Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Greek (9GK0)
Paper 1: Translation into English, reading comprehension and writing (research question) in Greek

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9GK Assessment Overview

The Pearson Edexcel A level in Greek comprises three externally-examined papers that assess reading, writing and listening skills. Summer 2023 marked the first full iteration of this qualification under post-pandemic conditions.

The three 9GK papers are as follows:
Paper 1: Translation into English, reading comprehension and writing (research question) in Greek
Paper 2: Translation into Greek and written response to works
Paper 3: Listening, reading and writing in Greek

All three papers draw their content from a list of themes, sub-themes and research areas which are identified below and serve as vehicles for the development of linguistic and cognitive skills, as well as cross-cultural awareness. Assessment is predominantly related to the ability to use the target language in an articulate manner, effectively, accurately and pertinently.

Themes 1, 2 and 4 focus on aspects of the society, artistic culture, and politics of Greece only. Theme 3 focuses on society and culture in Cyprus.
● Theme 1: Αλλαγές στην ελληνική κοινωνία (Changes in Greek society, past and present)
● Theme 2: Τέχνη και πνευματικός πολιτισμός στην Ελλάδα (Artistic culture in Greece, past and present)
● Theme 3: Όψεις της Κύπρου (Perspectives on Cyprus, past and present)
● Theme 4: Νέες εξελίξεις στο πολιτικό και οικονομικό πεδίο (Developments in politics and the economy, past and present)

In general, many candidates who entered for this examination demonstrated good reading, writing and listening comprehension skills and the ability to present relevant ideas in connection to their research findings and their evaluation of the questions posed to them.

9GK0/01

Paper 1: Translation into English, reading comprehension and writing (research question) in Greek

This paper is worth 80 marks and candidates have 2 hours 30 minutes to complete it. It is divided into three sections and on the front page of the question paper there are recommendations as to the amount of time one should devote to each section.

Performance on this paper was marked by very good to excellent translation skills in section A, often excellent comprehension skills in Section B, in the MCQ questions in particular, and often very good evidence of research in Section C,

with presence of critical analysis evident.

A significant note of guidance to candidates regards the length of their responses, as an unfortunate pattern of 6–8-page essays in Section C was observed again. Recommended wordage for essays in section C is between 270-320 words. Many candidates wrote overly long answers, which contained the same information in an uncritical, list-like manner and all-inclusive responses that did not argue purposefully in relation to the question asked. Illegible handwriting and disregard for the conventions of spelling and clear presentation were also a common occurrence.

Candidates who exceeded this word limit by far and continued on extra paper digressed from the topic and their performance contained irrelevance and lack of focus. As a result, excessively lengthy responses were deemed all-inclusive and failed to gain marks from the top bands of the mark grid, as, only occasionally, did they lead to straightforward and clear development of information and points related to research findings.

A) Section A: Translation into English (20 marks)

It is recommended that students spend 20 minutes on Section A, which requires the translation of a text from Greek into English. The translation into English question is marked using a points-based mark scheme (please see Sample Assessment Materials, page 23 and the MS for 2023). The translation is divided into 20 segments, and there is one mark available for the correct translation of each segment. The mark scheme gives indicative, acceptable answers for each part and variants will be accepted by the examiner if they convey the same intended meaning clearly.

This year content was drawn from Theme 4: New developments in politics/ political parties. It was a real pleasure to see such consistently good performance, with often excellent application of grammar and structures and apt choice of vocabulary. A good number of candidates offered responses that showed complete understanding of the source text, its nuances and style. Odd slips were mostly with regard to the translation of individual words, such as άρθρο, κόμμα, κυβέρνηση.

Occasional awkwardness in the transfer of meaning pertained to the translation of structures (e.g., ο πατέρας της Ζωής) which was often clumsily or inaccurately translated as 'the father of Zoe/Zoe's".

B) Section B: Reading (20 marks)

It is recommended that students spend 45 minutes on Section B, which consists of four comprehension questions based on a variety of text types and genres. The questions in this section are marked using a points-based mark scheme (Please see Sample Assessment Materials, pages 27–29 and the MS for 2023).

Section B draws on vocabulary and structures across all sub-themes within the four themes and this year's content came from Art and Culture in the Greek speaking world (question 2); Perspectives on Cyprus (question 3); Changes in Greek society (question 4); New developments in politics and the economy (question 5).

