

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

1GK0 Paper 2H

Higher tier: Speaking in Greek

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**GCSE Greek
Speaking paper
1GK0/2H (Higher tier)
2025 Examiner's report**

Introduction

The speaking examination for the Higher tier consists of three parts: a role play (RP) with 5 prompts and a maximum of 10 marks, a picture-based task (PBT) with five prompts and a maximum of 24 marks and a conversation of two topic areas and a maximum of 36 marks. There are 10 Higher role plays and 10 Higher picture-based cards. There is also a sequencing grid that centres are asked to follow when deciding which candidate receives which role play, which picture-based card and the theme for the second conversation. Following the sequencing grid is very important, as it ensures that the candidate is tested in four out of five themes of the specification and it avoids duplication. The candidates have 12 minutes preparation time to read through the role play and the picture-based card. In the Higher role play card the third prompt has an unpredictable question which refers to the past and the candidate is expected to use a past reference and the last two prompts require the candidate to ask two questions. The first task for each picture-based card is a description of the photo, the third task requires a response within a past time frame and the fourth task requires the use of a future time frame. For the Foundation and Higher role plays and picture-based tasks teachers are not allowed to rephrase questions. The questions may be repeated, but no more than twice, so overall the candidates may hear each question up to three times. In the picture-based tasks prompts «Τίποτ' άλλο;» (Anything else?) and/or «Γιατί;» (Why?) have been provided to enable candidates to develop their answers. Only these prompts may be used and there must be no other supplementary questions by the teacher.

The timing for the Higher speaking examination is 10-12 minutes. This is only a guideline for the role play and picture-based tasks and it does not mean that the three tasks cannot be completed successfully in a shorter time. However, **timings for the conversation task are prescribed and should be 5 - 6 minutes for the Higher tier** and teachers should not extend conversation times to reach the total time of the complete examination. Any response started after 6 min will not be given credit. An equal amount of time should be allocated to both parts of the conversation. If the first conversation is a monologue without questions and answers the mark for Interaction and Spontaneity is capped at 6.

Overview

As in previous years, the examination team was pleased to report that there were some impressive performances and that most candidates were well prepared and achieved marks in the upper band. The paper was challenging to some candidates who either were not familiar with the test or were not sufficiently prepared or they did not have the basic skills to communicate their answers and should have entered the Foundation Tier. Most popular RPs were HR9 (What school is like, description and opinion on school), HR5 (Work, looking for a job at a café in Cyprus), HR3 (Ambitions, looking for a volunteering job at a food bank in Athens) and HR10 (Travel and tourist transactions, booking a room at a hotel in Greece). Most popular PBTs were HP9 (Bringing the world together, big sport events), HP6 (School activities, on school exchange programmes) and HP5 (What school is like, on school rules and experiences).

A significant number of candidates underperformed in some parts of the RP (role play) – usually in Q4 and Q5 where they needed to ask a question based on the prompts given to them - and did not offer justification in opinions in PBT (picture-based task). In some cases, the candidates did not familiarise themselves with the RP scenario and as a result they struggled to answer the questions or offered irrelevant responses. That was evident in the first question of the RP when they had to answer an open question «Πώς μπορώ να σας βοηθήσω;» (How can I help you?).

In some cases, marks were lost due to bad examining practices, i.e., wrong timings in conversation or most commonly changing the questions or/and adding new ones in RP and PBT.

The Conversation Task proved to be a rich platform for most candidates to articulate their thoughts, ideas, and detailed information related to the topics. This year contrary to previous years there was not a clear winner in terms of popularity of themes for the first conversation (C1) that were selected by the candidates. Theme 1 (identity and culture), 3 (School) and 2 (Holidays) were equally popular. Following a similar trend in last year's series, more candidates opted for Theme 5 as their C1 theme and talked about the environment, often displaying impressive skills. Similarly to last year, for their first conversation increasingly more candidates chose Topic 5 and talked about the environment or a big sport event often displaying impressive skills.

Task 1: Role play (RP)

It is worth mentioning that the role play task is marked for communication only, unlike the picture-based task and the conversation. Answers should be brief and to the point to avoid confusion and ambiguity. It is very important that candidates read the scenario carefully during the preparation time to understand where the role play is situated and what is expected of them. Crucially, the teacher conducting the test should read out the small introduction in Greek before asking the questions. A few teachers failed to do so and that created an initial confusion. Also, there were some teachers who omitted one of the questions or rephrased one of the questions and as a result they disadvantaged the candidates. Many candidates were successful with the unpredictable question (Q3) and with the formation of a question for Q4 and Q5 of the role play. Some candidates were less successful in framing a question and lost marks due to poor pronunciation or by asking other questions from the prescribed ones.

