



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Russian (1RU0)

Paper 4H: Writing

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Introduction

Candidates were assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in Russian.

Candidates needed to communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts; to write short texts, using simple sentences and familiar language accurately to convey meaning and exchange information; to produce clear and coherent text of extended length to present facts and express ideas and opinions appropriately for different purposes and in different settings; to make accurate use of a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, including some more complex forms, to describe and narrate with reference to past, present and future events; to manipulate the language, using and adapting a variety of structures and vocabulary with increasing accuracy and fluency for new purposes, including using appropriate style and register; to make independent, creative and more complex use of the language, as appropriate; to note down key points, express and justify individual thoughts and points of view, in order to interest, inform or convince; and to translate sentences and short texts from English into the Russian to convey key messages accurately and to apply grammatical knowledge of language and structures in context.

The assessment was out of 60 marks. Each question was set in a context drawn from the themes and topics from the Pearson specification. The assessment tasks featured general content that was familiar and accessible to all candidates. Candidates were required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express facts, ideas and opinions in Russian.

The length of each response required, and the complexity of language increased across the paper. Recommended word counts were specified for each question. Candidates were not penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended in the word count or for going beyond the mandatory bullets. One question was a translation of a short passage from English into Russian.

All assessments were marked against assessment criteria. The instructions to candidates were all in Russian. The use of dictionaries was not permitted.

The assessment time was 1 hour and 25 minutes in length. The paper consisted of two questions and one translation from English into Russian. Candidates had to answer all questions.

All headings for questions were set in English.

Question 1 had two options from which candidates had to select one. This question assessed candidates on their ability to convey information, narrate, express opinions, interest, and convince the reader about a certain point. Candidates had to use the informal register.

This question was common to the Foundation tier.

Question 2 had two options from which candidates had to select one. This question assessed candidates on their ability to convey information, narrate, express and justify ideas and opinions, and interest or convince the reader. Candidates had to use the formal register.

Question 3 was the translation question. Candidates were required to translate a short paragraph from English into Russian. The individual sentences were ordered by increasing level of difficulty.

Question 1 (a)

This question addressed the theme of **Future aspirations, study and work** with specific focus on the topic of **volunteering**.

Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of an email to a friend talking about volunteer work; they had to write 60-65 words of Russian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames as well as giving an opinion about

preferences.

This question was considerably more popular than Q3(b).

The first bullet point required candidates to talk about what they usually do in free time. Candidates unfamiliar with the exam format sometimes omitted the first bullet point, and instead addressed the introductory statement, **«Она хочет знать, что ты думаешь о работе волонтером.»** Some candidates related the first bullet to the topic of volunteering and this was perfectly acceptable. Candidates showed clear knowledge of vocabulary relating to free time mainly from the topics of sport, entertainment and internet. Several candidates bemoaned the lack of free time and referred to the need to revise. Writing about volunteering seemed to be a familiar topic, especially when candidates wrote about the environment and looking after pets: **«Я волонтер в парке, потому что я хочу защищать окружающую среду от загрязнения», «Я планирую работать волонтером в местном приюте для животных. Помогать животным и заботиться о них является очень важным, особенно для меня» , «Каждую неделю я волонтер в местной конюшне, поскольку я обожаю присматривать за лошадьми».**

The second bullet point required the candidate to talk about a job that they had done in the past. As in the first bullet point, a large number of candidates related this to volunteer work and this could be credited. The verb **«работал»** was known by the vast number of candidates. It was acceptable to talk about either paid work or voluntary work. Most candidates successfully used the past tense here (often deriving it from the language of the question (**работал/а**) - a perfectly acceptable strategy). Answers in the negative (to the effect of "I have never worked") were credited. It was perfectly acceptable to write about the fact that the candidate had held more than one job in the past. It was equally acceptable for the candidate to say that they had not had a job due to age or the pressures of preparing for exams.

