



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Russian (9RU0) Paper 03

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Russian

Paper 3: Speaking mark scheme

This marking guidance is for the use of Pearson-appointed external examiners. The guidance has been included for teacher reference to aid understanding of how the assessment criteria will be applied.

For this paper, there are a number of levels-based mark schemes to be applied to each task.

General guidance for examiners on using levels-based mark schemes

Step 1 Decide on a band

- First of all, you should consider the answer as a whole and then decide which descriptors most closely match the answer and place it in that band. The descriptors for each band indicate the different features that will be seen in the student's answer for that band.
- When assigning a band you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not focus disproportionately on small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest or indeed has performed temporarily better. If the answer covers different aspects of different bands of the mark scheme, you should use a 'best fit' approach for defining the level. You should then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the band, for example if the response is predominantly band 5–8 with a small amount of band 9–12 material, it would be placed in band 5–8 but be awarded a mark near the top of the band because of the band 9–12 content.

Step 2 Decide on a mark

- Once you have decided on a band you will then need to decide on a mark within the band. You will decide on the mark to award based on the quality of the answer; you will award a mark towards the top or bottom of that band depending on how students have evidenced each of the descriptor bullet points.
- You will modify the mark based on how securely the trait descriptors are met at that band.
- You will need to go back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the band and the mark are appropriate.

Guidance on timing of the speaking assessment

It is the teacher-examiner's (TE) responsibility to cover all parts of each task and ask appropriate questions to ensure that the candidate is able to access the maximum amount of marks available. The speaking assessment should last between 16 to 18 minutes in total and the TE must ensure that timings are followed. The timing of the assessment begins with the candidate's first utterance in relation to Task 1. Once the maximum stipulated assessment time has passed, the TE must bring the assessment to a natural end, allowing the candidate to complete a final sentence. Examiners must **stop** marking at the end of the sentence once the maximum assessment time has passed, even if the recorded conversation has gone beyond the maximum time.

Task 1 (discussion on a theme)

Three mark grids are applied to Task 1:

- knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)
- accuracy and range of language (AO3)
- interaction (AO1).

The knowledge and understanding of society and culture mark grid assesses students' ability to communicate information about, and demonstrate appreciation of, different aspects of **Russian-speaking** culture and society.

Students are also assessed on their ability to respond critically and analytically to different aspects of Russian-speaking culture and society by selecting relevant material, presenting and justifying points of view, developing arguments, drawing conclusions based on understanding and evaluating issues, themes and cultural and social contexts.

When deciding how to reward an answer, examiners should consult both this mark grid as well as the **AL speaking Task 1: indicative content** at the end of the mark scheme, which is associated with each question. Indicative content contains points that students might use to construct their answer. It is possible for an answer to be constructed without mentioning some or all of these points, as long as students provide alternative responses that fulfil the requirements of the question.

Knowledge and understanding of Russian-speaking society and culture (AO4)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable material.
1–3	- Occasionally relevant, straightforward ideas, mostly generalised, occasionally supported by information/examples/references; frequent loss of focus on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. - Occasional evidence of analysis of the Russian-speaking cultural and social context; points of view are given with limited justification, arguments may be made but not developed, occasionally leading to straightforward conclusions that may be contradictory; mainly relies on description rather than analysis.
4–6	- Relevant, straightforward ideas sometimes supported by information/examples/references; some loss of focus on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. - Some analysis of the Russian-speaking cultural and social context is evident, with straightforward arguments and points of view, which are sometimes developed and justified, sometimes drawing straightforward conclusions; relies on description rather than analysis in places.
7–9	- Relevant, occasionally perceptive ideas frequently supported by pertinent information/examples/references; focus predominantly maintained on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. - Analysis of Russian-speaking cultural and social context demonstrated by frequently developed and justified arguments and viewpoints, often drawing convincing conclusions.
10–12	- Relevant, perceptive ideas consistently supported by pertinent information/examples/references; consistently focused on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. - Analysis of Russian-speaking cultural and social context demonstrated by consistently developed and justified arguments and viewpoints, drawing convincing conclusions.

Additional guidance

Perceptive: demonstrates an in-depth understanding by making connections between ideas and information; goes beyond the standard, predictable response; shows insight/originality.

Ideas include thoughts, feelings, impressions, opinions.

Straightforward ideas, arguments, conclusions, are deemed to be those that give the standard, predictable responses.

Task 1 (discussion on a theme (contd.))

Accuracy and range of language mark grid

This mark grid assesses students' ability to use a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary in order to produce articulate communication with a range of expression. It also assesses students' ability to apply grammar and syntax accurately and accuracy of pronunciation.