Performance in questions 2 and 3, which were based on MCQ in Greek, was very good and often excellent with many candidates earning full marks. There was evidence of good ability to identify the correct detail and understand the relationship between words in order to extract meaning.

Performance in question 4, which was based on open responses in Greek, varied. Many candidates expressed themselves unambiguously and fully (which does not mean in full sentences, but with the required amount of detail). This was particularly evident in questions 4(a) and 4(c). As is often the case with short answers in the target language, syntactical anomalies and verbatim copying from the source text result in lack of clarity and, often, obscured meaning. This was particularly the case with questions 4(a) and 4(d). In 4(a), for example, the copied response "την κοροϊδεύουν" failed to capture the essence of the correct response, which asks for an evaluation of how Anna's parents think about her choices. Indiscriminate copying from the source text led to partial responses that did not convey confidence in the candidates' comprehension skills. For example, in 4(d), the response, « Ακούνε πως τα κορίτσια δεν έχουν κλίση στις θετικές επιστήμες» more or less repeats the question, rather than answer it.

Performance in question 5, which was based on open responses in Greek, was consistently good and occasionally excellent. There was sufficient clarity and accuracy in most responses, with many candidates expressing themselves succinctly and with the right amount of detail. An occasional pattern of misunderstanding was evident in:

 5(a), when a small number of candidates answered the question by repeating the question: το θέατρο δεν ήταν σε καλή οικονομική κατάσταση, επειδή δεν είχαν λεφτά.
5 (b), when instead of indicating that Google yielded results because the name was κοινό/συνηθισμένο, candidates wrote that the name was διάσημο.

These examples are aberrations in an otherwise overall successful performance.

C) Section C: Writing (research question) (40 marks)

It is recommended that students spend 1 hour 25 minutes on Section C, which draws on a student's independent research of their chosen research subject, which is linked to one of the 4 themes. Students must read one unseen text in Greek and then answer a question, incorporating information and ideas from both the unseen text and their research findings and citing their sources. The extent of citing varied but the majority of candidates who entered this paper were able to provide varying degrees of acceptable citations. For example, "In Manos Hatzidakis's famous 1949 lecture on Rebetiko, which is available on the web…" (Question 7); "In an article published in the newspaper Καθημερινή in 2020, with the title *Ανθρωπιστική Καταστροφή στην Κύπρο*…(Question 8).

This question is marked using three levels-based mark grids:

● Knowledge and understanding of society and culture (via research) (AO4)
● Understand and respond to written language in writing (AO2)
● Accuracy and range of language (AO3).

In their response, students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of society and culture through their ideas, arguments and conclusions, supported by information, references and examples from their research. Students must also refer to information in the text that supports their ideas, arguments and conclusions (thereby showing understanding of the text).

There are more marks available for AO4 (20 marks) than AO2 (10 marks), so students are expected to place more emphasis on knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4) than on the text (understand and respond in writing to written language -AO2)

Many candidates showed extensive knowledge and understanding of society and culture by providing relevant ideas, information, references and examples related to the research aspects of questions 7, and often in questions 8 and 9. Answers to question 6 were not many and showed significant gaps in research and in the understanding of the question. One noticeable pattern of inappropriate response to Assessment Objective 2 (AO2), which targets understanding and responding to written language in writing, was evident across all questions 6-9, in Section C. Students are not expected to, neither should they try to, summarise the information in the source text. Often, more than one page (roughly in excess of 200 words) was devoted to students recasting the content of the source text in the own words or summing it up with minimal paraphrasing and in absence of any engagement with a development of an argument in response to the question asked. Candidates should avoid such practice in the future and focus instead on engaging with the information in the source text, either in order to support a claim of their own or to state an opposition to it.

Question 6

Very few candidates chose this question. Responses were mostly containing basic information, limited evidence of research and only partial or unsatisfactory focus on the prompt. Personalised narratives based on anecdotal experience, which cannot be conceived of as even rudimentary research, resulted in minimal connection to the subject or the question, as it relied on description, rather than evaluation. A common pattern of weak performance concerned the candidates' response in the style of a discursive rather than a research-based essay. Many candidates simply wrote superficial views about the importance of art in education, without engaging with the source text or showing evidence of research.
It was a rare occasion to witness an informed approach to the topic of educational requirements for being accepted to institutions of Higher Education in Greece, or recent debates about changes to the public examination system and the phenomenon of studying outside Greece.