The third point required the candidate to express an opinion on the importance of volunteer work. This point was the most abstract/theoretical of the four bullet points, it tended to be answered confidently by almost all candidates, most of whom thought voluntary work was a good way to help other or develop their own skills. Some responses referred to the importance of volunteer work but followed up by saying that the candidate personally would not do this. Less successful responses did not refer to the "volunteering" aspect and merely wrote about the importance of work. This was a partial response.

The fourth bullet point required a future tenses response as to where the candidate will do voluntary work in the future. Candidates showed good evidence in being able to use future tense in response to this bullet point. Candidates used tenses appropriately, forming either the future tense with **«буду»** or the use of **«хочу»** or **«хотел(а) бы»**. Some students produced very brief answers and even some stronger candidates barely met the minimum number of words per bullet point; however, they did answer the question in future tense. Those who expanded their answers often mentioned volunteering at a zoo or helping older people as something they would do. Answers which stated that the candidate wanted to do a particular job in order to earn money were not fully relevant to this particular bullet point.

Many candidates produced some excellent essays; they entered fully into the requirements of the question and succeeded in writing a highly convincing article dealing with the bullet points. They displayed linguistic flair together with an exploration of interesting ideas, justification, logical argument and individual expression. However, some candidates struggled in balancing the requirements of the task and other candidates failed to read the bullet points carefully.

Candidates should bear in mind that more than 50% of the mark is for content and communication and the mark scheme stipulates that "top box" answers must "communicate detailed information related to the task" and "develop key points". As such, it is difficult to produce first-rate answers that deal with a bullet point in the space

of a single clause. About 15 – 18 words per bullet point produces a balanced answer. Content marks were capped for some candidates who did not respond to all bullet points fully thus lacking some detail.

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Question 1 (b)

This question addressed the theme of **Identity and culture** with specific focus on the topic of **role models**.

Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of writing to a friend sharing information about who is a role model; candidates were required to write 60-65 words of Russian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames as well as giving an opinion.

This question was less popular than Q3(a).

The bullet points were generally well understood. A significant number of candidates showed their confidence with this topic and happily discussed their role models.

The first bullet point required candidates to describe a role model. Candidates wrote about a range of people with a significant number describing a family member. Any of these descriptions demonstrated successful comprehension of the bullet point. Most successful answers were about a favourite teacher, best friend, or somebody famous (but not about their parents). For example, several descriptions of a friend: **«Она очень умная и добрая девочка с красивой внешностью. У неё изумрудные глаза и русые длинные волосы.»**, **«Почему-то идеалы пустые и безнравственные, высокомерные и самоуверенные. Но для меня идеальный человек это тот, чьё сердце наполнено теплотой и любовью»**. Occasionally bullet points 1 and 3 were elided in candidates’ responses. So long as the cumulative length of these bullet points showed effective development, candidates who did so still had access to the full range of marks.

At times candidates were repetitive with the vocabulary due to the limitation of their vocabulary range or using the words from the tasks. Candidates sometimes left out either the description or who was the required **«пример.»**

The second bullet point required candidates to use past tense to say where they had first seen their role model. Some candidates did not access the full marks for content because they did not fully expand the point with relevant detail. Choosing a family member did not always allow candidates to expand the point. Stronger candidates demonstrated linguistic flair and gave reasons as to why they had seen this person in a specific place. Some candidates could not access the full requirements for communication and content by confusing **«первый раз»** and instead using **«последний раз»**. Some candidates mentioned when **«когда»** they saw their role model for the first time, but didn’t specify where **«где»**, as required by the question. Some candidates also spoke about the most recent occasion on which they had seen their role model as opposed to the first time they had seen him/her.

The third bullet required candidates to give a description as to why they liked the role

model. Some candidates did not successfully deal with this point by repeating what they had said for bullet point one. There were some impressive reasons given with full justification. Occasionally bullet points 1 and 3 were elided in candidates' responses. So long as the cumulative length of these bullet points showed effective development, candidates who did so still had access to the full range of marks.