Accuracy and range of language (AO3)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable language.
1-3	• Limited variation in the use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, limited or repetitive use of complex and idiomatic language, occasional variation of expression; communication is sometimes restricted/stilted. • Limited sequences of accurate language; often errors occur that hinder clarity of communication and occasionally prevent meaning being conveyed. • Pronunciation and intonation are inconsistent, leading to occasional impairment in communication.
4-6	• Some variation in the use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, with use of some repetitive complex and idiomatic language, resulting in some variation of expression; some sequences of articulate communication. • Accurate sequences of language, resulting in some coherent speech; sometimes errors occur that hinder clarity of communication. • Pronunciation and intonation are intelligible though sometimes inaccurate.
7-9	• Frequent variation in use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, including examples of complex and idiomatic language, resulting in frequent variation of expression and frequent sequences of articulate communication. • Accurate language throughout most of the conversation, resulting in generally coherent speech; errors occur but rarely hinder clarity of communication. • Pronunciation and intonation are intelligible and mostly accurate.
10-12	• Consistent variation in use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, including different types of complex structures and idiomatic language, expressing ideas in a variety of ways, resulting in articulate communication. • Accurate language throughout, resulting in coherent speech that is immediately understandable; any errors do not hinder clarity of communication. • Pronunciation and intonation are accurate, intelligible and authentic-sounding.

Additional guidance

Complex language is considered to include the following:

- using extended sentences to express abstract ideas/convey justified arguments that require a range of lexis and structures; for example, conjunctions and pronouns
- use of all cases, including nouns, adjectives and pronouns (singular and plural, regular and common irregular)
- use of comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs (including common irregulars)
- use of common short form adjectives
- use of cardinal and ordinal numerals, including in oblique cases
- use of verbal aspects
- appropriate sequence of tenses in reported speech/indirect statements/indirect questions
- passive voice, including present active and past passive participles
- gerunds
- conditional mood, verbs of wanting, commanding with *чтобы*, further uses of *бы* and *чтобы*
- compound conjunctions
- use of relative pronouns
- use of synonyms and a variety of expressions to say things in different ways
- any other grammar and structures included in the grammar list that are specific to A Level.

Variation in use of grammatical structures and vocabulary: the traits in the mark grid differentiate between the variation of grammatical structures and vocabulary used by students. Examiners should judge in which mark band to place students and which mark to award, based on the effect that the variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary has on the quality of the communication; the wider the variety, the more articulate the communication will become (see definition of *articulate* below).

Examples of a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary are: a selection of different verbs, tenses, adjectives, vocabulary and complex language (see above for definition of *complex language*) for a variety of purposes, such as to present and justify points of view, develop arguments, draw conclusions based on understanding and evaluate issues.

Articulate: articulate communication is fluent, effective and coherent, as students control/manipulate the language to express with some ease what they want to say for a number of different purposes. If students are restricted by their language skills, they may not be able to express themselves for all purposes, for example to develop arguments.

Errors: students are not expected to produce perfect, error-free speech in order to access the top band. The mark grid describes the frequency of errors and the impact that errors have on clarity.

Errors that **do not hinder clarity:**

- errors that do not affect meaning, for example gender, demonstratives, long form adjectives in place of short forms
- infrequent and isolated errors that do not distract the listener from the overall content of what is being said.

Errors that **hinder clarity**:

- errors that make speech difficult to understand immediately (even if the meaning is eventually understood) or errors that force listeners to strain to understand what is meant, for example inappropriate tense formation, mismatch of subject and possessives, mismatch of adjectives and nouns
- frequent errors hinder clarity, as they distract the listener from the content of what is being said.

Errors that **prevent meaning being conveyed**:

- errors that mean the listener cannot understand the message, for example он роботит (for они работают)
- errors that convey the wrong message, for example купит (for купить), тошно (for точно), чисто (for часто)
- errors that make it unclear who is doing the action, i.e. using the incorrect person of the verb
- mother-tongue interference.

NB: these are provided as examples only and do not constitute a finite list.

Task 1 (discussion on a theme (contd.))

Interaction mark grid

This mark grid assesses students' ability to interact with the examiner by giving relevant responses based on what they have heard, by initiating communication and eliciting points of view.

