



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Russian (9RU0) Paper 01

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Content of the examination

Candidates were assessed on their understanding of spoken and written Russian from a variety of types of authentic texts and listening materials, as well as their ability to translate from Russian into English. Texts and recordings varied in length to include some extended passages. All spoken and written materials were culturally relevant to Russia and Russian-speaking countries and communities, and were drawn from four themes: Развитие российского общества, Политическая и художественная культура в русскоязычном мире, Москва или Санкт-Петербург – Изменения в жизни российского города and Последние годы СССР – М. С. Горбачёв (1985-1991).

Candidates were given the opportunity to understand main points, gist and detail from spoken and written material; infer meaning from complex spoken and written material; assimilate and use information from spoken and written sources, including material from online media; summarise information from spoken sources, reporting key points and subject matter; and to translate from Russian into English.

The total assessment time was 2 hours. The assessment was out of 80 marks. Candidates had to answer all questions. The use of dictionaries was not permitted.

Listening

The listening section was made up of spoken passages covering different registers and types, including authentic communication involving one or more speakers. Sources included material from online media.

Question 1 (four marks) used an extract about Mini Eurovision. There were four multiple-choice questions, set in Russian. Candidates generally found this question accessible and performed well.

Question 2 (five marks) was an extract about a young female computer programmer. There were five questions in Russian, to be answered in Russian. Full sentences were not required. Candidates generally responded well to this question. In Q2(г), it was necessary for the answer to include an inference that the speaker had not always been interested in computer programming and had changed her mind after having heard a lecture. In part д a number of candidates gave она рада потому что она оказалась в этой сфере which examiners did not accept as it was considered too vague an answer. Candidates generally found this question accessible and performed well.

Question 3 (nine marks) was an extract from an interview with Evgeny, a resident of Moscow. Candidates had to respond in Russian to nine questions in Russian. Full sentences were not required. Candidates mostly responded very well to these questions. Q3(a) required an answer to the effect that Evgeny was positive about his move to Moscow. A few candidates wrote это лучшее решение which was not accepted as an answer to this question as it was too vague. However, Переезд в Москву- это лучшее решение его жизни was accepted. In Q3(д) it was necessary to include some mention of travel to get the mark. Терять час/полтора времени by itself was not enough. On the whole this question was accessible and candidates performed well.

Question 4 (twelve marks) required candidates to respond to six questions in Russian and to make two brief summaries in Russian. The text contained an extract from a documentary film about the 1991 putsch and was delivered in two sections. The questions in section a were generally answered accurately, although examiners picked up a number of common misspellings: опецт and арпест for апест, преседент, призедент, or приседент for президент, and various versions of социалистическая система, some of which had to be discounted as they rendered the answer ambiguous. Accuracy of spelling is vital.

The vast majority of candidates completed the summary task Q4(б) very well indeed. They correctly gave a number of relevant facts and thereby created a viable summary, which is what the task requires. There was an element in Q4 (б) i which examiners felt could be taken in one of two ways. Не надо было вводить войска в Новосибирск could be understood as it being unnecessary to send troops into Novosibirsk (which learner candidates would pick up on) or that it was unnecessary to send them in but it happened anyway (a nuance which non-learner candidates would have picked up on). Examiners felt in standardisation that it was fairest to accept both variants.

Reading

The reading section was made up of texts containing both factual and abstract content and was authentic or adapted from authentic sources. The texts included contemporary, historical, literary, fiction and non-fiction, written for different purposes and audiences.

Question 5 (four marks) was an online article about homelessness in Moscow, and required candidates to respond to four multiple choice questions set in Russian. They generally did so successfully.

Question 6 (four marks) was an extract from Anna Karenina. Candidates were offered a list of statements in Russian from which they had to select the four true ones. This question was done very well on the whole, with most candidates achieving three or four marks.

Question 7 (six marks) was a text about the social media site TikTok. There were five questions to answer in Russian. Full sentences were not required. Candidates responded with varying degrees of success, and this proved quite a demanding question for some.

In Q7(a), most candidates responded correctly. Q7(б) required candidates to understand that what was surprising was that a young blogger was invited to speak at the MEF. Answers that suggested the blogger was at the MEF were considered too vague. Examiners felt that this was quite a lot of information for a one-mark question, but candidates coped well with it in the main. Q7(в) was answered in many different ways, although some candidates over-thought the answer- which required simply to say that some authors reacted negatively to TikTok- and consequently missed the point of the question and did not gain the mark. In Q7(г) it was striking that quite a number of candidates seemed not to have heard of I S Turgenev and mistakenly put that he wrote about TikTok. However, most did answer correctly that he wrote about inter-generational conflict, which was what was required.

