



Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Russian
(5RU04/01)
Paper 4: Writing in Russian

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Introduction

Section A requires candidates to produce a short writing task in Russian (25-50 words) in response to a choice of four questions that relate to both of the prescribed themes (Media, Travel and Culture/Sport, Leisure and Work). The task is assessed for Communication and Content (10 marks) and Knowledge and Application of Language (10 marks). Section B (the longer writing task) requires candidates to produce a piece of extended writing in Russian (at least 90 words). Candidates had to choose one of four possible tasks that relate to both of the prescribed themes. Tasks offered candidates the opportunity to narrate, express opinions and justify points of view. The task is assessed for Communication and Content (15 marks), Knowledge and Application of Language (10 marks) and Accuracy of language (5 marks) and is marked out of 30. Any response that achieves a mark of 0 for Communication and Content will achieve 0 in the other sections of the mark scheme.

Q1A. Candidates had to mention what type of book they like to read and to say how much time they will spend reading in the summer with appropriate reason. Expectation was for approx 12 word minimum for each of these points. Those that did not answer well either did not mention the genre of book and/or did not refer to the summer/future when mentioning what they would be reading. Some candidates also didn't specify an amount of time and just used *много* to explain how much time they would spend on reading. Those that answered well specified number of hours a day or days a week and how many books they intended to get through.

Q1B Candidates had to mention whether they like staying in hotels with an appropriate reason and then mention the next time they will stay in a hotel. Expectation was for approx 12 word minimum for each of these points. This was the most popular question in section A; however it was not always answered well. There was a tendency to write excessively about a past holiday in a hotel leaving little space for discussion of their future intentions. Many candidates could write about their opinion of staying in hotels and could justify this opinion. The future tense was secure amongst many candidates although a high number missed the opportunity to extend this point with a reason. Some candidates wrote a generic essay about a holiday

Q1C Candidates had to mention what they usually do at a youth club and then mention a recent event with a reason and an opinion. Expectation was for approx 12 word minimum for each of these points. This question was answered the least well by learner candidates; however it appears to have been more popular with heritage learners and candidates with a more confident grasp of Russian. In a surprising number of cases there was some ambiguity when referring to the type of club and the activities available.

Q1D. Candidates had to give their opinion on studying Russian and then to say which language they will study in the future with appropriate reason. Expectation was for approx 12 word minimum for each of these points. This question was on the whole answered well, however it was clear that some candidates had not read the question properly and were advising their Russian pen pal to take up learning Russian. Reasons for studying Russian and for future study were generally well thought out and there was less scope for ambiguity than in other questions.

Q2a Candidates had to describe a local attraction, say what they did there with opinions and describe a future planned day out. Expectation was for approx 30 words for each of these points to create a balanced response. Most candidates that answered this question described a day out well; they managed to describe different activities with ease, however, descriptions of the actual attraction itself were lacking. Again, the future intention was less well developed for several candidates with them allowing for a couple of sentences at most on this part which made the whole piece rather weighted on the first two points.

Q2b. Candidates had to say what for them an ideal holiday is and describe such a holiday in the past or a future such holiday. Candidates should not have produced a generic holiday essay with minimal reference as to why it was/would be ideal. Expectation was for approx 45 words for each of these points to create a balanced response. This was by far the most popular question, however it was not answered as well as it could have been. Many candidates launched into lengthy descriptions of a past holiday without really mentioning their ideal holiday, with some tagging 'this is my ideal holiday' at the end. Some candidates would give a sentence or two as to what their ideal holiday would be e.g. 'My ideal holiday would be in Spain, we would stay in a hotel and swim in the sea' and then continue for the rest of the time about a completely unrelated past holiday they had spent in a different location last year. Again, future intention was less well developed and less commonly expanded.

Q2c. Candidates had to mention the types of job done by young people on work experience and then mention a memorable day on work experience and what they plan to do as a future job with appropriate reasons. Expectation was for approx 30 words for each of these points to create a balanced response. There was some ambiguity with the types of work experience mentioned in answers to this question – some candidates mentioned being paid for their work and some mentioned part time jobs as opposed to work experience. Future jobs and reasons were well answered across the responses. Vocabulary for this topic is impressive.

Q2D. Candidates had to mention an event that they had helped to organise with appropriate opinions and reasons and to mention an event that they planned to organise in the future. Expectation was for approx 30 words for each of these points to create a balanced response. This question was generally answered well although there were fewer responses. The future element tense was tackled

confidently and candidates described effectively some past tense information. The majority of responses referenced some kind of sporting activity and several responses showed good evidence of vocabulary relating to charity events.

Paper Summary

Based on the performance on this paper, candidates should have:

- Considered the word total expected for each task. Many candidates wrote in excess of 25–50 words in response to Section A but this can have a detrimental effect with irrelevancy and ambiguity becoming more common.
- Top end candidates continued to evidence a wide range of grammatical structures as well as sophisticated language and showed competence of giving opinions. Stronger candidates employed impressive idiomatic structures to support their responses rather than trying to shoehorn more ambitious language in to the response.
- Used the dictionary to support responses, although some candidates could have had more rigorous dictionary practice to ensure understanding of the differences between lexical items. Candidates also need to be able to adapt items from the basic dictionary form (this is especially true in verbal structures).
- Used a range of appropriate tenses. Most candidates were also clear on the need to present and back up opinions in order to access the full range of marks.
- Been careful if they speak other Slavonic languages, Ukrainian, Serbian, Bulgarian and Polish, amongst others. These candidates are often highly influenced by the mother tongue and marks for accuracy in section B can suffer as a result.
- Watched out for Cyrillic letters such as а and о, б and в, з and с, ы and и, и у, ч and ш, п and р.

There was also overuse of the soft sign.

- Read the specific requirements of the questions and not misread the task. Well prepared candidates either ticked the elements of the question or made essay plans which helped to focus on the requirements.
- Been secure in using the first person singular of the present tense but there were some problems in formation of first person plural and third person. The future tense was well used by stronger candidates but less secure for less competent candidates who used the correct буду but combined this with first person form of present tense verbs.
- Used case ending with prepositional, instrumental and genitive being most accurately employed.

The accusative case was more problematic for less competent candidates.

- Agreements in the nominative were generally secure in masculine and feminine

Grade Boundaries

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