



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Greek (6GK01) Paper 01

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Introduction

A good number of candidates produced competent responses, demonstrating familiarity with the topics and texts, good language awareness and evidence of ability to apply this knowledge, in order to transfer meaning, answer comprehension questions clearly and succinctly, exercise critical interpretation and offer factually correct details pertaining to their chosen topics and texts.

Many candidates demonstrated very good factual knowledge of the History of Cyprus, in response to question 4(a) in particular, wrote well-organised and informed responses for the Geography module, in particular question 5(b), and often provided excellent arguments supported by relevant examples and explanation for the literature and film modules, for example, in questions 6 (b), 7 (a) and 7 (b) and 8 (b).

There was also a considerable number of candidates who, despite evidently good language skills, did not read the questions carefully and did not provide pertinent responses (question 3a) or offered too many details and failed to offer the necessary clarity (question 1).

Unfortunately, rubric violations were very frequent with many candidates, particularly from centres overseas, exceeding the word limit by far. In addition, a significant number of candidates ignored the requirement that the two chosen responses in Section C be clearly indicated and composed in different sections of the answer booklet. It was a frequent occurrence to see that the response composed was not in fact the one indicated (for example 7a was ticked but the response was to 8a) or that two different responses (for example 7a and 8a) were written in the space reserved for one response (for example, the space in the QP reserved for 7a). Such violations caused considerable delays and challenges regarding marking in the online platform.

There were also some isolated instances of candidates answering a question (e.g. in the cinema module), by referring to films that were not in the prescribed list of works. These responses did not receive any marks.

In conclusion, this last series of what is now the legacy A level specification in Greek was successful and many candidates achieved excellent marks. We would like to thank the teachers who have taught this specification over the years and the students who have chosen to study and sit the Pearson A level exam in Greek.

Question 1

Question 1 produced a good number of appropriate, succinctly and unambiguously expressed responses in Greek. Several candidates presented the right amount of details and avoided superfluous and irrelevant content. There were several instances whereby candidates produced lengthy all-inclusive responses that contained extraneous material and did not provide the necessary clarity and precision. In reading comprehension tasks that elicit short answers in Greek (or English for that matter), the burden of proof is on the candidate. It cannot rest on the reader/examiner to tease out the correct aspect from a series of details that address a combination of relevant, irrelevant information and often inaccurate details. Such instances were in evidence in questions 1c, 1d, 1f and 1h in particular. Answers that relied heavily on copying whole phrases from the text, that happened to contain some correct details, were not rewarded as they relied on guesswork and interpretation on the part of the examiner to ascertain which part was correct, especially as there was no correspondence between the syntax and phrasing of the question and the syntax and the phrasing of the response. For example, the answer to question 1 (i) cannot be: σε κάθε δημόσιο σχολείο λειτουργούν αθλητικά απογεύματα. The fact that this is copied from the text verbatim aside, a response like this one lacks the necessary clarity that is required at this level.

A pattern of successful responses was evident in the following sub-questions:

1a, 1b, 1e, 1g and 1i.

Questions that seemed to pose a challenge were:

1c, when candidates failed to provide two details for two marks.

1f, when candidates provided either one detail or two contradictory details (e.g. σε ιδιωτική κλινική γιατί είναι δωρεάν).

1h, when candidates failed to articulate two details, one pertaining to the fact that state schools provide quality education and one about the fact that their students win prizes in competitions.

In conclusion, question 1 was handled very well by the majority of candidates, many of whom achieved near perfect marks.

Question 2

It was a pleasure to see so many candidates offer responses that showed good translation skills. There was evidence of sound knowledge of structures and vocabulary and most translations flowed well, with minor errors that did not hinder clarity and did not obscure meaning. Some areas of difficulty pertained to the following:

- "Internationally famous" was often rendered with an incorrect form of the adjective διεθνής
- "Citizenship" was often rendered with paraphrasing (which was acceptable) but very often with inappropriate spelling that rendered the word unrecognizable, e.g. ιππικότητα
- Literal translations of "we find ourselves" led to the rather awkward "βρισκόμαστε τους εαυτούς μας" instead of the correct "βρισκόμαστε". A similar example of literal translations led many candidates to omit the essential definite article from their rendering of "Giannis Antetokounmpo".

