



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in Russian (1RU0) Paper 2F: Speaking

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GCSE RUSSIAN FOUNDATION TIER

Overview

It was clear that many candidates had understood the requirements of the specification and examiners could hear very good performances and listened to some imaginative and interesting orals. Teacher-examiners have shown the skill to put candidates at ease during the speaking element of the examination. There was evidence of the full range of ability within the foundation tier with some candidates demonstrating beyond the requirement of the tier and others being encouraged by examiner to demonstrate their knowledge of Russian.

The timings of the foundation tier speaking examination are 7 – 9 minutes. Centres are reminded that these are approximate as candidates will take differing amounts of time to complete the role-play task and picture-based discussions. The timings for the role-play task and picture-based discussions are guidelines and many candidates were able to complete these tasks in a much shorter time than indicated in the specification.

There is no need to extend these tasks to reach the maximum time suggested.

However, it should be noted that timing for the conversation tasks is prescribed. This timing is 3.5 – 4.5 minutes for the Foundation tier. If a candidate has used less time for the role-play and picture-based task, teacher-examiners should not extend conversation time to reach the total time of the complete examination.

Teacher-examiners should pay close attention to the sequencing grid for the examination, which ensures that each candidate is tested on four of the five themes within the specification. This is based on the candidate's choice of theme for the first part of the conversation. Teacher-examiners will then select an appropriate role-play task from those given avoiding the theme of the conversation. Similarly, the choice of picture-based discussion and second conversation theme will follow the same format to avoid any theme being duplicated.

Teacher-examiners should be aware that it is necessary to keep to the scenario and the precise wording of the role-play and the picture-based discussions. Where this was not the case, marks could not be awarded for any response made by the candidate. candidates may have the question repeated where the candidate has not answered, or

has asked for a repetition, but may not be rephrased in any way. In addition, there were occasions where candidates were asked supplementary questions to elicit further information and candidates could not be credited for responses to these questions. Often, this was to extend the performance to fulfil the time limit in the specification which is not required.

The requirements of the conversation task were not always adhered to and centres should be aware of the necessity to keep to the instructions within the specification. Two themes are tested within the task, the first chosen by the candidate at least two weeks before the test and the other chosen from the two options, allocated by Pearson. Occasionally, candidates were given a second conversation theme that had already been tested in a previous task or candidates were asked to select a second theme for general conversation. This is not permitted in the exam and candidates cannot be fully rewarded.

Role-plays

Candidate responses within the role-play are not required to be elaborate but must focus on completion of the requirement in the bullet point. Some candidates on occasion presented very long responses which had an impact on the clarity of communication thus hindering the candidate from attaining full marks as the responses led to some ambiguity.

Candidates should be encouraged to read the scenario carefully in order to understand where the role-play is situated in order to aid understanding before completing the task and providing answers that are in context.

Teacher-examiners are reminded that they should adhere to the wording of the role-play including where a candidate is required to ask a question. Teacher-examiners should not prompt candidates with some form of using the word **«Bonpoc»**. Teacher-examiners should also keep to the required register set in the role play.

Occasionally candidates combined bullet points 1 and 2 within the role play and where this occurred, they were credited for both points. Such responses often elicited some confusion when the teacher-examiner then asked the question referring to the second bullet point.

The unpredictable question was often well done by candidates who anticipated a possible question within the nature of the role play. Less successful responses were evident from candidates who offered no response or one which had no relevance to the situation of the role-play.

Some candidates found difficulty in forming a question and teacher-examiners should be encouraged to practise this skill. There were several instances of less convincing intonation and occasionally statements as an answer to the question rather than a question asked.

FR1

Generally, well answered. Most candidates were able to recognise question words «**что**» and «**где**». Some candidates did not recognise «**обедать**». «**Думаешь**» was well understood as the unpredictable element.

FR2

Generally, well answered. Cognate words «**меню**» and «**ресторан**» were accessible to all. Less competent candidates struggled to recognise the unpredictable element of an opinion on «**русской еде**».

FR3

Generally, well answered by more able candidates. «**Мнение**» was well understood by candidates, some candidates found some difficulty with bullet points 4 and 5 and did not always recognise the question form «**с кем**» as well as the vocabulary item «**цена**». More able candidates managed the unpredictable element, but some candidates did not understand «**в котором часу**».

FR4

This role play was dealt well by many candidates. The most able scored high marks but some responses found difficulty with the unpredictable element «**где вы живёте в Москве?**»

FR5

More able candidates performed well in this role play with good understanding of weather vocabulary. Some candidates were unclear on «**летом**» and did not respond fully to the unpredictable element «**что ты делаешь когда светит солнце**».