Interaction (AO1)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable material.
1-2	• Interacts with occasional spontaneity to some questions and statements but requires frequent prompting; occasionally able to sustain the conversation, using communication strategies if necessary; frequent hesitation. • Occasionally initiates communication but development often relies on the examiner's lead; may elicit points of view/check for understanding, though this may appear contrived.
3-4	• Interacts spontaneously for extended sections of the conversation, responding mostly with assurance but needing occasional prompting; able to sustain most of the conversation, using communication strategies if necessary; occasional hesitation. • Initiates communication by frequently taking the lead to develop the conversation; elicits points of view/checks for understanding, although occasionally at an inappropriate moment.
5-6	• Interacts spontaneously throughout, responding with assurance to questions and statements; able to sustain conversation throughout, using communication strategies if necessary; minimal hesitation. • Initiates communication by consistently taking the lead to develop the conversation; elicits points of view/checks for understanding naturally and appropriately at different points in the conversation.

Additional guidance

Interacts spontaneously: responds to questions and statements that arise as a natural part of the conversation; gives a relevant, impromptu response based on what they have heard.

Communication strategies: strategies that aid communication and allow the conversation to be sustained, for example rephrasing, circumlocution, adjusting the message, asking for clarification/repetition, repair strategies such as self-correction; these strategies enable students to deliver the message when exact vocabulary or expressions are not known.

Elicit points of view/check for understanding: as part of the language of genuine discourse, students are required to engage the examiner in the conversation by asking for their points of view and checking that their own point of view has been understood. They are expected to do this throughout the oral assessment at appropriate points during the conversation. This constitutes questions such as:

- 'Вы согласны со мной?'

- *'Разве неправильно подумать, что...?'*
- *'Можно ли сказать, что ...?'*
- *'Что вы думаете о...?'*
- *'Вы понимаете, что я хочу сказать?'*

(In order to give students the maximum length of assessment time, the constraints of the assessment mean that the TE should contribute only brief opinions in response to these types of questions.)

Task 2, Part 1 – independent research presentation

One mark grid is applied to this part of the task: responding to written language in speech (AO2).

Responding to Russian written language in speech mark grid

This grid is used to assess the student's two-minute presentation **only**. It is not applied to the discussion that follows the presentation. This mark grid assesses students' ability to understand and respond in speech to Russian written language that is drawn from a variety of sources and to summarise information from Russian written sources in speech. The written sources will be those that students read in Russian as part of their independent research and they must refer to at least two named Russian written sources during their presentation.

For guidance on what might be included in an oral presentation and how it may be structured, see **Indicative content for Task 2, Part 1, independent research presentation** at the end of the mark scheme.

Responding to written language in speech (AO2)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable material
1–3	- Summary makes limited reference to named Russian written sources, makes generalised comments rather than being focused on authors' main points/ideas. - Gives a personal response with limited justification, loses focus on the Russian written sources, straying into general opinion. <i>Responses that refer to just one single Russian written source can be awarded a maximum of 3 marks only.</i>
4–6	- Summary refers to named Russian written sources but lacks clarity or is uneven in its coverage of authors' main points/ideas. - Gives a mostly relevant personal response with occasional justification, some loss of focus on the Russian written sources.
7–9	- Presents a mostly clear summary of named Russian written sources, generally clear outline of authors' main points/ideas. - Gives a relevant personal response to the Russian written sources, supported with some justification.
10–12	- Presents a clear summary of named Russian written sources, giving a clear outline of authors' main points/ideas. - Gives a convincing personal response to the Russian written sources, supported with clear justification.

Additional guidance

Personal response: this is considered to be giving justified opinions, demonstrating engagement with the Russian written sources by making focused comments, giving a reaction to/expressing feelings and thoughts about the Russian written sources.

Task 2, Part 2 – discussion on independent research

Three mark grids are applied to this part of the task:

- knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)
- accuracy and range of language (AO3)
- interaction (AO1).

The knowledge and understanding of society and culture mark grid assesses students' ability to communicate information about, and demonstrate appreciation of, different aspects of **Russian-speaking** culture and society. They are also assessed on their ability to respond critically and analytically to different aspects of the Russian-speaking culture and society by selecting relevant material, presenting and justifying points of view, developing arguments, drawing conclusions based on understanding and evaluating issues.

Knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable material
1–3	• Occasionally relevant, straightforward ideas, mostly generalised, occasionally supported by information/examples/references; frequent loss of focus on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. • Occasional evidence of analysis of the Russian-speaking cultural and social context; points of view are given with limited justification, arguments may be made but not developed, occasionally, leading to straightforward conclusions which may be contradictory; mainly relies on description rather than analysis.
4–6	• Relevant, straightforward ideas sometimes supported by information/examples/references; some loss of focus on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context. • Some analysis of the Russian-speaking cultural and social context is evident, with straightforward arguments and points of view that are sometimes developed and justified, sometimes drawing straightforward conclusions; relies on description rather than analysis in places.
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10–12	• Relevant, perceptive ideas consistently supported by pertinent information/examples/references; consistently focussed on the Russian-speaking cultural and social context.

