



Examiners' Report June 2015

GCE Russian 6RU04 01

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# **Introduction**

Examiners once again enjoyed reading the responses from candidates in the sixth year of this advanced level GCE unit. In those centres where candidates have been taught Russian, there has as usual been some comprehensive preparation of candidates for the examination and examiners have been pleased to note the careful heed being taken to the notes and suggestions in the examiners' reports from previous years. There are a range of centres where candidates' command of the lexis and grammar required at this level is truly impressive. As in previous years, the best Research-Based Essays were outstanding in their marshalling of factual information and their analytical approach. The discursive essays which scored the highest marks were persuasive yet balanced, and the creative essays which pleased the examiners most, were lively yet focused.

This unit requires candidates to answer three questions in two and a half hours. The translation (section A) is worth 10 of the 100 marks available and the proportionate amount of time to spend on it would be 25-30 minutes. Section B and Section C are each worth 45 marks, so an hour on each of these would represent an appropriate division of time. Candidates have clearly been well trained on time management in this examination.

The number of answers to question B and C which were overlong continues to reduce. The majority of overlong answers appear to be from native or near-native speaker candidates who have not been taught or offered advice on the examination by their centres. Examiners would like, once again, to remind centres that the upper word limit for these sections is 200 words. Examiners stop reading at the end of the sentence in which the 200th word lies. This may impact candidates who have not had appropriate guidance and have therefore written overlong essays.

In both Section B and Section C, overlong answers lost marks for Organisation and Development, and it was also often true that they failed to answer the question fully, as key information was contained in the section which lay beyond the word limit. Centres and candidates, especially non-learners in centres where Russian is not taught, should note that there is more space provided than is usually necessary for 200 words and that the space is not an indicator of how much candidates should write. There were very few short answers, as always, but where an answer was short, it often contained very little information or argument and therefore scored very low marks.

The approach to individual questions is considered in the reports on each of the options which follow. An example from a candidate's response is given for each question. Please note that, in some cases, only part answers are given as exemplification. A general summary of areas for improvement for Sections B and C is also given as this may prove useful for centres.

Once again, the examining team would like to pay tribute to those teachers of Russian in schools who present such excellent candidates. It is obvious that they work tirelessly to keep Russian on the curricula within their schools and to present candidates each year with such a good command of Russian grammar and understanding of Russian society, history and culture. Russian at GCE Advanced Level remains alive and well.

### Question 1

Section A of this paper required candidates to translate a short passage of English into Russian. The passage is split into 30 assessable elements and one 'point' is gained for each correct element at the marking stage. A mark out of 10 is awarded based on the number of correct elements (see the mark scheme). For an element to be considered correct it must have all the details contained in the English original (i.e. no word omitted) and all the grammatical endings (case endings, agreements and verb endings) had to be correct. One spelling or transliteration error was allowed per element, provided that it was not grammatical and did not affect the sound significantly when read aloud.

Overall, the majority of candidates performed well on this task, and slightly better than in previous years. Very many learner candidates were able to gain 7 or 8 marks, with more scoring 9 than has been the case in recent series. Very few learner candidates were able to score 10 marks, although the number of candidates scoring 10 marks has increased, suggesting that non-learners found this task easier than previously. It remains the case that many native speakers lost marks due to omission of elements, for example by failing to translate 'of them' in '95% of them'. As is the case every year, those with very little ability to manipulate the grammar of the language scored very low marks, perhaps 1 or 2, despite knowing much of the required vocabulary. They often gained points for elements such as 'сказали, что', 'делать больше', 'мы живём', 'они хотят' and 'и они думают', these elements having been designed to allow candidates to gain marks at the lower end of the scale. Those who have not mastered some of the more complex elements of the grammar required at this level will not perform well.

Candidates faced the most difficulties with the following elements:

- 'do [...] care' was translated in a range of ways, with 'заботиться', 'беспокоиться' and 'думать' all accepted. 'беспокоиться' was often conjugated incorrectly, even by native speakers, with many candidates losing the point for writing 'они беспокоются'. Any grammatically correct word order was accepted for this first element, with the inclusion of 'ли' not compulsory.
- Very many candidates omitted the '6' required in 'об окружающей среде', thus losing the point for the element as this error affects sound when reading aloud.
- 'or are they only interested' was often translated correctly, but the following element which required the candidate to use the instrumental (if that has used 'или они только интересуются') or 'в' with prepositional (if they had used 'заинтересованы') often caused difficulties.
- Many candidates did not spot that they needed to apply a soft adjective ending to 'последний' in 'последними мобильными телефонами'.
- Similarly, the soft ending on 'в недавнем опросе' was also often missed, and candidates lost marks because they did not know the word for 'survey', instead opting for 'research' or 'statistics'; these were not accepted.
- Native speakers and learner candidates often incorrectly wrote '95% ux' for '95% of them'.
- 'about global warming' was usually handled well, although if learner candidates did make mistakes, they were often in the correct declension of the noun in '-ие' ('потепление') in the prepositional case.
- 'they walk' was handled reasonably well, although some candidates would certainly benefit from revision of verbs of motion.
- 'by public transport' led to a wide range of translations, with many learners not knowing the correct word for 'public' in this context.