FR6

School was a generally well recognised topic and the word **«мнение»** was well understood and communicated. However, some candidates did not recognise **«начинаться»** and only stated what their first lesson was. The unpredictable element relating to popular subjects was well understood. The fourth bullet point elicited responses about either what the candidate does after school on a particular day or what they intend to do upon leaving school. Both responses were acceptable.

FR7

School as in role play 6 was a well recognised theme although some candidates struggled to recognise and communicate specific response to **«сегодня» «домашнее задание»** and **«форма»**. The question form **«как часто»** was not well understood by some candidates. The unpredictable element which required an opinion of mathematics was well communicated.

FR8

The topic of free time activities was well recognised by candidates. Many candidates communicated responses to all bullet points with no ambiguity. Where difficulties arose more frequently was in recognising question forms **« в котором часу»** and **«как часто»**. For the fourth bullet point many candidates did not communicate a time element in response to **«час»**. Some candidates did not manipulate the fifth bullet point to ask a question about clubs in Russian schools.

FR9

The English language stimulus was well used by candidates to work out the meanings of the Russian prompts. Some candidates used the first prompt **«сколько»** to ask the price of the tickets rather than saying how many tickets were required. Some candidates did not recognise the question form **« в котором часу»** in response to the unpredictable element. **«Цена»** was not recognised by some candidates who did not ask the question in the fifth bullet point.

FR10

This role play was generally well done by candidates across the range. References to **«работа»** and **«русский язык»** were well communicated with good recognition of **«где»** and **«мнение»**. Some responses did not turn the fifth bullet point into a question.

The unpredictable element was generally well attempted with good understanding of **«ЯЗЫКУ»**.

Picture- based task

This task requires responses to the bullet points and where possible to demonstrate more extended responses than in the role play but these should not be a series of long monologues. Occasionally candidates gave overlong responses these sometimes contained material which caused communication to be ambiguous, leading to the clarity of communication being impaired and, therefore, not able to score full marks. There is, however, the need to develop responses, adapting language to describe, narrate and inform in response to the stimulus questions. There were some good examples by well-prepared candidates who could use adjectives of colour and size, a range of opinion structures and good ability to demonstrate position vocabulary. Candidates are to be encouraged to justify opinions and to try to give more than **«хорошо»** and **«интересно»**. Many candidates showed the ability to give physical description alongside clothing description. There were some examples of candidates who used first person structures to describe the pictures with examples such as **«я на каникулах»** and **«я в школе»**. Occasionally candidates gave elaborate responses after a suitable answer had been given and the extra information did not add anything to what had already been said. Examiners award higher marks for the quality of the response rather than the length. Some teacher-examiners did not help candidates by asking the supplementary prompts when a developed response had already been given. Indeed, the ensuing silence as the candidate is unable to develop further information does not help the flow of response. There were responses which were brief, and some questions required considerable prompting by the teacher-examiner, using the prompts given within the task, or were unanswered. This cannot allow candidates to access the upper boxes of the mark scheme. There was a wide variation in the pronunciation and intonation of candidates and on occasion the inaccuracy of pronunciation led to no communication. Teacher-examiners are to be encouraged to work on pronunciation of opinion phrases. Some candidates made good use of the preparation time to prepare useful and purposeful notes. Other candidates read stilted responses which did not add

to the quality of conversation. Candidates should not read out written full responses but should use notes. Intonation is an issue in such responses. Centres are reminded that the questions within the Picture-based discussion are set and they should not be altered in any way. There was evidence of teacher-examiners rewording or reframing questions and this does not allow candidates to be credited for responses to these questions. There were also occasions where supplementary questions were added in the middle of the task. No credit is awarded for response to supplementary questions.

FP1

This proved to be accessible for many candidates. Candidates were able to give a good description of the photo. There was good evidence of clothing and colour description. Opinions on computers were given but some candidates did not back this up with reasons and this prevented access to higher mark bands. Candidates understood the need to talk about a past activity and a future activity, but days of the week were not always referenced. «**Воскресенье**» was not always attempted. Candidates were well prepared to address the fifth bullet point with comparisons between free time with friends and family referenced.

FP2

Some candidates found this task more challenging and did not give the fullest description of the photograph. Description of the main person in the photograph was generally stronger. Less confident candidates could not develop an opinion on the topic of books, but stronger candidates made reference to book genres. «**Недавно**» was not widely recognised in the third bullet point but there was some good expansion of future tense in discussing plan for the future holidays.

