GREEK (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0543/02

Reading and Directed Writing

Key messages

- In *Section 1* all vocabulary is taken from the *Minimum Core Vocabulary* list which should be used as a resource for teaching. In the short writing exercise, brief answers can score full marks and elaboration is not always necessary.

- In *Section 2*, **Exercise 1** candidates are rewarded for being able to locate the correct answer in the reading passages, whereas in *Section 3* Examiners are looking for signs of genuine comprehension and candidates need to demonstrate that they have fully understood the questions and the texts.

- In *Section 2*, **Exercise 2** there are 10 marks available for Communication which are awarded for each valid point a candidate makes in relation to the tasks set. It is important that candidates address all the tasks and include as much detail as they can within the word limit in order to be eligible for all 10 Communication marks.

General comments

The best responses demonstrated good knowledge of the *Minimum Core Vocabulary* used in *Sections 1* and *2*. Candidates were able to locate the required information accurately in the reading texts and wrote concise responses. In the longer writing exercise, they avoided repetition of verbs and ensured that they completed all three tasks in full.

Some weaker candidates lacked detailed knowledge of the core vocabulary which was necessary to understand the passages and copied long sections indiscriminately in their answers without demonstrating good comprehension. Phonetic spelling was tolerated where the meaning was clear.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–5

This exercise was answered well in general. The majority of candidates scored full marks with only a few having difficulty with the word *μάγειρας* in **Question 2.**

Exercise 2 Questions 6–10

In **Question 6**, the word *ιππασία* was not universally known but **Questions 7 – 10** posed no problems.

Exercise 3 Questions 11–15

Some core vocabulary in this exercise was not well known by all candidates.

In **Question 11**, a small number of candidates did not understand *αρχαίους πολιτισμούς*. The word *πυρετό* caused problems in **Question 12**. In **Question 13**, a greater number of candidates did not understand the word *φύση*. For **Question 15**, the verb *βαριέμαι* was not known by a small number of candidates.

Exercise 4 Question 16

This exercise was answered well. The vocabulary required was well known and the majority of candidates completed all three tasks successfully. It should be noted that a brief correct answer scored as well as a longer answer. Full marks were available to candidates who gave a single sentence in response to each task.

Most candidates scored full marks for Communication and the majority scored at least 1 mark for Language. Candidates usually spelled verb endings correctly and many were able to place accents accurately. Phonetic spelling and omission of accents were tolerated in this exercise, however.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17–23

Question 17 was answered correctly by most candidates. Some misunderstood *Πότε* in **Question 18** and therefore gave the wrong answer. To score the mark, it was necessary to read the whole sentence and to specify that the extra study was what caused him to eat sweets. Many candidates gave *Μετά το φαγητό* as their response and this was not accepted. In **Question 19**, the answer *Τρώει γλυκά* was not accepted as it was not linked in the text to Dimitri's return from school. **Questions 20 – 23** were generally well answered. It should be noted that when two separate answers were required for a question, as in **Questions 20, 22** and **23**, some candidates wrote an incorrect answer on one line, then two correct answers on the second line. Only one mark could be awarded in such cases.

Exercise 2 Question 24

This exercise was completed very well by some more able candidates who were able to write fully using a variety of vocabulary to describe their free time. In order to score full marks for Communication, it was necessary to complete each of the three tasks in some detail. The rubric clearly stated that this exercise was concerned with candidates' free time. A small number wrote about Saturday jobs or school lessons which were not relevant to the task. Some weaker candidates used one verb to introduce a list of activities and so missed out on some marks for Communication. Occasionally, a candidate wrote about a free-time activity using an English word in their description and so could not score a mark for Communication. Candidates should ensure that their response contains sufficient detail to score all of the marks for Communication without exceeding 80 – 90 words.

To score full marks for Language, it is necessary to use a range of appropriate vocabulary and verbs. In general, verb endings were correctly spelled and accents were used. The most common spelling and grammatical errors were in the verb *πηγαίνω* and *μου αρέσει/αρεσούν*.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 25–30

In this exercise, careful lifting of the answer from the text was accepted. It is important to note that the candidate's response had to make sense. In some cases, candidates used quotation marks and the first and last words of the quote with a series of dots in the middle of the phrase. This did not score a mark.