- 'instead of a bath' was translated correctly by surprisingly few candidates, with many attempting 'вместо ванной' (which was not accepted) or various transliterations of the English, such as 'барф' or 'бат'.
- The construction requiring the use of 'чтобы' in the last sentence was spotted by the highest performing learner candidates and handled well. Where candidates did not spot that 'чтобы' was required they often translated 'they want their parents to help' as 'они хотят их родителей помогать', which scored one of the four available points.

This candidate demonstrates a very good knowledge of the required vocabulary for the task, but shows a number of the errors outlined above, as well as some others.

Translate the following passage into Russian.
Do teenagers care about the environment or are they only interested in the latest mobile phones? In a recent <u>survey</u> , 95% of them said that t <u>hey are worried</u> about global warming, and that we should do more to protect the world in which we live.
Many young people say that they walk or travel by public transport, take a shower instead of a bath and recycle rubbish. They want their parents to help, and they think about the future positively.
Пинейджеры забот этся об окрумающёй среде или
они талько интересутаться новыми мобиними телефоними?
в последном вопросе, 95 процентов по говорили что они
беспокототся о глобалнем потепление и отом, что
мы должны больше делать чтобы сохранить
мир в которым мы тибём.
Много малодих модей гоборят что они
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транспорте, приниманий душу внесто бассейна и
перерабативают отходы. Они хотат чтобы свои

родители помогам и они думают о будуществе



This answer scores 6 out of 10. A number of minor errors mount up, and there are some vocabulary issues. This candidate would benefit from thorough checking of his / her work.



It can be a good idea to go through the translation and annotate it with the case endings or particularly difficult structures you are going to use. This can help you make the right decisions. This is an example of a candidate who has an excellent ability to manipulate the grammar of the language. A few slips mean that the score overall is reduced, although there are virtually no vocabulary issues.

Translate the following passage into Russian.

Do teenagers care about the environment or are they only interested in the latest mobile phones? In a recent survey, 95% of them said that they are worried about global warming, and that we should do more to protect the world in which we live.

Many young people say that they walk or travel by public transport, take a shower instead of a bath and recycle rubbish. They want their parents to help, and they think about the future positively.

Пинейдосеро думаной об окружаношей среде или они только
интересуройся новейшими токал драм портативной теверонами? В
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о глобальном потеллении, и что мы дольсны в сделать больше
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душ вместо ванной и решиклировать мусор. Они хотят, чтобы

вои розители попогави, и они зауманот о худума будущем

позитимо



This translation scores 8 out of 10. Points are lost for 'the latest mobile phones', 'in a recent survey', '95% of them', 'travel', 'take a shower', 'instead of a bath' and 'recycle rubbish'. The candidate loses track of the 3rd person plural ending required for the verbs at the end, which affects two points.



Candidates should examine the required grammar appendix in the specification and ensure they know the most difficult structures. It is likely that the translation will test a range of the grammar in this appendix.

This is an example of an excellent translation. The candidate has a full grasp of the linguistic requirements at this level, although there is a small number of spelling / ending errors.

Translate the following passage into Russian.
Do teenagers care about the environment or are they only interested in the latest mobile phones? In a recent survey, 95% of them said that they are worried about global warming, and that we should do more to protect the world in which we live.
Many young people say that they walk or travel by public transport, take a shower instead of a bath and recycle rubbish. They want their parents to help, and they think about the future positively.
Заботатся-ли подростки об окружающей среде
UNU MONIKO UHMERECYPOMICS NOCIEGHUMU MOGUNIHEIMU
телефонами? Согласно недавному опросу, 95 процентов
UZ MUX CRAZANO, to TIMO BONNOBANULO O ZNOBANONOE
тожара потопления, и тто мы должны делать
вольше, гтовы за сохранить мир, в котором мы
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Общественными видами транспорта, верут
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This translation scores 10 out of 10. The only point lost is for 'согласно недавному опросу'.

This candidate knows a lot of the vocabulary required for this task, but has little ability to manipulate the grammar required.

Translate the following passage into Russian.

Do teenagers care about the environment or are they only interested in the latest mobile phones? In a recent survey, 95% of them said that they are worried about global warming, and that we should do more to protect the world in which we live.

Many young people say that they walk or travel by public transport, take a shower instead of a bath and recycle rubbish. They want their parents to help, and they think about the future positively.

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This translation scores 3 out of 10. Only the items which require a knowledge of vocabulary alone have gained credit. Such translations are rare, but a lack of attention to grammatical awareness is an issue for some candidates.



Candidates must ensure that they learn their grammatical endings thoroughly and have plenty of practice in applying these in exam-type settings. A knowledge of vocabulary is not enough to score more than 3 out of 10.

