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Examiner's Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Chinese (1CN0)

Paper 1H: Listening and understanding in
Chinese

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Publications Code 1CN0_1H_2206_ER

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Introduction

After a gap of three years, this year's Higher Listening exam in Chinese saw a return to the more 'normal' number of candidates. Unlike some units, this exam did not have any Advanced Information about the topic content of the exam, but to compensate for this, only vocabulary listed on the Minimum Core Vocabulary (MCV) list was used in writing the transcript. Across the paper, as might be expected, the range of the average mark per question became wider according firstly to the increasing difficulty in each item, and secondly to the varying question formats. As in past years, the questions that require a written answer (6, 7, 9) offered the greatest challenge to candidates.

There follow comments on the individual questions, where it is thought that these might be useful for future cohorts:

Q1- Q4 (crossover questions)

- higher candidates should not have too many problems with this first section of the paper, and indeed the statistics do bear this out.
- in Q1, some candidates gave answers that did not make sense, eg writing 'brand new' as an answer to (d).
- most vocabulary in Q1 was accessible, 回收 as the answer to (d) being the only word that prevented many candidates from gaining full marks. It is important that key vocabulary from each topic area, including environment, is known.
- questions (i) and (iv) within Q2 both showed the importance of processing the information heard, rather than just assuming that an answer must be correct as it contains the vocabulary items you hear. In (i) the verb 让 led many to think that B was the correct answer, whilst in (iv) candidates gave more importance to what they heard last (三四天) than what came before that (跟当地人一起住). A good number of candidates consequently only scored 2 on this question.
- the majority of candidates gained full marks in Q4, which was encouraging as in this case it showed they had listened to the information given, and drawn a conclusion about the type of place it must be. In each case, there was only one possible answer. Some candidates had decided to use their own words, rather than those given; it is important that candidates read the rubric for each task.

Q6 School life

- this question gave a wider 'spread' of marks, which is as it should be for a question near the beginning of the Higher section 'proper'.
- 6(a): the use of 快.....了 to indicate an imminent occurrence was apparently not known to a fair number of candidates who gave Baolun's age as 18; they

did not seem to wonder whether that was not too easy an answer at this stage of the exam.

- 6(c): 文章 caused problems and showed the importance of choosing the right English word when the Chinese word can have a range of translations; really, only 'essay' matches the situation here.
- 6(d): many answers to this did not sufficiently make clear the inference that Baolun's friends have done equally badly or perhaps worse. Just to say 'she will not get angry' does not explain **why**.
- 6e: some failed to note that the question is about Baolun's **opinion** (ie, that Chinese students are more 用心), not about the **fact** that they start school earlier. Unlike 6(c), in this case, a wide range of translations for 用心 was accepted.

Q7 China at the Tokyo Summer Olympics

- in this question, it was more often the way the answer was phrased which led to loss of a mark as either the English meaning was unclear or it (presumably inadvertently) conveyed the wrong meaning.
- 7(a): candidates often missed the important 不过 and gave as answer what Anna thought they would **not** know (how many in team? more male or female?). Even those who had done well to understand 冠军 often failed to convey that the important thing was which **sport(s)** the Chinese are champion of, rather than **who** the champions are, or which **championship(s)** China has won.
- 7(b)(i): the 除了.....以外 structure seemed to cause problems on this item; many correctly identified the 最多 but applied it to the 2021 team, even though the question asks about 2008.
- 7(d): many candidates gave the correct answer to this, but incorrect answers showed two important things for future candidates to be aware of. Firstly, do not use pinyin (unless clear you may do so, eg it is in the question), and secondly, when not sure of the answer, make a sensible guess. Some gave 'dragon dance' as a sport, and some gave sports which are already part of the Olympics.

Q9 Future plans

- 9(a)(i): when answering a relatively straightforward 'recall' question, it is important that candidates give **all** the relevant information. Given the situation, it is clear that Mali's Chinese teacher would be worried that reading **Chinese/characters** has damaged her eyesight, rather than just reading.
- 9(a)(ii): this was a challenging inference question (which many answered correctly) but there were clues in the wording of the question itself that the

answer could not be 'not bad' (不错) as this referred to her 成绩 (results, as the question indicates). It also seems unlikely that someone would describe themselves as 不错.

- 9(b)(ii): this shows the importance of listening for detail and not relying on what you **think** you hear. A good number of candidates said there would be few Chinese speakers in a big city, but the recording does not say this; it says 说汉语的时候很少, few chances to speak Chinese.
- 9(b)(iv): another question in which it was necessary to use English accurately. Mali is not simply going to look for companies that have Chinese-speaking employees, she wants to find companies that are **hiring** such people.

Concluding comments

Candidates for this exam should be reminded that:

- as a rule, pinyin should not be used in an answer
- the correct number of ticks should be made, for example in Q3 and Q10; certainly no more than the rubric states
- in answers where it is needed, 汉语 should be translated as Chinese or Mandarin. When another language, such as Cantonese, occurs, it will be referred to explicitly as 广东话. (However, it should be noted that this is not included in the MCV list.)
- where a written response (worth 1 mark) is needed, only one answer should be given. The examiner should not have to choose from a series of phrases
- it is unlikely (although not impossible) that Korean will feature in a Chinese exam, and certainly not one where all vocabulary has been drawn from the MCV list. Some candidates, perhaps confused by 韩语 as opposed to 汉语, used this repeatedly in answers.

