

2000 NAFLaSSL Examinations

Notes from the Marking Centre

(Languages A — Z)

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Arabic

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates appeared well prepared for the Conversation. All candidates were able to demonstrate the ability to converse on a range of topics. Most candidates went beyond a minimal response using a variety of vocabulary and structures. The best candidates elaborated well on their responses. Weaker candidates tended to answer simply and had difficulty with the level of language of the questions asked.

Most candidates used Modern Standard Arabic.

Some of the problem areas included:

- Vocalisation of endings
- Gender plurals especially the feminine plural
- Incorrect use of case (nominative/accusative)
- Incorrect use of the verb to be
- Poor pronunciation

Report and Discussion

Examiners noted a better variety of topics this year and were impressed with the selection of topics reflecting current and local interest. Topics tended to be more precise than in previous years and this led to better discussion following the presentation of the report. However, there was some evidence of the direct lifting of information from the sources with little or no consideration of the application of the material to the topic chosen and/or in language inappropriate to the ensuing discussion.

The better reports tended to be of an appropriate length and allowed for discussion. There is no advantage in candidates preparing an excessively long report as it is their ability to discuss the information and ideas, rather than the presentation of the report itself that is more heavily weighted in terms of marking criteria.

The best candidates demonstrated a broad and thorough understanding of the chosen topic and presented information in a cohesive and well-structured report.

The Discussion revealed that candidates had used a variety of sources to access information such as the Internet, textbooks, and magazine articles. Most candidates demonstrated the ability to discuss the information presented. The better-prepared candidates were able to discuss the information and ideas presented in their report in some depth and offer and justify opinions on the topic.

The weaker candidates responded to the discussion question with minimal responses, hesitation and repetition of ideas/vocabulary/structures.

Paper 1: Processing spoken information

Part A

Most students were able to identify the relevant information from the two passages and responded appropriately to the questions based on the texts. Students are reminded that they must respond either in English or in Arabic in part A. Some students responded partly in English and partly in Arabic.

It is important that students understand the format and criteria associated with the examination. On the day, at the beginning of the examination, in reading time they should read the instructions carefully to avoid making unnecessary errors and losing valuable time.

Part B: Task drawing on both passages

The task was to write a newspaper article as a junior correspondent outlining the positive and negative aspects of growing up.

Most students were able to correctly select the main points from the two resources provided and write their responses in the required discourse form using a range of linking words and complex sentence patterns. On the other hand, there were some students who appeared to be uncertain about the conventions of the discourse form required for a newspaper article. Some were unable to present their views in a logical manner with the correct format of an introduction, body and conclusion. A small group of students with limited skills only identified minimal information from the resources. Spelling errors occurred frequently in their work. Their ideas were not presented in a structured systematic mould but haphazardly. Their range of sentence patterns was narrow and often grammatically unsound.

Students should be reminded to:

- read the instructions very carefully before attempting the task
- organise the information to meet the context and purpose of the new text as well as the associated criteria
- use information only from the two passages
- use the appropriate discourse form.

Paper 2: Reorganising information

Part A: Writing in Arabic

Although the full range of tasks were selected, the vast majority of students chose to write a letter. Most students responded appropriately to the task requirements, although some did not have a clear understanding.

Generally speaking, students demonstrated the ability to respond to their chosen topic in some depth and produced appropriate responses.

Common weaknesses were:

- vocabulary and grammar mistakes were often repeated
- sentences lacked a variety of structural forms
- some work tended to be simplistic and uninspiring
- spelling
- incorrect use of the poor hamzah

- the use of colloquial Arabic.

It was noted that in some cases students inappropriately memorized one or two pieces of work and endeavored to adapt these to suit the new textual requirements.

Part B: Reorganising written information

Most students were able to extract relevant information from both passages and reorganise these into a meaningful and logical order. However, in doing so, some students used sentences directly transcribed from the texts. Repeated use of the same information also occurred.

Many students did not use the correct discourse form in this section. A small group of students did not complete this task.

Paper 3: Discussing a theme

The overall performance of the students in this part of the examination was pleasing. They were well prepared and showed a sound knowledge of the resources studied during the year. The majority of them were able to develop the topic of their choice persuasively in line with the purpose of the task..

Armenian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates were generally able to handle a variety of topics and question types. Most went well beyond a minimal response and were able to initiate and sustain conversation.

Most candidates attempted to use complex structures and vocabulary that was appropriate to the topic and context. Some evidence of the influence of English was evident, especially with the use of fillers.

Report and Discussion

In general, the reports were well prepared and researched.

Candidates demonstrated a richness of vocabulary and structures. Candidates demonstrated that they had used a variety of sources for the information presented. A few candidates had learnt their report by heart and appeared insecure with some of the vocabulary used, which limited their ability to discuss the information they presented.

Candidates need to be reminded of the need to speak concisely within the time specified and to focus on the key issues, ideas or pieces of information of the report.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

The standard achieved by candidates was generally good. Candidates employed simple structures to convey their responses quite effectively and efficiently.

Candidate would benefit, however, from greater emphasis being placed on grammar. Candidates should also note that mixing Eastern and Western Armenian in their responses is to be avoided.

Parts A and B

Despite some difficulties experienced with vocabulary and sentence structures, candidates were generally able to understand the two listening passages and to respond appropriately to the task set in Part B.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Armenian

Candidates wrote clearly and accurately on the range of topics presented in this Part. Most candidates demonstrated good control of vocabulary and language structures and wrote coherently.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates had some difficulty selecting information from the texts relevant to the task. Candidates are strongly reminded of the fact that this is not a creative writing exercise and that they are expected to confine their responses to the information provided in the examination paper.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

This paper has traditionally been poorly done and this year was no exception. On the whole, responses demonstrated a lack of preparation and candidates did not deal effectively with the issues presented. Responses generally lacked depth and many lacked explicit references to the resources studied.

Croatian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The majority of candidates responded well to this section of the examination demonstrating good control of the linguistic elements. Most candidates were able to go beyond a minimal response in their answers and had the capacity to initiate and sustain conversation.

Weaker candidates tended to answer briefly and not in full sentences. There was evidence of grammatical errors particularly with case endings, but also in sentence structure, word order, syntax, and over use of sentence fillers. In some cases there was also evidence of lexical problems caused by the interference of Bosnian, Serbian and English words.

Report and Discussion

In general the examiners were impressed with the level of the presentations and discussions overall. Topics were generally well prepared with evidence of research based on a variety of resources including the Internet. The best reports were well-structured and interesting, and did not rely on general knowledge.

Some candidates appeared ill-prepared and presented reports that appeared to be based on personal experience rather than research. These candidates had difficulty engaging in any discussion following the report. Similar grammatical errors were evident in this section to those outlined in the Conversation section of the examination.

Candidates are advised to choose and prepare both topics carefully as they can be asked to present and discuss either. Those reports that contain a lot of technical information are often difficult to present in the candidate's own words. Candidates are also reminded of the need to use formal language to engage in conversation or discussion with an examiner.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Most candidates were able to select the relevant information.

Part B

Many candidates did not complete the task in this Part appropriately. Some candidates who did select appropriate information from both passages did not link the information effectively.

Others did not follow the conventions of the discourse form, ie magazine article. Examiners expected the article to contain such conventions as:

- heading/title
- by line (with a pseudonym)
- appropriate paragraphing for each new idea

Many candidates did not sequence the information effectively and moved seemingly haphazardly from one point to another. Some candidates wrote in pencil making their responses extremely difficult to read.

Whilst it was evident that the candidature reflected a range of experiences with the language, weaknesses in vocabulary range, and poor control of syntax and grammatical structures were often compensated by effective structural organisation and the observation of the conventions of the discourse form.

Most candidates were able to demonstrate the ability to write independently of the wording of the original passages although some candidates copied down parts of the aural texts verbatim and included these in their response.

The best candidates completed a well-structured and logically sequenced response that observed the conventions of the discourse form, using relevant information from both passages and expressing themselves accurately (including case endings).

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Croatian

Most candidates chose Questions 1 and 4. Most responses were adequate in form and content. However, some candidates did not observe the discourse form required for the chosen task, especially the diary entry and the dialogue. Some candidates misinterpreted Question 2 and wrote about the Croatian course rather than the language and included irrelevant detail relating to a description of class activities, getting up early on Saturday or socialising with students.

Grammatical errors such as case endings and tense were evident. Most candidates used a limited and predictable range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

There was a range of performance demonstrated in this task.

Most candidates were able to select and use relevant information but tended to focus on the subject's personal life and medical problems rather than her career.

In general, candidates dealt with the requirements of the discourse form, a diary entry, appropriately, although some candidates confused biography and autobiography. Some omitted a heading for the piece of writing and the poorer candidates did not link and sequence relevant information effectively.

Some candidates did not demonstrate a range of vocabulary and relied heavily on the vocabulary in the texts. Candidates tended to use dialect forms rather than standard Croatian. A few candidates had difficulty with various grammatical structures such as the correct use of pronouns, tenses and cases.