# Question 2 (a)

#### General Comments on Section B: Creative or Discursive Essay

In the creative essays in Section B, the best essays (scoring 13-15 for Understanding and Response) were succinct and succeeded in telling the whole story in the space available, or built sufficient suspense to leave the reader wondering about the characters or what might happen next. Good answers to question 2c, the newspaper article, were written in an appropriate journalistic style. Almost exclusively, the creative essays were attempted by non-learner candidates who had not received guidance on what might constitute successful creative writing; candidates must pay careful attention to the planning of their work.

Poorly planned pieces often contained lengthy scene setting or description of character but little action. Writing a successful piece of creative writing in 200 words is a challenging task and not something which should be embarked upon without first planning content or structure. There were very few completely irrelevant essays, although some were considered to be 'pedestrian' or failed to grab the examiners' attention. They usually scored no more than 7-9 for Understanding & Response ('satisfactory [...] response to stimulus').

The vast majority of candidates who have been taught Russian in schools wrote excellent discursive essays. There is a great deal of good practice in centres as shown in the candidates' work. Many candidates wrote extensive plans on their examination papers and such good practice is to be encouraged as carefully planned essays were, in virtually all cases, more successful. Careful planning by candidates results in balanced discursive essays where the ideas are well thought through and it seems difficult to conceive why a candidate would choose to launch into such a piece of writing without a plan. In order to score 10-12 or 13-15 for Understanding & Response, essays must be balanced and consider both sides of the argument. As every year, centres are strongly advised to take careful note of this requirement. Non-learner candidates taking GCE Russian, in centres where Russian is not taught, are significantly disadvantaged if they are not made aware of this requirement, and so write unbalanced essays. One-sided essays can score a maximum of 9 for Understanding & Response and some overlong essays were considered one sided as the entirety of the second half lay beyond the 200th word. Such essays scored a maximum of 9 for Understanding & Response and also for Organisation and Development, even if they were linguistically impressive. Balanced and well-structured discursive essays should have a conclusion in which the candidate comes down on one side or the other, but until this point, the best candidates remained neutral themselves and discussed ideas in abstract terms, avoiding the use of the first person. In order to score 9-10 for Range & Application of Language, learner candidates are encouraged to use wide or more complex constructions, such as passives, gerunds, relative clauses, compound conjunctions and conditionals. A range of varied essay phrases is also useful as this enables weaker candidates to score higher marks. They should be aware, though, that a string of such phrases is not able to make up for a lack of content or ideas; careful planning and consideration of the depth of ideas which the candidate has before beginning will result in a better essay across the board. Candidates should also be encouraged to ensure that they have sufficient topic vocabulary when they select a discursive essay to answer. It is perfectly possible for candidates to achieve 5 for Accuracy for their discursive essay; indeed many learner candidates did so. Accuracy does not have to be perfect to achieve this, but the essay must show an impressive command of noun and verb grammar and give the impression of accuracy throughout.

This question was the least popular of the creative options. Candidates were required to present a creative piece based on a photograph of a queue, with the question 'Why are these people in a queue?' The best answers explored a particular event which the people were queuing for and considered their emotions, or were written in the first person, from the point of view of someone in the queue. Other good answers took a narrative approach or journalistic approach. Lengthy scene setting often meant that very little happened and so the candidate scored badly for Understanding and Response. The least successful answers presented a list of reasons why people queue; these were not considered to be creative.

This candidate suggests that the queue we can see is of people who have come to the UK from all over the world looking for work. It suggests reasons why they have come, and urges us to consider the plight of refugees or asylum seekers. It is an unusual approach, but is engaging and though provoking, and a creative response.

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This is an excellent answer. It scores full marks in all the mark bands apart from Organisation and Development, where the score is 14. The candidate engages the reader and we are made to think. There is a sense of a complete piece. The vocabulary is sophisticated and the language is well manipulated.

# Question 2 (b)

There were a number of very good answers to this question, which was the most popular of the creative essays. This was the first year in which the first few lines of the creative piece have been given in the form of a dialogue, and the question specifically asked for the candidate to continue the dialogue. Many candidates did this extremely well, although there were more overlong essays for this question than for the other creative options. The most popular approach was for the person to have been on their way home from school where something or other happened to delay them until 1am, perhaps encountering a famous person or meeting an old friend and being invited to a party.

This candidate presents a dialogue where he tells the story of a meeting with a lost German tourist whom he helps make his way back to his hotel and then to the airport to catch a flight home. The mother, listening to the story, becomes increasingly sceptical about its authenticity. The piece has a swift pace, and uses the 200-word limit well. It leaves the reader amused.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ⊠. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ⊠ and then indicate your new question with a cross ⊠.						
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он аможет уже миль в аэрокорту. Потому мые примось
самаму нехагь из какого аэрокорта выметает ветером самомет в Берлин, на своём телофоке. И вот, доведя его до
метро, я каконем освободимся и поехам дамой. Из другого
конца гррода.
— Все? — мама хитро рассменлась, — а текерь
можеть сказать правду.
— Могла об сразу сказать, что не веримь. Я гуми
с друзьями и прокусти вой явтобус.



