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# GCSE

# POLISH

8688/LH: Listening (Higher)  
Report on the Examination

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## General Comments

The number of entries for GCSE Polish grew significantly compared to last year and over 5,500 students sat the Higher Tier of the new exam. The results of the Listening test were very good with 99% of students gaining at least 27 marks out of 50. A small number of students did not answer the questions in the appropriate language. Also, some students left questions unanswered. Teachers should encourage students to attempt all questions.

Finally, in many cases, answers were difficult to decipher. Students must make sure that they make their final answer clear to examiners by writing legibly and using the spaces provided otherwise they risk not having their answer marked. If students change their mind about an answer, the final choice must be clearly signalled to the marker and be placed as near as possible to the appropriate space. Some students had an insufficient level of English to answer Section A successfully.

Teachers should remind students to maximise the 5 minutes' reading time by:

- reading all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B;
- looking at any examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- highlighting and underlining key words in the rubrics/questions;
- identifying the questions which have two parts to answer from the same utterance;
- signposting Section B as it requires answers in Polish.

## Questions 1–5

These overlap questions were answered exceptionally well at this tier.

## Questions 6-7

These overlap questions provided a mixed response. Question 6 was answered most successfully with over 86% of students gaining two marks. Frequent incorrect answers to the positive aspect were *going to concerts to Warsaw/ she can listen to her favourite band/ she cannot live without music*. Examples of the negative aspect which were not credited were *problem with listening/ earache/ problems with ears*.

In Question 7, only 67.2 % of students gave two correct answers. Two words: *siatkówka* and *kontuzja* appeared to be unknown to a number of students; also students did not grasp that for the boy, the good aspect of playing volleyball was winning matches. They wrote *sport training/ keep fit/ sport*; quite often 'basketball' or 'netball' appeared in answers. For the negative aspect, students struggled to find the right word for *kontuzja*, regularly translating the word to *concussion* or replaced it with words, eg *accident/ broken (leg)/ health*. These answers did not score the mark.

## Question 8

This multiple choice question proved very accessible to students.

## Questions 9-11

These questions were targeted at the lower grades but proved to be more challenging than anticipated, especially Question 10. For Question 9, the utterance was relatively simple and contained cognates but students found it difficult to express what is expected from an ideal student

for the job offer. Examples of incorrect answers were *serve customers well/ make a good impression on the client/ has to have a good encounter with the client/ good customer contact/ service*.

In Question 10, lots of students misunderstood the recording and answered incorrectly. They emphasised computing skills or made a programmer out of a graphic designer. Examples of correct answers were *an excellent knowledge of graphics software, perfect knowledge of graphics programs to work in an advertisement company*. Examples of incorrect answers were *someone who knows programming well/ specialist with programming skills/ specialist in advertisement firm*. There were 69.6% of correct answers to this question.

In Question 11, 79.4% of students answered this question correctly. Some students did not seem to understand two words *obawiać się* and *występować* or they could not express these in English. There were some awkward attempts to answer this question correctly, which suggested that students do not re-read their answers eg *not scared to show himself in public/ doesn't care about speaking publicly*. In other cases, students transferred their own experience/knowledge into the answer without regard to the recording, so they wrote about *playing/ dancing/ acting on stage*.

#### Questions 12-14

Question 12 discriminated well with 70% of students getting the answer correct. Questions 13 and 14 were very accessible.

#### Questions 15-17

Question 15 and 16 were accessible to students resulting with well over 90% of correct answers. Question 17 was much more demanding. The correct answer to this question was *she couldn't ride her bike because she didn't want to inhale fumes*. Only 40.9% of students managed to answer correctly. Some students did not read the question with sufficient attention to detail or they did not understand that they had to give the reason why Natalia was not travelling on a bike to work. In such cases they wrote for example *she couldn't drive her car/ she couldn't take car and bike/ she inhaled pollution/ she didn't know which public transport to use*. Such answers were rejected. The word *spaliny* (which is included in the vocabulary list in the specification) was challenging for many students. It was often interpreted as *smog/ fossil fuels/ dirty air/ gas/ bad air/ toxins from the gas/ burned fuel or even congestion or fossils*. Some answers did not make sense and suggested that students do not read what they have written, for example, *she didn't want to breathe in the air/ she wanted to use a bike, but she didn't want to smell it*.

#### Questions 18-21

With this familiar type of question asking about a positive, negative, or positive + negative opinion, students coped very well. The most challenging was Question 19 with 71.6% of students scoring.

