



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2012**

**Polish**

**46854**

**(Specification 4685)**

**Unit 4: Writing**

***Report on the Examination***

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## General Comments

This was the second year of the current specification. As in the last series, there were three questions to answer: Question 1 (a short list), and Question 2 and 3 where students had a choice of topics and were required to produce longer answers.

Similar to last year, some students were totally unaware of the basic requirements of the examination and wrote answers to all questions: 1, 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b.

To obtain higher marks for Question 2, students had to use a variety of grammar structures (referring to two time frames) and express their personal opinions. In Question 3, students were required to write descriptively or imaginatively, expressing and explaining ideas and points of view. As in Question 2, they had to use a variety of grammar structures, including two time frames. The stimuli were written in Polish and the suggested content points were in English. The new criteria for Content requires students to include an opinion to obtain 4 marks.

Highest marks were awarded to those students who used sophisticated vocabulary, formed well-developed sentences with a range of subordinate clauses, made reference to past, present and future events and gave personal opinions with justification.

The standard of written Polish in the examination was fairly high, however it has to be noted that using colloquialisms (*gadać, kręcić as in kłamać, kibel, leco programy,*) is increasing year on year. Those students who used English vocabulary, repetitions and who confused tenses also lost a significant number of marks.

However, as in previous years, there were a few students who did not have a sufficient command of English to understand the instructions. Some students also lacked examination technique, whereas others clearly lacked the intellectual maturity to deal with the requirements of the examination.

Some students, whilst clearly understanding what was being asked of them, produced poorly punctuated pieces of work, with little or inappropriate use of commas and very poor spelling. There were also some very untidy and sometimes barely legible scripts which made scrutiny difficult.

The overall examination results were fairly good in comparison to last year, which may mean that more students were aware of the new format and general requirements of the exam .

## Question 1

Most students obtained the two marks allocated to this question, as the choice of items one can find in a bathroom is fairly extensive. However, some students lost marks as they wrote their answer in English, gave non-specific answers (*szczołka, płyn*) or used slang (*kibel*).

## Question 2 – General comments

Students had a choice of topics. They could either choose writing about Lifestyle (personal relationships) in Q2(a) or Education (work experience, future jobs) in Q2(b).

This question was fairly well answered with Question 2(a) being more popular as writing about friendships and family relations seemed to be more enjoyable than writing about work experience, which, it seems, is not widely experienced.

Although not compulsory, the suggestions are designed to help students to express points of view, which are required for higher bands in Content. It should be stressed that marks given for Range of Language and Accuracy are related directly to the mark awarded for Content.

### **Question 2(a)**

The students' answers were split into two categories. They were either direct replies to the letter (as in stimulus), or reply letters based on the suggested points. Similar to last year, many answers contained simple statements written in very simple language and lacking details, variety and confidence (eg *'Moja najlepsza przyjaciółka to Ewa. Jest wysoka i ma niebieskie oczy. Lubię ją, bo jest moja przyjaciółka.'*) Due to the fact that most of these answers were written using one tense and did not contain any opinions, they were not awarded many marks for Content and hence even less for Range of Language and Accuracy.

On the other hand, many students managed to write interesting and insightful essays emphasising the importance of friends, friendships and family relations. (eg *'Ta przyjaźń daje mi poczucie bezpieczeństwa, wiem, że jest ktoś, na kim mogę zawsze polegać, kto mnie wysłucha, kto mi pomoże. Jednocześnie wiem, że Kamila jest szczerą, prawdomówną i mogę być pewna, że wszystkie jej rady, słowa płyną z głębi serca oraz są bezinteresowne.'*)

### **Question 2(b)**

Based on the content of answers and the smaller number of students who chose this question, one might conclude that the subject of work experience is rather unfamiliar to many of them. The answer required students to write a letter of reply to a friend who saw an advert for Polish language assistants. Most argued that being a native speaker made them a suitable and good enough student; they also wrote about the importance of getting extra help with the language and gave themselves as good example of someone who benefited from such assistance. Many students recognised the value of work experience, and elaborated on how it could be used in the future, eg *'Uważam, że taka praktyka bardzo pomogłaby mi znaleźć dobrą pracę w przyszłości. Mogłabym pokazać, że jestem punktualna, pracowita, pomocna, otwarta i gotowa do nauczenia się nowych umiejętności.'*

Some of the students started writing an answer to this question, only to abandon it in the middle of the sentence, as if they realised that they do not have enough to say on the subject.

### **Question 3 – General comments**

Students had a choice of topics. They could either choose to write about Leisure (favourite television programme, the role television plays in everyday life, or other free time activities) – Q3(a), or Environment (home town, recent changes in your home town, threats to the environment and what can be done about them, public transport and its benefits and drawbacks) – Q3(b).

Although this question is aimed at the more able students, almost all students attempted it with some degree of success. Again, highest marks were obtained by those students who used sophisticated vocabulary, formed well-developed sentences with a range of subordinate clauses, made reference to past, present and/or future events and gave personal opinions with justification.

### Question 3(a)

Most students were eager to share their television favourites which ranged from soap operas and dramas to science focused series. All of them highlighted the educational role of television (*‘Oglądam programy przyrodnicze, gdyż pomagają mi zrozumieć procesy zachodzące w otaczającym mnie świecie, np. ‘Chemia na wesoło’, skąd dowiedziałam się o różnicach pomiędzy kwasami i zasadami’*), but at the same time were aware of its damaging effects when watched in excess (*‘Częste oglądanie może doprowadzić do bólu głowy, pogorszenia wzroku, gorszych ocen w szkole, a w skrajnych przypadkach do utraty przyjaciół’*).