This is an excellent piece of writing. Careful use of language, a well-constructed and authentic dialogue, and good accuracy combine to make a piece which scores full marks across all categories. Even though the true story is not that exciting, we are swept along, and left smiling.



When writing a story in 200 words, you need to think about plot carefully. You do not have space to describe the scene or the characters more than might be gained incidentally from the plot. It is best to jump straight in. Suspense and surprise are good tools for this task, and as we see here, a sense of humour also works well.

### Question 2 (c)

This question required candidates to write a newspaper article in response to a headline given on the exam paper, in this case the story of a 90-year old woman who is still working. The requirement to write a newspaper article was realised successfully in the majority of cases, with some very convincing pieces which precisely reflected an appropriate journalistic register. Very often examiners were treated to uplifting tales of a woman who has served the community in one way or another for very many years, with 90-year old teachers, nurses and charity workers being common. Articles often described how the woman had lived through the second world war, and it was quite common for her to have survived the Siege of Leningrad. The very best answers indicated the reasons why she had continued to work into her 90s, using quotes from an interview with her, and rounded off the article with a comment on the nature of a society in which 90 year olds have to work.

This candidate succeeds in presenting a rather different and certainly original take on the question of something (rather than someone!) which is 90 years old and still working.

				box ⊠. If you change your uestion with a cross ⊠.		
Chosen question number:	Question 2(a)	×	Question 2(b)	×		
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This answer scores full marks across all categories. The piece is original, the language is in an appropriate register and the reader is left amused and rather surprised. It is an engaging article overall and certainly challenges our assumptions about what the headline might refer to!



Make your writing more like a newspaper article by using rhetorical questions or devices, addressing the reader, using quotes or speculating about outcomes. Think about what you have read in a newspaper and the kind of language that is used.

# Question 2 (d)

This question, requiring candidates to reflect on whether to be an intelligent person you need to have read classical literature, was one of the most popular of the discursive essay choices. The word 'интеллигентный' was deliberate chosen over 'умный' to give the connotation of 'cultured' as well as 'clever', and the best candidates were able to pick up on this nuance. There were some excellent answers, and most candidates were able to present a suitably balanced argument, although there were a number of weaker essays where the candidate simply defended 'reading' without considering the other side at all, or failed to focus on classical literature rather than literature in general. The strongest answers began by presenting reasons why some might consider that reading the classics could lead to greater intelligence, generally because it gives people an awareness of history, exposes them to the beautiful language of the classical writers, and gives them an insight into the human condition. They then went on to suggest that intelligence might also be developed in other ways, such as through the learning of a language or through mathematics. Many candidates pointed out that professors of physics have no need or literature, and that modern literature might be equally as enriching as classical literature, but did still go on to conclude that the majority of those we consider 'intelligent' do read, or have read, the classics. A number made the point that not all those who read are intelligent, but that all those who are intelligent read. The very best answers had clear and convincing arguments for both sides, arguing that exposure to literature undoubtedly develops the human mind, but that there might also be other ways to achieve the same aim. The number agreeing with the statement was roughly equal to those disagreeing.

This candidate has produced a good essay which considers both sides of the argument. The first half points out that some consider that all intelligent people know about culture and the classical literature is an important part of that. It is also suggested that the classics help people to speak well. The second half spells out that perhaps literature does not make people intelligent, but rather that this happens through working hard in school, or that they are simply born that way. The candidate concludes that the most intelligent people study physics rather than literature, and that there are a range of different types of intelligence.

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This candidate uses a range of essay phrases and complex structures, and so the mark for Range and Application of Language is 9. Accuracy is also very good, with a mark of 5. The ideas presented are a little simplistic in places, and not always fully explained. Some of the ideas in the conclusion are not mentioned or explained fully earlier in the essay. Despite this, this is a successful piece, and scores 13 for both Understanding and Response and Organisation and Development.



Make sure you plan your discursive essay thoroughly. A carefully planned argument, which brings in the main issues but does so in a sophisticated and not simplistic way, will lead to a better outcome.

### Question 2 (e)

This question required candidates to reflect on whether people of different religions are able to live peacefully together. It was a popular choice and enabled candidates to examine a very current and quite challenging issue. There were some excellent answers which explored, on the one hand, the idea that people of different religions have been in conflict with each other for centuries, often citing current extremist terrorism as the evidence that this problem will never go away. On the other hand, it was argued, people of different religions live peacefully together in many cities in the UK, and candidates with personal experiences of multicultural schools were able to support their argument with examples. The very best essays succeeded in making the point that most, if not all, religions teach respect and tolerance, and that this would support the idea that peace is possible. Weaker answers tended to make sweeping generalisations, or lack the language to present sophisticated ideas accurately enough.