Candidates are again strongly advised not to identify themselves or their schools in any way and not to write in pencil.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Most candidates observed the conventions of the text type. Many candidates however, demonstrated only a superficial understanding of the texts. There was an overall lack of explicit, **appropriate** reference to resources to support the task chosen. Some candidates simply retold stories and did not demonstrate any depth or breadth when dealing with the task. Others responded generally to the task with no reference to resources at all.

Czech

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates had no difficulty understanding and responding fluently to questions, communicating ideas and information. All the topics had been well prepared and a depth of ideas was evident in most cases.

There was some evidence of the influence of English syntax and vocabulary.

Candidates are reminded of the need to use the correct form of address.

Report and Discussion

Reports were generally very well prepared and coherently presented. Candidates demonstrated the ability to present and convey opinions, and to discuss these logically and clearly. Reports were carefully structured within the length specified.

Candidates are reminded to organise and structure information and ideas carefully in their reports and to be prepared to answer questions relating to their choice of topic, their research and their opinions and ideas on the topic.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Parts A and B

While some candidates had some difficulty selecting specific, relevant detail from the listening passages, most demonstrated a good understanding of the passages and were able to select and use the information in Part B. Some candidates did not observe the conventions of the discourse form. Most candidates were able to organise the information selected effectively and appropriately. However, inaccuracies in the use of linguistic elements were a problem for many candidates.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Czech

In general, the responses in this section of the paper were satisfactory and the requirements of the task were fulfilled. In some cases, however, the tasks did little to maintain reader interest.

As in Part B in Paper 1, the area of weakness was expression and control of the language, with errors in spelling and grammar, particularly case endings evident.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates were able to select some information, but often missed key details. Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the conventions of the discourse form and structured their writing well, although there was some weakness in candidates' ability to link ideas coherently. Most candidates did not demonstrate the ability to reorganise information independently of the wording of the original texts and in some instances quoted verbatim from the texts.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

In general, the responses in this section dealt with the main aspects of the topics selected. However, only a small number of candidates made close reference to the texts they had studied or demonstrated sufficient understanding of them.

Dutch

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the range of questions and topics posed. They responded confidently and fluently with some handling complex structures well. There were few grammatical errors evident.

Report and Discussion

Topics were varied and well researched. There was pleasing evidence of thorough preparation. Reports were presented logically and all candidates were able to engage in a discussion following the report.

General

The standard of work produced by the majority of students was very high. However a few candidates scored very low marks due to a lack of in depth study demonstrated in Paper 3. It must be noted that several candidates produced brilliant work and a number of them wrote some very entertaining articles. Some were actually quite comical and downright hilarious.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

All candidates took very good notes and responded appropriately to the required task. In some instances the English and Dutch versions of the questions contained some inconsistencies. Where errors or confusion occurred as a result marking schemes were modified to ensure that no student was disadvantaged. Question 4 of Passage 2 did not have an obvious answer and any reasonable answer was accepted.

Part B

This task was executed well by most candidates. It must be noted that all but one candidate adhered to the word limit and the discourse form.

Paper 2

Part A – Writing in Dutch

Responses varied from just satisfactory to excellent. Where language skills are reduced it appears to be linked to the inability to adhere to the convention of the discourse form in the given tasks. The majority of candidates produced work of an excellent standard.

Part B – Reorganising Written Information

Many candidates did not produce a piece of written work drawing on the information from both texts. Many candidates tended to extract most of the information from only one of the texts.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

As in Paper 1 there were some inconsistencies in the English and Dutch versions of some questions and marking schemes were modified to accommodate the range of candidates responses.

Some excellent work was produced in this section indicating that some candidates have studied their Dutch references in depth.

Making appropriate and relevant reference to the resources studied is a continuing problem for some candidates. Some candidates referred to relevant resources in their discussion of the questions. However, a significant number of candidates made no relevant reference to resources studied.

Filipino

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates, in general, demonstrated a high level of ability to express themselves effectively in Filipino. Very few candidates required paraphrasing of the questions or responded with unnaturally long pauses. Candidates appeared to be able to think ideas and respond clearly to topics of general interest and current events. Candidates demonstrated a good range of vocabulary and some used complex structures. Weaker responses tended to use a limited range of vocabulary and relied on English cognates. There were no significant grammatical errors.

Report and Discussion

Candidates are advised to choose the topics for their reports carefully and prepare topics that are appropriate to their level of language and interests. Topics should be able to be researched or supported by source materials.

Overall, candidates were well prepared and demonstrated depth of treatment. However, candidates are advised to refrain from relating lists of facts or repeating story lines without offering opinions and to avoid topics that do not lend themselves to research or are based solely on personal experience, as these are difficult to sustain in the discussion.

Candidates should be made aware of the marking criteria for each section of the oral examination in particular "the ability to link with the conversational partner" in the Discussion and "the capacity to go beyond a minimal response in their answers" in the Conversation.

There was some evidence of the influence of English vocabulary, ie research, library. This practice should be avoided. Candidates are also advised to structure their reports within the 1 —2 minutes allocated.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Candidates demonstrated well-developed listening skills. Candidates gave clear, concise answers to the questions asked.

Part B

The content of the candidates' responses generally contained relevant information. Candidates are reminded of the need to select and use relevant information from both passages in their response. Some candidates did not use the appropriate conventions of the discourse form.

Although the overall structuring and sequencing of the ideas in the new text was handled well, few candidates were able to demonstrate the ability to link related ideas effectively.

Generally candidates demonstrated good control of vocabulary and grammatical structures and the majority of candidates were able to express themselves effectively in their own words. The less able candidates gave generalised answers based on the information in the texts, but did not provide sufficient supporting detail in their responses.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Filipino

This task was generally very well handled. Candidates wrote appropriately for the task and topic and demonstrated breadth of treatment. Overall, candidates' expression in Filipino was sound with candidates demonstrating the ability to use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures and accurate grammar and spelling. Most candidates observed the conventions of the chosen discourse form. The more able candidates wrote creatively, drawing on personal experience and their knowledge and skills gained from the course. In some cases humour was used to good effect to maintain reader interest. The less able candidates resorted to the use of both English and Spanish words.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates had difficulty synthesising the information from both passages. Candidates need to develop the skills to select relevant information from the texts and use this information to complete the required task.

Overall, candidates were able to express themselves well in Filipino. Consistent level of accuracy in relation to vocabulary and grammatical structures differentiated the best and weakest candidates.

Candidates are reminded to:

- read all instructions carefully
- avoid any specific reference to schools and individuals

- practise the use of formal written language as opposed to informal colloquial spoken language which is not appropriate for a written examination question.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Candidates in general had difficulty with the tasks in Paper 3. Candidates' ability to respond to issues, making appropriate reference to the resources studied, was generally low. Candidates need to reflect carefully on which resources support the task and make explicit reference to these in the response. Most candidates provided only a general summary of the issues without any in-depth analysis of the resources used.

Candidates are reminded to:

- avoid the use of the first person unless specifically requested by the text type
- observe the word length requirements
- exercise care in the use of liquid paper — some candidates did not provide final versions of material that they deleted.

Hindi

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The candidates were well prepared and their general ability to communicate in Hindi was sound. There was no evidence of significant grammatical errors.

There was some use of English words but this was usually appropriate in the context.

Report and Discussion

The majority of the candidates performed exceptionally well in this section. They communicated their ideas and information well and were able to express themselves eloquently, clearly and concisely.

Most candidates had thoroughly researched their topics and conveyed their command of the Hindi language in the report and ensuing discussion. There were few grammatical or syntactical errors evident. Practice in pronunciation is advisable for some candidates.

Paper 1: Processing spoken information

Most students performed well in both parts. Some students made mistakes in part A as they got confused with Mahatma Gandhi's date of birth (1869) which was variously written as 1849, 1859, 1872, 1879, 1884, 1890, 1894, 1896 and 1929. It is important that students learn how to read and write Hindi numerals. Listening more carefully to the tape would have enabled students to avoid careless mistakes.

Paper 2

Most students identified relevant information from the two spoken passages and attempted to use this information effectively. However, some students did not complete the blank spaces,

although their notes below the table indicated that they had selected the relevant information. Students need to be aware that answers need to be written in the spaces provided.

Some students who successfully identified relevant information in Part A did not use it in part B, perhaps in the belief that the information selected in part A should not be repeated in part B. Some students also used extraneous information in Part B. As stated on the examination paper, student responses should be solely based on the information from the two spoken passages.

Part B was a magazine article, and the majority of students showed that they had good knowledge of this discourse form. Generally, students were able to link related ideas well and to organise the information into a meaningful sequence. They presented information in a logical and convincing manner and in their own words.