The fourth bullet point asked candidates to talk about when they will see their do in during the holidays in order to relax. This proved to be a very accessible bullet point for candidate across the ability range. Better answers demonstrated full response with a balanced approach to the four bullet points. Candidates used tenses appropriately, forming either the future tense with **«буду»** or the use of **«хочу»** or **«хотел(а) бы»**. Conversely (albeit less commonly), candidates sometimes said where they would see their role model again, rather than when. Candidates are advised to read the question very carefully and to ensure they are confident of the meaning of question words such as **«когда»**, **«где»**, **«как»**, **«кто»**. Occasionally the response was ambiguous when candidates wrote phrases such as **«мы будем вместе жить в будущем»** or discussed what they plan to do with their role model (a friend or relative) in the future. While understandable, these responses did not directly address the question **«когда ты будешь видеть этого человека»**.

Candidates were clearly able to talk about past and future events when talking about role models and these bullet points allowed good demonstration of tenses with a good range of vocabulary. Less convincing responses did not distinguish between the first and third bullet points.

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Question 2 (a)

This question addressed the theme of **Identity and culture** with specific focus on the topic of **film and television**.

Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of responding to a website's request for articles about television in the life of young people; candidates were required to write 90-110 words of Russian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames as well as giving an opinion.

This question was considerably less popular than Q2(b).

The bullet points were generally well understood. A significant number of candidates showed their confidence with this topic and happily discussed their viewing habits.

Bullet point 1 required candidates to say why they watch or do not watch. The question deliberately missed out the specific medium to allow candidates to talk about viewing habits in times when young people tend not to watch television. Responses dealing with any aspect of watching something (e.g. YouTube channels, Netflix etc) were credited. It was accepted that the word **«телевизор»** or **«фильмы»** could have been inserted in bullet point 1 and the decision was made to allow all responses that could be seen as broadly relevant in order not to disadvantage any candidate. The vast majority, however, did elect to talk about the reasons for watching television. A common mistake amongst less competent candidates was that students wrote about what young people generally

like watching on television rather than their personal preferences. Students unfamiliar with the exam format often attempted again to address the introductory line **«русский веб-сайт хочет статьи о телевидении в жизни молодёжи»** without referencing the bullet. Some candidates were completely off the topic: they either wrote about how to stay safe while using the Internet or discussed the decline of television.

Bullet point 2 required candidates to talk about something **important** that they had recently watched and was generally the least successfully responded bullet. Candidates wrote about **what** they watched, but did not specify if it was important or useful to them. They did not need to use the word **«важное»** in their response, and any indication of shows that might be considered useful/helpful was credited. Many candidates spoke successfully about watching shows about global warming (with David Attenborough being a particular favourite) or urban poverty. Merely stating that a show was entertaining, however, was not considered a fully relevant response to the bullet point. At the same time, it was difficult to find the evidence that the programmes that they watched were “important”. Often the candidates did not emphasise this detail. Similarly, there were cases when the candidate talked about programmes for school curriculum or preparation for an examination but omitting the fact that it was important, however this was an acceptable interpretation of the task with minor omission.

Bullet point 3 required candidates to say what they will watch for entertainment in the future. This bullet point was generally answered well by most candidates, but some did not access the full range of marks for communication and content due to lack of development. Not all candidates addressed **«для развлечения»** and wrote about a range of programmes, events that could potentially be watched. The use of future tenses was generally secure.

Bullet point 4 required candidates to talk about why people enjoy going to the cinemas and was generally answered well. Where less secure responses did not attain the full mark from the mark scheme was when candidates did not give sufficient reasons to justify their answer. The strongest responses wrote in complex language about the positive reasons for going to the cinema: **«Людам нравится ходить в кино из-за атмосферы и чувств, которые испытываешь во время громкого звука, огромного экрана и попкорна в руках, особенно если это новый фильм», «Поп-корн, 3D очки и вся остальная эстетика кинотеатров завораживает нынешнюю молодёж», «По-моему, люди любят ходить в кино потому, что это помогает им развлекаться и отдохнуть».**

The most successful candidates restricted themselves to the recommended word count. Exceeding the word limit often increased the scope for error, ambiguity and irrelevance. There was also some good evidence of using the stimulus material with successful manipulation of verbs to first and third person.