This candidate has produced an excellent, well-structured answer. There is a useful plan, reproduced here to help demonstrate the thought processes which have led to a successful answer. The candidate explains that some people have very strong beliefs and think that they need to fight to defend their religion, and points out that there is much Islamophobia in the world. On the other hand, we are told, we now understand other cultures much better than we did before and religion can be a force for peace. The candidate concludes that we ought to work together to counteract racism, and that this would help people to live together peacefully.

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This essay shows the value of careful planning. The best discursive essay answers virtually always show some evidence of such planning. The essay scores 13 for Understanding and Response, 14 for Organisation and Development, 8 for Range and Application of Language and 4 for Accuracy.



You must carefully count the words in your essay and ensure that it is not too long. The 200th word must lie in the final sentence to avoid the mark for Organisation and Development in otherwise excellent essays being capped at 9.

### Question 2 (f)

This question was one of the most popular discursive essay options. Candidates were required to consider whether buying fashionable clothes could be considered a waste of money. There were very many learner candidates who wrote convincing answers, perhaps because they had personal experience to draw on, although weaker essays tended to declare that they disagreed with the statement in the first sentence and tended to be very one sided. Convincing essays often pointed out that fashions change very quickly and therefore it is certainly a waste of money to keep up with fashion, also noting that non-designer clothes are often much cheaper and could look fashionable. On the other hand, it was often argued, fashionable clothes are usually well made and last a long time, and that some people gain a lot of satisfaction from following fashion in the same way that others do from going to the cinema or eating out. Many simply stated that if someone has money to spend on the latest fashions, then he or she should be able to do so freely. Weaker answers were often too personal or lacked insight into the wider fashion industry or the ramifications of issues such as debt and addiction to shopping.

This candidate offers a helpful introduction to the essay and goes on to suggest that some people think fashion is important and enjoy buying new clothes. For these people, 'looking good' is important and fashion is a hobby for them; it is better to spend money on clothes rather than on cigarettes or drugs. On the other hand, we are told, money does not lead to happiness, and that there are more important things than clothes such as family and education. The conclusion suggests that spending a lot of money on fashionable clothes would be a waste, but that it does depend on the individual.

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This essay is successful in many respects, although some of the points made are rather vague and it does not always hang coherently together. The arguments suggested are sound in most cases, although the candidate would benefit from more careful planning of how the points suggested can reflect and respond to each other. The language is appropriate for the task, although a wider range of more difficult grammar and complex structures would have enabled the candidate to score higher than 7 for Range and Application of Language. The mark for Organisation and Development is 14, for Understanding and Response, 13 and for Accuracy, 4.



Develop a range of essay phrases to use to help structure your arguments. Examples might be, 'надо задать вопрос','с одной стороны надо понимать', 'однако нельзя забыть', 'из вышесказанного можно сделать вывод, то', 'ясно, что', 'прибавляя  $\kappa$  этому', etc.

# Question 2 (g)

This was the least popular of the discursive essay options and required candidates to consider whether the state should do more to help tourists from other countries. Many weaker candidates tended to offer a discussion of the merits or otherwise of tourism per se, rather than of state support for tourists. Successful essays focused more often than not on the financial returns which could be gained from investment in tourist infrastructure, on the positive image on the international stage which a good tourist experience creates, and on how in times of financial crisis, it might not be appropriate to make these investments but rather spend money on supporting education or welfare for local people. Candidates with a more sophisticated understanding of the issues often suggested that it is not the role of the state to support tourists, but rather that of private enterprise, but also that there are some things which only the state can achieve, such as easier access to tourist visas. Many candidates offered a list of things which the government could do to help tourists (such as signs in foreign languages or free travel on transport networks), but did not consider the wider implications or benefits of these effectively.

This candidate presents an excellent essay. It is suggested that the government should do more to help tourists because they bring money with them which in turn leads to advantages for local people. On the other hand, we are told, tourism can have a negative effect on the environment. The candidate concludes that the negative impact which tourism has is not outweighed by the positive, and that the government should not therefore encourage more tourism by investing in it.

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GCE Russian 6RU04 01



This is an outstanding essay. Rather than focus on specific things which the government could do to support tourists, the candidate has examined the wider picture and picked up on a particularly modern problem - the fact that investment in transport infrastructure brings economic benefits but also environmental problems. The linguistic level and register are extremely good and the candidate succeeds in scoring full marks in all categories except Understanding and Response, where a mark of 14 reflects the slightly unbalanced nature of the points made.



Essays should be balanced. The best essays have introductions which do not state the side of the argument which you will come down on. Keep the introduction general; state the question and suggest that there are different opinions about it. Introductions should not be long; you should keep the space for examples when discussing the main points of the essay. You should also make sure that your essay is not a 'personal response' - try to avoid using first person constructions until the conclusion where you state the side of the argument you are supporting.