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles agreed across all modern languages:

- If a teacher changes a question or inserts a supplementary question, there can be no credit for a response made by the candidate.
- Where a candidate has offered an incorrect response to a question, the teacher may not repeat the question. If the teacher does so and the candidate then gives a correct response, this is ignored.
- Teachers may repeat each question twice but may not rephrase any of the questions.
- In those cases that the candidate asks more than two questions, only the first two questions are marked.

HR1

This RP was rarely used and overall it was well performed. Very few did not answer Q3 using past references. More specifically, in those cases where the teacher examiner spoke fast it was more difficult to understand that it was «κάνατε» not «κάνετε», although «μέχρι τώρα» should have helped. As a result, some candidates replied by explaining what they usually do when they are in a Greek city. It is worth mentioning that a candidate who is well prepared for the speaking exam should expect a question referring in the past in Q3, therefore their response should include past references. In Q5 most candidates were familiar with the prompt «διάρκεια» and asked about the duration of the festival.

HR2

Most candidates performed very well and they were well prepared to talk about mobile phones, a topic close to them, often resulting in a natural conversation. There were many variations in the way candidates formed a question in Q5 using the prompts (Κινητό τηλέφωνο – βίντεο) and most of them were correct (i.e. whether the Greek student watches or makes videos or simply if they like watching videos on their mobile phone, etc.).

HR3

A popular RP this year. Most candidates knew the Greek word for volunteer (εθελοντής/ντρια) and were able to score full marks in Q1-Q3. The word «ωράριο» in Q4 similar to previous years caused problems to some candidates who mixed it up with «ωραίο» or badly pronounced it as «ωάριο». Very few candidates found Q5 challenging and did not make the connection between «εθελοντές» and «αριθμός», offering non meaningful responses.

HR4

In Q1 some candidates ignored the prompt and did not ask for 4 tickets to visit to the Acropolis. Similar to HR1 there were some candidates who answered Q3 in the present (confusion of «κάνατε» and «κάνετε»), although «μέχρι τώρα» should have helped. Also, in Q3 some candidates did not realise that the setting was placed in Athens and gave irrelevant responses. In Q4 the word «ξενάγηση» caused problems to some and in Q5 some did not phrase the question in a way that both prompts were targeted.

HR5

This was the most popular card and many candidates managed to score full marks. It is pleasing to see that candidates increasingly perform well in role plays on seeking a holiday job. The word «ωράριο» in Q4 similar to HR3 caused problems to some candidates who mixed it up with «ωραίο» or badly pronounced it as «ωάριο».

HR6

Most candidates were well prepared to talk about sports at school. Very few gave a general opinion on sports in Q2 and not what they thought about sports at their school. There were

variations in the way candidates approached Q5 and all questions that included the two prompts («Σχολικοί αγώνες – γονείς») were considered valid.

HR7

Very few candidates were given this role play and those who had managed to score full marks and talk about their family extensively. It must be noted that long responses are not needed in this part of the speaking exam and should be discouraged because by the time the candidates reach the third task time has passed and some teacher examiners wrongly cut them short in the conversation task costing them marks.

HR8

This was handled very well and many candidates managed to score full marks. Some natural conversation took place, possibly due to the fact that the topic was close to the candidates' everyday life and experiences.

HR9

This was one of the most popular cards and generally it was answered well, as most candidates were well prepared to give an opinion about their school. Although many candidates asked a valid question on school uniform in Q5, Q4 posed difficulties to some candidates who misunderstood «αριθμοί» for «βαθμοί».

HR10

Q1 & Q2 were challenging for some candidates who did not recognise the words «κράτηση» and «είδος». Finally, there were some candidates who did not recognise the word «διάρκεια» or did not pay attention to the detail and as a result they asked about breakfast in general and not the duration.

Task 2: Picture-based (PBT)

The Higher tier candidates often offered detailed photo descriptions concentrating not only on the physical characteristics and the clothes of the people in the photos but on their feelings and their surroundings. They often went further, explaining what they believed was happening in the photo and used expressions such as «(Μου) φαίνεται ότι ...», «Πιστεύω ότι...», «Θα έλεγα ότι δείχνουν...» to enhance the task. «Φαίνονται/Δείχνουν ήρεμοι και απολαμβάνουν τον ήλιο, καθισμένοι στο γρασίδι σε ένα πάρκο και μιλούν με τους φίλους τους ή την οικογένειά τους» was an indication where a candidate could use the picture to give an opinion or make a deduction.