FP3

Descriptions of the photo were well developed by a range of candidates. There was good evidence of descriptions of people and clothes. Stronger candidates also made reference to the fact that coffee was being consumed and described the souvenirs on sale. The second bullet point allowed candidates to give an opinion of holidaying in Russia, but some responses did not refer to Russia. Most candidates were able to identify the need for a past tense reference in the third bullet point but not all were able

to recognise «**покупки**». Future plans were usually well presented, but the fifth bullet point presented challenge to some candidates who did not recognise «**море**».

FP4

The photograph allowed candidates a good opportunity to describe weather conditions and «**снег**» was generally well identified and used. Some very impressive responses referenced the tourist attraction in the background. Less able candidates did not produce «**женщина**» but referenced «**девушка**». Some candidates did not access the highest marks as they did not mention some prompt words from the stimulus. There was occasional failure to reference «**район**» or «**зимой**». Some responses developed answers relating to tourist attractions well, with good opinion phrases to support the response.

FP5

The photograph in a school setting was accessible for most candidates and many were able to give a good description of the classroom and the candidates taking an exam. Simple responses about not liking exams were clearly communicated and past tense references to a previous school experience were well communicated by candidates. There were occasions when no mention was made of «**вчера**» and non specific answers were given. The fourth bullet point, requiring a response about what the candidate would do after the day's exam, proved problematic for some candidates. The higher scoring responses talked about clubs and free time activities. Opinions about school were presented confidently.

FP6

Candidates generally gave clear descriptions of the people in the photograph with good knowledge of clothing and colour vocabulary. Better developed answers made reference to the location of the photograph, but some candidates did not relate the picture to the theme of school despite this being given as the topic area in English. The second bullet point was well understood by many candidates, but some responses did not talk about music in school specifically. The past tense element was generally well communicated but the future reference to attending a club was less developed by many but the most able candidates. The final bullet point giving an opinion on sport was recognised and understood.

FP7

This card was found challenging by candidates, not due to the vocabulary used, but due to a lack of ideas and detail in the responses from candidates. The description of the photo was often limited to the description of the two people, but some candidates did not expand on the location or the possible jobs. Some candidates struggled to identify «*летать*» but «*самолёт*» was understood. The bullet point referring to a past trip was well understood but «*ехал*» was used most frequently in responses. Future intention was given but some candidates did not mention languages that they planned to study. Opinions on office work were presented well by many candidates.

FP8

Most candidates could give a clear description of the photograph with good descriptions of the sports being played. The second bullet point requiring an opinion about sport was also well delivered by candidates. The third bullet point referring to work as a volunteer was less successfully dealt with by candidates although some candidates did recognise the cognate «*волонтёр*». Opinions about university and about future plans for study were generally well handled but some less strong candidates did not take on board the theme title of “Ambitions” and proffered answers relating to sport only.

FP9

This photograph task allowed candidates a good opportunity to describe people and clothes and make reference to music events. Candidates across the ability range made good attempts to refer to past and present music events and cognate words in the stimulus were well recognised. There were some instances of candidates giving bullet points 2 and 3 in one response and this led to some confusion when the prompt for point 3 was given by the examiner. The fifth bullet point requiring an opinion of time spent with friends was dealt with well by more able candidates but caused difficulty to some candidates. «*Отдыхать*» was not always successfully communicated.

FP10

This photograph allowed candidates a range of ideas for the description bullet point. There were some convincing examples of description of people and place in town. The description of the transport was significantly less detailed. «*Велосипед*» and «*машина*»

were well recognised and described but «**городском транспорте**» presented more difficulty to some candidates. Some candidates found more difficulty in presenting their opinions on «**экология**» in the final bullet point.

Conversation

Conversations were generally well conducted and there was evidence of candidates who could participate in simple straightforward conversations at a good level for foundation tier. Most examiners conducted this part of the exam sympathetically and encouraged candidates to participate. Examiners must familiarise themselves with the timings given within the specification. The Foundation conversation should last between 3.5 and 4.5 minutes. The introduction by the candidate should not exceed one minute. Some centres elongated the conversation to make up the total time of the whole examination when the role-play and picture-based task took less time than suggested in the specification. This should not be done; the conversation has discrete timings. Examiners stop marking at the end of the candidate's response after 4.5 minutes of the Foundation conversations. Any material beyond that cannot be considered for assessment. Centres are reminded that in the conversation task, there are two themes tested, the first chosen by the candidate and the second by Pearson according to the sequencing grid. Candidates may give a presentation of up to one minute on their chosen theme and each theme should be of roughly equal length. The first theme showed evidence of more than half the time in several cases. This leads to insufficient time spent on the Pearson chosen theme in some centres. This may affect marks awarded as the conversation is marked globally and examiners take into consideration performances across both themes. The purpose of the presentation is to allow candidates to begin the conversation confidently and the follow-up discussion then allows them to explore this with the teacher-examiner in more detail before moving to a second theme. Candidates should not go through a list of pre learnt questions. Centres must ensure that both themes are well represented and accomplished equally. There were a few occasions when candidates were asked to choose their second theme. This is not acceptable. Successful examining was most evident when examiners used the presentation as a starting point, and the remaining time to follow-up on ideas given by