### Question 3 (a)

#### **General Comments on Section C: Research-Based Essay**

The Section C Research-Based Essay was, as last year, very well handled by a high proportion of candidates from those centres where Russian is taught in the curriculum. In nearly all cases, the essays from learner candidates were a pleasure to read and the examiners would once again like to express their gratitude to teachers for their excellent preparation of candidates for this section. Many candidates' essays demonstrated their considerable, in-depth research and showed an impressive command of language and structure. Candidates are reminded of the importance of addressing the question on the paper; essays which did not actually answer the analytical part of the question scored a maximum of 13-18 for Reading, Research & Understanding. In order to score 19-24 or 25-30, essays need to offer opinion and analysis as well as factual content. This will usually involve stating a fact and then telling the reader what this fact shows us or why it is important or relevant. Conversely, the stating of opinion without sufficient evidence will also often lead to lower marks; the requirement for this unit is that candidates do detailed, sustained research in advance and come to the examination armed with facts which they then use to back up their analysis. Sadly, as in previous years, poor preparation for the examination led to a number of candidates writing almost entirely irrelevant essays or essays which simply retold the plot of a book or film, thus scoring very low marks. There was an increase this year in the number of candidates who wrote answers to 3(a), 3(b) or 3(d) which, while often interesting, scored zero as they did not meet the clear requirement on page 40 of the specification and on the exam paper itself for the research to relate to the 'culture and / or society of a Russian-language country, countries or community.' It was therefore surprising to read essays on 'Of Mice and Men' and the economy of Lanzarote. Examiners accepted any country which formed part of the former Soviet Union or the former Russian empire as being 'Russian speaking' for the purposes of this section, and, as usual, there was a range of interesting essays on the former Soviet republics for 3(a). Candidates are reminded of the importance of writing a structured essay in this section. Those candidates who had written detailed plans virtually always performed better, and the examiners again expressed surprise at the relative lack of such plans. There were many essays which gave lots of factual information but which were really, in essence, a regurgitation of all that is known on the topic or the plot of the book or film they had read; candidates must use their factual knowledge to answer the question and support their assertions if they are to reach the higher mark bands for Organisation & Development. Essays should have an introductory paragraph and a conclusion which refers back to the question set on the paper. Examiners were surprised at the increasing number of essays which show no evidence of paragraphing and attention to the order of the points being made. Centres are reminded that quotations do not count within the word limit and also that proper names need not be included. Very few essays contain a bibliography or sources of factual information. Whilst this is not a requirement for the higher mark bands, some 'facts' used by candidates did seem unlikely and proper referencing of sources would help candidates to prove that they have done extensive research.

This question required candidates to demonstrate their research about and understanding of a Russian-speaking geographical region or city, and specifically recent economic changes in and whether these are important for the region. Many, but far from most, candidates were able to offer some factual detail about the economic issues facing their chosen region, but very few were able to give sufficient detail to warrant scoring in the highest mark band for this question. Often, candidates described the impact of recent Western sanctions on the area they had chosen, and this showed some understanding. The analysis of the importance of the economic changes was often tacked on the end and not integrated throughout. The most successful essays mentioned specific events (such as the Sochi Olympics), local industries or recent building work and the positive effect of these had on the area. Centres and candidates are reminded that, although the questions are expressed in two parts, the best essays will integrate these two parts together. Once again, the most common regions / cities studied were Moscow, St Petersburg, Sochi, Kiev, Minsk and other capital cities of countries of the former Soviet Union, with Almaty and Astana topping this list. Perhaps

predictably, Donetsk and Donbass now feature more frequently than in the past.

This candidate describes the economy of Ukraine, and explains why recent changes have been important and the effects that they have had. A wide range of statistical data is given to support the points made.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ⊠. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ⊠ and then indicate your new question with a cross ⊠.		
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состовлял Чорк одному. Эго значит, что импортные продукты дорожают и стабильности в стреми не наблюдается. Полько и 15. Кличко, изра внева, все стабильно. Взер проеза в метро стоит всё так же один жатончих. "Учитывая стоинами в стоинами не предоставить по нентиврого изменения всеры к увеличению безрыотичны, которая составляет 9.7%, по станичики коттегрожден нев. Люди не могут позволить соде базовые велим, а государство продолжение тратить по 10 млн. дольарь в день на вотну на Дорожает при отсунствии иностранных инвестров, насти высокого плачевае иню радота в киеве нереально.

Украина и власти стоиний должими умучить эти этоми ческие изменение. Прегращение войны было бы жорошим чаские изменение. Прегращение войны было бы жорошим части в экономиче весь смысл революции пропадает.



This is a rare example of a 3(a) answer which scores in the higher mark bands. The candidate has clearly completed appropriate research and this is demonstrated by the factual content. The essay scores 6 for Quality of Language, 8 for Organisation and Development and 26 for Reading, Research and Understanding.



Teachers and candidates should make sure that they have prepared the full range of aspects of the specification requirements for the Research-Based Essay. Candidates offering a geographical region should be able to write comfortably on key people, events and issues (demographic, environmental, economic, social and political), and the customs, traditions and beliefs of people from that area. They should be able to explain, in every case, why they think something is important or interesting, offering their own opinion or analysis of the facts they present.