Many students wrote in detail about the advantages and disadvantages of having a television set in the bedroom, with the majority preferring to have their own television for the pure comfort of being able to choose and watch what is most interesting to them. As for the disadvantages, the most widely used argument involved staying up late and losing sleep, which were both viewed as and unsociable.

The highest scoring students demonstrated high attention to detail, used a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentences and imaginative language.

### Question 3(b)

This question produced the best answers. Most answers were descriptive and detailed enough to be awarded top marks for Content.

Students seemed to have enjoyed writing about where they live (or used to live), giving plenty examples of what they like about it, what has changed in the area recently and what should, in their opinion, change in the near future. They also seemed to enjoy writing about the places they would like to live in the future, with places in Poland and the US as their most popular choices.

Regarding the suggestion about threats to the environment, it is extraordinary how many of the students were aware of the problems the world faces today and were keen to tackle these, eg *‘Mieszkańcy dbają o otoczenie poprzez comiesięczne wspólne zbieranie śmieci, sadzenie kwiatów, powstała też grupa doradcza, pomagająca i promująca sposoby na zmniejszenie zużycia energii i wody...’*

Most of the students followed the suggestion about the advantages and disadvantages of public transport but although they managed to give full and interesting answers, some failed to see the issue of transport in a wider context and its enormous impact on the environment.

Overall, the highest scoring students expressed and justified their opinions, used a variety of vocabulary and time frames and followed the required format (letter, article).

The students who relied solely on their language skills and did not properly prepare for the exam received the lowest number of marks.

### Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below

**UMS conversion calculator** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)

## Guidance Notes for Examiners

The following guidance, provided to examiners during the marking period, is reproduced below for information.

### 1. Principles of marking

- 1.1 All marking must be done in accordance with the published criteria for assessment.
- 1.2 The stress is on effective communication. Credit should be given for the language successfully conveying the target message without ambiguity.
- 1.3 In Questions 2 and 3 there is no need to count the number of words used to answer each question. The sole criterion is completion of the two tasks.

### 2 Mechanics of Marking

#### 2.1 Question 1 Content

Marks	Content
0	No understandable words
1	1-2 words conveyed without ambiguity
2	3-4 words conveyed without ambiguity

- 2.2 Question 2 - Suggested content points are not compulsory. No automatic penalty can be applied if students choose not to address these particular points in their answer.
- 2.3 Question 3 – Suggested points are not compulsory. No automatic penalty can be applied if students choose not to address those particular points in their answer.
- 2.4 Assessment Criteria for Questions 2 and 3

Content	
Marks	Criteria
13-14	<b>Very Good</b> Fully relevant and detailed response to the task. Sound ability to convey information clearly, express and explain ideas and points of view. Well organised structure.
10-12	<b>Good</b> Mostly relevant response to the task and shows ability to convey a lot of information clearly, express and explain ideas and points of view.
7-9	<b>Sufficient</b> Response to the task is generally relevant with quite a lot of information clearly communicated. Points of view are expressed and ideas are developed.
4-6	<b>Limited</b> Limited response to the task with some relevant information conveyed. Simple opinions are expressed and there is some development of basic ideas.
1-3	<b>Poor</b> Very limited response to the task with little relevant information conveyed. No real structure.
0	The answer shows no relevance to the task set. A zero score will automatically result in a zero score for the answer as a whole.

<b>Range of Language</b>	
<b>Mark</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
5	Wide variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures. More complex sentences are handled with confidence and verb tenses are used successfully.
4	Good variety of appropriate vocabulary and structures used. More complex sentences are attempted and are often successful.
3	Some variety of vocabulary and structures used. Including attempts at longer sentences using appropriate linking words which are sometimes successful.
2	Vocabulary is appropriate to the basic needs of the task and structures are mostly simple.
1	Inappropriate vocabulary with little understanding of language structure.
0	No language produced which is worthy of credit.

<b>Accuracy</b>	
<b>Mark</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
5	Largely accurate, although there may still be some errors especially in attempts at more complex sentences. Verbs and tense formations are secure.
4	Generally accurate with errors occurring in attempts at more complex sentences. Verb and tense formations are usually correct.
3	More accurate than inaccurate. Verb forms and tense formations are sometimes unsuccessful. The intended meaning is clear.
2	Many errors which often impede communication. Verb forms are rarely accurate.
1	Limited understanding of the most basic linguistic structures. Frequent errors regularly impede communication.
0	No language produced which is worthy of credit.

- 2.5 The mark awarded for Range of Language must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content. (See table below)
- 2.6 The mark awarded for Accuracy must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content. (See table below)
- 2.7 If a mark is awarded for Content, this will inevitably lead to the award of a mark for Range of Language and for Accuracy. (See table below)
- 2.8 If a mark of zero is awarded for Content, this will automatically result in a zero score for Range of Language and for Accuracy. (See table below)

2.9

<b>Content</b>	<b>Marks for each of Range of Language and Accuracy</b>
0	0
1-3	1-2
4-6	1-3
7-9	1-4
10-12	1-5
13-14	1-5

2.10 To score a mark of 5 for Range of Language, the candidate needs to use successfully a minimum of two verb tenses.