At Higher tier, there was a wide range of marks awarded and this was because there was an uneven level of response across the task. Some candidates were able to give very good descriptions of the photo and offered very good opinions with some justification in question two but were less expansive in the response to questions three and four when dealing with events in the past and the future. The most successful candidates were able to relate past and future events with minimal prompting and there was little hesitancy within the responses. These questions proved to be good differentiators within the mark scheme. A significant number of candidates failed to use the past tense in Q3 and in some cases future references in Q4, either because they did not have the linguistic skills or in some cases because they did not pay sufficient attention to the way the questions were formed. Less confident candidates used mainly the present tense and some attempts to use past reference were

unsuccessful and led to some ambiguity. Furthermore, some lost marks because they did not justify their opinion in what was discussed in Questions 2&5.

HP8, HP9 & HP10 were challenging to a number of candidates; the picture of different professionals in HP8, the picture showing the finish of a running event (HP9) and the photograph from a traffic jam proved demanding to some candidates in terms of vocabulary and ideas.

In some cases, candidates were allowed to 'ramble on' when an acceptable answer had been given and the extra information did not add anything to what had already been said. It is counter-productive to go through the supplementary prompts when a perfectly good detailed response has been given. Indeed, the ensuing silence does not help the candidate and it often affects their performance towards the end of the task. On the other hand there were cases where the candidate was prompted and encouraged to describe the picture in great detail but in the remaining questions they did not get prompted even though their responses were very short. These candidates could not be awarded top marks because they did not consistently respond to the set questions.

Centres are reminded that the questions within the picture-based discussion are set and **they should not be altered in any way**. Unfortunately, there were instances where teachers reworded or reframed questions or added extra prompts which did not allow candidates to be credited for responses to these questions. For example, in some cases the teacher examiners asked «Τι βλέπεις;» (What do you see?) instead of or after the prescribed question «Περιγράψε τη φωτογραφία» (Describe the photo). This is not accepted and the candidate's response is discredited for Question 1. There were also occasions where supplementary questions were added in the middle of the task. No credit could be given for these responses and the practice caused confusion for these candidates who had prepared responses to the five bullet points. In some cases teacher examiners repeated the question or part of the question signalling to the candidate that they did not cover what is needed. This is not accepted and any response following the repeated question is disregarded.

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles agreed across all modern languages:

- Candidates must refer to the visual image in response to the first question.
- Where a teacher changes a question or changes the prompts («Γιατί (όχι);» and «Τίποτ' άλλο;») or inserts a supplementary question which is not scripted, there can be no credit for a response made by the candidate.
- Teachers may repeat each question twice but may not rephrase any of the questions.

HP1

This was answered well possibly due to the fact that shopping is a familiar topic. Some candidates though found Q4 challenging maybe because of the use of the conditional.

HP2

This card was not used as much as others. In Q2 & Q5 some candidates found it difficult to answer because they do not read news or newspapers and they do not watch TV in the conventional way.

HP3

As in previous years, the topic 'Holidays' was answered well, although some candidates did not give their opinion on holidays specifically in a tourist place but in general in Q2 or answered in the present tense in Q4 instead of using the future.

HP4

Some candidates misunderstood the word "μειονεκτήματα (disadvantages)" on HP4 and spoke instead about advantages. It seems that they were not well prepared for the topic 'living in a city'. Similarly, a few did not recognise the Greek word for entertainment "διασκέδαση" and did not offer meaningful responses or simply talked about their town.

HP6

This was a very popular stimulus. Some candidates did not recognise that it was set in London, but still managed to describe the picture and get full marks. Some less successful candidates did not give a meaningful opinion on school exchange programmes in Q2 either due to lack of vocabulary or because they relied only on personal experience and these programmes were not part of that. It must be noted that student exchange programmes is part of the specification and candidates are expected to give their views on them when asked.

HP7

Many candidates were prepared to talk about a past volunteering experience in Q3. However, some struggled to answer the unseen question on what they thought as important in a job because they either lacked the vocabulary or they were not well prepared for this topic.

HP8

For similar reasons in Q2 & Q5 some candidates did not adequately discuss the characteristics of a good job or share their opinions on working from home versus working in an office. Some possibly were thrown off by the Greek word for countryside with which they weren't familiar, but the question that follows allowed some of them to give an answer. Furthermore, compared to other stimulus some candidates struggled to describe the picture of different professionals all looking at the camera mainly because they could not identify the jobs in Greek. Q3 was often answered in the present tense and not in the past. Often this was not because of lack of ability. It seemed that they did not realise they were being asked about a past action. In Q4 few students answered without taking into consideration the age given in the question (i.e. 18).