	• Analysis of the Russian-speaking cultural and social context demonstrated by consistently developed and justified arguments and viewpoints, drawing convincing conclusions.
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Additional guidance

Perceptive: demonstrates an in-depth understanding by making connections between ideas and information; goes beyond the standard, predictable response; shows insight/originality.

Ideas include thoughts, feelings, impressions, opinions.

Straightforward ideas, conclusions, arguments are deemed to be those that give the standard, predictable response.

Task 2, Part 2 (discussion on independent research (contd.))

Accuracy and range of language mark grid

This mark grid assesses students' ability to use a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary in order to produce articulate communication with a range of expression. It also assesses students' ability to apply grammar and syntax accurately and accuracy of pronunciation.

Accuracy and range of language (AO3)

Marks	Description
0	No rewardable language
1-3	• Limited variation in the use of grammatical structures and vocabulary, limited or repetitive use of complex and idiomatic language, occasional variation of expression; communication is sometimes restricted/stilted. • Limited sequences of accurate language; often errors occur that hinder clarity of communication and occasionally prevent meaning being conveyed. • Pronunciation and intonation are inconsistent, leading to occasional impairment in communication.
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- conditional mood, verbs of wanting, commanding with *чтобы*, further uses of *бы* and *чтобы*
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- use of synonyms and a variety of expressions to say things in different ways
- any other grammar and structures included in the grammar list that are specific to A Level.

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- errors that make it unclear who is doing the action, i.e. using the incorrect person of the verb
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Task 2, Part 2 (discussion on independent research (contd.))

Interaction mark grid

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5-6	• Interacts spontaneously throughout, responding with assurance to questions and statements; able to sustain conversation throughout, using communication strategies if necessary; minimal hesitation.

	• Initiates communication by consistently taking the lead to develop the conversation; elicits points of view/checks for understanding naturally and appropriately at different points in the conversation.
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Additional guidance

Interacts spontaneously: responds to questions and statements that arise as a natural part of the conversation; gives a relevant, impromptu response based on what they have heard.

Communication strategies: strategies that aid communication and allow the conversation to be sustained, for example rephrasing, circumlocution, adjusting the message, asking for clarification/repetition, repair strategies such as self-correction; these strategies enable students to deliver the message when exact vocabulary or expressions are not known.

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- 'Вы согласны со мной?'
- 'Разве неправильно подумать, что...?'
- 'Можно ли сказать, что ...?'
- 'Что вы думаете о...?'
- 'Вы понимаете, что я хочу сказать?'

(In order to give students the maximum length of assessment time, the constraints of the assessment mean that the TE should contribute only brief opinions in response to these types of questions.)

AL speaking task 1: indicative content

In their responses, while presenting and justifying points of view, developing arguments and drawing conclusions based on understanding, students may refer critically and analytically to the following points. However, the indicative content is not exhaustive and students should be rewarded for any valid response.

Candidates need only refer to one Russian-speaking country to be awarded full marks for cards RU4-RU6.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU1

Statement	Indicative content
А	• According to a report by the Borgen project in 2023, the Russian government has made great improvements to the healthcare system in the country in the last 20 years. Young people there now have access to treatments and care that were not available several years ago. • The Ministry of Health of the RF (Минздрав) reports that, as a result of the tobacco control strategy in Russia, since 2008 the number of young Russians, particularly young Russian men, who smoke has fallen significantly. • The success of young Russian sportspeople, e.g. the footballers Арсен Захарян and Алсу Абдуллина, has led to a renewed interest in sport amongst certain groups of young Russians. • Industries in Russia are investing in youth sport e.g. the diamond mining company Алроса invests in sports facilities in Siberia where young people can do archery, gymnastics and play football.
Б	• According to Минздрав, the health of certain groups of young Russians e.g. young homeless people, is in decline. • The Astra Zeneca Young Health Programme has identified young orphans (12-18 years old) as a group of people who have poorer health than average and have set up initiatives to improve the situation e.g. the organisation works with orphanages in the Kaluga and Novosibirsk regions to improve health education and to get adolescents involved in sport. • The Public Health and Social Development Foundation «ФОКУС-МЕДИА» reports that the major threats to the health of Russian young people are smoking, alcohol abuse and drug abuse. • This organisation has also identified a lack of health education as a threat to young people and is working to combat this e.g. through its programme «Путешествие ради жизни» it aims to change the behaviour of adolescents by developing health education in schools in eight regions of Russia.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU2

