



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In Russian (6RU0) Paper 3

Spoken Expression and Response

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Assessment Principles

The unit is assessed according to the marking grids on pages 36 and 37 of the legacy Specification: Response (20), Quality of Language (7), Reading and Research (7), Comprehension and Development (16). The total is 50.

Conduct of the Test

The candidate should outline the initial issue for about one minute, adopting a definite stance towards this. The best candidates will support their opinions with evidence of reading and research, often quoting statistics and sources and / or citing the views of others. They should then justify and defend their views for up to four minutes during which the examiner should adopt a point of view in opposition to the candidate's and lead a constructive line of questioning to allow the candidate to defend and justify. After the first four to five minutes of the test, the examiner should initiate a spontaneous discussion of at least two further issues. The examiner may be less adversarial from now until the end of the test. The entire test should last between eleven and thirteen minutes.

Performance of Candidates

The entry for this unit was small. All candidates chose suitable topics, but a few could have phrased them more successfully to allow a better argument and associated justification, when challenged. Some popular topics continue to be: 'I am against / in favour of abortion / death penalty / same-sex marriage/ legalisation of drugs/ euthanasia', 'That Putin is a good president' as well as issues to do with advertising, video games, a healthy life-style, school uniforms, school systems (UK and Russia), and the impact of IT and Robotics on every-day life and employment. One new topic this year was an issue relating to the 'Colonisation of Mars'. The most successful topics continue to be those that allowed both the candidate and the examiner to express strong but balanced views. Many candidates, demonstrated an excellent ability to take the initiative, show in-depth reading and research and use sophisticated vocabulary, structures and the power of argument. Some examiners noted that a few teacher-examiners were limiting candidates achieving marks at a higher range because of reasons such as the tests were of incorrect duration (i.e. too short, too long) and that the candidates did not progress very far from the original issue. It is also noted that some questions were not entirely appropriate for this paper. Centres are advised to be cautious about the test duration and associated penalties in terms of marking the candidates' performance. It is important for the centres to bear in mind that revisiting AS and GCSE past question papers alone would not be sufficient to support candidates to demonstrate appropriate linguistic and intellectual skills necessary to score high marks in this unit. Centres are also advised not to reuse the same set of questions for all its candidates.

Advice and Guidance

Candidates should

- write their chosen issue on the form in Russian, clearly indicating their stance. (Я за... / Я против... / Я думаю, что... etc)
- research their chosen issue carefully
- try to give statistics to support their arguments, not just say “statistics show that...”
- quote specific sources, not just say “someone said that...”
- demonstrate a clear grasp of the initial issue
- if being examined by an examiner who is not their teacher, send the oral form to the relevant person in good time for the examiner to prepare the fairest possible test

Teacher-examiners should

- observe the correct time limits
- make sure the test consists only of the discussion of issues
- avoid asking purely factual questions about the issues discussed
- make sure they move on from the original issue no later than five minutes from the start of the test
- make sure that at least two distinct issues have been discussed after the original one has been completed
- avoid just asking a series of questions on individual issues without responding to what the candidate has said and probing further
- make sure that the additional issues are genuinely unpredictable (If a candidate is struggling with one unpredictable issue, it is easy to move on quickly to another which might produce a better performance)
- avoid talking too much or dominating the argument
- check that the recording has been done clearly
- mark the CDs or memory sticks and their boxes clearly with the centre name, centre number, candidate numbers and names of candidates
- announce the above at appropriate places on all recordings
- make sure that the tests have been recorded in a form acceptable to Pearson and that they can be played back at a suitable volume

- make sure the recordings are securely packed (CDs are particularly breakable in transit)
- if in doubt about how to conduct the test, consult the Oral Training Guide on the website, the subject advisor or the Ask the Expert service.