



Examiners' Report June 2014

GCSE Greek 5GK04 01



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June 2014

Publications Code UG039550

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Introduction

The Greek, paper 5GK04, requires students to write two pieces in response to a choice of questions that relate to the prescribed themes of this specification: media, travel and culture or sport, leisure and work. The writing unit is externally assessed through an examination paper consisting of two tasks from a choice of eight. The tasks and related assessment criteria have been designed to accommodate a wide range of student profiles and reward work from grades G to A*. The paper rewards students for effective communication and knowledge and application of language (as well as accuracy in the second longer task). Tasks are set in English to ensure that assessment is not over-reliant on reading ability. Although elements of the second task are accessible to students seeking grades G to C, the task provides opportunities for stretch and challenge through a more extended writing requirement. The total mark for this paper is 50, 20 for section A and 30 for section B. It is important to note that the rubric requires that students write no more than 70 words in their response to one question from Section A. Students who do not address all the bullet points in their question of choice within the word limit lose valuable marks from the Communication and Content category, despite their often impressive language skills. This was often the case in questions 1(a) and 1(b) where candidates exhausted the amount of words available to them before even beginning to address the second bullet point in the question.

This year also, a good number of students demonstrated very good writing skills and produced accurate and relevant responses, which addressed the required bullet points. There was evidence of ability to narrate and evaluate in response to the questions set and many students displayed high levels of accuracy. Many of the bullet points required by the tasks were completed within the word limit and there was evidence of reasonable attempt to link the various points into a whole. A good number of students wrote responses which were fully relevant, coherent, accurate and pleasant to read, especially in 1(a) and 1(b) in Section A and 2(a) and 2 (b) in Section B. On some occasions, hasty reading of the bullet points led to significant omissions and irrelevance, especially in the case of questions 1(c), 1 (d) and 2(a). Questions 1(a) and 1(b) were by far the preferred choices in Section A and questions 2(c) and 2(d) attracted the highest number of students in Section B. A very small number of students chose questions 1(c) and 2(b).

A small but significant number of students ignored the rules of the Greek alphabet and the conventions of the stress system. They either failed to indicate the position of the stress or used English characters ("t" and "u" in particular) instead of Greek ones. Consequently, marks were limited. Students are reminded that the position of the stress ought to be indicated, where appropriate. Moreover, in a response which has wordage set between 50-70 words it advised not to include English words or too many proper nouns, which take away from the pertinence and the cohesion of the response.

Question 1 (a)

The majority of candidates who attempted this question wrote detailed responses to the stimulus, with occasional omission due mostly to lengthier than appropriate narratives. Students did well in explaining the various reasons why they wanted a mobile phone but sometimes they were not very clear with regard to what had happened to the old one. Most of the candidates who chose this question had the necessary range of vocabulary to carry out this task well.

This answer scored 7 out of the available 20 marks.

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The response attempts to address the question but limited linguistic competence obscures the meaning considerably. Some of the points are delineated but there is much ambiguity. This response is not easy to read, as the language is often basic and inappropriate to the task.

Verb endings are of primary importance in creating meaning. Candidates ought to be familiar with suffixes and their role in denoting the subject in the sentence. Even if the stem of the verb is actually incorrectly formed, a correct ending can contribute to the emergence of some meaning. This response scored full marks.

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The candidate has composed a coherent, pleasant to read and detailed piece. The language is fluent, contains longer sentences and offers convincing description and justification, in direct response to the requirements of the question. Quality is not necessarily found in quantity. It is a good idea to strive for a succinct but fully relevant response, which includes a range of appropriate vocabulary and structures.