### Question 3 (b)

This question seems to have become more popular than last year. Candidates were required to discuss a person from the period of history which they have studied and explain why they consider the person to be significant for people in the modern world. The most common choices of historical figures were Stalin, Lenin, Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, Nicholas I, Zhukov and Pushkin. A number of candidates wrote about more recent figures such as Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Many candidates were able to provide a substantial about of biographical information on their chosen figure, but were not able to explain their significance for the modern world in enough detail. Sometimes, this aspect of the essay was only referred to in the conclusion. Such essays did not score in the higher mark bands. There were a large number of essays by non-learner candidates on Stalin and these very often cast him in a positive light, regularly citing his importance in shaping Putin's politics. The weakest candidates failed to integrate their use of historical facts with analysis and thus were not able to access the highest mark bands.

This candidate has chosen Stalin and describes his influence and impact on the modern world. Several areas of influence are explored, and assertions are supported with evidence. The candidate has clearly researched the chosen period of history thoroughly.

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проградорова в СССР.

Donowskimensko, b. 1928 rogy Docynaubuski npegenabus neplocie патилетний план, который начал преобразовамь Россию из аграр в индустриальную сверхдержаву. Сталин признал, сто nozagu nenegobux compan u ou mak duempo в соврешенном мире экономика может соперничата с западничии экономиками. Доме того, Мах 10 Delphan good lang Sophand Lang Seem cyuseembyer oo ee chooga hours goomurkyns andujuoziese years ukgyomps Bgodalok, Gnasux urpas ocers baschyro pars Ханднай Войны пале Второй Мировой Войны. Советск webecomepolare opositive cyseus & political carrola edpositions bagol songetical Not Jourse Booppeening, and npubero k downpomemby розрушению СССР в 1991 году, что, конечеко, синько повышем современный ипр. П тому же, руские граждани всегда они Zacuranu проп**аг**андей против Запада, как: "Они [капиталисты] nurcero ne modern dansue rem odmanulans ux emoponemos ", remo . 1 Bonnegenetikoù comenes cuarro yapenuso regobenue ma kaceserua так пустом установило мишление , что в наши дни существу между <u>Россией</u> autoro .... regonorusiamis AND THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY V Западничи сприна жанданама для соврешенного шира, изи недемократической pycakur wogen go choogu manyun в 1943 году: Я знаю, тто после моги смерти лу манесут мусу лихора, но ветер истории безысалостно развеет eë " # 4 max cuyeusous = Bragurup Tynux onpabgubaem genenbua

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This is an outstanding Research-Based Essay. It scores 9 for Organisation and Development, 6 for Quality of Language and 28 for Reading, Research and Understanding. The candidate has a well-developed knowledge of the topic, makes appropriate assertions and incorporates analysis throughout.



Make sure you give your own opinion and analyse facts throughout. If you are unsure about how to do this effectively, use a 'point, evidence, explain' approach: state your point (e.g. 'The October Revolution deprived many people of their personal freedom'), state some factual evidence (e.g. 'A significant number of people were imprisoned by the Bolsheviks for their political or religious beliefs') and then explain why you think it could be interesting (e.g. 'I think this is interesting because it could have led to fear of the regime and this perhaps reinforced its power, something which is relevant in many regimes in the world today').

#### Question 3 (c)

This question required candidates to describe a significant cultural development in modern Russian-speaking society, and explain why this development could be considered interesting. The term 'culture' was interpreted widely. Many candidates focused on areas such as smartphones and the internet, immigration, alcoholism, the smoking ban, Russian education and Russian language. Homophobia in Russia was perhaps the most common choice of topic, and some candidates wrote very interesting essays on topics such as street fashion or the increase in the popularity of extreme sports. There were few excellent answers, with many candidates providing little factual content and resorting to sweeping generalisations. The best answers engaged the reader by providing some new or original insight and were able to provide factual content to back up the assertions made.

This candidate has chosen to examine racism in sport and the 2018 World Cup for his Research-Based essay. The candidate uses quotes and examples to back up the points made (this is entirely acceptable; 'factual content' does not have to be statistics) and the analysis is clear.

mind, put a line through the box oxtimes and then indicate your new question with a cross oxtimes. Chosen question number: Question 3(a) Question 3(b) Question 3(c) Question 3(d) PaceMumbbal Imou acnekin a scornel of il nucamb notetly Я считаю что, рассизм в спорте Это огромном baselle sportetta & cobpensional ycckology that active conte. k cookalekura, cezagha paccuzy 3ña oyekb chlowa a modletta 6 comme somety to, nogliteral delive u Jolbure cumpagna & Hoboconax kasopli gett. Tak ulu uHa4e Helber He costonies costacumber a men 4ma, 6 hocan clytae 3000 Headscagullo odcydgant. go Mekangoou cheelu. Iño zabucum om cumyorguu, k naulepy lekomoph noklakuku Зенита говорят что черны игроки "Недостойны нашега belukoza zapaga, 3mo MapalbHbu banpoc ala penethua spootletta. 6 pezylmane Yzhab o makaŭ ^ cepbezhoù pochete 9mo akmyalbhittu Bospoc и он доворен овтов решён. Некоторой игроки не хотят uzpaño B Bocom makue kak SHK MBula. No Miekuro cregalucios. Mukalaŭ Zoa HMarrukob, & cekpernaph caraga фубовистов и тренеров Вссии говорят что, игроки Могут деновстировать таким образам странам и ввастяем свое откешение к проблене отказавшись играть в Россий. Blakkli mockes Bellina, Lylaka Craklette colopeto on

