



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The performance of the majority of students in 2007 was very good. Most students were able to engage in lively exchanges with the assessors and demonstrated good oral skills in Maltese. The top students showed an ability to change quickly and smoothly from one topic to another during the Conversation, while average students did not always respond as spontaneously to the assessors' questions which resulted in gaps in the flow of conversation. Pronunciation was of an acceptable standard.

The main topic for the Discussion for this year was World War II. Sub-topics were varied and had clearly been studied in depth. Many students were well prepared and engaged in a detailed discussion of the sub-topic they had chosen for the Detailed Study. Quite a few of the students brought props (such as photos) to support their arguments. A few weaker students presented a basic study of the sub-topic and sometimes their range of vocabulary was rather limited. Some students could have obtained better results if they had avoided studying the information on their sub-topic in rote form.

Most students were very confident in their oral skills and used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar. Students are encouraged to use Maltese as the medium of communication whenever possible. Listening more to spoken Maltese (via media, music, etc.) will help improve pronunciation and oral communication skills. Most students kept to the time limit and all used the correct greetings when entering and leaving the room.

Section 1 – Conversation

This section involves a conversation between the assessors and the students about their personal world. The higher performing students handled the Conversation with great confidence and demonstrated an ability to engage in flowing, spontaneous conversation. These students were able to maintain a natural interaction with the assessors and demonstrated the correct use of language structures.

A few students were less fluent in their oral skills and expressed their ideas with some difficulty. Sometimes the range of vocabulary was limited. In such cases, assessors often supported the student by rephrasing a question to overcome short pauses. Students are advised to develop a greater range of vocabulary by listening to and using the Maltese language more frequently when opportunities arise.

Overall, the majority of this year's students demonstrated excellent oral skills and handled this section with great confidence.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topic chosen for the Discussion this year was World War II. This topic is broad enough to provide students with a reasonable choice of sub-topics which can accommodate a range of interests and perspectives. The majority of students had researched their topic in depth and used various resources such as books, interviews, talks, videos and the Internet to obtain information for their Detailed Study. The choice of sub-topics varied greatly.

High-scoring students provided a lot of relevant factual information and demonstrated good research skills. These students answered questions without difficulty and were able to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately. The average-scoring students demonstrated some knowledge of the texts but failed to show enough knowledge of content to fill the required time. A few students had learned the whole sub-topic by rote and found it difficult to answer questions posed by the assessors when interrupted. Students are encouraged to practise their verbal communication skills so that the discussion is natural and spontaneous.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students' performances in the written component of the 2007 Maltese examination varied from average to high.



Section 1 – Listening and responding

Most students did very well in this section, but others had difficulty in either understanding the questions or remembering details, and answered inappropriately. All students followed the instructions and answered all questions in the correct language.

Part A – Answer in English

Students listened to five recorded texts in Maltese and had to answer questions in English. The majority of students did well in this section.

Text 1

Question 1a.

Students had to choose one of:

- huge success in Europe and America
- they will have only one concert at the Sydney Town Hall.

All students answered this question correctly.

Question 1b.

Both of:

- buses provided from Melbourne and Adelaide to Sydney
- booking accommodation for two nights in youth hostels or hotels.

The majority of the students answered correctly and included both of the above answers.

Question 1c.

Both of:

- they were to keep interested listeners informed about ‘Qawsalla’
- they had been granted an exclusive interview with the pop group.

The majority of students answered this question correctly, while a few gave only one correct answer.

Text 2

Question 2a.

The correct answer was:

- Grand Master Perellos gave them as a gift to the city on being elected.

Almost all students circled the correct answer.

Question 2b.

Both of:

- to record the condition of each square centimetre on a plan of the tapestries
- to enter the information on the computer at the University.

Most students answered the question correctly.

Question 2c.

- Doris’ tasks were tedious/boring: No, they were not. She was excited to be part of such a project/looked forward to each day’s work.
- Because Malta is so small, Doris must have seen everything there was to see: No, her parents had been to Malta several times and only saw a fraction of the art treasures.

Students needed to provide two wrong assumptions and Doris’ response to each assumption. Half of the students included all four answers, while others gave two or three correct answers.

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Text 3

Question 3a.

Any three of:

- it was hot
- she had sore feet
- she was thirsty
- she was worried about her article
- it was difficult to find a table in the café.

Three quarters of the students answered this question correctly. The others gave only two correct answers.

Question 3b.

Any three of:

- he ignored her complaints
- he kept talking about the food/how hungry he was
- he told Sandra to get a picture from some other festa for her article
- he said he never carries a camera.

Only half of the students gave three correct answers.

Question 3c.

Both of:

- her battery was flat just when she was about to take a photo
- Fredu rang his friend's mobile and asked him to email the photo.

The majority of students answered this question correctly and received full marks.

Part B – Answer in Maltese

Text 4

Question 4b. proved to be difficult and only one student included all four answers.

Question 4a.

Both of:

- the mother was writing postcards
- the father was reading the newspaper.

All students answered this question correctly.

Question 4b.