Some students did not provide the title or the writer's name. Their responses also lacked the appropriate format and style of a magazine article. A few students had difficulty incorporating and linking the information from passage 2 into their writing. Some students misunderstood the text and made untrue statements (e.g. Gandhi went to study law in Africa; he fought against British because they had closed doors to temples; the main weapons he used against British were guns and cannons). Some students presented various points without developing them into one whole argument or they tended to repeat information from Part A in its original form.

The standard of the language used was generally very good. However, there were many students who showed sloppiness in the use of linguistic elements. Spelling errors were quite common. Inappropriate use of conjuncts was also often found. Some examples of misspelt words are given below. Correct forms are indicated within brackets:

co\$I Azo\$I † v;h; AEvh;\ † m'dIR AEm'idr † dRV;j; AEdrv;j; †
ln\$N AEI'dn † a'g[j AEa'g[ej † svt'] AESvt'] † a/Uto' AEazUto' †
blkI AEbiLk † sce AESCce † mhond;s AEmohnd;s † <NneAE<Nho'ne †
ibsvI s/I AEbIsvI' sdi

Paper 2: Writing in Hindi

There was a great deal of variety in student responses this year, with students writing on a wide range of topics and discourse forms. The quality of writing was generally good and the topics chosen were dealt with in sufficient breadth.

There were several interesting, informative and entertaining pieces in Hindi. Some of the letters were quite imaginative and the interview segments were quite interesting.

Almost all the students achieved high scores for this part of the examination because their writing was suitable for the topic they had chosen.

Most of the writing produced by students met this criterion.

Form and Organisation

Observations of the conventions of the discourse form (style, sequencing, cultural appropriateness) and specifications regarding length

Generally, students showed good knowledge of discourse forms. However, there were some instances where students disregarded instructions for a particular discourse form. Letters, diary-entries, short-stories and interviews were generally well done. Some students showed unfamiliarity with report-writing. The need for familiarity with a wide variety of discourse forms

be overemphasized. Most of the writing was culturally appropriate. Generally students kept to the prescribed word limit range. Some students who exceeded the word length went to extraordinary lengths to delete major portions of their work to keep it within the prescribed word limit range. Where this occurs, it is important to note that the finished piece of writing should be self-contained and should not look like a cut and paste job. It should flow smoothly.

Most students were able to organise and present information in a well-structured manner. In some cases, students had difficulty in linking the various parts of their writing. Writing of transition sentences and connecting various paragraphs in writing needed greater attention in some pieces.

Some students demonstrated a good command of the written language while others made many mistakes. Often inaccuracies in the use of linguistic elements detracted from the quality of the work. The sentence structure was often not correct. For example, sCcI jIvn pr inbRr krtI instead of ÆsCc; R jIvn pr in.Rr krtI hw) or s f;S\$ fU@ duk;n %ulegI instead of yh;\ f;S\$ fU@ duk;n %ulegI muZe mw' <sse ifr se b;tcIt kroge instead of mw' <sse ifr b;tcIt k᳚'g;) Students also had difficulty in changing singular verb forms to plural verb forms and putting the dot in the inappropriate places.

There were a few students whose range of vocabulary and sentence structures was limited or inappropriate, however, most students used vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to their chosen task.

Part B: Reorganising written information

The task in part B required students to write a review of the film "*Ham Aapke hai Kaun*". Generally students handled this task well, including identifiable features of this discourse form.

Most students were able to select relevant points but some students included irrelevant information or points taken from extraneous sources. Some students had difficulties in organising the selected information from the two written resources into a meaningful sequence but most students were able to structure their writing quite well. A number of students gave the story of the film in great detail, without considering other aspects of the film. Unfortunately many students transcribed the information available from the written passages rather than use their own words.

Often inaccuracies in the use of linguistic elements detracted from the quality of the work. It appears that some students transported letters and words from their native language or used English words when they had difficulty in finding Hindi equivalents — this should be avoided.

Paper 3 : Discussing a theme

No information has provided by the Victorian Board of Studies.

Hungarian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The best candidates were fluent and confident in their responses to a range of question types from simple to complex. The majority demonstrated excellent comprehension, responded competently and did not require questions to be rephrased.

There was a range evident in candidates' vocabulary. The better candidates used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures, other candidates demonstrated knowledge of a limited vocabulary. Common grammatical errors included subject/verb agreements, prepositional errors and incorrect word order.

Report and Discussion

On the whole the reports were well presented with a variety of unusual topics represented. The best reports were well researched and candidates were able to discuss the information and ideas confidently and in their own words. Those candidates who had memorised their reports by heart and appeared to present them by rote, often had difficulty discussing the subject matter presented.

Candidates had used a range of source material in both English and Hungarian, including written texts and the Internet.

Note: *The written paper was marked in Victoria. The report on Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3 is not as yet available from the Victorian Board of Studies*

Japanese Accelerated

Speaking

Many candidates had difficulty with the following vocabulary items: *itsu, dono gurai, kyoodai, shigoto, donna*

Part A: Report and Conversation

The high-ranking candidates were able to present a clear report of appropriate length demonstrating good knowledge of advanced structures. They were able to respond to most questions with 2 or more highly relevant, clear and accurate sentences. In their answers they demonstrated expertise not only in understanding advanced structures but also in their ability to reproduce them appropriately.

Part B: Role-play

Most candidates performed better in Part A than in Part B. In order to receive a high rank in Part B candidates must take the initiative in carrying out their role, ie they must show that they are in control of their chosen situation. They must ensure that they cover all areas of the question using a variety of relevant vocabulary and sentence structures. They must use advanced structures accurately and appropriately.

Paper 1

Part A: Extracting Information from Spoken Passages

Candidates, on the whole, showed good understanding of the spoken passages. Candidates should ensure that all details are included in their responses and that their responses are written entirely in English. For example dates cannot be written using *kanji* for months and dates and

English numbers. Candidates also need to ensure that they respond to the specific question word(s) asked i.e. when, who, why. Highlighting or circling the question words before listening to the passages may help candidates to focus on these aspects. Attention to particles would also help as many careless errors occurred in this area eg. beer and juice was in fact beer or juice, Japanese and history was Japanese or history. Location words (in front of, next to) also need to be learnt more thoroughly. Candidates found Passage 5 part C the most difficult in this section.

Part B: Responding to Spoken Passages

In this part the best responses included the appropriate use of several independent advanced structures and kanji and a degree of independence from the wording of the original text. Candidates need to demonstrate a good knowledge of what was said in the spoken text. Good use of tense, verb forms (plain/polite forms) is essential and a meaningful flow of expression.

Paper 2

Part A: Extracting Information from Written Texts

Text 1: More than half the candidates did not indicate the correct time in Part (d). Many wrote 9.15. There were many interpretations of the word *shinsetsu*. Candidates should not list (guess) a lot of adjectives — markers are looking for one. *Amari* was unfamiliar to most candidates.

Text 2: Many candidates wrote China instead of Korea for Part (d). The word *abunai* was not well known. Candidates need to be able to correctly romanize words of English origin such as *saafin*, *skyuuba daibingu*.

Part B: Responding to Written Texts

This question was handled quite well by most candidates, with many able to apply the post card format conventions appropriately. In most cases the postcard had a proper beginning and concluded well. Candidates should adhere to the suggested length of the response i.e. 80 — 100. The following advanced structures were handled successfully: - *to omoimasu*, -*kute*, *tsumori desu*, -*tai desu*.

Candidates should avoid simply listing information and be aware that not all information given in the text needs to be used. The candidates should select some and introduce other elements into it. Many candidates simply listed the rooms in the house without any creativity. Many candidates confused the contact person's telephone number and used it as their telephone number.

Paper 3

Writing

General: The 3 choices of topics in this section allowed for a wide range of possibilities in both style and language. Many candidates demonstrated a good level of fluency in their answers.

Question 1 – Speech

High-ranking candidates in this question were able to effectively communicate a good range of relevant ideas about Japanese home life and they used the appropriate beginning and ending

for addressing a group. Weaker responses provided less relevant information, ie related more to school life / sightseeing etc.

Question 2 – Dialogue

This was the least often attempted of the 3 questions. The best responses covered all areas of the question and demonstrated good knowledge of spoken Japanese, ie Using appropriate greetings / *keigo* etc.

Question 3 – Diary

This question was chosen by the majority of candidates. The question provided a good opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their ability in using advanced structures and in reproducing the number of English place names necessary to answer the question in *katakana*.

The high-ranking candidates included the appropriate language for the diary format, ie beginning with date and weather and ending with a good final statement such as. *kyoo wa tanoshikatta desu*. Lower ranking candidates tended to use letter writing format i.e. ending with name and *yoru* and date.

Candidates should be able to use GENKOOYOSHI correctly. Candidates are strongly advised against the inclusion of irrelevant pre-learned material (eg. from their oral report) in the written section.

Khmer

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates handled a range of simple to complex questions well. Candidates used a range of vocabulary and sentence structures and demonstrated sound knowledge of the language across a variety of topics.

