

# 2018 VCE Sinhala written examination report

## General comments

Most students performed well in Section 1 of the 2018 Sinhala written examination and it was evident that they had a good understanding of the language. There were a few instances where students did not include some points in their responses or did not select the relevant answer to the question.

In Section 2, Part A, most students were able to identify answers but struggled to explain and compare statements.

In responses to Section 2, Part B, some students wrote good answers. It was evident that others may not have read the question properly and instead wrote the information given in the text as their answer.

Responses to Section 3 demonstrated that students have a very good knowledge about the format of the different text types. However, some students need to improve their knowledge of the vocabulary to use for the different types of writing.

## 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

#### Text 1

##### Question 1

Passengers travelling beyond Rambukkana station or passengers travelling to Kandy/Maha Nuwara would be interested in the announcement, because:

- the train is not going beyond Rambukkana station or up to Kandy/Maha Nuwara to the final destination
- there is a special bus service provided for the passengers, taking them to all stations (up to Kandy).

Most responses were awarded full marks for this question. A few responses did not include the first reason.

## Text 2

### Question 2a.

- 8 August has been UNESCO World Literacy Day since 1965.
- His free education policy has increased literacy levels/to show gratitude for his efforts to raise literacy levels.

Most responses received full marks but some did not include the link between World Literacy Day and Mr Kannangara's free education policy.

### Question 2b.

- Education was free in all state schools.
- Regardless of social status or gender, everyone could receive education.
- Students could receive education in their own language.

Most students received full marks for question.

## Text 3

### Question 3

Your voice:

- clear voice
- correct pronunciation
- good intonation

Presenting the ideas (three of the following):

- an introduction and an ending
- content in sequence
- correct information relevant to the topic
- presenting pictures and/or visuals

Further strategies to engage the audience:

- friendly conversation during the lecture
- short humorous stories
- body language

Some students scored well on this question but other students scored less well. This was mainly because even though they had recognised the correct point they had written it within the wrong category.

## Part B – Answer in Sinhala

### Text 4

#### Question 4

- cheap prices
- five-year warranty
- easy payment methods
- free delivery to doorstep

Most responses were awarded full marks.

## Text 5

### Question 5

- The sister asked the brother to water the plants – the brother predicted that it was going to rain in the evening.
- Then the sister asked him to go to Mala's house – the brother predicted that she had not come home yet.
- Because the brother was lazy, he was making predictions (or excuses) to avoid doing jobs/chores.

Most students identified the two examples, but a few students did not explain how they reflected the proverb stated in the text.

## Text 6

### Question 6a.

- because Dr Danapala graduated from Peradeniya University
- for his great contribution to agriculture or producing BG paddy grains

Most students were not able to give the first point (that Dr Danapala had graduated from Peradeniya University). Instead, just mentioning that rice grains were distributed among the farmers was considered correct.

### Question 6b.

- The paddy plants take a short period to ripen/the plants ripen in three months and can therefore be harvested three times a year rather than twice a year.
- The paddy plants produce a better harvest/three times more harvest.
- They can grow in any region of the country.
- They are resistant to insect attack.

Most responses were awarded high marks. A few students wrote the first answer as two points. Some students wrote that the plants are shorter or that the plants are healthy, but these answers were not considered correct as these factors do not directly affect the country's self-sufficiency.

## Section 2 – Reading and Responding

### Part A – Answer in English

## Text 7

### Question 7

The new support scheme is a free medical/health insurance scheme.

Special features:

- It is valid only if attending school regularly.
- Financial help is given in case of sickness.
- Financial help is provided if a student becomes disabled because of an accident.

The difference with other programs is that this scheme is not only for the students attending state schools but also for students in private schools/international schools/religious schools.

Most responses identified the new support scheme correctly. Many mistook the difference of this program for a special feature of the program.

## Text 8

### Question 8a.

- When Sri Lanka was a British Colony/under British ruling, being able to speak English was highly respected/recognised.
- After the independence, when Sinhala became the national language, interest in learning English dropped/it was learnt only for academic purposes.
- Since English became an international language to get better jobs and promotions or to get jobs overseas, learning English has become important again.

Many responses did not include three explanations for how the attitude towards learning English changed over time. Mostly, the last two explanations were mentioned.

### Question 8b.

- Schools identify weak students and offer extra help.
- Help of overseas experts is sought to assist and train English teachers.

Most responses were awarded full marks for this question. Some responses stated that experts from overseas were brought in to teach the students; this was not accepted as correct.

## Part B – Answer in Sinhala

### Text 9

#### Question 9

Students had to produce a format suitable for the text type of email.

As to the content of the email, students had to:

- make reference to their relative's lifestyle (busy, quiet or any other aspect)
- compare the two tours, give reasons as to why they chose one tour over the other, citing the relative's lifestyle.

The email format was correctly used in all responses, but it was evident from the content of some responses that some students had not understood the task. The students needed to select the trip that was suitable for their relative depending on their lifestyle rather than reflecting on the relative to select a suitable trip after describing the positive and negative aspects of the two trips. Students are reminded to read the whole question on the examination very carefully in order to ensure that they are answering the question appropriately.

## Section 3 – Writing in Sinhala

### Question 10

Students were required to produce a format suitable for the text type of a short story and to produce imaginative writing, for the judges of a writing competition. The language could be formal or informal, with appropriate vocabulary.

Students could, for example, write about a kind deed of one person to another person, who was in need. Then, the story could show how that person reciprocated this kindness knowingly or unknowingly or passed it on to yet another person.

Very few students selected this question and their writing was generally of a very good level. Students were expected to write about a good deed being passed on to another person and not

simply about someone achieving a benefit because they had done a good deed, as some students wrote in their responses.

### **Question 11**

Students were required to produce a format suitable for the text type of a newspaper article and to produce persuasive writing for the newspaper reading audience. The article needed to be in formal language, with appropriate vocabulary to persuade readers. A personal opinion had to be presented as the conclusion for the article.

Students could, for example, describe a number of harmful effects of plastics on the environment and suggest ways in which the use of some plastic material could be reduced or completely replaced.

Most students selected this text and their writing was mostly at very good to excellent levels. Responses included examples of harmful effects on the environment and animals, and included suggestions to reduce the use of plastic. However, the responses would have been awarded higher marks if they had used more effective persuasive language to more strongly compel the audience to reduce the use of plastics.

### **Question 12**

Students were required to write the script for a speech and use evaluative writing, for fellow students. The required text type was that of a speech with a start addressing the audience and an ending thanking the audience. The language had to be informal, with appropriate vocabulary for the audience. Students had to express a personal opinion as the conclusion of the speech.

Responses could, for example, include a number of examples of useful aspects of technology and address the way in which people depend on or over-use technology in their homes, at school or at their work place, and the impact this could have on human health and relationships.

Many students selected this question. Students were aware of the format required for the text type of a script for a speech relevant to the audience and used appropriate informal language. Most students focused on mobile phones and their positive and negative aspects. Very few students mentioned other technological advancements such as machinery, vehicles and spacecraft, and their contribution to global warming, which could also be a threat to human life.