Statement	Indicative content
A	• In Russian schools extra-curricular activities can be an important part of the school offering e.g. in recent years there has been a push to introduce chess clubs, with chess competitions becoming more popular and higher profile, and pupils are encouraged to take part in sport and music after school. • The website of School 247 in St Petersburg contains a long list of extra-curricular activities including computer design, karate, volleyball and drama. • There are opportunities in Russian schools for pupils to study aspects of citizenship, e.g. School 247 in St Petersburg offers кружки such as Юный правовед (формирование правовой культуры гражданина). • In the 1980s, education reforms were put in place which aimed to equip students to deal better with the “modern technologically advanced nation” that Soviet leaders foresaw, and this trend has continued following the collapse of the USSR.
Б	• Schools and pupils take the ЕГЭ extremely seriously and older pupils often focus on preparation for this exam to the exclusion of everything else. • Some research has found that the ЕГЭ is a major cause of stress for pupils e.g. Isak Frumin, a researcher at the Institute of Education in Moscow, reported that the ЕГЭ is more stressful than the previous exam system, as the stakes are too high, and it can only be taken once a year. • Some reports say that the academic focus of the ЕГЭ does not prepare Russian pupils for life beyond education e.g. preparation for the exam does not include skills (such as IT competence and working with other people) that will be needed in the workplace. • Some say that the fact that pupils have no choice of the subjects they study for much of their school career is too restrictive and does not allow pupils to direct their education towards their future career.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU3

Statement	Indicative content
А	• By law in Russia, employers need to ensure that all employees are paid equally for work of equal value; discrimination on the grounds of e.g. gender, ethnicity, language, age etc. is illegal. • Светлана Баланова, director of an IT services provider, said in an interview with the Financial Times that there is no gender discrimination in Russia, rather, women are “held back by the glass ceiling in their heads”. • According to Росстат (Russia’s state statistics service), the average monthly wage in Russia is increasing, e.g. in 2023 and in the first quarter of 2024 it rose by nearly 6%, and this trend is continuing. • Wages in some sectors e.g. IT and the financial industry are growing more quickly than in others e.g. public services.
Б	• According to data from Росстат, women in Russia earn less than men e.g. in 2023 women earned on average 30% less than men for doing the same job. • Some say that this reflects the fact that women go on maternity leave and that they can retire earlier than men, but, according to the economist Зоя Хоткина, this is merely a result of discrimination against women. • In a survey by «Деньги Вперёд» in 2023, about 40% of Russians said that they did not earn enough to live on comfortably. Only 36% of those surveyed said that they earned enough to live well. • Responses to the survey differed in different areas of the country e.g. low wages were particularly an issue in the Sverdlovsk and Rostov regions.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU4

Statement	Indicative content
A	• There are many online newspapers available in Russia e.g. in 2024 online press such as Медуза.ru, Газета.ru and Лента.ru were freely available and widely read not only in Russia but in other Russian-speaking countries. • A decline in the popularity of the printed press in Russia has been matched by an increase in the popularity of online press e.g. from 2013 to 2023, the number of newspapers in circulation in Russia declined from 9.5 million to 3.5 million, but the number of people reading the press online increased hugely. • According to the Kazakh researcher Yerkebulan Sairambay, the media influence political participation, particularly by younger people, during political events e.g. during the protests during presidential elections in Kazakhstan. These protests led the Kazakh government to consider how it conducted itself. • In Estonia, public schools teach “media literacy” and media literacy is accepted to be “as important as maths or writing or reading”. In this way the government has recognised the influence that media can have on young people, and aims to teach young people to use media sources intelligently.
Б	• According to the office of the President of Belarus’, “national mass media are increasing their influence in Belarus” and their work is supported by the country’s laws. • A report by Freedom House emphasized the importance of the media in effecting social change in Uzbekistan e.g. it stated, “the online mobilisation of public opinion is a potential express lane to democratic change.” • The number of internet users in Uzbekistan increased by more than 7% between 2020 and 2023, and the number has continued to grow since then. Increased access to internet media e.g. news reports, means that people are better informed about what is going on in the country. • According to statista.com, in January 2023 the most popular source of information in Russia was television, but other media sources e.g. websites, forums and blogs were increasingly popular.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU5