Report and Discussion

Most candidates had prepared their report well and presented it confidently. Although some had learnt their reports by heart they demonstrated the ability to discuss the ideas and information presented in an effective manner. Candidates reports were based on a range of source materials such as books, newspaper articles and class work. Whilst it was evident that some information had been available in Khmer, candidates had also accessed resources in English.

Candidates are advised to structure their reports within the 1 —2 minutes allocated.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Most candidates scored more highly in this part of the examination than in any other, and their listening skills were of a high standard.

Part B

In general, candidates performed well in this task. Responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the material and candidates selected appropriate information well. Most candidates handled the requirements of the discourse form satisfactorily, although a few candidates had difficulties with the concept of a talk to be given on the radio (rather than to their classmates).

A small number of candidates included information that was not in the passages. Candidates are reminded that they must use only information from the passages in their responses.

Some candidates had difficulties with spelling certain words. Most candidates demonstrated effective skills in organising and sequencing information. However, some candidates had difficulty putting the information into their own words.

Some candidates showed weaknesses in the areas of punctuation and sentence structure. Some sentences were too long, while others were too short. A few candidates inappropriately began a sentence in Khmer with the equivalent of 'And'.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Khmer

There were several outstanding responses. Weaknesses were generally related to spelling and sentence structure, punctuation, and the sequencing of ideas. A number of candidates had difficulty following the conventions of writing an article, but most candidates successfully handled the discourse form of letter. Some candidates wrote sentences that were lengthy and vague. Candidates are reminded that they must respond to the topic chosen. The most successful candidates wrote clear, well-structured responses.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Most candidates managed the requirements of the discourse form well, although some responses were too long. Some responses to this section were of a very high standard. A number of candidates had difficulty selecting and then using relevant information. Some candidates copied sentences directly from the texts. Candidates are reminded that they must demonstrate a degree of independence from the original wording.

A few problems were experienced with spelling. The observations about grammar, spelling, and punctuation made elsewhere in this report also apply to this section.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Most candidates chose Questions 1 and 2.

A number of responses were outstanding. The most successful responses addressed the whole question, avoided generalisations, and supported all statements with examples from the texts studied. They drew conclusions about the themes of the works that were directly relevant to the question.

Some candidates did not make adequate reference to texts studied. Teachers and students are reminded that responses *must* refer to the resources studied. References to the works must be used to support all statements and conclusions.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate understanding and appreciation of the works in their responses, as well as depth of treatment. The content of their responses must be relevant to the demands of the task. That is, all aspects of the question must be answered. Some candidates retold elements of the story without linking these elements to the question. Others relied on unsupported personal opinion.

Candidates are again reminded that they demonstrate an understanding of the resources in their responses to the questions in Paper 3.

Many candidates are unfamiliar with the conventions of a range of discourse forms. Some responses did not include an introduction or a conclusion. The most successful responses demonstrated a very high level of understanding and appreciation of the works studied. They also drew all key statements together in a clear, coherent conclusion.

Not all the candidates who wrote responses in English demonstrated a satisfactory level of English writing skills. There were many difficulties with both structure and expression, with limited use of paragraphs and punctuation. However, most candidates used a satisfactory to wide range of vocabulary.

Most candidates listed resources referred to in the resources used box.

Several candidates did not attempt this section.

Korean

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates handled the questions in this section well. Candidates demonstrated the ability to initiate and sustain conversation and the best candidates were able to go beyond a minimal response in their answers.

Common grammatical errors included incorrect use of:

- particles
- conjunctions
- verb endings

There were also minor errors with sentence structure.

Report and Discussion

Whereas some candidates performed well in the report and discussion, others had difficulty completing their reports. The better candidates conveyed information with appropriate vocabulary and structures and generally expressed themselves clearly. In general, candidates had prepared their reports thoroughly and the information presented was relevant to the topics chosen. However, there was some evidence that reports had been memorised without sufficient understanding of the content. Candidates are also advised to select topics that are appropriate to

their level of language and not to rely exclusively on the presentation of factual information ie statistics at the expense of opinion.

The candidates' ability to discuss the report varied considerably. Some candidates appeared to rely heavily on statistical information that they found difficult to discuss. Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with a breadth of ideas on the chosen topics rather than a narrow range of features and to be prepared to answer questions relating to the choice of topic, research, opinion on the topic.

Part 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Most candidates were able to select and use relevant information from both passages.

Part B

Candidates were required to write a profile of Elvis Kim to be placed on the Internet.

There was a range of responses with the best responses including relevant information from both passages presented in an interesting and appropriate way for the task.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Korean

General weaknesses included:

- use of articles and subject markers
- verb endings
- tenses
- poor dictionary skills, ie students selecting an inappropriate word from the dictionary.

However, markers noted increased use of conjunctions in the construction of complex sentences.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

The task required candidates to write a letter describing your first few days of work. In the best responses candidates synthesised information from both passages and wrote coherently and logically.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Although candidates appeared familiar with the themes and were able to write in general terms about the information required, few candidates made explicit references to the resources studied.

All tasks require candidates to refer to at least two resources. Candidates and teachers are also asked to refer to the criteria for marking which include the candidates' understanding and appreciation of the works. It is difficult for candidates to gain marks in this paper if they do not list the resources studied, then make explicit reference to these in their response to the task. It is

not sufficient for the reference to the resources to be implied. Many candidates appeared to be writing from a general knowledge base rather than responding to the task based on the books, films, documentaries, articles etc encountered in the course of their study of Korean over the year.

Candidates are also reminded of the need to write using the text type for the particular audience referred to in the question and to structure their responses effectively to meet the demands of the task. In Question 1 candidates needed to discuss in depth both Korean rituals and respect for elders, in question 3 they needed to describe the influence of religious beliefs on customs and way of life and not just describe them.

Those candidates did extremely well who made appropriate reference to the resources and responded to the task as described. However, there were only very few candidates who did this.

Most responses showed evidence of structuring though not all responses met the 250-word requirement. Most candidates demonstrated effective communication and variety and accuracy of language use.

Candidates are advised to:

- name the resources studied in the space provided on the examination paper
- address all the issues raised in the question
- write specifically for the audience and/or purpose and/or context referred to in the question
- write in pen.

Latvian

Note: If you experience any font display problems with the following Latvian text, please call Howard Jacobs at the Board of Studies on 9367 8039.

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates were able to engage in an interesting conversation with the examiners. Candidates appeared at ease with the language and there were only minor grammatical errors of case evident.

Report and Discussion

Reports were well prepared on a range of interesting topics. Candidates had evidently used a range of original source materials to support their reports and the overall level of performance was impressive. Candidates are advised to structure their reports within the 1-2 minutes allocated to allow sufficient time for the discussion.

General Comments on Candidate Responses

Most candidates achieved a high standard and were well prepared for the examination.

It was pleasing to see that most candidates observed the criteria for various tasks, such as length of response, writing in the genre requested, using the particular language requested, and listing resources with their answers for Paper 3.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

The answers in this paper showed that students have well-developed comprehension skills. They understood which parts of the spoken information to use and, very importantly, which parts were irrelevant and could be omitted. Nothing irrelevant was used in the answers this year.

There were some mistakes in writing responses, such as starting sentences with *because*, or making spelling errors.

Part B

Answers were done well and indicated a very thorough understanding of the spoken information that was presented. The students very ably selected and reorganised information from the passages. They wrote at length and gave a lot of information from the texts that they had heard.

Some students had difficulty with the discourse form, an informal letter to a friend. Students must be careful to observe the conventions of letter-writing when this discourse form is asked for.

- This means that the word *Tu* must have a capital starting letter. Similarly, *Tavs*, *Tev*, *Tavejie*, must be capitalised.
- The date and place must be shown at the beginning of the letter, even though it is an informal letter.
- Single sentence paragraphs are not acceptable, even in an informal letter. The writer should always have a topic sentence followed by more sentences.
- Grammar continues to be a weak point in students' answers, for example:
 - *be\rna popgrupa* should be *be\rnu popgrupa*
 - future tense endings were largely missing, eg *es dzirde\ju, ka tu cel%os pa Eiropu*
 - wrong cases were used, eg *mana mēl%a\ka\ lieta par Rēgas*
 - present tense verb endings were often wrong, eg *es doma\, tu pavadu . . .*
 - the conditional mood of verbs was ignored, eg *Rīga\ bu\t laba\k*.
- Some students created new words, eg *mil%onas, zi\ma* instead of *zi\me*.
- Some words were misspelt, eg *Brēnes'k%ēga, ra\pujus, viskaista\kiem*.
- The conjunctions *ka* and *kad* pose difficulties each year. Students should remember that *ka* = that, and *kad* = when. These two words cannot be interchanged.
- The conventions of dates were largely ignored, eg. no full stop in *1924 gada 10 nov*.
- Phrases such as *ta\pe\c, ka* were used without *ka*. This is wrong but it is increasingly common in spoken Latvian. One must make a distinction between oral and written forms of the language.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Latvian

The most popular questions were Questions 1 and 4. Question 1 asked for a letter to the Minister of Education in which the students had to describe an ideal school and give reasons for their opinions. Question 4 asked for a creative essay with the title 'Why is it important to learn from one's mistakes?'

