

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
in Chinese (6CN01)  
Paper 1A Spoken Expression and  
Response

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Summer 2016 Publications Code 6CN01\_1A\_1606\_ER

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## **6CN01/01 GCE Chinese – Examiner’s report – June 2016**

### Unit 1: Spoken Expression and Response in Chinese

#### **General overview**

The Unit 1 speaking assessment requires candidates to speak in monologue for 5 to 6 minutes, based on an assigned English stimulus card with bullet points.

Invigilators/teachers should not be involved in the candidate’s assessment and they must not ask any questions in either Chinese or in English.

Candidates have 15 minutes preparation time and they are allowed to make notes during the preparation time which may be referred to during the speaking assessment.

There are 8 stimuli cards which cover the following four topic areas:

- Food, diet and health
- Transport, travel and tourism
- Education and employment
- Leisure, youth interests and Chinese festivals

On each stimulus card, there is a picture and a short passage in English which is relevant to the topic. The guidance in the form of a series of bullet points provides candidates with clues to explore their ideas. Candidates are expected to refer to both the English stimulus and the bullet points so that they can communicate effectively in Chinese (either Mandarin or Cantonese) with regard to the topic given in the stimulus.

Candidates need to express opinions as well as provide relevant and appropriate information. (*Edexcel GCE Chinese specification page 4*)

#### **Assessment: Content and understanding**

The majority of candidates gave good quality performances, showing they were familiar with the exam setting and were well prepared. Some gave developed and detailed answers, demonstrating thorough consideration on the issues relating to the stimulus.

Most candidates started the speaking assessment with a full or partial translation of the English stimulus. This was usually sufficient to provide a good start. To achieve at the upper end of the marking criteria, candidates should use the English stimulus thoroughly and properly; cover all the bullet points well and enrich the speech by providing fully developed ideas.

The higher achieving candidates were those who spoke logically and accurately in an authentic manner at native or near-native standard.

Although a full summary of the English stimulus is not required, it will be unwise to ignore it completely and go for a free-style speech.

Misinterpretation of the content of the English stimulus should be avoided. Bullet points were important for this assessment and candidates were encouraged to respond to those bullet points in their speech.

An accurate interpretation of the stimulus and the bullet points is essential. Some candidates failed to show their understanding of commonly-used English words/phrases such as "knowledge" in Stimulus 1, "a part-time job" (confused with "temporary job") in Stimulus 2, "transport" in Stimulus 3, "travel agencies" and "Forbidden City" and "considerations" in Stimulus 4 "encourage" and "considerations" in Stimulus 5, "voluntary work" in Stimulus 6, "interviews" and "exciting" in Stimulus 7, and "sports lessons" (confused with "extra-curricular activities") in Stimulus 8.

Some candidates did not pay enough attention to the details in the bullet points. For example:

Stimulus 1, bullet point 4: "What are your opinions about watching the news on TV and the internet?" Some students ignored the word "news" and talked about watching TV and using the internet.

Stimulus 4, bullet point 3: "What makes a place more attractive to tourists?" Some candidates focussed on Beijing rather than giving a general discussion on what makes a place attractive to tourists, thus making the presentation repetitive.

Stimulus 4, bullet point 5: "What are your considerations when choosing a place to visit?" Some candidates talked about the places which they wanted to visit rather than the considerations, thus distorting the focus of the bullet point.

Stimulus 6, bullet point 3: "Why is happiness important to our health?" Some candidates failed to link "happiness" to "health". Instead, they gave a general discussion on the reasons for being happy.

Stimulus 6, bullet point 5: "How do you maintain a happy and healthy lifestyle?" Some candidates did not respond to the word "healthy".

Stimulus 7, bullet point 5: "What are your considerations in choosing your ideal career?" Some candidates talked about their dream job rather than their considerations in choosing their ideal career.

Stimulus 8, bullet point 4: "How can sports help with your future career?" Some candidates talked about being an athlete or a sports coach as their future career.

Overall, candidates who were unable to achieve in the upper mark bands demonstrated the following characteristics:

- struggled to speak for the full time allocation (i.e. 5 to 6 minutes);
- spoke over 6 minutes (the remainder of the presentation was not marked);
- gave limited or no response to the stimulus (i.e. bullet point 1);

- became repetitive;
- talked freely without responding to all five bullet points;
- gave a lot of irrelevant responses;
- failed to extend their responses to the full range of all bullet points;  
or
- Gave an unbalanced presentation (e.g. spent too much time on the first three bullet points and rushed through the last two bullet points).

## **Assessment: Quality of language**

Quality of language marks were awarded based on pronunciation and grammatical accuracy, as well as the range of lexical items and variety of structures and expressions related to all bullet points.

The majority of candidates received good marks for quality of language. High marks of 9-10 were often awarded for performances which were not faultless, but showed clear pronunciation and good control of complex language structures.

The weaker candidates tended to demonstrate problems with tones which sometimes caused misunderstanding, and hesitation which stemmed from uncertainty. Some candidates spoke fluently, but simplicity of language expressions or structures or limited vocabulary affected their quality of language marks.

## **Administration**

### **1. OR1CN oral form**

A completed **OR1CN oral form** (including "declaration of authentication") should be attached with the recording for every candidate. The latest version of the oral form can be found in the *Administrative Support Guide GCE Orals – Chinese 6CN01*, which can be downloaded from the Chinese qualification page of the Edexcel website.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/chinese-2008.html>

### **2. Recording on CD or USB**

Centres must record the exam digitally and send recordings on CD or USB. ***Audio cassettes are no longer accepted for assessment from September 2014.***

The centre name/number, candidate name, candidate number and stimulus card number should be announced at the start of each and every recording. Please make sure the candidates' information matches the registration form. At the end of each recording, "end of test" should be announced.

The test should last between 5 and 6 minutes, **excluding** the announcement at the start of each recording. Invigilators **must not stop the recording** at any time during the allotted 6 minutes. Recordings must NOT be stopped to allow candidates time to think and prepare for the next utterance.

Centres are reminded to check thoroughly that the recordings on CD and USB are complete and of a good audible quality before sending the assessment to the Edexcel Examiner.

Centres are also reminded that CDs/USBs should be packaged carefully with appropriate wrapping in order to prevent damage to the recordings.

Centres must keep **back-up files of the recording** and resend the recording upon request in case of faulty or missing originals.

### **3. Invigilation**

Invigilators are reminded to read the instructions carefully before conducting the exam. It is important for the integrity of the examination that invigilators accurately follow the sequence of oral stimulus, as specified in the exam oral booklet. **Candidates must NOT be allowed to choose their own stimulus card.**

Full instructions regarding the conduct of oral assessments can be found in the *Administrative Support Guide GCE Orals – Chinese 6CN01* on the Chinese qualification page of the Edexcel website.

Centres should retain the candidates' notes produced during the 15-minute preparation time till the last date for Enquiry About Results (EARs).

More importantly, **invigilators MUST NOT prompt candidates** by reading out questions from the stimulus card, or by asking supplementary questions either in English or in Chinese. The assessment requires the candidates to produce a **monologue** and additional support by the Invigilator could disadvantage the candidates' performance.

### **Conclusion**

The stimulus material in this assessment proved accessible to all candidates. The examination requires students to give complex, well-structured and extended answers based on the stimulus material provided by the examination board. In preparation for this assessment, teachers should ensure that candidates are given proper training and experience of the expectations of the assessment prior to the examination (such as time management, covering the stimulus as much as possible and responding to all bullet points).

## **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>