Statement	Indicative content
А	• There are more than twenty music venues in Tallinn and many concerts e.g. those at the Tallinn Philharmonic, sell out quickly. • There are some very big concert venues in Moscow e.g. VK Stadium has a capacity of 7 000 and the «Открытие Арена», which is usually used for football matches, has a capacity of more than 45 000. • According to a survey in 2022 by statista.com, pop music is the most popular genre of music in Russia, followed by folk songs and then rock music. • The official website of the Estonian Tourist Board notes “В Эстонии обожают классическую музыку: каждый месяц здесь проводятся фестивали и концерты, куда приезжают всемирно известные музыканты.”
Б	• Many people replying to the question «Какую музыку вы больше любите, русскую или иностранную?» on otvetik.com said that they prefer to listen to both Russian and foreign music. Some said that they listen to music in English in order to improve their knowledge of that language. Some said that they find Russian music more melodic. • However, international artists are extremely popular and in the past their concerts have sold out quickly, despite the high cost of tickets e.g. tickets for a past concert by Franz Ferdinand in Moscow cost up to 10 000 roubles, or more than 10% of the average monthly wage in the city. Despite the fact that foreign groups have not been able to perform in Russia recently, their music remains popular. • There are very many popular Russian singers and groups e.g. according to one source, in 2024 the most popular group was Филатов и Карась. These musicians have a huge following and many young Russians say that they like listening to singers who sing in Russian. • A renewed interest in Russian folk music has been reported in recent years and this has been linked to an increased sense of nationalism and pride in the country among some Russians.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU6

Statement	Indicative content
A	• In Russia, young people are increasingly using celebrations for International Women's Day to link with international organisations e.g. organisations that fight for equality and those which support the empowerment of women. • Праздник Весны и Труда, marking the beginning of Spring, is especially popular with young people in Russia. Parks, cafés and restaurants are often full of young people celebrating with friends on this day. • According to many sources, Новый год is still the most popular holiday in most Russian-speaking countries and societies. • Since the fall of the USSR, attendance at church services has increased in Russian-speaking countries and this has led to the increased popularity of religious holidays e.g. Easter.
Б	• Young Russians are increasingly interested by celebrations that have their roots in other cultures e.g. Halloween, and they can be less interested in traditional former Soviet public holidays, e.g. День Победы. • The Victory Day celebrations in Belarus' have been used by opposition movements to express anti-government feeling, leaving some people less likely to celebrate on this day. • The celebrations for Independence Day in Latvia are not always widely appreciated by some of the Russian-speaking population of the country, as they do not identify closely with this holiday. • The celebrations for Victory Day in Azerbaijan are widespread and on a large scale e.g. thousands of people march through the streets of Baku on that day, reflecting the pride that the citizens of Azerbaijan have in their country's history.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU7

Statement	Indicative content
А	• In an interview on the Россия 1 television channel, the Mayor of Moscow, Сергей Собянин, said that the housing relocation programme remains a priority e.g. in 2020 the city authorities built 80 apartment blocks and 170 more were under construction. This means that many people will have better housing than they did in the past. • According to its website, the recent Новый Оккервиль apartment complex in St Petersburg, offers comfortable flats in an ecologically clean region of the city, close to a metro station and near a park. This is only one of many new apartment buildings in the city. • A Russian journalist who moved to Moscow a few years ago, writing on the website Москва 24, likes living in the city because, compared with the small town where she used to live, in Moscow there are more opportunities e.g. for education, work and socialising, and the transport links are better. • Inhabitants of St Petersburg have said that, despite the harsh climate, they like living in the city because of the access to museums, theatres, concerts and other cultural activities there.
Б	• According to a UN report, due to poor maintenance and a shortage of living space, more than 30% of housing in Moscow does not meet modern living standards. • Though housing is available in the centre of St Petersburg, the cost of housing is an issue for many people e.g. a person earning the average salary in the city struggles to afford to live in the city centre. • Research carried out by Greenpeace found that 82% of people living in Moscow think that the air quality there is bad for their health, and nearly half of those surveyed said that they would move out of the city centre to find a cleaner environment in which to live, if they could. • The crime rate is increasing in St Petersburg e.g. according to some sources, 20% more crime was reported in the city last year than in the year before. This is very worrying for the people who live in the city.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU8

Statement	Indicative content
A	• The average night-time temperature in Moscow in January is -10°C, and the charity Médecins sans Frontières, which runs projects to help homeless people in the city, estimates that every winter hundreds of homeless people die of exposure on the streets there, and many more suffer illness and frostbite as a result of the cold. • Ночлежка in St Petersburg reports that the climate in winter makes the lives of homeless people more difficult e.g. the number of people seeking shelter at this time of year increases significantly. • Homeless people in Moscow are more likely than others to be victims of crime e.g. robberies and violence. • In St Petersburg homeless people have suffered as a result of the dangerous conditions in which they live e.g. people have suffered burns after making fires to keep warm.
Б	• An article in Стрелка identified unemployment as the major cause of homelessness in Moscow, followed by family break-up. • In St Petersburg, Ночлежка has identified unemployment as a major cause of homelessness and one of the ways in which the charity supports homeless people is to help them find work e.g. the Hilton hotel chain and restaurants on New Holland Island have offered work experience and training programmes to some of the residents at Ночлежка. • In Moscow, the authorities cannot provide shelter for all the homeless people in the city e.g. the founder of the medical outreach centre Дом друзей has said that Moscow has never had enough shelters for the homeless, and that the problem only got worse during the coronavirus pandemic. • The authorities in St Petersburg invest in projects to help homeless people, but according to critics the amount they invest is not enough to solve the homelessness crisis in the city.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU9