Candidates should bear in mind that more than 50% of the mark is for content and communication and the mark scheme stipulates that “top box” answers must “communicate detailed information related to the task” and “develop key points”. As such, it is difficult to produce first-rate answers that deal with a bullet point in the space of a single clause. About 22-25 words per bullet point produces a balanced answer. Content marks were capped by some candidates because they did not cover all bullet points fully.

Question 2(b)

This question addressed the topic of **School** and specifically **what school is like**. Candidates were given four bullet points within the context of a Russian school’s request for information about schools in the candidate’s home country; they had to write 90-110 words of Russian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames.

This question was considerably more popular than Q2(a).

Candidates, who opted for this question, gave informative and creative answers describing schools UK, Russia Ukraine, Dubai, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Spain and several other home areas. Many expressed their opinions on why certain subjects are popular as well as contrasting the educational systems of various countries and demonstrated a breadth of relevant vocabulary.

There were some excellent essays; however, some stronger candidates did not always address all the points, but instead either merged a few points together or gave very detailed answers about two points and completely missing the others.

Bullet point 1 required candidates to say what they think about schools in their country of residence. In order for a response to this bullet point to be considered fully relevant, candidates needed to say something about schools in their country, not just about their own school. However, candidates who wrote about their own school and subsequently developed the point to encompass the school system in general (e.g. "my school is a typical school in my country") were credited. Most answers described their positive impression about schools in their countries, and some drew comparisons between schools in Russia and their own country, demonstrating good knowledge of relevant vocabulary and grammar.

Bullet point 2 required candidates to talk about the best thing that had happened in their school demonstrating the ability to use past tense structures. This was less successful amongst a surprisingly high number of candidates who described the best thing about their school in the present. These candidates failed to use the correct past tense and talked about school events in the present. In some cases, candidates did not refer to the in the past and often merged the response with bullet point 1. Other candidates did mention some past events but not necessarily emphasise that this was the best thing that happened at school. Candidates did not always recognise that they were being required to speak about something that had happened in the past **«было»**. Simply listing positive aspects of their school (e.g. the canteen) did not constitute a full response to the question, although some credit was given. Unfortunately, a second consequence of this omission was that candidates did not always include any past tense verbs in their response, which likewise reduced the maximum score they could achieve for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Bullet point 3 required candidates to talk about how they will help their school in the future. This was generally well answered with a significant number of candidates talking about donating money, returning to school as a teacher and many talking about improving the school environment. The most developed answers described that they would invest money into schools so that they could purchase equipment for students or improve facilities. Additionally, a lot of answers here reflected good knowledge of Theme 5 content Environment, talking how they would help recycle rubbish and ensure the school is environmentally friendly and green.

Bullet point 4 required candidates to justify why pupils liked particular subjects in school. Most candidates answered this bullet point well linking with previous bullet points. This was well answered in most cases. Some answers didn't specify which subjects were preferred but gave a good explanation as to why they are popular. There were some very convincing answers here, demonstrating creative use of language, expressions of individual thoughts and opinions. Occasionally candidates just listed the favourite subjects without giving any reasons why the students at their school like them. Some misunderstood the word **«некоторые»**, assuming it meant "no" (resulting in an answer that said why students don't enjoy any subjects). The most common reason for enjoying a subject tended to be a good teacher, which may give colleagues some much deserved

recognition.

The most successful candidates restricted themselves to the recommended word count. Exceeding the word limit often increased the scope for error, ambiguity and irrelevance. There was also some good evidence of using the stimulus material with successful manipulation of verbs to first and third person.