HP9

This was one of the most popular stimuli and in general it was answered well. The picture was well described, often including supposition of what had just happened. In Q2 some candidates did not refer to big sport events just school games and commented on that or they did not explain why big sports events are enjoyable. Furthermore, they did not expand on the occasion they watched a sports event on TV or live in Q3.

In Q3 many answered in the Present, not the Past. This was not because of a lack of ability, but because they did not realise they were being asked about a past action.

HP10

Some candidates found Q1 and Q2 challenging, as it usually happens with the stimulus on environmental issues. Most candidates did not expand sufficiently to describe the picture showing a traffic jam in Greece. Some less successful candidates did not recognise the word «δημόσια συγκοινωνία» and did not give a meaningful response or asked the teacher examiner to clarify. In the cases where the teacher clarified the candidate's response was not taken into account. It was evident that for some candidates lack of relevant vocabulary was an issue and affected their performance in HP10. As in HP8 and HP9 Q3 was often answered using a present tense and many candidates gave a list of environmental friendly actions, however failed to use the right tense. Similarly some candidates failed to use a future reference in Q4 and gave a list of environmental initiatives their school takes in general for the good of the environment.

Task 3: Conversations (conversation 1 on a chosen theme and conversation 2 on a theme prescribed by Pearson)

In general, the conversations were well conducted and the skilful and appropriate questioning from the teachers afforded candidates the opportunities to fulfil their potential in line with the criteria enabling candidates to achieve their best.

It is essential to be careful with the timings and avoid any imbalance between the two conversations or any shortfall or excess in timings. Most teachers put their students at ease, using a friendly tone of voice and spoke clearly and slowly so that the students had little or no problems in understanding the questions. They also covered a variety of sub-topics within a theme, which resulted in a wider variety of language from the candidates.

For the first Conversation, students should be encouraged to introduce the topic they have chosen for up to one minute prior to the interaction with the teacher. It is equally important to ensure that **they are not allowed to go on beyond the 1 minute** and **teachers should interrupt with their first question if the candidate seems determined to continue with a monologue**. Unsurprisingly, the first conversation was often more successful than the second and it was noticeable how the less successful candidates frequently found it difficult to complete their sentences as they struggled to find the right vocabulary, grammatical structures or verb tenses in conversation 2.

Some teachers had clearly not been listening carefully to what the students were saying and confused them by asking questions the answers to which had already been covered in the initial presentation. The Conversations should be allowed to develop naturally and the teachers should listen carefully to what the candidate is saying and build the conversation accordingly. It is worth noting that in the conversation task the candidates are **not** expected to ask questions to the teacher examiners. In some cases, the candidates were prepared to do so and teacher examiners gave lengthy responses taking up valuable time from the candidate's allotted time for each conversation.

Marks were lost mainly when bad examining practice took place; monologues lasting over one minute (Interaction and Spontaneity is affected), the first conversation containing only a monologue (maximum 6 for Interaction and Spontaneity), the first conversation significantly longer than the second (Communication and content is affected) or both conversations together lasted less than 5 minutes (Communication and content is affected).

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles that have been agreed across all modern languages:

- Higher Conversations should last for between 5 and 6 minutes
- Timings begin with the candidate's first utterance.
- Conversations that are too short are likely to be self-penalising.
- Conversations that are too long: once the 6 minutes for Higher tier candidates have passed, examiners stop listening and assessing at the end of the candidate's response to the current question.
- An equal amount of time must be allocated to each Conversation.
- The candidates are not expected to ask questions in the conversation task, unless they need clarification or they ask for a question to be repeated.
- Where the first Conversation is a monologue and has no interaction, students will be limited to a maximum score of 6 marks for Interaction and Spontaneity. The marks for Communication and Content and Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, however, are unaffected.

Administration

Administrative guidelines were followed by some centres and the relevant CS2 form was uploaded electronically. Some centres however failed to upload the relevant form and that resulted in delays in marking. Going forward centres are advised to fill in the Excel version of the CS2 form adding all information, i.e. the Role play and the Picture task number along with the themes of the first and second conversation.

- Centres should follow the sequencing grid.
- It is very useful if teachers announce the role play card number and the picture card number at the start of the tasks, as well as the theme for each of the Conversations at the beginning of each one.
- Centres should upload separate CS2 form for each tier.

Finally, the examining team would like to thank the vast majority of centres and teachers for conducting the exam effectively and according to the instructions of the conduct of the examination, as well as for completing their administration efficiently.