Statement	Indicative content
А	• Scientists report that toxic waste from the Красный Бор waste site in St Petersburg is in danger of polluting the area's waterways. • According to the website of the Mayor of Moscow, the water quality of the Moscow River is improving e.g. as a result of tougher control over industrial discharges and wastewater, and the city's main goal is to increase the number of beach zones in the city. • The historian Лев Лурье has said that the main problem in the centre of St Petersburg is a lack of green space, and that the city centre needs more parks and public transport. However, some plans to redevelop the city centre in order to increase the number of green spaces and to improve the transport system were recently cancelled. • Contrary to what many believe, pollution from cars is decreasing in Moscow, especially e.g. as result of improvements to the public transport system and the increased number of electric cars on the roads. According to a report by C40.org, the level of emissions from road transport in the city has reduced significantly over the last 10 years.
Б	• Lorries are banned in the centre of Moscow between 6 a.m. and midnight. However, in the south-east of Moscow, beyond this zone, there are water treatment plants and chemical plants (e.g. Электрохимический завод (ЭХЗ) Росатом) and the lorries that serve these factories are a source of pollution. • In St Petersburg, the Кировский Завод has been named as a major source of pollution in the city; the heavy traffic which serves this factory is a major contributor to this and can also make life unpleasant for local residents. • There are reasons to be optimistic about the future ecology of St Petersburg due to the work of pressure groups e.g. Зелёная коалиция Петербурга, which campaigns to save and improve the city's green spaces. • In 2006, the Mayor of Moscow became a member of C40, a network of the mayors of almost 100 major world cities who are collaborating to create inclusive and thriving cities in the face of climate change.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU10

Statement	Indicative content
A	• In 1998 in Moscow there were events that one newspaper called “bread riots”, e.g. when a bakery ran out of bread in southwest Moscow, customers shouted abuse at the workers there. One resident of the city is quoted as saying at the time, “Is this what Perestroika has brought us? Before the reforms, at least we had food”. • When Gorbachev visited Siberia in 1988, people complained to him about the shortage of food and consumer goods of all sorts. • Many Soviet citizens at the time complained about the way in which they were living e.g. about poor housing, poor public transport and poor environmental conditions. • The rate of inflation increased dramatically during Perestroika and this had an adverse effect on people’s lives as the cost of e.g. everyday goods and fuel rose, and rationing was introduced for some basic items.
B	• Many of the richest oligarchs in Russia, e.g. Roman Abramovich, became rich during Perestroika as a result of the economic reforms at that time. • Alexander Smolensky took advantage of the reforms of Perestroika to begin a small business building dachas. Within a few years the business was booming and Smolensky opened SBS-Agro Bank to deal with its cash flow. SBS eventually became the largest bank in Russia. • Shortage of e.g. material goods led to corruption in society as people bribed others in attempt to get the supplies they needed. • Though one of Gorbachev’s aims in implementing his reforms was to expose and abolish corruption in the USSR, he was not successful and, when Yeltsin spoke in Congress in 1989, one of his criticisms of Gorbachev’s regime was that it allowed corruption.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU11

Statement	Indicative content
A	• Andrei Richter, an academic at Moscow State University, has described the late 1980s as a “golden age” for the press in the USSR. Although Gorbachev had installed newspaper editors who were loyal to his policies, greater press freedom allowed greater freedom of expression. • Some thought that media freedom at this time had gone too far and risked destabilising the regime e.g. in 1988 Vladimir Karpov, head of the Writers’ Union, said “Some people view Glasnost’ as carte blanche to write whatever they please”. • Many of Gorbachev’s Glasnost’ reforms were initially popular e.g. people reacted positively to the fact that he encouraged scrutiny of the work of the country’s leaders and that people were able to express their views in letters to the newspapers. • Glasnost’ led to greater contact between Soviet citizens and the West, and this was well-received by many.
B	• As a result of Glasnost’, people had access to material, e.g. books and historical sources, that had previously been banned. • The policies of Glasnost’ allowed the media more freedom to share information about topics that had previously been taboo e.g. the purges during Stalin’s regime. • Emigration from the USSR rose dramatically during the second half of the 1980s e.g. the number of Jews emigrating from the USSR in 1987 was six times higher than in 1986. Many saw that as the result of greater freedom to leave the USSR, but some reported an increased mood of antisemitism in the country, resulting from greater freedom of expression, as a motivating factor to emigrate. • Some citizens of the USSR did not welcome the Glasnost’ reforms, fearing that the instability they caused would have negative consequences for the people.