Candidates should bear in mind that more than 50% of the mark is for content and communication and the mark scheme stipulates that "top box" answers must "communicate detailed information related to the task" and "develop key points". As such, it is difficult to produce first-rate answers that deal with a bullet point in the space of a single clause. About 22-25 words per bullet point produces a balanced answer. Content marks were capped by some candidates because they did not cover all bullet points fully.

Question 3

This question addressed the theme of **Local area, holiday and travel** and the topic of **destinations**. Candidates had to translate a paragraph from English to Russian. A significant number of candidates could not achieve full marks due to the missing out of vocabulary items, but a pleasing number achieved marks in the upper boxes; the meaning of the passage was fully communicated, and the language and structures were consistently accurate, with errors not hindering clarity. A significant number of candidates did not know some key vocabulary. The translation question required candidates to communicate the meaning of a passage into Russian. Candidates should be aware that spelling, orthography and grammar are important as the mark scheme states that "errors that make writing difficult to understand immediately (even if the meaning is eventually understood)" and "errors that force readers to reread in order to understand what is meant" are characteristics of a mid-level response. That said, perfection is not required, and scripts with an occasional misspelling or incorrect adjective ending could still score full marks. A successful translation is one which could be understood by a native speaker who did not have reference to the original English text, and one that contained all the elements of the original text.

Common difficulties/miscommunications:

«я хожу в отпуск» or «я летаю в отпуск» suggested for **"I go on holiday"**.

«в новое место» given as «в новый плейс»

«по дороге» given incorrectly for **"abroad"**

«летний» (sometimes omitted)

«лагерь» acceptable as «кемпинг» but unsuccessfully given as «табор» (many unsuccessful variants given, including «кемп»

«заказ» given as **"in order to"**

«курорт» often miscommunicated as «резорт» «дорогое туристическое место», «туристическая база», «ризорт» «тур» «поход» «отель» all of which were suggested by candidates.

A variety of options were accepted for **"to save money"**, not only «сэкономить деньги»

Several candidates used the past tense «я хотел/намеревался сохранить деньги» in the last sentence and failed to communicate the concept of **"I intend"**.

Most candidates understood the need to use correct tenses in translation. There were a number of good quality translations. "Resort" was a challenging word

On the whole, most candidates at least attempted to translate most words and were able to communicate some of the key ideas without major ambiguity.

Candidates should note that marks are awarded holistically for this task and, if they are not sure of the exact translation of a given word, full marks can still be achieved if they

are able to substitute a convincing Russian synonym.

Paper Summary

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

- Answer the questions within the range of words which is suggested.
- Read the bullet points carefully and note which tense is required in your response.
- Write a separate paragraph for each bullet point, as this will help you check that you have covered all of them in detail.
- Think yourself into the scenario outlined in the instructions and only include material which is relevant to answering the question convincingly.
- Ensure that your handwriting is as neat as possible.
- Try to use a variety of grammatical structures.
- Try to vary the vocabulary you use and avoid repetition.
- Correct formation of verbs is essential in all questions. Ensure responding to the bullet point in the set tense of the point. Always check endings – especially in the future tense.
- Write your answers on the correct pages of the answer booklet if you find that you have written, for example, part of Q2(b) on the page for Q2(a), then please write a brief note so that the examiner (who only sees one question at a time) is aware of this and can take the necessary action.
- In Q3, try and translate every word, including what might appear minor words
- Try to include near alternatives for vocabulary or structures that you are unsure of in question 3.
- Care must be taken to write in Cyrillic and not include Latin letters - e.g. u for y, t for т, s for с. Formation of **л б в н**. These were the most common in 2025 and meant some miscommunication when examiners could not decipher the letter
- To access the higher marks there needs to be consistently effective development of all bullet points and creative use of language.
- For Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, to access the higher marks, language must be consistently accurate, with convincing examples of each tense, as well as a wide variety of grammatical structures.