Question 3

Very few candidates chose question 3. The very few responses to 3 (b) were largely irrelevant and offered details about the political rather than the cultural climate. Responses to 3 (a) were more successful but many relied heavily on anecdotal and emotionally charged platitudes and very few offered a critical analysis of facts.

Question 4

The majority of candidates who chose this question clearly knew their facts about the history of Cyprus. This knowledge sometimes obscured relevance, as is often the case with all-inclusive answers that are not organised according to principles of pertinence and development of a thesis. This was mostly the case in answers to question 4 (b) that sometimes veered into a short history of the 50s and left very little room for an explanation of the issues related to the Zurich-London agreements.

Researched-based essays assess knowledge of pertinent material that is also organised well and conveys the information that is essential, within the required parameters. Candidates are advised to draft an essay plan in which they prioritise the essential material and omit material of secondary importance. This is a particular challenge for the abler candidates who are often compelled to write everything they know about the topic. Essay writing is an exercise in structure as much as in relevant content and candidates must not neglect to form a response that includes the essential details and omits the superfluous.

On the contrary, question 4 (a) was handled impressively. Candidates offered a good explanation of the reasons that led to the October events, identified the role of the key players and assessed the impact of the events on the years that followed.

Question 5

The majority of candidates who chose question 5 (b) wrote persuasively and purposefully about the geographical features of their chosen areas and how these contribute to the economy. Generalisations about beaches and the blue sea aside, most answers displayed very good knowledge of the topic and went beyond description to comment on the significance of location, geology and climate, to mention but a few aspects, for the economic prosperity of the region. The most successful responses focused on Crete and the Peloponnese.

On the other hand, many of the responses to 5 (a) were organised around generic comments about pollution that showed very little knowledge of particular regions of Greece and Cyprus and did not provide any specific examples that shed light on their particular environmental problems. Reference to particular cities and areas, the factors that affect the health of the environment (industry, population, consumption habits, landscape, climate issues) would have helped raise these candidates' marks.

Question 6

Question 6 was one of the three most popular questions in this examination series. The majority of the candidates who answered question 6 showed that they had very good

knowledge of the films and were able to provide good explanation in response to the question. A good number of candidates went beyond explanation to offer critical analysis, with good links between the examples that they cited and the points that they made.

Question 6 (a) invited candidates to compare the friendships that the young protagonists form in three films studied. A pattern of omission emerged when some responses relied heavily on description in each individual film and neglected to frame it within a comparative framework that made reference to the other films.

Question 6 (b) focused on the dramatic elements in the films and asked candidates to comment on their impact and the way they affect the reception of the film. Many candidates identified these dramatic elements and offered good supporting examples. A pattern of omission was mostly in relation to the commentary regarding the significance of dramatic tension.

Question 7

As has been the case since this specification came into effect, question 7 has proven to be the most popular question in this paper. The close knowledge of the poems that this year's candidates displayed is truly impressive. Answers to 7 (a) identified the portrayal of religion with apt poems and explanation that led to good conclusive remarks. Similarly, answers to question 7 (b) singled out the poems that treated the theme of old age and substantiated points with good examples. Patterns of unsatisfactory responses were mostly to do with overtly long narratives that summed up the poems and failed to identify how this description answers the question; a case of narrative at the expense of analysis.

Question 8

Question 8 was the second most popular in this exam series but tended to yield somewhat lengthy responses that went over the word limit, before the candidate had the opportunity to discuss a third story. It was very clear that the vast majority of candidates had solid knowledge of the short stories and quite a few were able to identify characters that attracted their attention (8a) and the themes that seem to be prevalent in Ioannou's collection (8b).

A small number of candidates who chose question 8 (a) did not notice that the question required commentary regarding why certain characters are more interesting than others and failed to offer a complete response. Instead they focused on lengthy descriptions without observations or evaluation. These responses indicated minimal understanding of the question and could not earn high marks.

In question 8 (b), many candidates produced detailed and sophisticated responses, testament to the candidates' hard work in itself but also to the fact that they had been taught very well.

