
GCSE

POLISH

8688/WF: Writing (Foundation)
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This was the first year of this examination and the quality of work produced was generally good and promising. The paper differentiated well and most of the students were able to score marks over a variety of questions. The majority of students had been entered appropriately for this tier, but it should be noted that there were students who should have been entered for the Higher tier. Equally, there were some students who wrote their answers phonetically, so teachers should be reminded of regular writing practice followed by thorough marking and assessment of students' levels.

Many students showed a good knowledge of vocabulary required for the tasks, demonstrated an ability to use tenses and express opinions. Any inaccuracies which caused a delay in communication resulted in the loss of marks. Another barrier to achieving full marks was the omission or misinterpretation of the bullet points in Questions 2 and 4.

Question 1

Students are required to write four sentences about what is **in** the photograph. Each sentence is marked separately and is worth a maximum of two marks. As the clarity of the message is the key element, the students who were most successful in this question were those who used simple language, usually with a verb like *widzę* or *jest*, followed by something they could see in the photo. The sentences had to relate to something that was in the photo and so a general opinion such as *Lubię to zdjęcie* did not score a mark. If there was ambiguity or a delay in communication in what the student wrote, then a mark of one was given. This included instances where the verb was omitted or conjugated incorrectly.

Advice to students

- Include a verb, and keep the sentences fairly short and simple to maintain their clarity.
- Write clearly, as illegible writing might cause a loss of marks.

Question 2

In this question there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 40 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points are compulsory and must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets.

Content

In order to score in the top band for Content, students had to give clear information in relation to all four bullet points.

Students could write anything at all in relation to each bullet point, although the majority tended to give their opinion on each aspect. The most successful responses were concise and addressed and developed all bullet points. It seems that all of them (*położenie kawiarni, z kim tam się spotykasz, ulubione dania i napoje oraz atmosfera kawiarni*) were understood by most of the students.

Clarity of communication was important and there were often lapses in clarity when students tried to use tenses other than the present. There is no requirement to do that in this question.

Quality of language

The vast majority of students were able to score four marks or above. There were good attempts at variety as well as expressing and illustrating opinions. Students failed to gain marks when verb or noun formations were inaccurate and as a result caused a delay in communication.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly ten words per bullet point. If you can write a little more on one and a little less on another, that is acceptable. However, try to keep to approximately 40 words in total. If you write less (e.g. 20 words, it is likely that not all bullet points will have been addressed).
- Mention **all** the of the bullet points. If you miss out a bullet point entirely, you will automatically fail to gain two marks for Content.
- Tick off each bullet point on the paper once you have covered it.

Question 3

For this question, there are 5 marks for Conveying key messages and 5 marks for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. Given that the level of demand of the messages was aimed at covering Grades 1 to 5, the question differentiated well with nearly all students able to score some marks.

The sentences were divided into 12 key messages, as in the table below.

Conveying key messages

I like my new phone.	This was generally well done, but some students omitted 'nowy'.
In winter I often go to the mountains, because skiing is my favourite sport.	<i>Zima, jazda na nartach, narciarstwo</i> and <i>jechać w góry</i> caused some problems.
On Sunday I helped at a centre for homeless people.	Surprisingly (and similarly to <i>winter</i> above), 'Sunday' (<i>niedziela</i>) was often mixed up with 'Saturday' (<i>sobota</i>). Some students omitted the past tense, producing a translation in the present tense instead.
Our house has five rooms and a big garden.	Our (<i>nasz</i>) was frequently translated as my (<i>mój</i>), otherwise this was generally well done.
In future, I am planning to get married in a church.	Some students did use phrases <i>żenić się/wyjść za mąż w kościele</i> , but many were familiar with <i>ślub w kościele</i> which was an excellent alternative.

Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures

If one of the key messages contained a minor error or errors, it was still credited. For example, *iść do gór, pomagać, pienć pokojów*. However, an accumulation of such errors had an overall effect on accuracy which could be reflected in the mark for Application of grammar. Nevertheless, there was usually a direct correlation between the two marks.

Advice to students

- Practise high frequency words and phrases.
- Check carefully that you do not miss out any parts of the translation by accident.
- If you are not sure how to translate something, have a go as it may score you a mark. Leaving it blank will not.
- Check verb tenses and endings.

Question 4

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 90 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets.

Students were able to achieve full marks by writing in the region of 90 words. Many did this, but others failed to gain marks for Content because they wrote around half that amount or because they wrote too much and made more errors in so doing. This affected the mark for Quality of language.

At this tier, it was the students who wrote concisely and accurately who scored the highest marks.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: coverage of the bullet points, development of ideas, clarity of communication and expression of opinions. Students need to be reminded that coverage of all 4 bullet points is essential, as misinterpreting or omitting even one means that the award of a mark for Content is a maximum of 6. In order to be awarded marks within the 7 to 10 range, all aspects of the task must be covered. Most students had no difficulty in expressing opinions, but some students failed to gain some marks due to producing pieces of writing full of information, but lacking in opinions. Also, some answers were too short or unintelligible.

Question 4.1

This question was far more more popular than Question 4.2. The first bullet point about the student's favorite place in their home town was answered well. The second bullet point, about a last weekend was equally well answered. The third bullet, about what transport do students use and its impact on the environment, required quite specific vocabulary, which some lacked. As a result many students produced very simple sentences, some of which were a translation of the bullet point itself, *ich wpływ na środowisko nie jest dobry*. The last bullet about where the student wants to live in the future was done well overall and there were plenty of good reasons given for wanting to live there.

Question 4.2

In the first bullet point, most students were very eager to share details of their last birthday's celebrations. The second bullet was equally welcoming and students were happy to write about their favourite birthday gift. Some of them, however, mixed up favourite with a present received for their last birthday. Those answers were accepted and awarded accordingly. The third bullet was meant to help students include their opinions, but it seemed that some of them found it challenging. Most agreed that celebrating special occasions is indeed important, but were not able to produce any further development. The last bullet point elicited reference to the future, although many students were not able to mention specific Polish traditions in their answers. Christmas and Easter were most frequent examples used by students.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment here are variety of language, attempts at complexity, time frames and accuracy.

Students were able to show a variety of vocabulary in relation to the four bullet points of their chosen question. This came automatically as they were asked to write about diverse topics.

Both questions elicited language which referred to past, present and future events and students had the possibility here to show a knowledge of different tenses.

When giving opinions, many students were able to use different verbs and adjectives which lent greater variety to their writing. Two bullet points per question directly elicited opinions. Complexity at this tier was achieved in various ways: infinitive constructions; subordinate clauses; the use of longer sentences formed by using connectives; comparatives; negatives.

The other strand in Quality of language is the accuracy of the writing. The major errors were with verbs, either with the wrong person or the wrong tense of the verb. A good number of minor errors, for example of gender or frequent spelling errors led to a lower mark.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the suggested number of words.
- Mention all of the bullet points. Attempt to write something about them rather than omitting them. Tick off the bullet points on the question paper once they have been covered.
- Identify which bullet points target the different time frames and check that your verb formation is accurate.
- Make sure you include opinions as required by the task.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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