Students coped very well with their chosen topic. They had the vocabulary to express themselves accurately and in some depth. It appeared that they had thought about similar topics and they had a case to present. They did it convincingly and with a good deal of humour. The opinions and activities described in the writing seemed to come from the students' immediate experiences, and this was very pleasing.

Students observed the discourse form that was asked for in the task well. Formal letter-writing conventions were observed well. Paragraphs were well formed with a topic sentence followed by an explanation or an argument, whichever was necessary. The writing was logical and progressed easily from one paragraph to the next. It appeared that the students had a great deal to say, and this made for interesting reading.

The main weaknesses were incorrect use of the Latvian language, mistakes in grammar, and spelling errors, for example:

- *matrialiem*
- *no koku matrialiem*
- tape\c, ka* – in this phrase *ka* was not used
- *êt, êna\t* verbs not used correctly
- instead of Germanisms, eg. *nepase\t,*, one should use a more Latvian word such as *iet, dere\t*
- definite and indefinite forms of adjectives were not used correctly
- the conditional tense was not used correctly, eg *vajadze\t* instead of *vajadze\tu*.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates had to use information from three texts and write the text of an oral presentation to a class in a Latvian school in Australia about how they had celebrated a traditional rural Christmas in Latvia.

This task was done well, although not exceptionally well. Maximum use was not made of the texts. For instance, it would have been expected that some of the ancient beliefs would have been quoted.

All students realised that they had to produce a speech and had an adequate opening. They were realistic in that they greeted and addressed the class, and sometimes the teacher as well. They used the correct structure for this task and could write the text with logical progression.

One element that detracted from the quality of the answers was that the celebrations of Christmas and the personal element were not linked. Most students did not convince the markers that they had really celebrated Christmas in rural Latvia. The students talked about the traditions but did not involve themselves. In order to gain high marks, students should have described the activities in such a way to show that they had been there and had taken part in them. For example, they could have said something about going outside into the snow and cited the old

superstition. Another example would have been to describe their masks and get-up gear for the procession.

The weakness of some answers was grammatical inaccuracy. Errors included:

- *tradiski* instead of *tradicionali*
- *svine* instead of *svine\ t*
- *vecis cilve\ks* instead of *vecs cilve\ks*
- the debitive mood was not applied.

Some errors seemed to be caused by carelessness. Candidates are therefore advised to read their answers carefully before handing them in. Candidates are advised to read through the work once and pay particular attention to macrons and commas. Then re-read the work and pay close attention to spelling and to conjunctions such as *ka* and *kad*. Re-read it a third time and pay particular attention to tenses.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

All students chose Question 6, for which they had to choose two works relating to the theme of Love and relationships and write a review of each with the intention of promoting these two works in the publishing industry.

All students responded in English, even though it was not a requirement.

The students had a thorough knowledge and understanding of the texts that they had chosen. The question asked for a review, and this meant that it was not sufficient only to retell the story of the two works. Students must read the question carefully and answer what is asked for, rather than just write something.

Students could quote from the texts and retell the facts, etc. However, the links between the retelling of the texts and the theme could have been closer. Students must tie the work in with the theme, or say in what way the work reflects the theme.

The discourse form in this answer had to have an introduction, the body of writing, and a conclusion. Some students wrote the introduction in the second paragraph. It is suggested that teachers revise essay-writing structure again. This structure applies to all the answers in the themes.

The essays were of a good length. Once again there were many spelling mistakes, this time in English.

It was good to see that a range of resources was referred to. All students numbered their answers and all students completed the resources used box .

Some of the work had what seemed careless mistakes. Students are advised therefore to re-read their work and do some editing in the time available before handing it in.

Lithuanian

Note: If you experience any font display problems with the following Lithuanian text, please call Howard Jacobs at the Board of Studies on 9367 8039.

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

All the candidates were able to initiate and sustain a conversation. There were some errors in noun endings non-agreement of appropriate case endings.

Report and discussion

Most candidates were well prepared with their oral reports. There was some evidence of not linking ideas, and some reports sounded a little disjointed. Candidates showed their preparedness by capably engaging in discussion with the examiners. Most candidates self-corrected, showing awareness of the correct forms as they were conversing.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Most candidates answered all the questions correctly. There were some small inaccuracies in candidates rewording of the information. Where the question asked for three reasons to be given, some candidates gave only two in their answer.

Part B

Overall the candidates were able to cope with the task. However, the required discourse form was a travel brochure, and some candidates responded with an essay. Teachers are advised to make sure that they cover and teach the purpose, style, tone, and grammatical features of the different discourse forms.

Candidates ability to select and reorganise information showed up some comprehension confusion, eg *Traku pilyje ir galima pamatyti z'eme [s teismus, kurie pritraukia daug Europinu\$ turistu\$*. There was some misunderstanding with the similar words *kamerine [s* (chamber music) and *Karaimai* (Crimeans). Careless spelling mistakes included *pilije* for *pilyje*, and *jegu* for *jeigu*.

Paper 1

Part A: Writing in Lithuanian

Candidates made a pleasing effort and seemed to cope well with the topics. Half the candidates chose Question 1 and half Question 3.

Candidates are reminded to adhere to the discourse forms in their answers, and not write only an essay.

Common spelling and grammatical errors included *jokinga* for *juokinga*, *matem liutašš* for *matem liu\taš*. Codicils were omitted with *iš*, eg *iš Australijaš iš Lietuvaš*. There was evidence of translating directly from English, eg *as' esu iš lovaš, visi z'aide [jai Australijaš patinka*.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates managed the task well, although they are again reminded to take note of the discourse form and answer accordingly. Teachers must also advise candidates on time management in the examinations, so that all questions are answered.

Grammatical observations nouns and case endings *Prie Baltijos Ju\ra (Ju\ros)*, *priz'iu\re [ti vanduo (vandeniš)*; masculine and feminine forms *s'itokie (s'itokios) katastrofos, nuodingus (nuodingaš) medz'iagaš*; direct translations from English *vanduo bus tars'as*.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Questions 1 and 2 on the topic *Young people today* were chosen by candidates, who showed an ability to cope with the tasks. There was evidence of adequate preparation and understanding of the topic. Candidates who were less well prepared included some waffling, and the depth of treatment of the topic was not always evident. Both discourse forms (essay and report) were written well. Most candidates were able to structure and sequence their responses; however, spelling and some sentence structures could be improved. Resources (texts and newspapers) were listed (with little detail) in the box. Students must be specific in their listings

Macedonian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates responded confidently to the range of questions and topics covered. They demonstrated a sound knowledge of the language and most demonstrated skills and strategies that enabled them to initiate and sustain a conversation.

In the weaker responses there was some occasional use of dialect and grammatical errors, such as incorrect use of gender and incorrect or English terminology for common vocabulary items such as school subjects evident. Most candidates attempted to use complex sentence structures and a range of appropriate vocabulary.

Report and Discussion

Candidates had selected an interesting range of topics.

There was a range of levels in this section of the examination. Some candidates had evidently prepared their reports well and spoke confidently and were able to discuss the range of information and ideas presented, others appeared to rely on their knowledge of the language and general knowledge and did not demonstrate a deep knowledge of the topic selected. The report needs to be well structured and based on research.

Candidates are reminded that it is of benefit to the discussion if they have information and ideas to present or can present an opinion that can be justified with evidence from resource material.

Candidates are reminded that two topics must be prepared and the choice of topic rests with the examiner.

Paper 1: Processing spoken information

Part A: Tasks on the two spoken passages

Students were able to understand both passages well and provide answers to the questions correctly.

Some students had poor note-taking skills and were therefore not able to answer some questions as well. A few unnecessarily wrote complete sentences rather than noting down points. They were not able to find the key point in an elaborate comment or statement.

Part B: Drawing on both passages

Since most students clearly understood the two passages they were able to use the information appropriately. Those that presented the information in their own words were able to make their work flow smoothly. Some students actually used whole sentences and phrases directly from the passages and tried to incorporate these into their own work. Students are reminded to take careful stock of the conventions of the discourse form.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Macedonian

Students wrote on a variety of topics and had the choice of a wide range of discourse forms. The quality of the writing was generally good and the topics chosen reflected their writing capabilities. Letter writing was usually the most commonly chosen discourse form. Students must remember that their response must be interesting enough to maintain the reader's attention. They need to be creative and convincing in their writing.

Many students showed good control of the written language but others needed to take more care in order to avoid unnecessary errors. One of the common grammatical mistakes was the gender recognition of nouns and making appropriate adjectival agreements — a problem that should not occur at year 12 level. Most of the students showed a fair range of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure.

Part B: Reorganising written information

Students who performed well in this part of the paper, were able to read through the written information and select or note important details that they then used in their writing. They were then able to select the most important. They were able to link related ideas well although some students had difficulty in organising the selected information into a meaningful sequence. Overall the structure of the written pieces was quite good.

