



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Chinese (5CN04)
Paper 4: Writing in Chinese.

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GCSE Chinese
Unit 4: Writing
Examiners Report

Candidates are required to produce 2 essays of 100-150 characters each under a supervised exam condition in two 45 min to 1-hr sessions. They are given a choice of 4 themes and topics. Candidates and their teacher can negotiate and choose from the tasks suggested by Edexcel on the four prescribed themes. Centres can also devise their own task and/or theme as well. Candidates can have up to two weeks preparation time and 6 hours of guidance from the teacher before the assessment takes place.

Most centres used or adapted the Edexcel-set tasks. The most popular title across all levels of ability is again describing about their holidays to their Chinese friends. Another equally popular task/topic is "sports and leisure – task 1: lifestyle to be fit and healthy"

Other more chosen tasks/titles include:

- Media and culture
 - Task 4: film club
 - Task 1: a blog that supports the local library from being closed
- Travel and tourism
 - Task 3: email to your friend about the plan on holiday together after the exam this year
- Sport and leisure
 - Task 2: best weekend ever
- Business, work and employment
 - Task 2: part-time job
 - Task 4: languages at work place

Popular topics/titles devised by Centre are similar to previous years which include

- My family / school / hobbies
- My home and local area
- Healthy eating
- Famous person
- Job application

Examiners noted that topics on travel and holidays continued to be a popular choice and candidates in general performed well. There was evidence that increased number of candidates were able to provide more distinctive and individual content. However, examiners also noted that some candidates writing the particular task 'about the plan on holiday together with friends after examinations' (travel and tourism task 3) were not describing a future event waiting to be happened but a past event or experience, tending the content and communication towards issues of irrelevance.

Task 4 of 'media and culture' (film club) was another more chosen topic/title among candidates. However, candidates should be reminded to read the rubric carefully before put down to pen. A significant number of works were found heavily narrative by focusing a lot of space on the first bullet, which was telling the story of the film. Response to the 3rd bullet (members' opinions of the film) was not detailed enough. A few did not seem to understand that this was meant

to be a 'report'. Some were not aware of the 'role' of the person who wrote the report. If students prefer to write a simple film review, it is more appropriate for the teacher to re-write the title and bullets.

Examiners were also concerned about the following issues:

- Some essays tended to be very pedestrian and repetitive in both 'content' and 'language'. For example, they repeated the like and dislike of various school subjects or different types of activities and interests one by one using almost same one or two sentence. More able candidates must be encouraged to show some creativity in their ideas. They also need to learn to link the piece into a whole so that it is pleasant to read. Candidates must be helped to understand that the ability to manipulate language is awarded not by counting how many different sentence structures being included. Sometimes it is appropriate to use simple sentences or single connection word depending on the situation to be described and communicated. (For example, when it should be simply 'A 和 B', it would become unnatural when '不但....而且' is applied).
- There were still a significant proportion of candidates who started their essay with a personal introduction irrespective of its irrelevance to the nature of the title and task. Candidates should be reminded that to earn higher marks, the information chosen to write in the content must be relevant to the purpose of the task.
- Some candidates continued to have the problem of rote learning. Some centres were found to present similar or virtually identical essays according to a template or writing frame. Students should be advised that works that lack originality would not be awarded marks in the top band for communication and content.
- Candidates are strongly advised to write the title again at the start of the essay, even though it has been given on the CM4 form already. It should be noted that title is specific to each essay (for example, 'a film review' or 'my best weekend ever'). It is different to 'theme' and 'areas of topics' (for example, media and culture, travel and tourism). If candidate is using Edexcel set-tasks, to copy the full description of the task is NOT required, but please make sure which task it is, for example, "travel and tourism task 2". It is required to indicate on the CM4 form and be repeated at the start of the essay.

Word count

The majority of candidates were able to produce two pieces of essays of between 100-150 characters each. The following marking principles are applied to shorter essay:

- between 76-95 characters – mark is capped at 12 for Communication and Content
- between 61-75 characters – marks is capped at 9 for Communication and Content
- fewer than 60 characters – mark is capped at 6 for Communication and Content

Students are also reminded that no extra marks would be awarded to the additional effort of writing over 150 characters. Candidates are strongly advised to pay more attention to organising the details rather than unnecessarily lengthening the essay that might lead to the loss of focus and being repetitive.

The CA4 Notes Form

This is generally well used. It can include up to 30 words/50 characters. Please be reminded that for 'words', it means written in English or pinyin as an item and is counted as one word such as xuexiao/school. But if written in characters 學校/学校 it will be counted as 2 characters. Details of guidance can be found in the Administrative Guidance.

Administration

Examiners are worried to find an increased number of centres that forgot to enclose the CM4 form. Examiners are grateful if centres will double check all the paper forms so that the marking process will not be interrupted and delayed. Centres are advised regarding the following:

- Use the administrative support guide to check that all procedures are carried out correctly.
- Make sure each candidate's work is secured separately. Please use staples or paper-clips to fasten each candidate's work (putting together the CM4 duly signed by the teacher and the candidate, the task and stimuli, the CA4 notes if used, the 2 pieces of essays). Use of plastic pockets or card folders for each individual candidate's work should be avoided.
- Both the teacher and the candidate must sign the front sheet to authenticate the work; without the two signatures the marking process cannot be completed.
- Where all candidates have been given the same stimulus task, it is necessary to include this only once.
- Teachers should not mark or annotate or correct the work in any way.

