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Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Greek (1GK0)

Paper: 4H (Writing)

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Principal Examiner's Report

Summer 2023

1GK0

Specification: 1GK0

Paper: 4H Writing in Greek

Introduction

1GK0 4H is assessed by means of a 1 hour and 25 minutes examination. Candidates are assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in Greek for different purposes and are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to narrate, describe, explain and express ideas and opinions in Greek. The instructions to candidates are all in Greek and word counts are specified for each question.

Paper 4H requires that candidates answer two open-response questions and one translation into Greek. The total mark for this paper is 60. The use of dictionaries is not allowed.

Questions in this paper address a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are: identity and culture; local area, holiday and travel; school; future aspirations, study and work; and international and global dimension. For more information on the topics and sub-topics please consult the paper specification booklet.

Recommended word counts are specified for each question, and candidates are advised to adhere to these recommendations, as overly long responses have been proven to contain irrelevance, digression and a certain imbalance regarding the coverage of the various bullet points. All questions are marked according to the assessment criteria as published in the current specification.

This was the first iteration of the examination of the Greek specification in post-pandemic conditions and performance was mostly good, with some excellent results at the higher end of achievement. In general, it was evident that candidates had been well prepared for the examination. They performed very well with success in questions which required description and narration and moderately well in aspects that required justification and opinion. Only a few candidates were less successful in questions which required a certain formal register, the provision of details across various time frames or the knowledge of vocabulary specific to a theme.

An unfortunate pattern of very long responses, illegible writing, often mixing English and Greek characters, was also observed. Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the conventions of the Greek alphabet before entering for this examination, avoid dotting the iota, not a Greek convention, and refrain

from using, for example, *a, u, t, e, y* instead of *a, u, τ, ε, γ*, in order not to lose marks.

In conclusion, a good number of candidates scored very well throughout the paper. They demonstrated their ability to convey information, develop points using familiar vocabulary and use language with consistently high degree of success.

Comments on individual questions are below.

Question 1

Q1 has two options from which candidates have to select one. This question assesses candidates on their ability to convey information, narrate, express opinions and interest, and convince the reader about a certain point. Candidates must use the informal register. This question is common to the Foundation tier.

Question 1 is worth 20 marks: 12 for Communication and Content, the ability to write information relevant to the task, with effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform and give convincing personal opinions, and 8 marks for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, which involves evidence of accurate language and structures, good linking of the piece as a whole and successful reference to past, present and future events. The recommended wordage for this question is 80-90 words and the most successful essays remained within or went reasonably above this limit, not surpassing 150 words.

Question 1(a)

This year, question 1(a) drew its content from the theme of 'Identity and Culture' and the topic was 'family'. It required that candidates write an email to a friend in Greece, in which they describe their family; they narrate in relation to a recent family experience; explain what they'd like to do with their family in the future and offer opinion as to why family is important to them.

1(a) was the popular choice and the one tackled very successfully by the majority of candidates, since this is one of the most rehearsed topics in the specification. Performance was consistently marked by clear communication of information relevant to the task at descriptive level and successful application of grammatical structures, in the Present, Future and Past tenses. Occasionally, there was either a misreading of the rubric or the candidates lacked the skill to respond ably and accurately to the request for information regarding "what you all did as a family recently". Instead, they wrote about what they usually do with their family, failing to demonstrate their knowledge of using multiple time frames, the Simple Past in particular. Patterns of grammatical errors pertained to the wrong use of the verb *αποτελώ* and the wrong noun case after the preposition *από* (for example, *η οικογένειά μου αποτελεί από 4 άτομα, ο μπαμπάς μου, η μαμά μου...*)

Here, more than in any other question there were lengthy and irrelevant descriptions of all family members (their hair, height, hobbies, jobs) and annual holidays in Greece which took up almost two pages at the expense of expanding and showing ability to adapt language to address other bullet points. On rare occasions, the required opinion was expressed rather hastily in one sentence. Candidates are advised to demonstrate a sense of balance when they respond to the various requests for information and opinion required by the essay questions.

In general, the level of success was high. A large number of candidates wrote clear descriptions, referred to the past successfully and employed the subjunctive or the future tense to discuss future plans and why family is important.

Question 1(b)

Question 1(b) fell under the theme of 'Local Area Holiday and Travel' and the topic was 'eating out'. It required that candidates write a review about a place where they ate recently, describing it, explaining why they went there, sharing their opinion and offering a recommendation to those who are thinking of visiting it.

1(b) was mostly marked by significantly weaker performance, as a result of omissions that deprived candidates from marks from the top bands. At lower levels of competence there was no justification or development of ideas, especially in relation to "what you would recommend to someone who is considering this restaurant". Patterns of unsatisfactory performance, in relation to offering justification and references to time frames that extend to the future and the past, seemed to characterise candidates at grades 5 and below.

Many candidates conveyed relevant information appropriate to the task, using basic structures and a good range of straightforward vocabulary. On occasion, points were made with effective development and good linking of extended sentences, particularly in relation to the second and the third bullet points, with often superficial reference and minimal expansion of the first and fourth bullet points. A preference for lingering on lengthy descriptions of food detracted from a purposeful and complete response.