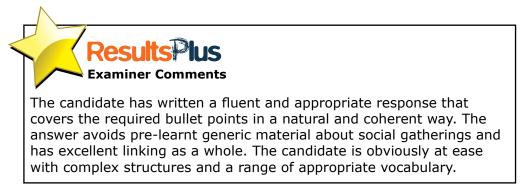
Question 1 (b)

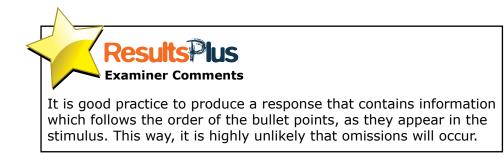
Q1(b) was one of the two most popular questions. Many students wrote fully relevant accounts that contained a variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures, equally distributed and employed to target both bullet points.

Some attempt at over-ambitious narratives was also evident, with students writing lengthy descriptions of menus or lists of names of those invited to attend the celebrations, which went well above the prescribed word limit. There was also an occasional pattern of excessive description of what people will do, at the expense of mentioning where and when people will meet.

This response has scored full marks.

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Sadly, this response has only scored 3 out of the available 20 marks.

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Little relevant information is conveyed in this response. There is substantial omission and at times incoherence, due to rather limited linguistic ability. Dictionaries are a tool that may assist a candidate if a particular word escapes them. Dictionaries however cannot help with sentence structure, the rules of verb inflection, case and agreement. Familiarisation with the linguistic structures and the minimum core vocabulary as recommended in the Greek specification is the best preparation for this examination.

Examiner Comments

Question 1 (c)

Q1 (c) was one of the two most popular questions. Many students wrote fully relevant accounts that contained a variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures, equally distributed and employed to target both bullet points. Some attempt at over-ambitious narratives was also evident, with students writing lengthy descriptions of menus or lists of names of those invited to attend the celebrations, which went well above the prescribed word limit. There was also an occasional pattern of excessive description of what people will do, at the expense of mentioning where and when people will meet. This question was handled very well by students with higher language skills, who wrote a compelling and persuasive defence of the usefulness of foreign languages and sophisticated tips about improving one's language skills. Some who also attempted this question erred on the side of either superfluous or incomplete information because of hasty reading of the rubric that led to an omission of the second bullet point or the advice that ought to be given to the friend who is thinking of giving up studying a foreign language.

Question 1 (d)

The small number of candidates who chose this question did very well on the first bullet point of the stimulus but were on rather shaky ground when it came to the second bullet point because of insecure use of verbs in the Aorist or the Imperfect. There was a tendency to over expand on the reasons why exercise is good for you at the expense of a narrative that relates one's own personal experience of how exercise helped them.

Question 2 (a)

Technology is a popular subject and one that is closely linked to candidates' personal experience, especially when the discussion turns to computers and the internet. Some essays drew extensively on a passage on the internet previously encountered in the paper 3 examination and reproduced paragraphs from it, without enough attention to the cohesion and relevance of their piece. The majority however, veered away from platitudes and pre-learnt material to write interesting and fluent responses about the pros and cons of technology and their own personal experience of it. It was surprising, given the popularity of the topic among young people, to see so few choose this question.

Question 2 (b)

Question 2(b) invited students to write a review of a school performance and explain why they had recommended a particular play for next season. Very few student chose this question and those who did wrote extensively describing the plot of the play but skimming over their recommendation for the next play or the reasons why the liked or disliked something about the show they watched.

Question 2 (c)

This was one of the most popular questions in this section. Many wrote fluent and appropriate accounts describing their school and teachers and offered convincing arguments about suggestions for improvement. It was clear that the majority of the students who chose this question had received good training and practice with regard to this topic area and were taught the necessary structures and vocabulary to tackle questions on this theme. There were some isolated cases of responses that launched straight into their recommendations, choosing to concentrate on the second bullet point. Many of these responses were highly successful, as their recommendations also contained the candidates' existing impressions of the school and the teachers. Some, however, wrote about additions and alterations, without offering detailed or clear views of what they think of their school as it is. Even though these essays contained relevant information and went well beyond a minimal response, they also contained significant omissions. This response has scored 16 out of the available 30 marks.