Vicky:

- immediately ran to help the little boy, without thinking about her own safety or her computer
- called out to the parents, but they did not hear her, so she climbed over the wall to help the child herself
- turned her laptop bag upside down and offered it to the child to grab
- lifted the child onto the wall to safety.

Very few students included the four answers above, with the majority giving between one and three correct answers.

Text 5

Question 5a.

Both of:

- she would spend her life in a kitchen
- it's a job which is noisy and greasy.

Half of the students included the two statements above, while most of the rest gave only one answer. .



Question 5b.

Both of:

- he owns his own company, Borg Financial Services
- he owns a property in the shopping centre.

Half of the students included both of the above answers, while the others included one.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

In Part A of Section 2 most students demonstrated an understanding of the texts and answered most questions accurately.

Text 6

Three students gave correct responses to all four parts of Question 6. The others gave incorrect answers to one or two of the questions.

Question 6a.

All of:

- 1988: Spent a summer in Malta
- 2000: Finished a course in fashion design; worked in Italy in a big fashion house
- 2001–2004: Started his own business in a warehouse, designing swimwear
- 2005–2007: Worked with theatre costumes
- 2008: Plans to go to London to do a course in costume design

More than half of the students included all five answers. The others gave only four.

Question 6b.

When he was 12 he spent a summer in Malta by the beach, then he returned to Australia for another summer.

Almost all students answered this question correctly.

Question 6c.

Any three of:

- he started his own business
- he made good use of his opportunities
- he took up the challenge of designing and working with theatre costumes
- he used his experiences abroad for his creative work.

Half of the students responded to this question correctly. The others included one or two correct answers.

Question 6d.

She provided her expertise as an embroiderer when she was younger in Malta. She went to work and helped Albert every day.

Nearly all students answered this question correctly.

Text 7

Question 7a.

All three of:

- up to World War II, after reaching puberty
- a woman had to wear a faldetta every time she left the house
- a woman had to cover herself from head to toe as a sign of modesty.

Three quarters of the students included all the above sentences, while others students provided only two.

Question 7b.

- Both the faldetta and the clothes designed by Pietru required special sewing skills.



- The faldetta was black and sombre, whereas swimwear is brightly coloured and attractive.
- The faldetta is designed to cover the body, whereas swimwear is designed to show off the body.
- The faldetta was uncomfortable on windy or hot days and required some getting used to, whereas swimwear is comfortable and easy to wear.

This question was quite challenging for students and only a few students included all four statements. Most students gave between one and three correct statements.

Question 7c.

All of:

- black cotton for ordinary days, black silk for special occasions. Hand sewn with tiny needles and almost invisible stitches
- a long piece of cardboard which is inserted on the top of the faldetta, between two pieces of material to stiffen the head part
- wire to keep it in place.

Just under half of the students included all three of the above answers. The majority of the other students gave two correct answers.

Part B – Answer in Maltese

In Part B, half of the students understood the task and demonstrated knowledge of the conventions of how to write an informal letter. The other half demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of the requirements of the task.

Question 8

In this question students had to respond to an informal letter written by a pen pal who is about to visit Malta during Christmas. The scores ranged from top marks to average. Higher-scoring students produced a piece of writing that showed sequential ideas, good organisation of information as well as the inclusion of more complex language structures. Average-scoring students' writing demonstrated these skills but to a lesser degree.

The majority of students demonstrated good knowledge of the conventions of letter writing; however, some students did not know the basic conventions of writing an informal letter and subsequently could not score highly. Teachers are encouraged to explain clearly the requirements of this text type.

Section 3 – Writing in Maltese

In Section 3, Questions 9, 10 and 12 were attempted by students, with the most popular being Question 9, which was an imaginative topic. No students attempted Question 11. In this section a number of students showed a good understanding of the task. They used correct language structures and their ideas flowed sequentially. Others students were less able to convince the assessors that they had understood the task and that they could write a piece of text that clearly demonstrated this.

Question 9

Students had to write an imaginary story for a children's publication about a special animal. This question was the most popular and was chosen by more than half of the students. The scores for this question ranged from above average to high, with three students gaining nearly full marks. Most of the students who tackled this essay understood the target audience and wrote in an easy, flowing style suitable for children's literature. The higher-scoring students demonstrated an extensive knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. Some story lines were very creative.

Question 10

For Question 10, students had to write the text for a speech to give at a school assembly, persuading students of the importance of learning languages in this era of globalisation. Most of the students who chose this topic scored average marks as they failed to convince the assessors because the arguments presented were rather weak. The organisation of ideas and knowledge and understanding of vocabulary and grammar were often not strong. In some cases, spelling was rather poor.

Question 11

Students were required to write a critical review for the local newspaper, evaluating the variety and quality of a recent Maltese art exhibition.

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No students chose this topic.

Question 12

Students had to write an informative article for their school magazine to tell other students about the experience of participating in a big campaign to clean up a river. Only a few students attempted this question. The information was presented in a very convincing way. One student wrote an excellent text and used idioms to embellish their writing, such as '*hdiemna daqs klieb*'; '*Kemm trod salib*' and '*mill-lejl ghan-nhar*'. The language structures and use of vocabulary in the texts written by the average-scoring students were of a satisfactory level.