Question 25 was correctly answered by most candidates. In **Question 26**, the word *σύγχρονος* seemed to cause some difficulty. **Questions 27 – 30** were answered well by the majority of candidates. In most cases, the correct phrase was located in the text and copied in part in the justification but the mark was not always awarded owing to an incomplete or unclear use of language.

Exercise 2 Questions 31–37

This exercise was answered well by the more able candidates who wrote an accurate and concise response to the questions, manipulating the language when appropriate. A correctly formed verb was required in most cases. Some candidates did not attempt all the questions in this section.

In **Question 31**, to score the mark it was necessary to refer to the fact that the candidates cultivated and looked after the plants themselves. Stating that the candidates looked after the schoolyard was not sufficient as a response. **Question 32** caused no difficulty for the majority. In **Question 33**, some candidates demonstrated a lack of understanding of the question and were unable to locate the answer in the text.

Question 34 proved difficult for many candidates. The correct answer required candidates to mention both the website and the fact that it had won an award to gain the mark. In **Question 35**, the most common error was caused by a misunderstanding of the question. Several candidates mentioned exchanging articles and stories with their Spanish friends which was incorrect. Those candidates who answered **Question 36** but who did not score the mark often gave a response which was grammatically incorrect or which did not make sense. In *Section 3*, candidates must demonstrate the ability to understand and respond in correct Greek. **Question 37** was answered well by the majority.

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Key messages

- To score well in the A Role plays (Speaking), candidates need to be as concise as possible, stick closely to the cues on their cards and ensure that they complete all parts of each task.
- In the B Role Plays it is important for both the Teacher/Examiner and the candidate to address all the tasks exactly as prescribed by Cambridge.
- It is important that the Teacher/Examiner announces the start of the General Conversation to clearly distinguish it from the Topic Conversation.
- Teacher/Examiners can help candidates by observing the time limits for each of the Conversation sections, and by remembering to ask each candidate questions which elicit past and future tenses in each of the two Conversation sections.
- Good performances in the Conversation sections tend to be those where candidates are given the opportunity to respond not just to straightforward questions, but also to unexpected ones, and where they are encouraged to expand upon their answers, to give and explain their opinions.
- The best performances from candidates of all abilities were heard in Centres where there had not been over-preparation of work and where the spontaneity of the examining could be heard.

General comments

High levels of communication skills were displayed and the results in general were very good. Teacher/Examiners were mostly well prepared and able to elicit the best performance from their candidates. There were instances, however, where the fourfold nature of the test was difficult to distinguish as Test 3 (*Topic Conversation*) and Test 4 (*General Conversation*) were presented as one test. When this happens it is difficult for the Moderator to confirm the marks awarded for each one of these tests. Therefore, announcing the end of the Topic Conversation and the beginning of the General Conversation is an important part of the examination process, both for Moderators and candidates.

Administration

Only minor instances of clerical errors were reported this year.

Quality of recording

The quality of recording was good in all Centres, and cassettes, CDs and digital recordings were correctly labelled.

Duration of tests

There were instances of short or overlong examinations in Test 3 (*Topic Conversation*) or Test 4 (*General Conversation*). Teacher/Examiners are reminded that each candidate's test must consist of the following four parts: Test 1 (Role Play A (Speaking)) and Test 2 (Role Play B (Listening)), approximately 5 minutes in total; Test 3 (Topic Presentation and Conversation), approximately 5 minutes; and finally Test 4 (General Conversation), approximately 5 minutes, making the total time for the examination about 15 minutes.

In cases where the Role Plays A and B last less than 5 minutes total, there is no need to extend the following parts of the examination to compensate. Also care should be taken to ensure that no section of the test is omitted. In the most successful tests, it was clear that the Teacher/examiner was listening to what the candidate had to say and that the conversation was a natural and spontaneous development of topics which the candidate had encountered throughout their course of learning.

Application of the mark scheme

Marking in Centres was generally close to the agreed standard. Some instances of harsh or rather generous marking were reported and adjustments were therefore necessary.

Comments on specific sections

Test 1: A Role Plays (Speaking)

In general candidates performed very well in this part of the test. Teacher/Examiners are reminded that marks can only be awarded for completion of tasks set by Cambridge so it is vital that they stick to the tasks specified in the Teachers' Notes booklet and encourage candidates to attempt all parts of each task. If only one part of the task is completed, only one mark can be awarded. Candidates should take time to act the scenario appropriately and not be rushed quickly through it producing unnaturally brief exchanges with the Teacher/Examiner. It is also important to remind Centres that candidates should be given preparation time to read carefully the prompts so that they do not omit any task and lose marks because of this.