Some students were able to present the information available in their own words, but those who transcribed information directly from the given passages did not score very well.

Students are reminded that they should remain aware of the purpose and aim of the question, and use this knowledge to select relevant information from all the resources for their work. They should then combine the information from these resources to answer the question, again keeping in mind the purpose of the writing.

Maltese

Conversation

The candidates' ability to initiate/respond to spontaneous conversation was predominantly good. The high-scoring candidates had carefully prepared the key conversation points allowing themselves the opportunity to ad lib as necessary. This allowed them to converse fluently with the examiners. The low-scoring candidates tended to recite verbatim a memorised text. This often meant that when the examiners asked something which the candidates had not pre-scripted, the conversation from the candidate came to a grinding halt. In general these candidates experienced no difficulty in generating spontaneous conversation on all familiar topics such as school.

Report and discussion

In this part of the examination, candidates present a report on a topic of their choice for two minutes then discuss its contents in more depth with the examiners for about five minutes. This year's candidates presented a variety of topics that ranged from the traditional, such as the Maltese Festa to the contemporary, such as heroin use and the changing food patterns of the Maltese in Australia. Most reports provided a suitable basis for discussion. Most reports were well-structured with a proper introduction, body and conclusion. Some candidates would have benefited from giving more emphasis to remembering the key points rather than memorising the whole report. The majority of the candidates however, engaged and held the examiners' attention throughout Part 2 of the examination.

In general, the candidates responded well even to quite challenging questions.

Paper 1: Processing spoken information

The students' overall performance ranged from medium to very high. They understood the criteria and the requirements of the task and responded appropriately. The correct discourse forms were used and word limits were observed. The responses were accurate and little students had difficulty in selecting and using relevant information. However, some students retained the original wording and the same sequence of main points. A few students included information, which was not included in the original text.

Part A

Overall, students did well in this task. Medium-scoring students would have done better had they been more attentive when listening to spoken Maltese and when putting the information together.

Part B

Generally, students did well in this part of the paper. The higher-scoring students, however, were those who juxtaposed and rearranged the arguments for and against further scientific research, highlighting contrasts. Less able students would have scored better had they only used relevant information contained in the spoken passages.

Most students observed the features of the discourse form such as format, and style, and submitted culturally appropriate pieces of writing. The higher-scoring students linked the ideas in a logical manner to build up to the argument for their article.

Unfortunately, some repeated the same information, in the same order, and in the same context — an approach which suggests lazy thinking. Students need to remain aware that the purpose of the task is to assess their ability to process all the information, elicit the salient points from that information, and to use these points to create a **new** piece of writing. The higher-scoring students reorganised the information appropriately.

Most students demonstrated good control of the language and completed the task well. The medium-scoring students would have done better had they had a wider range of vocabulary and structures. Higher-scoring students were more accurate in the variety and use of their linguistic elements.

Quite a few students followed the original wording closely. A few did a great job at paraphrasing what they heard on the recording to complete the task. The higher-scoring students, however, elicited the salient points from the passages and paraphrased them to complete the task.

Paper 2

Most students understood the requirements of the task with their scores ranging from medium to very high. The quality of the work submitted was good overall with some outstanding students. The higher-scoring students seem to have understood and followed the expectation for the task better and produced more creative responses.

Part A: Writing in Maltese

The breadth of treatment of the chosen topics varied with most students fitting comfortably into a midway position, demonstrating a good understanding of the task and this criterion. The higher-scoring students seemed covered the topic in greater depth and drew on more points. The pieces of writing were engaging and interesting. They used techniques to construct their writing in a way that reached a climax, a surprise or a well thought out punchline at the end.

As in Paper 1, most students observed the conventions of the discourse form, for example with regard to style, sequencing, cultural appropriateness and specification of length. All the students were aware of the importance of the organisation of the content and their writing was structured with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

Overall, students demonstrated a good command of the Maltese language with the higher-scoring students demonstrating greater language control and accuracy in their use of the linguistic elements. Students could have used a wider range of vocabulary and sentence structures. These two techniques would have helped them gain some additional marks. The higher-scoring students showed a better understanding of the subtleties and nuances of Maltese vocabulary and used it more effectively.

Part B: Reorganising written information

Most students did well in this part of the paper; however, some persisted in using information which was not provided in the original texts.

It was very encouraging to see that most students observed the conventions of the discourse form. The higher-scoring students greeted their audience, introduced themselves and their topic, and delivered their address methodically. They linked the ideas to formulate their address. However, in most instances the information was not manipulated and reorganised appropriately but re-produced in the same order and in the same context as it was presented. This approach does not address the task and prevents students from being creative. By re-packaging the information provided students demonstrate understanding and the ability to reorder it into a meaningful and original sequence to produce a new piece of writing for a new purpose.

Generally, students demonstrated good control of the Maltese language to complete their task appropriately. The points made were clearly and accurately expressed. Medium-scoring students had a limited range of vocabulary and understanding of grammatical rules.

Quite a few students stuck to the original wording to complete the task. This cut and paste approach denies the students the opportunity to re-organise the information provided. The higher-scoring students related the same ideas in a paraphrased fashion, demonstrating their ability to move away from the original text and to express themselves independently.

Paper 3: Discussing a theme

The students' performance in this paper was good with a variety of responses. Students understood the requirements of the task and most responded appropriately, by demonstrating understanding and appreciation of the texts studied and adhering to the required word limit. The breadth of treatment of the texts was adequate, and better students used the information to present a good piece of writing.

All students presented their work in a context that was relevant to the demands of the task. They structured their work well using an introduction, body and conclusion. The medium-scoring students would have gained additional marks had they made better use of logical sequencing of ideas, the use of a key sentence in every paragraph and appropriate linking of paragraphs to lead the reader through their writing.

Persian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The candidates' general ability to handle a range of questions across a variety of topics was sound. Weaker candidates had difficulty going beyond a minimal response but the majority answered in detail. There were only minor grammatical errors and some interference of English vocabulary evident.

Report and Discussion

Few candidates had prepared the report well. Many candidates spoke from personal experience rather than a discussion based on research or resources. The best candidates had researched their topics well and were able to both present and discuss information and ideas logically and coherently. Some candidates appeared to have lifted information directly from sources rather than conveying it in their own words.

Candidates need to be reminded that they must be prepared to discuss either of the two topics nominated for the examination.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Most candidates performed very well in Part A. The majority of students answered this part in Persian.

Part B

Generally students coped well with this task and selected relevant information. However, some candidates experienced difficulties organising and sequencing information.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Persian

Question 2 was the most popular question and Question 3 the least popular. The overall performance was very good. It was noted that many students wrote more than the suggested length, and some very capable students used very high level sentence structures and effective language. However, those who scored poorly lacked adequate knowledge of accurate Persian script, which consequently affected the whole sentence structure and other areas of their writing skills.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

This task was generally handled well. However, some students copied information directly from the given text(s). In a few instances students scored poorly because of difficulties with organising and sequencing information. Another area of concern was misinterpretation. Some students scored poorly against the capacity to select and use relevant information criterion.

As in previous parts of the examination, students who revealed difficulties in using correct script, spelling, grammar and sentence structures, and appropriate vocabulary scored poorly against the criterion effective expression and control of the language required to complete the task .

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Generally students coped satisfactorily with this task. Women in Persian-speaking Countries was the most popular theme, and Question 3 was the most frequently answered question.

Most students were reasonably well prepared and their responses reflected thorough knowledge and understanding of the topic, although a number of students did respond in sufficient depth.

Some students did not base their responses on the resources studied and relied instead on their own opinions and information. This was reflected in their score on understanding and appreciation of the works. Some students did not list resources in the space provided, while others listed inappropriate titles and resources. A few students did not indicate the question number, and some students only summarised the information from the resources used in the theme Women in Persian-speaking Countries. These students failed to demonstrate depth of treatment in their responses and scored very poorly against this criterion.

The comment mentioned previously regarding Persian writing skills was also evident in this paper. The English writing skills of students in general were barely satisfactory, while some were not satisfactory.

Polish

Note: If you experience any font display problems with the following text, please call Howard Jacobs at the Board of Studies on 9367 8039.

Conversation, Report and Discussion

In general candidates performed very well in both the Conversation and Report and Discussion.

Conversation

The majority of candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of vocabulary and structures, excellent pronunciation and maintained a reasonable flow with some evidence of grammatical error relating to agreement of endings of various parts of speech.

Report and Discussion

Most candidates appeared well prepared and were able to convey their report clearly and logically. The better candidates showed a good understanding of the topics, and in the discussion were able to discuss ideas, and present and defend an opinion. There was ample evidence that candidates had used a variety of resources to research their report.

The outstanding candidates had prepared ambitious topics that they were able to discuss intelligently and in depth showing evidence of considerable research. There was some evidence of incorrect use of idiom, but on the whole the standard of Polish was extremely high.

