

# GCSE

## Edexcel GCSE

### Russian (1241)

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Examiners' Report

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## 1241 Paper 1 (LISTENING) - JUNE 2006

On the whole candidates were well prepared for this examination and were generally comfortable with various types of questions and rubrics. It was encouraging to see the majority of candidates attempting all questions with some C/D candidates gaining marks in the process.

### Questions 1- 5

The introductory question posed few problems and the items of vocabulary were generally well known. A small number of candidates had difficulty recognising сувениры.

### Questions 6- 10

Expressions of weather were generally well known, apart from туман in question 8, where a large number of candidates opted for answer Б.

### Question 11

Although most candidates dealt well with the format of this question, some failed to cope with the question forms in Russian (по каким дням, она заканчивает). Correct information was therefore given in response to the wrong question. Spellings were varied, but most renderings of words were recognisable. Одежда was not always known.

### Question 12

This question was successfully answered by able candidates but some did not recognise за городом.

### Questions 13- 15

This question posed no problems to candidates.

### Question 16

Most candidates were able to score well on this question.

### Question 17

Many candidates, including some of the very best, were thrown by this question. There was some confusion over one name featuring twice in the answers. Not infrequently a correct answer had been crossed out or gaps left.

### Questions 18- 19

These questions were handled easily by candidates.

### Question 20

On the whole candidates managed to gain marks on this question and it was very well answered by more able candidates.

### Question 21

This question elicited many guesses, possibly because of unfamiliarity with the topic. Постель and посуду were less guessable than стол.

### **Question 22**

Although this question was aimed essentially at the higher calibre candidates, weaker candidates did well on question e. Although there were some wild guesses at question c it was frustrating that many candidates were correct in all but the last digit of the year. Vocabulary which proved difficult for all but the most able candidates included: живопись, выставка, галерея, культура, портрет and художник.

A surprisingly high number of candidates, both learner and non learner, seemed not to read the questions properly and thus produced answers which were non-sequiturs. This was particularly prevalent in questions g and h.

## 1241 Paper 2 (ORAL) - JUNE 2006

The examiners were very pleased with the quality of the candidates' responses this year. Centres seem to be taking on board our comments to make the exam as straightforward and positive for their candidates as possible.

As expected, the students' own first topic was well prepared. It is good to see centres expanding the Free Time section to include more on students' Fitness and Health. Everyone agrees smoking is bad for them!

"The Simpsons" is the most popular television programme this year by far. Everyone seems to like sport, going to the cinema and drinking beer. It is nice to hear that some students still like classical music and Shakespeare. The computer seems to be the centre of home life for most students and everyone agrees that watching too much TV is bad for them, but they do it anyway.

Nobody likes school uniform and many students like talking about their goals and ambitions. The majority are looking to going to university after school. Holiday questions are very popular. It seems that majority of students spend their holidays abroad. The bad British weather appears to be the most common explanation for this.

Questions about vegetarianism are very popular with opinions varying on that topic. David Beckham is the most popular "favourite famous person". The most popular shop overall seems to be "Top Shop".

It is worth noting that Higher questions were often either avoided by the Teacher Examiners or answered shakily by most students. This prevents the majority of candidates from scoring higher marks.

### Administration

Centres are reminded to follow the topic sequence laid down in the handbook, otherwise examiners may suspect certain themes are not being studied. If no Attendance Register or LT3 form has been received by a Centre, a home-made one should be sent. This not only helps the examiner, but speeds up the marking process. Holding on to tapes in the vain hope that something will appear in the future really does not seem the best way forward. One centre sent a tape with both GCSE and GCE orals on it - please do not do this. Different markers are responsible for different levels.

It states clearly in the handbook that the tape should not be paused once the examination has begun. Some centres are jeopardizing their candidates' marks by ignoring this instruction.

Teacher-Examiners are also advised (and it is clear not all are doing this) that they should use a stopwatch to check the length of the topics. Apart from putting candidates through extra torture when conversations go on too long, markers are not best pleased when having to listen to excessively lengthy tapes. Equally, centres should ensure that the timing of the examination is spread evenly over the three topics.

While the majority of Teacher-Examiners and centres did everything absolutely correctly, it is sad to note that some centres still disadvantage their candidates. Overall, however, we were very pleased at the co-operation of Teacher-Examiners and their adherence to the rules laid down by Edexcel.



## 1241 Paper 3 - JUNE 2006

The paper was well done by the majority of candidates and it was pleasing to note that errors in using the Cyrillic alphabet are becoming fewer. However candidates should be reminded of the importance of clear handwriting in both English and Russian scripts and of orderly presentation.

**Question 1** posed few problems, although several candidates gave 6 for (ii) presumably only reading *мобиль*

**Question 2** likewise was well done, although *поёт в хоре* was not generally known.

**Question 3** was accessible to almost all candidates.

**Question 4** seemed to pose fewer problems for candidates than similar questions in previous years. Only very few candidates, however, were able to use either grammatical or context clues to help their answers. There are still candidates who use their own words or words from the text rather than those in the box and therefore unfortunately score 0.

