enrolled in the army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote studies about the Romanian army • wrote about the social and economic situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • joined the/a secret society (‘Justice – Brotherhood’) (and met future leaders of the Revolution of 1848) • he met (Romanian and foreign) revolutionaries (while travelling through southern Europe) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrote a proclamation in which he formulated revolutionary ideas • analysed the revolutions of Romanian history

Question 3a. required students to extract specific information from the text and establish links between Bălcescu’s life experiences and his writings. Students needed to demonstrate a good level of comprehension and analysis of the text.

Question 3b.

Bălcescu’s activities have been valued in Romania through:

- a portrait on the one hundred lei note in the communist period
- localities and many streets in Romania named after him.

Most students were able to answer this question correctly.

Part B – Answer in Romanian

Text 4

Question 4

Cristina îi lasă un mesaj înregistrat Andreei pentru că: (Cristina is leaving a recorded message for Andreea because):

- *Andreea nu era conectată când a încercat să o contacteze Cristina* (Andreea hasn't been online when Cristina has tried to contact her)
- *I s-a oferit o bursă de vară (în cadrul căreia să studieze bisericile fortificate din Transilvania)* (she has been offered a scholarship [to study fortress churches in Transylvania])
- *are nevoie de o adresă/cameră de închiriat de la Mătușa Ana* (needs a Romanian address/to rent a room from Aunt Ana)
- *are nevoie ca Andreea să vorbească cu Mătușa Ana* (needs Andreea to ask Aunt Ana).

Students needed to identify Cristina's purpose before leaving a recorded message for Andreea. All students answered this question.

Text 5

Text 5 was about pigeons. Many students wrote good answers; however, only some obtained full marks.

Question 5

Students needed to identify six arguments that supported the idea that pigeons are not 'a nuisance'. Relevant answers may have included any six of the following:

- *ne urmăresc pașii prin piețele aglomerate* (they follow in our footsteps in busy squares)
- *ne fac să zâmbim* (they make us smile)
- *sunt păsări inteligente* (they are intelligent birds)
- *în trecut erau folosiți ca mesageri / aveau spirit de orientare* (in the past they were used as messengers/their navigational skills)
- *în prezent participă la competiții de tot felul* (nowadays, they take part in all sorts of competitions)
- *unele exemplare sunt foarte frumoase* (there are some very beautiful exemplars)
- *au fost incluse într-un documentar despre păsări* (included in a documentary about birds).

Text 6

Question 6

Students needed to identify the similarities between the two sculptures by Brâncuși featured at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. Relevant answers could have included the following:

- *amândouă fac parte din grupul de sculpturi al „Păsărilor în spațiu” de Brâncuși* (belong to Brâncuși's 'Bird in space' group of sculptures)
- *sunt ultimele sculpturi din acest grup* (very last sculptures of the group)
- *sunt cele mai mari sculpturi din acest grup* (largest sculptures of the group)
- *au forme și dimensiuni identice* (identical shapes and sizes)
- *amândouă sunt sculptate din marmură* (both sculpted in marble)
- *au un aspect simplificat, în comparație cu Măiastra* (simplified and purified compared to Măiastra)
- *inspirate/influențate de folclorul românesc* (inspired/influenced by Romanian folklore)

Section 2 – Reading and Responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 7

Text 7 was about an aquaponic garden. Question 7 required students to analyse the information presented in the text.

Question 7a.

Relevant answers that listed the four economic and/or environmental advantages of the aquaponic garden initiated by Daniel presented in the text could have included (four of):

- the water from the fish tank is filtered by the pebbles and the plants, which means that there is no need to clean the fish tank (and the habitat of the fish is always clean)
- the plants do not need fertiliser as they feed on the refuse from the fish
- the water is permanently recycled
- the plants consume only ten per cent of the water they would if they grew in the ground
- the garden is very productive, over 100 kilograms of fish and hundreds of kilograms of vegetables are produced in six months (which means they buy less from supermarkets)
- produces fresh and organic food/no chemicals
- tanks made of recycled plastic.

All students answered this question, but only some correctly identified four economic and/or environmental advantages of the aquaponic garden.

Question 7b.

Most students correctly mentioned two social advantages of this garden. They referred to:

- the socialisation and collaboration among the housing estate neighbours/the retirees/elderly pensioners spending time together working in the garden
- the socialisation and collaboration between the housing estate neighbours and other social groups/friends and family spending time together with their retired relatives and learning about/helping in the garden.

