



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2012**

Polish

PLSH1

(Specification 2685)

Unit 1: Reading and Writing

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

Entries for PLSH dropped slightly from 1394 students last year to 1354 this year. For PLSH2, the number has risen slightly from 892 to 944.

Similar to last year, there was a wide spread in students' abilities. There were a number of well prepared students with excellent Polish who knew what was expected of them and produced good quality papers. Most of them attended Polish Saturday schools, had some form of tuition, or had studied the text thoroughly. Some of them had an excellent command of Polish, some did not, but both groups knew the requirements of the exam and were well prepared.

Compared to last year, there were more students who missed out on their schooling in Poland and have neglected their Polish since coming to England. Some of them thought that the knowledge they had brought with them would be sufficient to get them through the exam and did not study for the exam or even familiarise themselves with the specification. They produced very weak papers, especially in the essay section.

There were many untidy, badly written scripts which made scrutiny difficult. It is of paramount importance that centres make sure that students read the specification and know what the exam requirements are. Students should be reminded to read the instructions carefully and to study past papers for practice; in this way, they will know what is expected of them and will fully understand how to answer questions.

Section 1: Comprehension

Overall, the comprehension questions did not trouble students too much and the majority of students scored very high marks. A score of 37 or 38 out of 45 was typical. There were some students who dropped a significant number of marks, but this was not due to the article, which was similar to previous papers in terms of difficulty. It was mostly the result of poor technique. There were omissions, insufficient items of information for the full quota of marks per question and answers based on what was thought to be in the text or students' personal opinions, rather than what was actually there. The best illustration would be the answer to Question 1a (xiv) *Co dają studia młodym ludziom? Studia dają wiedzę*. Whilst this is true, it is not the correct answer as it was not stated in the text.

Question 1(a) (i) and (ii) did not cause any problems.

Question 1(a) (iii) for three marks some students did not give sufficient information, sometimes just one piece – *w rodzinie nie mają o czym rozmawiać*.

Question 1 (a) (iv) and (v) most students managed to answer correctly. Only a few failed to provide two pieces of information for question (v).

Question 1 (a) (vi) and (vii) did not cause any problems.

Question 1 (a) (viii) *W co wierzy większość Polaków?*

This question was mostly answered correctly, but among incorrect answers *że im ktoś starszy tym bardziej zacofany*, *że wiek 35 lat to kres młodości* were quite common.

Question 1 (a) (ix) *Jak w praktyce są rozwiązywane konflikty?*

Quite a few students answered this question *Wystarczy tylko porozmawiać, rozładować ciężką atmosferę lekkim żartem*. This was an expensive mistake because the question was worth four marks.

Question 1 (a) (x) produced mostly correct answers.

Question 1 (a) (xi) and (xii) These two questions caused problems so we accepted the answers interchangeably and only a few students lost marks.

Question 1(a) (xiii) *Co jest pocieszające w tej sytuacji i co jest konieczne do jej poprawy?*

Most students answered this question correctly, but some missed one mark for not supplying two pieces of information, answering only the first part of the question.

Some did not score any marks by stating - *pocieszające jest, że dzieci zwierzają się kolegom.*

Question 1(a) (xiv) *Co dają studia młodym ludziom?*

Some students just stated *wiedzę* – whilst this is true, it is not the correct answer as it was not stated in the text.

Question 1(a) (xv) *co sądzisz o tym artykule i myślach w nim zawartych?*

This question assessed the quality of written language. Students should be reminded to answer this question in more depth. It is not sufficient to say that it was interesting and they enjoyed reading it.

Section 2: Translation

This year's passage for translation into English came from an article about a recent Channel 4 programme regarding the significant contribution made by Polish pilots to the battle of Britain.

In the past, some students taking the AS exam did not have the necessary English skills to cope with the translation. This year, most did at least attempt it, which is an improvement.