**Question 5.** (i) A was frequently given as a wrong answer. Weaker candidates latched on to individual words, rather than reading the text more closely ie wrongly chose *кататься на лошадях* because of similarity to *кататься на коньках*. However it was encouraging to note that the majority of candidates coped well.

**Question 6** was well done, although it was quite a testing exercise. Many candidates gave *домой* for (i) and *с семьёй* for (ii).

**Question 7** was well done by the majority of candidates, although a surprising number did not know *игрушки, мебель, одежда*.

**Question 8** again was well done, although showed up some unknown lexical items - *на двоих, на одного, бесплатное*.

**Question 9** was well done by the vast majority of candidates.

**Question 10** was as usual the most difficult question. Many non-English speakers lost marks because of poor English; other candidates lost marks because of poor handwriting. A significant number of candidates did not read the questions carefully, missing such things as 'Give two details' or misreading question words 'when?' 'where?' 'why?'

- (i) Usually well done although some candidates gave 'map' rather than picture/painting as the answer.
- (ii) An accessible question for most, although weaker candidates confused *девять* and *десять*.
- (iii) Some candidates did not read the question and gave only one detail. Surprisingly days and dates were not well known and there was confusion between 4<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- (iv) No problems
- (v) Straightforward for the majority of candidates, although some did not know 'red car'.
- (vi) The answer was often guessed as 'meddling'.
- (vii) Most candidates coped well

- (viii) The most testing question as an attitude was being sought. Only the most able candidates coped well with this question. Some just translated the inspector's words.

Overall the results were pleasing. Most candidates coped with the different question types and showed that they had been prepared well for the examination. The most able showed an ability to extract meaning and inference from more complex language, while weaker candidates were able to deal well with straightforward information contained in simpler texts.

## 1241 Paper 4 - JUNE 2006

Markers were impressed by the positive attack candidates made on this year's paper as more and more centres seem to be in tune with the style of the examination.

**Q1** proved a nice, gentle start to the paper and we allowed **газета** as well as any food or drink, although more than one spelling mistake or un-Russian letter meant no mark was awarded for that offering. There were more cognates than we had expected: **чипсы, кока кола** etc.

**Q2** Again, very well done, although there were errors in many straight-forward expressions: **меня 16 лет** instead of **мне**. We had many problems with adjectival agreements, although in this question, we ignored them.

**Q3** There was plenty of evidence of good work from learner candidates and good centre practice with students ticking off the points as they dealt with them. Some were marked down a band for content if they produced fewer than 100 words, as the rubric states they should write about 130 words. It was also apparent that some candidates focused on the English bullet points and did not avail themselves of the language help offered in the Russian version of the question. Marks suffered accordingly. Any pedestrian submissions, with repeated vocabulary, also attracted lower bands. Candidates always seem to have problems referring to weather in the past tense. This might be something centres wish to focus on in the future. Markers were not inclined to award many marks to those who wrote pre-prepared essays, which were fine in themselves, but which did not deal with the stimulus given.

**Q4a** This question was aimed at candidates who could move away from the more restricted topic, although it was by far the less popular **Q4** option. We were looking for a conflict with parents/teachers and children and some chose the role of an adult, which worked well. Some recognised odd words in the speech bubbles and chose to write about something completely different, scoring low marks as a result. Most candidates, but not all, recognised the need for a future tense reference. Such omissions led to lower marks. Lack of pocket money was the most popular topic for their complaint.

**Q4b** offered more of a familiar theme to candidates, but again prepared answers, which did not answer the question, were penalised. Surprisingly, **день рождения** was not always understood. Another disappointing comment was that enrichment vocabulary (e.g. **однако, сначала**) was seldom in evidence. Markers look to give the highest marks to essays which answer all the points and have something special to offer. (Please refer to the Marking Grid which shows those who answer the topic are able to receive marks of between 7 and 10. To get higher marks candidates have to show more evidence of their knowledge.)

Overall we were happy to mark this year's offering and are pleased with the standard offered by centres.

## Statistics GCSE Russian 1241 - JUNE 2006

### Overall Subject Grade Boundaries (Four skills)

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	86	73	60	47	40	33	26	19	0

(NB each paper is worth 25% of the total)

### Paper 1 Listening and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 1 grade boundaries	50	39	34	29	24	20	17	14	11	0

### Paper 2 Speaking

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 2 grade boundaries	20	19	16	13	10	8	6	5	4	0

### Paper 3 Reading and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 3 grade boundaries	50	42	35	28	22	19	17	15	13	0

### Paper 4 Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Paper 4 grade boundaries	55	49	41	33	25	20	16	12	8	0



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