Question 7

Question 7 yielded some of the most comprehensive, well-researched and aptly articulated responses. Those who answered showed excellent research skills, cited two or more sources correctly and provided a wealth of relevant information, which they used to substantiate their consistently on-point arguments. Most responses on Rebetiko used information from the unseen stimulus to engage in meaningful analysis. For the third year running, essays on question 7 were some of the best responses in section C, showing that the candidates who chose this question were very well prepared and had appropriate training in using information from the written stimulus to link to ideas in their research findings and make persuasive and insightful connections between their main thesis (that the rebetiko does possess artistic value) and the claims of the source text.

Question 8

Performance in this question varied. Students performed well with regard to Assessment Objective 4 (AO4), that targets knowledge and understanding of the research subject and Assessment Objective 3 (AO3), that targets Accuracy and Range of language. Occasionally, narrative that drew from the candidates' extensive knowledge of the subject was at the expense of analysis or a more consistently purposeful response to the question, resulting in loss of focus. Even though it was undeniable that students had studied in depth the history of Cyprus within the specified time frame, the response would often veer to an uncritical report of the history of the Cyprus issue, without engagement with the ideas in the stimulus or a developed evaluation of the prompt. Most candidates referred successfully to the sources they used for their research, which included the official, government issued history textbooks, various articles from the press, testimonies from refugees and survivors and UNCHR Cyprus.

Question 9

Question 9 was the most popular question in this series, but in certain of its aspects it was also the one that presented serious challenges, as the essays were uniquely and unnecessarily lengthy, descriptive and all-inclusive, containing often list-like accounts of everything that the candidate knew. This type of response was almost template-like and all the pertinence it contained was extracted by the reader, rather than as a result of purposeful arguing on the part of the candidate. All responses cited references successfully, and these sources ranged from newspaper articles to public lectures, to documentaries, to websites of NGOs, the UNHCR in particular.

It is advisable that candidates who are trained in responding to this question reconsider their approach and discontinue the practices of "summing up" the written stimulus in almost a full page, writing 'everything' they know, rather than what is relevant to the statement of the question, and continuing their answers in extra paper.

Conclusion

This was the first full iteration of the 9GK specification in post-pandemic condition and it was welcome to see such a high level of performance in Sections A and B and in some parts of Section C. In order to improve performance, it is important to consider that research-based questions in section C are designed around certain principles that require good knowledge of the topic and analysis of the statement posed, in relation to the research conducted and cited and the written stimulus. The unique dimension of AO2, understanding and responding to the stimulus text, is a relatively new aspect in this type of essay and the one that requires particular attention. Therefore, familiarisation with the new assessment criteria is important, as this would allow students to know confidently what exactly the level of demand is in this section.

In general, candidates who study for this QP are advised to consider the following:

- o Read each question carefully before answering
- o Check answers if there is time at the end
- o Keep in mind the importance of clear Greek and careful presentation in order to avoid ambiguous or illegible answers
- o Where wordage is recommended, ensure that they adhere to the guidelines. Good responses are not accounts of everything one knows or everything that is true; rather they are marked by succinct, purposeful and fully developed arguments and consistent and precise focus on the statement/question.

- • In section B

- o There is no requirement to respond in full sentences to open-response questions. Candidates are advised against incorporating the question in their answers. For example, the following pattern should be avoided:
  "Ο Γιώργος παραξενεύτηκε που ο Ιταλός συμφώνησε να νοικιάσει αμέσως το θέατρο γιατί…"
  And instead, the candidate should begin with the phrase that responds succinctly:
  «Γιατί…»
- o It is permitted to use words from the reading extract in their answer, but must not copy whole sections as this invariably leads to inaccurate and unclear, or all-inclusive responses
- o There are no marks for quality of language in this section, so spelling and grammar mistakes will be tolerated, as long as they do not introduce ambiguity or hamper clarity
- o For a one-mark answer, the first response is taken as the answer, even if this response is incorrect and the correct information follows later. Where two marks are available, the same rule applies, i.e., the first two responses are taken as the given answer, even if they are incorrect and the correct information follows later.
- o Answers must be in Greek – correct answers in the wrong language will not be awarded marks.

- • In Section C

- Select information from a range of authentic sources and refer to at least two research sources in their response by citing these. Responses that refer to just one single research source cannot be awarded marks above the 13–18 markers.
- Refer to information in the text that supports their ideas, arguments and conclusions (thereby showing understanding of the text and achieving AO2)

Thank you for choosing to study this specification.