A telephone conversation to invite a Greek friend to an excursion

Candidates performed very well in this role play and the vast majority used the appropriate register in Tasks 1, 4 and 5 for talking informally to a friend and using the singular in pronouns and verbs: *Γεια σου* or *Μπορείς να φέρεις...;*

Talking to an employee at the travel agency to arrange a trip

Again candidates coped well with this role play and most of them used the appropriate formal register in Tasks 1 and 5 for talking to an adult, for example using the plural in pronouns: *Γεια σας* or *Σας ευχαριστώ*.

Conversation with a teacher at school about volunteering

Candidates seemed quite comfortable in responding to the tasks of this scenario and there were a number of natural exchanges and questions. As before, most candidates used the appropriate register for talking to an adult, for example using the plural in pronouns and verbs.

Test 2: B Role Plays (Listening)

These role plays were more challenging than the A Role Plays in that they required the candidate to initiate the conversation, listen to the Teacher/Examiner's responses and then tick the appropriate box(es) or complete the notes provided in the Role Play Booklet. Generally, however, candidates found the role plays accessible, with most able to gain marks when going through the tasks as they conversed in a natural way with the Teacher/Examiner.

A town hall employee talking to a person who wants to register as a volunteer

Most candidates performed well in the tasks of this more challenging role play and they were careful to address all parts of the task. They were able to listen, understand and respond to more complex vocabulary and structures in their conversation with the Teacher/Examiner. All three B Role Plays followed the same scenario but the responses of the person seeking to register as a volunteer, which was played by the Teacher/Examiner, were different each time.

For the last task (writing the telephone number) all digits must be written correctly to gain a mark; half marks cannot be awarded.

Test 3: Topic Presentation and Conversation

This section of the examination allows candidates to prepare vocabulary and structures in advance, and is intended to give them a confident start to the Conversation sections. Generally, candidates chose topics appropriate to their level of linguistic ability. However, Teacher/Examiners should advise candidates not to choose 'Myself' or 'My family' as these topics can become far too general and leave little to be exploited in the General Conversation section. Furthermore, in some cases, the questions asked by the Teacher/Examiner were not such as to enable the candidate to display their knowledge and ability of handling the language and of using past and future tenses in their responses.

A small number of candidates omitted to give a Presentation. Teacher/Examiners are reminded that candidates are expected to prepare and present a topic, rather than the Teacher/Examiner just asking questions about it. More specifically, candidates should be allowed to speak for about one or two minutes on their chosen topic before the Teacher/Examiner begins to ask questions about it.

Overall, a number of interesting presentations were given this year on topics relevant to the candidates' age group and interests, for example: 'A special celebration in Sweden', 'Young people and addictions', 'Technology today', 'Holidays in Cyprus and Lebanon', 'Fitness and sports', 'My plans for the future', 'My favourite hobby-music', 'All about my school' etc. Such topics enable candidates to talk about their experiences, and express and justify their views and opinions. The best performances were to be found in Centres where a natural and spontaneous conversation took place after the initial presentation of the topic. There were many instances of good examining which enabled candidates to use different tenses and to give and justify their opinions.

Teacher/Examiners are reminded that candidates as well as Moderators find it useful to be told when this section of the test is over and when the examination is moving onto the General Conversation. Also, keeping to the time specified for each conversation section is important as a matter of fairness for all candidates.

Test 4: General Conversation

A good range of high-quality performances were heard in this section as in the Topic Conversation section. However, Teacher/Examiners are reminded that they should aim to cover two or three topics in this section of the test. In some cases, the Teacher/examiner asked a wide range of topics, which meant that they could only be covered superficially, without a meaningful in-depth conversation. The topics should be different for different candidates and should be chosen by the Examiner so as not to overlap with the Topic Presentation section. Also Teacher/Examiners are reminded to ask questions which enable candidates to expand upon information and use past and future tenses. Closed questioning techniques which elicit one- or two-word responses are best avoided in favour of questions such as: *για ποιο λόγο προτιμάς...;, τι είναι αυτό που σε κάνει να...;, με ποιον τρόπο θα καταφέρεις να...;, εξήγησέ μου πώς θα...;*, and so on.