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This is a good essay. The candidate takes an appropriate approach. It scores at the top of the second mark band for Reading, Research and Understanding and could be improved by more careful planning of the logical sequence of ideas. The mark for Quality of Language is 5 and for Organisation and Development is 8.



Plan your Research-Based Essay carefully and ensure that you have facts to back up each of your opinions. Make sure you analyse information and explain what it tells you about the issue being discussed.

#### Question 3 (d)

This question required candidates to choose a book, play or film which they have studied and discuss the relationship between two characters from it, explaining why the relationship can be considered significant. Candidates needed to present some factual information about the characters and their interactions and an analysis of the relationship, perhaps by considering its impact on our understanding of the themes presented, or its effect on the reader. To access the higher mark bands, the analysis needed to be integrated into the answer. As usual, lengthy retelling of the plot or descriptions of scenes did not score well.

Once again, this was by far the most popular discursive essay question, reflecting the fact that the majority of centres teaching Russian are requiring candidates to study literature or film. As usual, a wide range of literary works was featured, and the insight that these works have given candidates into Russian culture and history was pleasing. The most popular prose works studied by learner candidates in schools this year were Pushkin's 'Пиковая дама', Bulgakov's 'Собачье сердце' and Baranskaya's 'Неделя как неделя'. There has been a slight resurgence in 'Первая любовь' with at least one centre offering candidates who had studied Turgeney. Tolstaya's short stories have not returned, however. The most popular plays remain Chekhov's 'Вишнёвый сад' and 'Дядя Ваня' and Gogol's 'Ревизор'. Once again, some native speakers attempted to explore a relationship in one of the novels or Dostoevsky or Tolstoy, with 'Преступленте и наказание' featuring often. These were occasionally successful, but candidates are reminded that in general novels of this length do not lend themselves well to a 200-word essay. The most popular film choice for schools remains 'Утомлённые сольнцем', with 'Живой' close behind and 'Восток-Запад' also studied. Native speakers often chose 'Легенда № 17', with the Soviet classics remaining popular also. Overall, examiners were pleased with candidates' ability to identify a significant relationship and talk about the two characters involved. Good answers explained the significance throughout whilst giving concrete examples form the text or film - either through the use of targeted quotations or by explaining a scene or event.

The most successful essays identified the characters and their relationship in the first paragraph and launched straight into an analysis, with evidence, or why the relationship is significant. Those essays which made it into the top band for Reading, Research and Understanding were a pleasure to read. These candidates showed that they knew the text very well and their writing was analytical and to the point; no word was superfluous to requirements.

This candidate has chosen to study Bulgakov's 'Собачье сердце'. The significance of the relationship between Preobrazhensky and the dog Sharik, later Sharikov, is discussed. The candidate uses quotations to back up the assertions being made.

	Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box $\boxtimes$ . If you change you mind, put a line through the box $\boxtimes$ and then indicate your new question with a cross $\boxtimes$ .
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	Question 3(c) 🛛 Question 3(d) 🔣
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This is a very good essay. The candidate knows the text well and is able to use quotations to back up the points being made. There is clear awareness of social and historical context, and this is used to support the claim about the significance of the relationship discussed. The essay scores 26 for Reading, Research and Understanding, 5 for Quality of Language and 6 for Organisation and Development.



Prepare some short quotes from your book or play - this will enable you to illustrate your points more effectively. Make sure you refer to the question explicitly in your answer.

This candidate writes about the relationship between Kotov and Mitya in 'Утомлённые сольнцем'. The essay focuses on how the relationship between the two men addresses the various themes of the film. Analysis is spread throughout and evidence from the film is used to support the ideas suggested.

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This essay is well conceived and well structured. It scores 8 for Organisation and Development, 4 for Quality of Language and 24 for Reading, Research and Understanding.



For the literature or film option, detailed knowledge of the text is what is meant by 'clear evidence of in depth reading and research.' Candidates do not need to have studied secondary literature to access the highest mark bands, although this can always give further insight and might represent an opportunity for stretch and challenge.

## **Paper Summary**

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Divide your time carefully in the examination and do not spend too long on any one part.
- Ensure that you prepare thoroughly for the translation task by studying the prescribed grammar list in the specification.
- Learn grammatical endings for verbs and nouns thoroughly, paying particular attention to the use of cases after prepositions.
- Seek to incorporate a range of more complex grammatical structures into your written work, such as conditionals, subjunctives, compound conjunctions, gerunds and participles.

# **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <a href="http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx</a>