Question 2

Question 2 has two options from which students have to select one. This question assesses students on their ability to convey information, narrate, express and justify ideas and opinions, and interest or convince the reader, as well as use the formal register. This question is worth 28 marks: 16 for Communication and Content, which involves the ability to communicate relevant facts, expand, express individual thoughts and opinion, while maintaining appropriate use of register and style throughout, and 12 marks for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, which invites accurate use of a variety of complex grammatical structures, cohesion and successful references to various time frames.

Question 2(a)

Question 2(a) related to the theme of 'Future Aspirations' and the topic was 'further study'. In this question, candidates were asked to apply for a spot in an all-expenses-paid trip to Greece; give information about themselves; explain why they are interested and why they should be chosen; and inform those in charge whether they have any experience of travelling without their family.

2(a) was the most popular choice and the candidates' performance was mostly very good and persuasive, and, on occasion, excellent, with examples of effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform and explain/interest. Their errors, although present, rarely hindered clarity and the ability to develop points relevant to the task. There was a small number of candidates who merged bullet points in a way that invited unfortunate repetition (why you want to go to Greece and why you think you should be chosen). They left it to the examiner to assume that because they had never been to Greece (in response to: 'γιατί ενδιαφέρεσαι να πας εκδρομή στην Ελλάδα') this reason also constituted the reason why they should be chosen. This pattern of omission of a purposeful and clear response did not satisfy the criteria that require 'Effective adaptation of language to narrate, inform, interest and give convincing personal opinions' in order to gain marks from the higher bands of the assessment criteria. Those who answered clearly and in direct response to the question mentioned compelling reasons such as: 'δεν έχω την οικονομική δυνατότητα να πάω μόνη μου'; 'είμαι ένα υπεύθυνο άτομο και θα σας βοηθήσω πολύ με την οργάνωση', etc. Justification of opinion is an important parameter for successful performance in this question and candidates are advised to consider carefully the rubric, when it asks them to 'να δικαιολογήσεις τις ιδέες και τη γνώμη σου'.

Question 2 (b)

Question 2 (b) related to the theme of "International and global dimension" and focused on the topic of 'music'. It required that candidates write to their Head Teacher to persuade her to organise a music event to welcome the students of another school; ask for the school's help; explain why this event is important for the students and offer information about prior experience in event planning.

The level of success in this question was moderate. Some candidates expressed their views clearly and compellingly, identifying the music event (for example, *ένας διαγωνισμός μουσικού ταλέντου...*), narrating about a specific experience (for example, *πέρσι διοργάνωσα μια γιορτή-έκπληξη για τα γενέθλια της αδελφής μου*) describing the kind of help they would like (for example, *θα ήθελα να μας δώσετε μια αίθουσα στο σχολείο...*) and persuading the teacher about the importance of the event (for example, *θα μπορέσουμε να διασκεδάσουμε όλοι μαζί σαν ομάδα και να*

κάνουμε καλή εντύπωση με τη φιλοξενία μας...). Those who answered well argued with a degree of persuasion that was evident and clearly stated, as opposed to implied. Patterns of unsatisfactory performance related to the omission of clear, persuasive writing and either too lengthy or too short descriptions of a specific bullet point, which detracted from the purpose of the piece and provided no information or superfluous information.

Question 3

This question requires translation of a short passage from English into Greek. It is worth 12 marks and consists of 4 sentences ordered in rising degrees of complexity.

This year's question related to the theme of 'School' and the topic was 'what school is like'. Most candidates gained more than half of the marks awarded for this question, showing very good understanding of the Greek text and good skills of transfer of meaning into English. Many showed excellent translation skills and gained full marks.

Weak performance or occasionally incorrect use of language mostly related to specific vocabulary and omissions. The word 'υπεύθυνοι' was often left out or spelled inaccurately to the point of unrecognisability. Words like 'only' and 'also', which add a specific meaning to the sentence, were often omitted. The phrase 'raised money' was often translated literally as 'σηκώσαμε λεφτά', which, in fact, is meaningless in Greek, in this context. A surprisingly large number of candidates turned Paphos into a masculine noun.

Paper Summary

Based on this year's performance, candidates are invited to consider the following:

- The prompts in the bullet points may give useful vocabulary but this needs to be adapted to suit the grammar and syntax of the candidates' own sentences
- Read every question on the exam paper before beginning to write their answers. Questions 1 and 2 offer a choice, so they ought to make sure they write about a topic that interests them and that they have something to say about.
- Look very carefully at the whole question, including the rubric, to make sure that they fully understand what they are being asked to do, noting, in particular, the register they must use. In Greek, the formal register is indicated with the 2nd person plural of the verb and pronoun.
- Pay attention to key words in the bullet points, as these will help them answer each of the bullet points correctly. Answer each of the bullet points in the order that they appear, so that they do not end up omitting any.
- Organise their essays using the conventions of essay writing, using paragraphs and the correct punctuation.
- Leave enough time to check their work carefully at the end of the exam.

- Familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria, so that they are aware of the aspects involved in assessing performance. This is particularly important for questions that elicit the use of a formal register or purpose linked to persuasion, justification of opinion, interest etc.

Thank you for choosing to study this specification.