

Modern Greek (continuers)

2013 Chief Assessor's Report



Government
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MODERN GREEK (CONTINUERS)

2013 CHIEF ASSESSOR'S REPORT

OVERVIEW

Chief Assessors' reports give an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

Moderation of the school assessment resulted in confirmation of most grades. There was a wide variety of standards presented for moderation. It was evident that teachers who had familiarised themselves with the Stage 2 subject outline and school assessment requirements had prepared their students well and based their assessment decisions appropriately on the performance standards.

Assessment Type 1: Folio

The folio is made up of three different assessment types: interaction, text analysis, and text production. Schools have the choice (as described in their approved learning and assessment plan) of requiring students to complete between three and five assessments for their folio, including at least one assessment of each of the different types. Most schools chose to complete five assessment tasks (one interaction task, two text analysis tasks, and two text production tasks).

The interaction assessment task must give students an opportunity to interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions, or experiences in Modern Greek. All schools followed this structure, allowing students the opportunity to exchange information about themselves, their family, their school, and their plans for the future. Most schools followed the assessment description and conditions indicated on their approved learning and assessment plan. Changes to the plan should be indicated on the addendum page.

For the text analysis tasks, students need to analyse sufficient text to show that they can perform at the highest level of the performance standards. Most tasks allowed for this. Teachers must ensure that the assessment design criteria, as outlined in the assessment task sheet and in the learning and assessment plan, have been assessed. Specific feature IR2 (analysis of the language in texts) would most logically be assessed in a text analysis assessment task, and this is a prime opportunity to address this specific feature in this assessment type. Questions should be designed to give all students the opportunity to perform at all levels of the performance standards.

Grades allocated in the text production tasks were the most consistent. A variety of tasks were presented to students and they were designed to meet all levels of the performance standards.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

The in-depth study allows students to demonstrate research into, and personal reflection on, an aspect or aspects of a topic — preferably one in which they are interested. Students then present a written response in Modern Greek, an oral presentation in Modern Greek, and a reflective response in English.

The majority of schools managed this task very well and students achieved to a very high standard. The best responses showed clear evidence of research and were elicited using a clear set of guidelines in the task description.

The written responses in Modern Greek were, in the majority of cases, of high standard and with good choices of topics.

Some examples of topics chosen this year were: *the Olympic Games, Asia Minor catastrophe, Parthenon marbles, The Golden age of Greece, Aghia Sophia, Famous Greeks, Migration, Greeks in World War 2, and Cyprus.*

Tasks should be designed carefully so that students are guided in their research and able to extract, interpret, and analyse relevant information from various sources. Students need to be supported in designing tasks for the written response and oral which, although based on the same topic, have a different purpose, context, and audience.

The oral presentations varied in standard. The most effective presentations had a specific focus and did not rely heavily on notes, presenting an interesting and relevant aspect of the research.

The written tasks in Modern Greek were generally well written and showed evidence of the drafting process. A clearly defined topic or question needs to be designed so that the purpose, context, and audience of each of the written and oral tasks is clear.

Most reflective responses met the required word limit and contained reflection on culture, language, and the learning process. The more successful responses included some analysis and evaluation of texts accessed, as well as the impact on the students' own learning. Students would benefit from careful guidelines in the task description, including suggestions about what they need to address in order to write a good reflective response. In some examples there was a paragraph or two where students reflected on their learning, but then reverted to a recount of the information they provided in their Modern Greek written response.

Word count is very important here, as is the opportunity to address specific feature IR3 ('reflection'). If students exceed the word count of 600 words, and they have not addressed any reflection in the first 600 words, then they may not be able to achieve at the highest level described in the performance standards.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Examination

Oral Examination

Section 1: Conversation

The oral examination of 10–15 minutes comprises a conversation and a discussion of the student's in-depth study.

In the conversation, students converse with the examiners about their personal world. Topics covered typically include life, family and friends, home, local environment, school, hobbies, interests, aspirations, and travel. Most students performed well in this section, demonstrating thorough preparation and familiarity with the language.

The most successful students provided extensive, relevant responses to the questions asked. They were able to move the conversation forward confidently, displaying a good command of the language and an extensive vocabulary. These students also readily clarified, elaborated on, and justified their opinions and ideas and paid particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress, and tempo.

Successful students possessed a sound working knowledge and mastery of all the tenses and were able to use complex structures including passive and subjunctive moods. They were also at ease using the second person plural when addressing examiners and asking for clarification if they did not understand the examiners' questions. They could elaborate on responses and sustain the conversation.

Other students were able to discuss a wide range of topics, but it was evident that they were not fully prepared. Common errors included incorrect article and gender, syntactical errors, adjective noun agreement, and verb tense.

A few students had difficulty in responding to a variety of topics. They appeared to understand the questions, but needed some prompting with their answers and their responses were very simplistic. They were unable to advance the conversation as their vocabulary was limited and their expression poor. They frequently resorted to Anglicisms and rote-learned material.

Section 2: Discussion

The discussion section of the oral examination relates to the in-depth study where students are required to discuss a topic that they have researched at length — one that relates to an aspect or aspects of a topic associated with 'The Greek-speaking Communities' or 'The Changing World' themes. As part of the discussion, students may be asked questions relating to their reflective response. This proved quite challenging for a lot of students, as they were not able to transfer the information they had compiled in English for the reflective response into Greek to support their answers. Many simply repeated facts and information, rather than giving their own ideas and opinions about the topic.