#### Question 22

This two-part question met with a mixed response. Question 22.1 had 91% of correct answers but Question 22.2 had only 55.9%. Once again, students did not focus on the wording of the question with the most frequent incorrect answer *start losing weight slowly*. Another reason for not scoring marks was due to not understanding the utterance, which led to answers such as *caused by many diseases/ it might be an illness*. Some students gave a vague answer eg *because obesity causes a lot of different problems*. Some students did not attempt to answer this question at all.

### Question 23

This question was aimed at the highest grades and did prove to discriminate successfully. Students had to answer four questions based on a longer narrative talking about present, future and past events. 58.7% of students gained two marks for Question 23.1. The most frequent wrong answer for part 1 which asked about the actress's opinion about the role she played was *she was mother of 4 children* or *she was shouting* – which are comments about the character she played. For part 2 in this section, students misunderstood the intentions of the actress, that she is willing to change her appearance or figure and wrote what she would like to play eg *deformed character* or *she wants a different role*. Part 2 was answered slightly more successfully. The main problem with part 1 in this section was that students did not pick up the word *obsesja* and its meaning. Answers like *used to clean a lot/ she liked cleaning/ clean a lot* were rejected. For part 2, rejected answers for being too vague included *to feel good at home/ her family* or a made up answer *for everyone to stay healthy*.

### Question 24

This question was answered very well by students, which was pleasing.

### Questions 25-27

The majority of students (75.5%) correctly answered Question 25. They wrote *helping others is popular and it has encouraged him to be a volunteer/ to be similar like 1/5 of Poles that take part in volunteering work*. The most common incorrect answer was *to help others*.

Question 26 caused difficulties for many students with only 54.9% of correct answers. Firstly, it seems that they confused the meaning of the words *employers, employees, workers* and *volunteers*. As a result, there was an array of odd answers like *some volunteers use employers/ employees use employers like workers/ some people use the employers*. In addition, a number of answers were too vague such as *take advantage of others/ some people use the volunteers*. Secondly, many students did not understand the word *wykorzystują* as they associated it with the word *korzystać*.

Question 27 was answered much more successfully which was pleasing.

### Questions 28-29

These two questions consisted of two parts: advantage and disadvantage. For Question 28, for the advantage part, the key word *niezawodny* was often misunderstood, resulting in the wrong description of public transport eg *no public transport so it helps the environment/ the transport isn't used as much, which is good for the pollution/ there is no public transport*. Also a general answer such as *transport/ public transport* was not awarded a mark. The second part of the question was the disadvantage and this was answered much more successfully but answers such as *shopping/ all the shops closed down* were rejected. 66.4% of students scored 2 marks for this question. Question 29 caused serious difficulties for many students with only 45.4% scoring two marks. The lexical item *zabytki* was not known by many students and the sentence was misinterpreted. A number of students understood the meaning of this word and tried to find an English equivalent for it but often unsuccessfully, eg *tourist point/ old houses/ unique object/ artefact/ antique/ shopping centre* but answers like *ancient buildings/ famous landmarks/ famous monuments* were accepted. The disadvantage section was answered much better but some students gave a wrong answer

such as *people moving out due to old/ crumbling/ in bad state houses/ the city centre being overcrowded.*

### Question 30

This overlap question was answered better than at the Foundation tier as expected with 87.9% of correct answers for Question 30.1 and 70.1% for Question 30.2. Such questions which are testing the understanding of the time frames and tenses should be practiced often during lessons.

### Questions 31-32

Students found these overlap questions very accessible at this tier.

### Questions 33-34

Both multiple choice questions were answered quite well. A number of students chose option C which was a distractor in Question 33. Students found Question 34 more accessible and chose the correct answer which was B.

### Questions 35-36

In these questions, students had to select the right answer from the table which was a mixture of options in the present and past tense, or present and future. As the utterance was in reported speech – *Bartek powiedział mi, że w domu nie czuje się dobrze.... Mówi, że taty będzie mu brakować...* - it made it more challenging to identify the correct option. For Question 35, 66.8% of students chose the 2 correct answers. Question 36 was a positive end to the paper with a large number of students (91.1%) gaining the marks.

### Advice to students

In Section A (Questions and answers in English):

- Make sure that you read the question carefully so that you know exactly what is required.
- Ensure that you give precise answers as vague answers will not be credited. For example in Question 7, a boy is saying that sport is very important to him, that he practices volleyball in a club and that he is happy that his team wins international games. The question asks about a good aspect of **his activity** which is winning matches with his team. The answer 'important is sport' is too vague to be acceptable as it could firstly mean any sport and secondly does not say anything positive about the sport. Similarly vague is the answer to the negative aspect 'worrying about health'.

In Section B (Questions and answers in Polish):

- Reading the instructions carefully is very important.
- Clear and legible handwriting is essential. There were many illegible answers this year which could not be credited.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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