The weaker reports relied on general knowledge or personal opinion rather than research and were based on topics that were not particularly interesting or allowed for discussion. In these reports, expression was occasionally limited and there was evidence of grammatical error, ie declension of proper nouns.

Although in general reports were well-structured, candidates are reminded of the importance of structuring their reports within the 1-2 minutes allocated for this task.

There was a noticeable improvement in cultural appropriateness, eg using the passive form instead of personal pronoun in the active form.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A: Task on the Two Spoken Passages

Two candidates answered different questions in different languages.

A small number of students struggled to explain how wild animals that live on ecological farms behave and/or did not list all the ways that people can spend their time on an ecological holiday.

Overall, candidates scored well against the capacity to select and use relevant information criterion.

Part B: Task Drawing on Both Passages

In Part B candidates were asked to write a letter to a family going to Poland and wanting to spend time in a quiet place. Students had to explain what ecological holidays involve and to encourage the family to choose one.

Students gave sufficient relevant information; however, they had difficulties with the second part of the task. Although the capacity to select information was high, the use of relevant information was only satisfactory.

A large number of candidates scored poorly against the criterion effective expression (control of the language), revealing an inability to use appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures. Some candidates had difficulties with the declension of nouns and adjectives through cases and the conjugation of verbs (particularly in the past tense, plural). In some cases there was a lack of consistency between verbs and subjects.

A number of candidates did not observe basic spelling rules. In some cases students did not fully observe the discourse form and missed important elements such as capital letters in personal pronouns, paragraphs, or the date and place of a letter.

Overall, against the form and organisation and effective expression criteria, candidates scored satisfactorily.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Polish

Question 2 was the most popular question, followed by Questions 3, 1, and 4.

Although Question 2 was the most popular topic, it was generally poorly presented and did not meet the clarity of expression and variety and appropriateness of vocabulary and sentence structuring criteria. Only one piece of work on Question 2 was outstanding in every aspect.

Across all questions weaknesses were generally related to control of the language required by the topics, including appropriateness of vocabulary and accuracy in the use of linguistic elements. Mention must be made of spelling and grammar mistakes in this part of the examination.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Most candidates performed at a satisfactory level in this part of the examination. Most wrote more than the suggested length, but some did not use the information provided, and based their answers only on their own knowledge and opinions.

Most students understood the texts and selected and reorganised the relevant information satisfactorily.

As in previous parts of the examination, many candidates had difficulties with control of the language required to complete the task there were many grammatical, linguistic, and spelling mistakes.

Examples of Incorrect Spelling

Examples of Linguistic Errors

Most students coped well with the required discourse form.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

This task requires students to respond to a task on one of the two themes that they had studied throughout the year, using the resources suggested in the syllabus.

Students responses in this section showed sound evidence of preparation and good knowledge of resources studied. However, many students had difficulties with analysing resources and using them appropriately in their writing.

In many cases students wrote about the plot from the literature studied or talked about what they know about friendship, instead of concentrating on the issue. Many students showed low ability to logically plan their works and to see the major points.

In some places misinterpretation of some events or parts of the literature was evident.

A very small number of students did not refer to resources and as a result scored very poorly against the criterion understanding and appreciation of the works . Some students did not answer the question and/or mixed up the names of characters, authors, and facts from the resources.

Questions 3 and 4 were the most popular questions, followed by Questions 1 and 2.

In Question 4 some students gave both positions on the statement Friendship lasts forever , instead of writing either *for* or *against* it.

In Question 3 a number of students gave two negative examples of friendship and were unable to prove that difficulties in people s lives can strengthen friendship.

In Topic 2 students talked about love, but there was little evidence that love is the greatest power in a person s life .

In Topic 1 students had difficulties incorporating literature into their speeches about the positive and negative aspects of disputes between the generations .

In some cases students had difficulties coping with the prescribed discourse forms and the structure and sequence of their responses. Generally the level of students' language in this part of the examination was satisfactory.

Students from the states where the language could be chosen to complete this task usually chose English. Some who chose to write in Polish appeared to struggle to complete this part of the examination because of an insufficient level of language.

Some responses were extremely long (three booklets), and the structure of these responses was not effective.

The standard of responses in this part of the examination would improve if students put more effort into reading the question carefully and then discussing/analysing the material they plan to use, rather than writing a summary of the resources that relate to the theme.

Portuguese

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates had no difficulty comprehending a range of questions from simple to complex and to go beyond the minimal response.

The level of language in the conversation was very high. Errors included incorrect person, incorrect verb endings and the use of English terms instead of Portuguese and the use of inappropriate youth jargon.

Report and Discussion

There was a diverse range of interesting topics chosen which was pleasing. The reports were generally well prepared, although in some instances candidates had evidently memorised the report and this impeded their ability to discuss the report at any depth. Candidates are advised to use their own words and to present the information as naturally as possible and to become familiar with the topic to maximise their ability to discuss the information presented.

There was evidence that candidates had used a range of sources to provide them with the information required.

General Comments

All three parts of the written examination proved to be quite accessible, as candidates generally attained high marks.

Paper 1: Processing spoken information

Most students performed well in Paper 1 and were able to access the relevant information from both passages, completing task 1 and 2 without difficulty. The majority of students were able to link the ideas logically and only a few of them were not able to write clearly.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Portuguese

Students were given a choice of 4 tasks. Most of students responded appropriately to the tasks. The most popular was the imaginative story. The reader's interest was maintained in most cases. There were some problems in the use of verbs and linguistic elements.

Part B: Reorganising written information

Some students demonstrated their ability to select and use the relevant information for the task. However others did not understand their role and wrote incorrect information or they transcribed large segments from the original texts. Students are reminded that they are required to reorganise the material they select from the passages in a logical and sequential manner using the correct discourse form.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Students were offered a range of topics and overall, the paper was well answered; some wrote in English others in Portuguese, and spelling errors were in evidence. Most of the students made the reference to the resources studied during the year but some did not.

Russian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

In general, candidates performed well, although the level of ability of expression and range of vocabulary was generally not as impressive as in previous years.

Conversation

Candidates demonstrated good comprehension of a range of questions on a variety of topics. Most candidates responded confidently and provided thoughtful answers, often at some length. The clarity of expression and the variety of vocabulary and structures were generally good, although there was evidence of the influence of English syntax and vocabulary in many responses.

Report and Discussion

The majority of candidates appeared to have researched their chosen topic thoroughly and many demonstrated a keen interest in the topic they had chosen which came across in the discussion. Candidates presented their reports logically and coherently, and most were able to discuss the information and ideas with the examiner.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A: Tasks on the Two Spoken Passages

Most candidates performed well in this paper. Some candidates used the wrong geographical name or date (eg Switzerland instead of Sweden, fifteenth century instead of thirteenth). A few candidates could list only five of the six features that give St Petersburg its unique appearance.

Part B: Task Drawing on Both Passages

Most candidates selected and used relevant information and observed the conventions of the discourse form, i.e. a report. Some candidates started the report without addressing the audience. Few candidates had problems organising the information into a meaningful sequence.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Russian

The most popular topic was Question 1. This was followed in order of popularity by Question 4

Education does not end after graduating from school or university, and Question 2. The least popular question was Question 3. Most candidates dealt well with all aspects of the chosen topic, expressing complex ideas of their own. Most candidates observed the conventions of the required discourse forms.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Candidates were required to read three different items of information and reorganise the information as an interview. Most candidates handled this task well; however, some candidates failed to reorganise the information as an interview, and others did not select and use all the information. Few students went far beyond the required number of words.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Most students handled this paper well. The most popular task was Question 2, followed in order of popularity by Question 5, Question 1, Question 4, and Question 3.

Serbian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The majority of candidates responded fluently to this section of the examination. Candidates demonstrated the ability to go beyond a minimal response and appeared confident in their ability to respond to and convey information and ideas. There was a high degree of linguistic competence evident, with only minor grammatical errors evident, such as incorrect case endings.

Report and Discussion

Most candidates were well prepared and presented a researched report. Many candidates were able to elaborate on the topic during the discussion. The information was generally presented logically and clearly and did not appear to be lifted directly from source material but reorganised in the candidates' own words.

A minority of candidates appeared to speak from personal experience rather than a research base. These candidates had greater difficulty sustaining the discussion that followed the presentation.

Candidates referred to a variety of sources, with the Internet proving the most popular.

Candidates are advised to broaden the topic base of their reports to allow for greater discussion of ideas and opinions rather than facts and to structure their reports within the 1-2 minutes allocated.

General Comments

Overall, candidates performed well in the examination. However, there are a number of issues common to the tasks across the paper that are worthy of noting.

- Candidates should read the requirements of each task carefully. Each task specifies what should be addressed, to whom and the discourse form to be used.
- For most tasks, the maximum word length is specified. Candidates should practise writing to this specification within the approximate time available.
- Candidates should write appropriately for the discourse form required by the task. This includes using the appropriate conventions of the discourse form.
- Responses should be logically and coherently sequenced.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

In general, candidates demonstrated an excellent ability to select and use relevant information.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Serbian

The most popular question was the informal letter.