the candidate, to probe further about the subject, and allow the candidate to take part in a spontaneous exchange. The task was often less successful where the presentation was followed by a sequence of well-rehearsed questions and answers. This did not allow candidates to access the higher mark bands as there is a need for spontaneity, interaction and an ability to deal with unpredictable questions within both themes. In these cases, teacher-examiners did not take the opportunities offered by the candidate to explore in more detail what had been said. Best practice demonstrated by well prepared centres is evident when the examiner responds to the answers of the candidates rather than having a pre-set list of questions which do not allow candidates the opportunity to take part in a truly spontaneous interaction, thus preventing them accessing the higher mark bands for Interaction and Spontaneity. Most successful examining was evident when teacher-examiners questions appropriate to the level of the candidate being examined, challenging the candidate by asking for further explanation of a points made and tailoring their questions to the responses of the candidate thus promoting more spontaneous conversations. For candidates to access the higher mark bands they must be also be given the opportunities to interact and to deal with unpredictable elements. Less confident candidates should have the opportunity to respond to more modest questions using language which they are able to manipulate rather than attempt questions that they do not understand or have the capacity to answer. There were occasions when less competent candidates were asked some very challenging questions where a simpler line of questioning would have instead enabled them to access higher marks for Communication and Content of Foundation tier. There were occasions where teacher-examiners asked too many closed questions as well as candidates merely responding to an option of two choices in a response. There was some evidence of less successful examining when candidates were not given enough thinking time before teacher-examiners rephrased questions or moved on to another question. Within the mark schemes there is a need for candidates to be able to produce developed responses and extended sequences of speech to reach the higher mark bands for Communication and Content. There should be evidence of using the language creatively to express thoughts, ideas and opinions and these appropriately justified with a range of vocabulary. More successful candidates took

opportunities to express a range of ideas and points of view and to demonstrate a range of more complex structures and vocabulary to reach the higher mark bands for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy. These structures and expectations are outlined in the grammar and structures and vocabulary sections in Appendices 2 and 3 of the specification. At Foundation tier limited manipulation of variety of straightforward structures and minimal use of complex structures can allow candidates to access the higher marks in the grid. This should include some successful references to past, present and future timeframes. It was clear that many centres and candidates are aware of the need to use the different time frames with good examples of tense usage although there was not much evidence at Foundation tier of use of any other person other than first person singular. It was clear that some candidates who had been entered for the foundation tier of the exam could have achieved marks at higher tier. Teacher-examiners are to be encouraged to enter candidates at the tier relevant to their ability.

Administration

It is important that centres check their recordings before sending off the samples. There were cases where the candidates could not be heard clearly. There is a need for minimal background noise so that the candidate being examined can be clearly heard. It is also important that the recording favours the candidate rather than the examiner although both must be able to be heard.

There were many cases where there were difficulties in accessing recordings following the encryption of the USB. Some centres did not send the examiner under separate cover the password and there were also incorrect passwords or problems with unlocking the USB due to the software used in the encryption. Centres are reminded that recordings should only be sent using USB sticks. It is important to check for compatibility and details of accepted digital formats (.mp3 (at least 192 kbit/s), .wav, .wma), these are listed in the Administrative support guide. There were a significant number of centres where USBs were incorrectly labelled and centres are kindly reminded to include with the USBs the track list, giving details of the centre number, candidate name and number, language and series. Centres should check the labelling of

the USB, especially where the software just details Track 1, Track 2 etc. These should be changed to reflect the correct labelling as indicated in The Administrative support guide. It also avoids confusion if details of the candidate name and number are announced clearly at the start of each speaking examination and the role-play number and picture-based discussion number are announced at the beginning of each task. The teacher-examiner should also announce the start of each theme in the conversation. It is not necessary to announce the specification, centre number and centre name before each candidate.

Centres are reminded that once the examination has started no English should be used during the examination to indicate the start and finish of the various components and this should be done in the target language. The Administrative support guide gives details of all requirements for the successful administration of the examination and centres are encouraged to read this well in advance of the examination.

Centres must ensure that the correct paper work is included and must have the signatures of the candidates as well as the examiner. Assessments cannot be marked without this information.