Text 8

Text 8 was an extract from one of Mihail Sadoveanu's short stories, *Părul din ograda bunicilor* (The Pear Tree from Grandparents' Backyard).

Question 8

Students needed to explain how the pear tree in Text 8 was similar to the aquaponic garden in Text 7. Relevant answers could have included the following:

- it generates a close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren
- the pear tree represents a place for social gathering
- its origin is explained – how the pear tree was brought from the forest, planted and cared for
- the pear tree represents the idea of harvest, abundance
- big pear tree/big, wide garden
- both are situated in the middle of the garden/complex.

Students who obtained full marks for this question demonstrated higher-order-thinking skills; they were able to analyse the information in the two texts, compare it, grasp the subtleties of the texts while inferring the appropriate meaning and formulate answers.

Part B – Answer in Romanian

Text 9

After reading Text 9, students were required to write an email to a friend, in which they tried to persuade them to learn a traditional Romanian trade or craft and explain why it might interest the youth of today.

Question 9

Most students understood the information presented in the text and responded accordingly. They used a varied vocabulary and conveyed the information coherently. Most students linked their ideas to the given text. They demonstrated the characteristics of the required text type, an email, by using persuasive and some informal language and presented sufficient detail to demonstrate a clear understanding of the task. Very good responses made reference to the reader's opinions and/or emotions and included some comments about youth attitudes. Some students copied sentences from the text in their responses, which is not recommended.

Section 3 – Writing in Romanian

In Section 3, students needed to choose between questions on three different topics: an article for a youth magazine, an imaginative journal entry and a formal letter. The most popular question was Question 11. Overall, the majority of students were able to develop a response in the format required by the question.

- Some students had difficulty using a series of past tenses, particularly *perfectul compus* and the hyphenated forms (*ma cuprins, mam întâlnit, ma spus, na explicat, azis, avrut, ma asigurat, gândeștete, avenit, nea fost, ma lasat*).
- Frequent errors occurred with the use of definite articles in both singular and plural nouns (*ideiile, tiner, balonu, orasu, copiii, pașile, felu, zii, obraji*). Some students had not mastered the subjunctive (*să studiează, să răsar, să închiriază, să alege*) or the use of pronouns, especially object pronouns (*te sugerezi, o persoană pe care îl admir*).
- Some vocabulary inconsistencies included *amînțe, impurtunitate, flăcorul, plastesină, eișă, vem, crerăre, pese, armartori, zobrram, a trei, identicale*. Other errors included words that should not be written as two separate words (*cine va, de osebit, ne potrivită, ce va*) or words that should be hyphenated (*întrou, întrun*).
- Some students were not familiar with the use of diacritics *ă, î, ș, ț* and *â* (*ma șocată*). Other students think in English when writing in Romanian, and this was reflected in how sentences were structured in Romanian. For example, *niciodată am simțit* is incorrect in Romanian language, and a negative form of the verb should be used with a negative adverb (*niciodată nu am simțit*).

Question 10

Students were required to write an article for a youth magazine, about a person they admire, concentrating on the efforts undertaken by this person in order to succeed. A relevant answer could have included the following:

- written as an informative piece of writing
- developed and sequenced ideas and arguments
- formulated a conclusion/advice for the reader
- used evidence to support ideas
- used an objective style

- used a range of tenses.

Question 11

Students were required to imagine that they were in a hot air balloon and flying above their favourite place. They had to write a journal entry in which they described the journey and their impressions.

A relevant answer could have included the following elements:

- described the experience in the balloon, the place below and the impressions experienced
- demonstrated the characteristics of personal writing
- maintained the appropriate tense (past) and used descriptive words such as adjectives and adverbs
- could be clearly recognised as a journal entry
- might have contained abbreviated words/sentences
- subjective/informal language
- first person.

Question 12

Students were presented with a scenario where they were visiting the city of Constanța and read in the local newspaper about plans to rebuild the beaches of the area. Students had to write a letter to the mayor of the city, in which they included their suggestions, making reference to Australian beaches and the lifestyle of the youth.

A relevant answer could have included the following:

- salutation
- followed the conventions of a letter (layout, address, date, signature)
- used logical and cohesive sequence of ideas
- used full sentences and paragraphs, questions or rhetorical language
- contained complex sentence structures
- used appropriate expressions and objective language
- persuasive writing
- might have used exaggeration and superlatives in order to express a point of view or attitude.