Question 8 (eight marks) contained eight questions to be answered in Russian. The text was an article about air pollution in St Petersburg. Although full sentences were not required, candidates were expected to give all information that was relevant to a full answer.

In Q8(a), most candidates understood that the author wanted to find an ecologically safe place to live in St Petersburg. In Q8(б), most candidates understood that tourists would notice the worst polluted places as they were in the city centre where tourists visit. In Q8(в), most candidates understood that the most respectable properties were in the city centre. Q8(г) was successfully answered, with most candidates writing *автотранспорт*. Q8(е) was answered successfully by many candidates who understood that the author of the text was comparing the choices of property in Moscow and St Petersburg, where in Moscow the most elite properties were built far from the river. For Q8(ж), the essential point was that the wind cleaned the air, and most candidates were able to express this satisfactorily. Most candidates found Q8(з) straightforward.

Question 9 (eight marks) was an article about the 1991 putsch. It contained eight questions to be answered in Russian. Many candidates found at least some parts of this question demanding, as one would expect.

Q9(a) was answered well, although a few candidates missed out *больше* and forfeited the mark. In Q9(в), the most popular answer was *лояльно*, which was acceptable as this showed some manipulation of the text. Q9(г) was generally answered well, although this was the most challenging part of Q9.

Translation into English

Question 10 was a translation task whose content dealt with Russians' attitudes towards work. The text was divided into twenty sections, each worth one mark. A translation was regarded as successful if an English speaker could understand it without having understood the text in its original language. Variants on the acceptable answers proposed in the mark scheme were accepted if they conveyed the same intended meaning. Many candidates found this a challenging task, and only very few achieved full marks. Most scored between 12 and 16 marks.

Candidates sometimes got close to the correct meaning, but then wrote the wrong tense, or wrote a plural instead of a singular, or misspelled a word in such a way that its meaning became ambiguous, or else they omitted words. The majority of vocabulary and structures contained within the text appeared to be generally accessible, with only a few particular words causing problems for candidates. Some candidates gave alternative variants of translations for particular words. Candidates missed marks if they did not translate "little" words such as *recently*, *more*, *even*, *almost*, *also*: candidates should ensure that they read the text carefully and translate the complete sense of it. A missed small word can render the translation incorrect. There were also several occasions where candidates missed the entire second paragraph, or half of it- it is essential to read through the text and the translation in order not to lose marks, and it is here that good time management comes into play.

Some problems included the translation of 'Также важна возможность заниматься продуктивной работой.' Some candidates translated this as 'It is also important to have the opportunity/possibility to work productively,' whereas the answer required was 'It is also important to have the opportunity/possibility to do productive work.' The nuance is subtle. The

word возможность was often incorrectly translated as 'ability' which isn't the same thing as opportunity or possibility, both of which were accepted as synonyms.

Summary

Based on performance in this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Ensure you use a decent black pen and make your handwriting as legible as possible. Examiners commented on the difficulty of reading some of the handwriting. You should make sure that you are forming letters clearly; again, a word that looks to be spelt in two different ways may render an answer ambiguous and deny you a mark.
- You may do rough work on the blank pages of the question paper, or in the white spaces. Rough work must be crossed out, so that there is no ambiguity about what needs to be marked and what needs to be ignored.
- Time your work carefully, ensuring that you leave enough time to do the Translation.
- For Q2, Q3 and Q4, you may respond using single words, short phrases or sentences.
- For Q7, Q8 and Q9, you may respond using short phrases or sentences. You may use words from the texts, but you must not copy whole sections. Sometimes, phrases from the text need to be manipulated from first person to third person.
- Even though full sentences are not required, you are expected to give all information that is relevant to a full answer. Be aware that sometimes what you hear or read first is not necessarily the correct answer. Make sure that you respond to both parts of two-mark questions.
- For the Translation (Q10), avoid omitting words. Do not leave gaps, since no marks are awarded for blank spaces. Read the rubric carefully, as it gives a hint as to the content of the text. Check that your English is grammatically correct and that each sentence makes sense. Be very careful about details such as tenses, singulars and plurals.
- Avoid giving alternative variants of answers; select the one which you wish the examiner to consider.
 - Never leave blank spaces, as no marks are awarded for blank spaces. Have a go at everything