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Kado kar pa pas tous palites. Tedos MONTON ENtaporto MON ME OKOUGATE Kan VOOTE KOJA.



The candidate has conveyed some relevant information, although there are several lapses in the comprehensibility of the piece. There is evidence of ability to go beyond a minimal response, but the candidate focuses mostly on the second bullet point and skims over the first. The piece included frequent errors and misspellings.

Candidates should attempt to address each bullet point fully. The position of the stress should be consistently indicated. This question is also marked out of 5 for accuracy, so respect for the conventions of orthography is of primary importance.

This response has scored 29 out of the available 30 marks.

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Examiner Comments

A very detailed and fully relevant response to the stimulus. There are no omissions and the candidate has addressed both bullet points convincingly. The piece is not flawless in terms of spelling but the candidate possesses enough fluency and language awareness to be able to describe, express opinion and expand clearly and coherently.

It is always pleasant to read about the candidates' personal opinions and experience, when these are required, as in this question. Moving away from general, pre-learnt material adds variety and interest to any essay.

Question 2 (d)

The most popular question in this section, question 2(d) invited candidates to write about the significance of free time and narrate a personal experience of a memorable time with friends that had to do with leisure.

Most candidates did well in narrating, describing and expressing their opinion on the significance of free time persuasively. Some, however, skimmed over the evaluation aspect of the question, why free time matters, and chose to expand mostly on existing habits about free time. As this question is looking for the candidates to demonstrate their ability to use more complex structures and a variety of tenses, narratives which unfold predominantly in the present tense, cannot earn marks from the higher bands of the assessment grid.

An excellent response that has earned 29 marks.

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Results Plus

The candidate has taken care to describe the importance of free time and connect it to the ways he and his friends usually spend it. There is clear ability to narrate and express opinion, the various pieces of information are linked well and are fully relevant. Occasional awkwardness in expression and spelling slips do not detract from the fluency and pertinence of this essay. It is also pleasant to read.

A good essay structure always adds to a response. A conclusion that sums up the essay's main point is a neat and apt addition to the narrative.

This essay earned 17 out of 30 marks.

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Results Plus Examiner Comments

The candidate is obviously quite fluent in Greek and has considerable skills in describing and expanding on his/her views. The response however is not entirely pertinent as has a slightly different angle to the topic and misses out the second bullet point altogether. As a result, the essay does not include different time frames or tenses and loses out on knowledge and application of language and accuracy, as well as content.

Candidates are assessed on their language competence in response to a required and clearly defined theme or topic. Marks from the higher bands in any of the three categories will not be awarded if the piece contains major omissions and irrelevance.

Paper Summary

To improve their performance, students should:

- Read each question carefully before attempting to answer it, to ensure clear understanding of what is expected.
- Respond to the questions within the framework of the bullet points, in order to construct a good response.
- Ensure that they employ good variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures. Many times, required content is tied to a specific time frame and if this is omitted marks are limited in the category of content as well as knowledge and application of language.
- Observe the rules of orthography and indicate the position of the stress, when appropriate.
- Structure their response and link their various ideas and descriptions into a whole, rather than write sentences in isolation.
- Familiarise themselves with the cases and the correct inflections of articles, nouns and adjectives.
- ("η μητέρα" versus "την μητέρα" etc.).
- Inconsistent use of the nominative and accusative cases is still responsible for many inaccuracies. Similarly, incorrect suffixes in verbs create confusion and obscure meaning as it is not clear who carries out the action.
- Avoid using generic pre-learned material, which may often be irrelevant to the requirements of the particular question.
- Remember that writing more than the prescribed number of words is a rubric infringement. Candidates must not go beyond the maximum word limit, as content produced beyond the prescribed word count will not contribute to the overall marks.
- Use the dictionary wisely. List of words do not betray ability to narrate if a sentence is not structured correctly.

Grade Boundaries

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





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