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Key messages

For candidates to do well in this paper, they should be able to write about 130–140 words for each of the two questions. Within this word limit it is important to address all the tasks (bullet points) of each question, so there is no loss of marks for omitting tasks. The language used in the answers should be accurate especially the verbs. All verbs used in the candidates' responses should be grammatically correct with accents in the correct position, and should avoid use of Latin alphabet letters instead of similar Greek alphabet letters for example 'i' or 'u' instead of 'ι' or 'υ'.

General comments

In good responses to this paper candidates addressed all the tasks of each question within the limit of 140 words and answers displayed good understanding of the tasks set out in the rubric.

The better responses contained language with a rich and varied vocabulary and with a good level of linguistic accuracy. They maintained good spelling and avoided basic errors of grammar in gender, number and case of nouns and adjectives. In the use of verbs in particular, accurate spelling included the correct use of accents and the correct use of present, past and future tenses in regular and common irregular verbs. Also, a variety of correctly used pronouns, participles, connectives, adverbs and prepositions was used in these answers. Weaker candidates could have improved their performance by paying close attention to the correct use of verbs, particularly spelling and accents.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a)   Young people and pocket money

The rubric was well understood by all candidates who chose this question, and most of them were able to present interesting and informative responses of high quality. The presentation of the opinions and comments in task 3 of the question was well structured and skilfully explained.

Most candidates were able to score quite highly for Communication for fairly simple statements, employing appropriate tenses and handling irregular verbs correctly. In a few cases, answers were extended beyond the word limit causing a few marks to be lost for Communication.

The required elements were quite straightforward for this question as the correct tense for the first and third tasks was present. For the other two tasks, candidates had to display correct use of past and future tense but the tasks were easily accessible (*αγόρασα*, *πήγαμε*, *φάγαμε* or *θα βρω*, *θα ψάξω*, *θα δουλέψω*).

Responding to the first task, explaining where they get their pocket money from, most candidates wrote that they get it from their parents in return for helping around the house or doing well at school. Other options were the pocket money given by grandparents or saved from summer jobs, or money given at birthdays or Christmas. Most candidates described how they receive the pocket money, either in cash or added to a prepaid credit card.

Replying to the second task required the use of past tense in explaining how they spent their pocket money the previous week. Candidates wrote varied and detailed accounts for example, that they spent it on a day out shopping or for a weekend outing with friends, or that they went to the theatre, cinema or a restaurant, or

simply bought a birthday present for a friend. Many mentioned that they didn't spend it all as there is an economic crisis and they think it is sensible to save some money.

Replying to the third task required candidates to give an explanation of their views on whether it is a good thing to save money. Candidates gave interesting and informative opinions. They all agreed that it is a good idea to save money and they all gave different reasons why (because you might need it for your studies, or because you can use it later for something you like, or because you do not know what you might need later in your life, or because it is not sensible to waste money unnecessarily in an economic crisis, or because it gives a sense of security and independence to have some money set aside).

Responding to the fourth task, explaining what they plan to do when they finish school to earn their pocket money, most candidates favoured the idea of finding a temporary job. Candidates suggested a range of different jobs, such as work in a factory, a hotel, a restaurant or at a hairdresser's. Other options were to find summer jobs while studying in winter.

The question in general enabled even weaker candidates to score marks for both Communication and Language for using simple statements in the present tense, while at the same time offering the stronger candidates the opportunity to show off their Greek in employing more complex and polished language.

(b)   My town

This question was also popular with candidates, and they had plenty to say about the cities, towns or villages they live in. In some cases the candidates displayed originality by choosing a town they had visited on holiday, for example New York or Moscow, or places they had lived in when younger, for example a small mountain village. They all had different things to say about the positive and negative aspects of their town or village.

The required elements were relatively straightforward for this question as the correct tense for the first and second tasks was present, and the third and fourth tasks required past and future statements respectively (*επισκέφτηκα...*, *πήγα...*, *είδα...* or *θα καθαρίσω..*, *θα φτιάξω...*, *θα κάνω...*).

In responding to the first task about what they like best in the place where they live, candidates gave detailed descriptions and explanations about what is good in their towns: the beautiful, green, quiet environment, the unique antiquities, museums and monuments, the shopping centres, the friendly people, the modern way of life, opportunities for employment etc.