However, there are still fundamental errors being made, some of which are a matter of technique. Students are advised to read through the text before commencing their translation, in order to avoid mistakes. For example, the word *lotnicy* caused many problems and was translated as: *Polish airline army, flyboys, aircrafters, airplane cavalry, airhelp, airplane drivers, airplane soldiers, air shooters, plane users, plane owners* and '*Polish airports done important thing in the war with England*'.

The word pilot appeared in the same text in the second paragraph, but many students did not make the connection that *polscy lotnicy* and *polscy piloci* was referring to the same group of people. In many instances, there was a lack of logical thinking, basic grammar – mainly tenses – and poor vocabulary and spelling.

Some candidates had no practice in translating, therefore they were not aware of the most important rule – to convey the meaning of the text in grammatically correct sentences that make sense.

Some examples of poor translation were:

Wybuchu drugiej wojny światowej – *blow, explosion, explode, exposure, bang, bom.*

Dramat Polaków – *thriller, tragidness, badness of Polish, bad things.* We have the same English word, 'drama', that would convey the meaning beautifully.

Pamiętniki – *dictionaries, souvenirs, grave yards.*

Sala kinowa – *the cinema's hole*

Wypełniona po brzegi – was full to the coast

Despite these difficulties, a score of six or seven out of ten was typical as often students tried to come up with alternatives like *salute and thanks* for difficult words, such as *hold* and *zastugi*.

Section 3: Essay

This question dealt with friendship and the impact of expanding technology on relationships between people. It was an excellent question to differentiate more able, mature students from less prepared or younger ones who did not know how to cope with the demands of the question. Many of them thought that the only adverse effect of technology was that it encourages a sedentary lifestyle and thus prevents us from getting enough exercise:

Bycie na zewnątrz jest lepsze jak bycie wewnątrz tak jak Paweł, i wdychanie zanieczyszczonego powietrza na przykład przez gaz kuchenny lub wdychanie gazów z ciała i z ust.

A lot of students based their answer on the prompt, which should not be the case. The prompt is there to stimulate, not to be copied or developed as some did in trying to finish Paweł's story, thus not answering the question set.

There were many ideas not fit for an A level essay of a higher grade:

Dzięki temu, że człowiek żyje w grupie z innymi mnoży nam się ilość nowych członków rodziny a także człowieczeństwa.

Another student stated that our parents or grandparents had no means of communication as if the telephone and the mobile phone had only been invented 10 years ago.

Some students did not grasp what the word friendship entails, regarding everybody on Facebook as true friends. Others skimmed over friendship altogether and talked about the advantages of technology and the internet as an excellent source of information or tool for shopping. There were many short essays which finished abruptly without any conclusion or proper ending. Students should be reminded that 200 words is the minimum requirement for an essay. In some instances, students use vocabulary or expressions without really understanding them:

sądzę, że człowiek

został stworzony do życia w grupie, aczkolwiek nie zawsze jest to mile widziane.

There were a lot of good essays, which were enjoyable to read, with students writing movingly at times about what friendship means to them and how technology can help us to develop closer ties with other people. Some were critical of modern technology, stating its shallowness and feeling that nothing can replace direct contact and meetings with friends.

The following are exemplary examples of students' work:

Relacje międzyludzkie są bardzo ważne w życiu człowieka, ponieważ pozwalają nam one nie tylko się rozwijać i kształtować naszą osobowość, ale również dają nam one powód do życia.

Bez przyjaźni czulibyśmy się bardzo samotni, ponieważ nie mielibyśmy się do kogo zwrócić, gdybyśmy potrzebowali pomocy, lub po prostu z kimś szczerze porozmawiać. Przyjaźń oznacza, że dwoje ludzi sobie ufa i obdarza się sympatią.

W dzisiejszych czasach rozwoju technologii więź między ludźmi się zmniejszyła i życie jest trudniejsze. Teraz zamiast spotykać się z kolegami w kawiarni lub w kinie ludzie spotykają się na internecie, bo jest łatwiej i taniej, ale to nie to samo.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.