Students who had chosen their topics wisely and researched them at length stood out from the rest of the cohort. They were thoroughly prepared and were able to maintain and advance the discussion appropriately and effectively, using the texts

and resources studied to support their ideas and opinions. They demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of their topic and were skilled in expressing and elaborating on their views. They also had an excellent grasp of the linguistic elements of the language and used a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures effectively.

Students who were not as well prepared found this section very challenging. Students need to be guided in their preparation for the discussion so that they can respond to the questions with sufficient depth and evidence of research and to reflect on their own learning. Some found it difficult to talk about texts they had accessed as part of the research process.

The problems that students encountered with the use of the language were similar to those they encountered in the conversation. The stronger responses were clear and thorough with a depth of information. These students had the appropriate vocabulary and grammar required to discuss their topic with ease, which resulted in an interesting discussion. They were also able to reflect on their learning effectively, comment on the texts they had analysed, and reflect on their own values and beliefs.

Written Examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

Overall, this section was answered very well. The majority of students were able to identify the information in the texts and respond appropriately.

This year there were five unrelated texts of varying lengths and types. For all texts, the questions and answers were in English.

Question 1

- (a) This question was answered very well and the majority of students were able to identify the audience as 'young people' but some did not include the required detail of 'who like music'.
- (b) The majority of students successfully identified the rock band by name.

Question 2

Students answered well and justified their answer with evidence from the text.

Question 3

Most students showed excellent understanding of the text and answered correctly.

Question 4

- (a) Text 4 was possibly the most challenging text, allowing the opportunity for higher-order thinking. Some students did not identify the sporting event and hence did not achieve full marks.
- (b) Most students answered this question successfully, identifying the monetary grant as the benefit to the school.

- (c) The most successful responses identified all groups involved in the event but some students only identified the student group.

Question 5

- (a) Most students identified all three differences between schools in Greece and Australia.
- (b) Full marks were assigned to students who provided a description of Vasoula. Some students simply provided a recount of her actions from the text.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

Part A

Overall, students demonstrated very good understanding of the content, purpose, and audience of the two texts. However, some responses contained unnecessary recount or repetition and incorrect interpretation of words.

Question 6

- (a) Although there was some recount in responses, most students provided examples of language used to convey the seriousness of the events.
- (b) Most students answered well, although some included unnecessary details or repetition.
- (c) The majority of students identified all the positive outcomes of the event.

Question 7

- (a) While most students answered correctly that longevity was a reason that the island has attracted the attention of doctors and researchers some missed the second point that this did not occur in other parts of the world.
- (b) Students extracted the relevant details from the text, generally performing very well in this question.

Part B

Question 8

The stimulus in the examination was a diary entry outlining details of a proposed holiday to Greece. Students were required to write a transcript of a speech in which they describe the benefits of the holiday and persuade their classmates to consider a similar trip. This involved students demonstrating their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text, and to convey information accurately and appropriately.

Student responses were generally good, including the appropriate ideas and expression. The more successful responses included the required details and were in the appropriate text type. Some, however, produced more of a recount and did not use persuasive language to encourage their classmates to do the same. Some students did not respond in the appropriate text type, instead producing a diary entry.

The more competent responses were organised, original, and used authentic vocabulary. Students were able to defend their ideas and views clearly and in a balanced and well-presented manner.

The more successful responses observed the word count, included students' own ideas, and supported them with evidence. The grammar needed for a successful response included correct articles and adjective–noun agreement, appropriate verb tenses, accurate spelling, and appropriate choice of vocabulary.

Students should be reminded to use a pseudonym if the response requires a name.

Section 3: Writing in Modern Greek

Three choices were provided this year, and students were required to write 250–300 words in Modern Greek on one of the three questions. Each question required a different text type and style of writing. Most students chose to answer Questions 9 or 10 which required a letter or the transcript of an interview.

A wide range of abilities was observed in this section. Stronger responses showed complex vocabulary and expressions, while weaker responses presented simple ideas and basic vocabulary.

Question 9

Students were asked to write a letter to a friend in Greece recounting their experience at a sporting event. Many students expressed their ideas well, structured sentences correctly, and wrote in a logical sequence. The better responses clearly described emotions and included all the features of the text type.

Question 10

This question asked students to write a transcript of an interview with a migrant. This question was a popular choice, although some students had difficulty using the appropriate language for an interview.

Question 11

Students were asked to imagine they were a journalist writing a review of a concert by a famous Greek singer. Many of the students who attempted this question produced reflection rather than a review.

Common language mistakes included incorrect articles, verb tenses, especially past perfective and past imperfective non-agreement of adjectives and nouns, and incorrect use of cases, especially accusative and incorrect choice of words (from dictionaries).

OPERATIONAL ADVICE

Teachers are required to provide a copy of their approved learning and assessment plan (with any changes noted in the addendum) when submitting student work. Several schools omitted to do this. A copy of each task is also required. Most student work had the task attached to their work, but others did not; in these instances, it was difficult for moderators to work out the description and expectations of the task(s).

Teachers are advised to be mindful of how students' work is presented; each student's work should be separate, with tasks for the two assessment types in, for example, a manila folder. Heavy plastic folders are cumbersome and are not appropriate. Simple packaging is the most effective.

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