In dealing with the second task there was also a variety of opinions about what the worst thing is in their towns. Most candidates agreed that what seems to be the worst in their town is the pollution and noise, or the lack of care about the environment because of the economic crisis (parks that are not looked after), or lack of public sports centres or entertainment facilities for young people. All explanations for their opinions were well constructed and presented using rich vocabulary and structures.

In responding to the third task candidates' answers displayed originality and innovation as to what was the last sight they visited in the places where they live, and what they did there, for example visiting a museum or gallery and admiring the exhibits, or visiting an interesting ancient monastery, or simply going to the beach and enjoying the sea. In responding to this task, most candidates displayed a good knowledge of handling the past tense in both regular and irregular verbs.

Responding to the fourth task candidates wrote answers displaying imagination and creativity as to what changes they would make in the future to improve the life of the people who live in the town, for example, create more shops and restaurants to offer employment opportunities, provide money for the poor people of the town, increase policing to reduce crime and make the place safer for young people, create more green areas or more facilities for young people to do sports or recreation activities, install more extensive recycling programmes, etc. Most candidates displayed a good knowledge of dealing with future tense both in regular and irregular verbs.

As in **Question 1(a)**, most answers were of the appropriate length with few marks lost for Communication when candidates exceeded the word limit of 140 words.

Most candidates were able to display a rich and varied vocabulary and use a varied range of idiom in their answers and were rewarded accordingly for Language.

The question again enabled even weaker candidates to score marks for both Communication and Language for using simple statements in the present, past and future tenses while at the same time offering the stronger candidates the opportunity to display more sophisticated and complex language.

For both **Questions 1(a)** and **1(b)**, register was not a problem and the questions proved to be fair as almost all candidates were able to find something to say about each task, and the best were able to show their knowledge and linguistic skills in detailed explanations about their views.

Question 2

A sporting event at school

This question's open-ended nature enabled the best candidates to shine, and also offered opportunities for weaker candidates to display their knowledge in handling the language. All answers contained more complex structures in describing the most interesting part of this sporting event and in explaining their reactions to the experience. Most candidates performed equally well in this question as in **Question 1**.

Nearly all candidates understood that they had to describe and explain the most interesting part of this event and also to explain their reactions to this experience as a whole. Most began their answer by giving details of the most interesting part of the event and then explained their feelings and reactions to this experience overall. Almost all candidates scored a Communication mark for expressions like *δάκρυα έτρεχαν στα μάτια μου, φωνάζαμε συνθήματα για το σχολείο μας, ένιωθα μεγάλη αγωνία*.

All candidates had realistic and reasonable stories about the events during this sporting event, and concluded that they made new friends, they thoroughly enjoyed the experience, they learned a lot about different athletes and their sport and that they would like to organise it again in the future. Such stories in their simplest versions were within the compass of average to strong candidates who were able to handle past tenses effectively and accurately. To avoid losing marks for Language, candidates should remember to make correct use of accents on verbs (e.g. *είναι, μου αρέσει, παίρνω*).

Candidates were very inventive in writing their answers. The descriptions of the most interesting part of this event were varied and imaginative. In some responses the most interesting part was the first day when they met the other participants for the first time and they started new friendships. In other responses it was the last day when the winners were receiving their medals. In a few more dramatic answers the most interesting part was when they met a beautiful girl near the swimming pool and they exchanged their first shy kiss, or when the teachers' football team were playing an exciting match against the candidates' team, or when their own school was announced the winning school with the most medals, or when famous athletes came to this event and talked to them about their sports, or when they were enjoying a fantastic party celebration at the end. The description of the most important part of this event also included details about the different sports that were performed.

In explaining their reactions to these experiences, candidates again were able to display rich and varied vocabulary and structures in their answers and were rewarded accordingly for Language. The account of their reactions to this event was presented with a lot of enthusiasm by most candidates and there were descriptions of emotional outbursts and tears of joy as a result of their experience.

Almost all candidates seemed to have read the rubric carefully and answers addressed both tasks appropriately. Only a very small number of candidates did not address the tasks within the word limit of 140 words or were unable to use appropriate vocabulary and structures, and were therefore unable to access all the available marks for Communication or Language.