AL Task 1 STIMULUS RU12

Statement	Indicative content
A	• The attempted coup by hard-liners, which aimed to remove Gorbachev from power, lasted only three days. When this coup failed, there was a great deal of uncertainty about what would happen next e.g. many thought that Gorbachev's days were numbered, and it was not clear whether the USA would continue to support Gorbachev, or whether they would support a new leader. • Leaders of the coup told the Soviet people on 19 August 1991 that Gorbachev was standing down due to ill health. It quickly became clear that this was a lie and led people to wonder which, if any, sources of information they could trust. • Some republics of the USSR were quick to declare independence after the putsch e.g. by the end of August 1991 both Belarus' and Moldova had declared independence, and the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) did so in September that year. The resulting changes in the governance and structure of the former republics of the USSR led to uncertainty about what the future would bring. • The changes that came about as a result of the independence of the former republics of the USSR, e.g. economic reform and privatization, inevitably led to periods of instability and uncertainty in these countries.
B	• Yel'tsin was quick to denounce the attempted coup and he organised protests against it e.g. strikes and street demonstrations. • Yel'tsin made a speech standing on top of a tank in front of the White House in Moscow during which he rallied the support of the people in opposition to the putsch; this image is one of the most memorable from that time and Yel'tsin was considered a hero by many. • After he came to power, Yel'tsin promised radical economic reform. This was popular with those who believed that the policies of Glasnost' and Perestroika had failed. • Not everybody supported Yel'tsin e.g. Mikhail Arutyunov, a deputy in the Russian parliament at the time of the putsch who was with Yel'tsin at the White House, quickly became disillusioned with the new Russia when what he saw as oligarchs and corrupt officials were becoming the country's new elite. He said, "What we have is what we were fighting at the time, the population is separating into the extremely poor and the extremely rich."

Indicative content for Task 2 part 1, independent research presentation

The example below is presented in written form in order to demonstrate what a student might include in their presentation and how it may be structured. The *Comment* column demonstrates how the presentation meets the requirements of the assessment criteria in the mark grid

Responding to Russian written language in speech.

Independent research question or statement: «Был ли Борис Ельцин хорошим или плохим лидером для независимой России?»

Student presentation (up to 2 minutes)	Comment
Я буду говорить о том, как можно оценить историческую роль первого президента независимой России, Бориса Николаевича Ельцина. Я нашёл две полезные статьи. Первая называется «Роль Б. Ельцина в истории России». Она появилась на сайте «БАЗА ДАННЫХ ФОМ» и была написана Григорием Кертманом. Вторая появилась в «Российской газете». Статья написана политологом Леонидом Радзиховским и называется «Царь Борис».	Opening statement indicating topic and names of the two Russian written sources to be summarised in the presentation.
В первой статье описываются результаты опроса населения в ста населённых пунктах в России в 2007 году. Респонденты разделились на две равные группы: 40% российских граждан полагали, что Б. Ельцин в целом сыграл в истории России положительную роль, 41% – что отрицательную. Остальные затруднялись ответить.	Summary of the first Russian written source.
Вторая статья была написана в 2016 году. В статье говорилось, что огромное большинство людей в России по-прежнему не относится положительно к президентству Ельцина. Однако в этой статье рассматривается то, что называется «обратной стороной» всех отрицательных аспектов этого периода.	Summary of the second Russian written source.
Мне было интересно читать статью Кертмана, в которой показана, как сильно отличались разные мнения	Provides a personal reaction to the findings

российских граждан об исторической роли Ельцина. Для меня было удивительно узнать, что одни его считали «хорошим руководителем», а другие «преступником». Прочитав статью в «Российской газете», я убедился, что не надо слепо поверить в то, что Радзиховский назвал «устойчивым Мифом 1990-х, мифом о Ельцине». Вы со мной не согласны?	of the two Russian written sources.
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Other examples of possible questions/statements for the Independent Research Project are:

- Газпром – самая большая нефтяная компания в мире.
- Олигарх Александр Лебедев: почему он живёт в Великобритании?