Candidates responded appropriately to the tasks and wrote relevant, well-balanced responses overall.

Areas requiring attention in some instances were syntax and variety of sentence structures.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

In general, candidates performed well. However, some showed weaknesses in linking related ideas from the texts.

Candidates demonstrated a range of ability in terms of vocabulary and structures.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

In general, performed well. Candidates are again reminded of the need to refer to two relevant resources in their responses.

Slovenian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Candidates handled a range of simple to complex questions on a range of topics. They answered fully, giving detailed comment. There were no major grammatical errors evident.

Report and Discussion

Reports were well researched and the choice of topics interesting. Candidates demonstrated an impressive ability to analyse and evaluate the ideas and compare and contrast the information presented. Candidates used a range of vocabulary and structures in their presentation..

There was evidence of a range of resources used, beyond those available in Slovenian. Candidates demonstrated an ability to use English sources and translate the information accurately in Slovenian, without recourse to anglicisms.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Candidates demonstrated an excellent ability to select relevant information.

Part B

Candidates produced succinct, appropriate responses that were well structured. They used the correct discourse form.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Slovenian

The small number of candidates chose to write on a variety of the tasks. They demonstrated knowledge of a range of vocabulary and structures.

The weaker responses were characterised by a limited range of vocabulary, grammatical errors and a lack of fluency in the writing.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

The task was a challenging one for some candidates. However, the more able candidates handled it exceptionally well.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Examiners were impressed with the responses to this task. Candidates made in depth and appropriate references to the resource material and presented coherent, logical responses to the task.

Swedish

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

All candidates demonstrated the ability to comprehend and respond to the range of questions asked. All went beyond the minimum expected and demonstrated a range of vocabulary and sentence structures

Report and Discussion

The overall standard was high with all candidates well prepared and demonstrating evidence of research. A small minority of candidates did not appear adequately prepared for the report and discussion.

General Comments

The majority of candidates complied with the requirements of the written examination and dealt satisfactorily in processing both spoken and written material. There were fewer candidates who felt that it was more important to write at length and not be selective. On the other hand, a few weaker candidates tended to be too bound to the phraseology of the text instead of using their own words to convey the information.

Paper 1

Parts A and B: Processing spoken information,

Students clearly understood the spoken passages, and were able to accurately extract relevant information and attempted to use it effectively. A number of students were very successful in presenting the information in their own words. Generally students demonstrated familiarity with the discourse form and were able to link related ideas well. Greater attention is still needed in extending vocabulary and knowledge of grammar structures.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Swedish

Most students responded appropriately to the demands of the task. Overall writing tasks demonstrated consideration of the purpose of the writing and reader interest. The topics chosen were generally of sufficient depth. The better pieces demonstrated good control of language and a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structure.

Students are encouraged to select a topic that enables them to demonstrate their ability and control of the language, and are encouraged to remain aware of the purpose of the task and to maintain reader interest.

Part B: Reorganising written information

Students were able to select information from the texts and reorganise it in a coherent manner using their own words. Weaker students just transcribed sentences from the texts provided instead of presenting the information in their own phraseology. In the best responses, students synthesised information from both texts, wrote coherently and independently of the wording of the original texts, and demonstrated evidence of variety in vocabulary and language structures.

Paper 3: Discussing a theme

The overall performance of the students in this part of the examination was pleasing. Most students dealt proficiently with the topic of childhood experiences as shown in literature.

A few responses lacked explicit and appropriate references to resources to support the task chosen. Students are reminded that they need to make appropriate and relevant references to the resources they have studied during the year.

Turkish

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

The majority handled the questions well with a few candidates requiring questions to be rephrased, paraphrased and/or repeated. Candidates were generally able to go beyond a minimal response and some answered thoughtfully and in depth to the range of questions and topics.

There was a range of abilities represented, with common linguistic errors associated with the poorer responses including:

- Inconsistent and incorrect use of tense
- Incorrect pronunciation
- Incorrect subject/verb agreement
- Use of English or dialect on vocabulary choice
- Difficulties with use of the active and passive voice

Report and Discussion

Most candidates had prepared their reports thoroughly and there was evidence of a range of sources used to support their preparation. Candidates demonstrated the ability to analyse and synthesise the information and present it in their own words.

Some candidates appeared ill prepared and endeavored to speak from their own general knowledge or experience. These candidates had difficulty sustaining a discussion.

Candidates are advised to:

- avoid topics of a very general nature that can not be covered effectively in the time available
- limit the scope of topics and aim to discuss the topic chosen in some depth
- select topics that are of interest to them
- structure reports within the time available
- avoid a rote learned delivery

- avoid the use of English words, ie school subjects

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Candidates are reminded:

- that the use of red pen or pencil is not appropriate
- of the need to read questions carefully
- that they must choose either Turkish or English to answer all the questions in Part A.

Teachers are reminded of the need for directed classroom exercises targeting particular aspects of grammar and vocabulary.

Part A

Most candidates were able to identify the relevant information from the two passages.

Part B

Generally responses included relevant information although weaker responses were characterised by weaknesses in sequencing of ideas, grammar, choice of vocabulary (eg *daktilo, beceri, tausiye, kagit*), tense use, spelling (eg *önemsel kaatlar*) and syntax (eg *degerli 12. Sinif öğrenciler, zaman simdi is arama saatine geldi, iyidirsiniz*)

Some candidates had difficulty with the conventions of the discourse form. Candidates need to observe the conventions of the form and write logically, using only the information from the two passages. Weaknesses included lack of basic punctuation including capitalisation, lack of paragraphing and errors of spelling.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Turkish

Most candidates responded appropriately to the demands of the task chosen, although there were a few instances of candidates misunderstanding the content or context of the task. Candidates need to be reminded to read the task carefully to ensure the requirements are clearly understood.

Most candidates demonstrated the ability to respond adequately to their chosen topic. However, in many instances the responses lacked breadth and or depth. Some candidates failed to use the conventions of the discourse form.

In some responses the influence of English was particularly evident, eg *Athens, tikits, Olympics*.

Many candidates prepared responses that reflected the transcription of spoken language, rather than in a style appropriate to written discourse forms. Teachers are reminded to expose candidates to the range of discourse forms in the syllabus and ensure candidates are aware of the conventions associated with each of these. This will ensure that candidates have some choice of tasks in this part of the Paper.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Texts in this part are linked thematically so that candidates can synthesise the information and reorganise it to produce a new text. Candidates need to be reminded that they should use only the information provided in the texts.

Many candidates failed to use headings in their response although the form and organisation was well done overall. Most candidates were able to reorganise the information in their own words, while a small number simply copied information verbatim from the original texts.

The greatest weakness was evidenced in the criteria of effective expression. Candidates responses showed weaknesses of grammar, in sentence structure, spelling and some in the basic conventions of punctuation.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Candidates wrote on the range of topics offered. However, many candidates failed to make clear and explicit reference to the resources studied during the year. Candidates are required to refer to at least two resources and relate these to the task. Scripts are marked against criteria that include the ability to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the resources studied.

Candidates should write legibly in pen or biro and not in pencil.

Ukrainian

Conversation, Report and Discussion

Conversation

Most candidates were well prepared and spoke confidently. Candidates were prepared to engage in conversation and go beyond a minimal response in their answers. Nearly all candidates were able to respond to a range of questions from simple to complex.

Candidates demonstrated knowledge of a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to the topics discussed. There was some use of anglicisms evident and grammatical errors in case use.

Report and Discussion

Topics presented in the reports were varied, interesting and well researched. Candidates appeared well prepared without relying on memorisation. Some candidates appeared very familiar with their topics, spoke enthusiastically with interest and were able to contribute to a lively discussion.

There was evidence of a range of resources used, both in Ukrainian and English, including the Internet, books and peer interviews. Most candidates appeared to use their own words rather than lifting information directly from sources.

The level of language used was appropriate to the topics. Candidates used a variety of sentence structures, some complex. Vocabulary used was appropriate to the topics and pronunciation good. There were few glaring errors of grammar.

Paper 1: Processing Spoken Information

Part A

Candidates demonstrated an excellent ability to select relevant information.

Part B

Candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the two passages and the ability to select relevant information for the processing task.

Some candidates had difficulty with the conventions of the discourse form.

Paper 2

Part A: Writing in Ukrainian

Candidates are strongly advised to revise the conventions of the most popular discourse forms, ie diary, review and letter. Candidates are reminded of the need to maintain the reader's interest.

Part B: Reorganising Written Information

Some candidates found the task excessively challenging, others did not reorganise the material but copied verbatim from the texts. The best responses demonstrated a creative reorganisation of the material written for the particular discourse form specified by the question.

Paper 3: Discussing a Theme

Only question 2 was attempted.

Overall, the question was answered well although more attention should be paid to language and structure.