Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

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Introduction

The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Greek (First Language) consists of two externally examined papers: Paper 1, 4GK1/1: Reading, Summary and Grammar, 60% of the qualification, and Paper 2, 4GK1/2: Writing, 40% of the qualification. There are ten topic areas tested across both papers and new test types have been introduced, in addition to extended writing responses, which test summary, comprehension and grammar skills.

Paper 4GK1/01, Reading, Summary and Grammar is externally assessed over a period of 2 hours and 15 minutes. Total marks for this paper are 75. The content of this unit is informed by the following topic areas:

- A. Youth matters
- B. Education
- C. Media
- D. Culture
- E. Sport and leisure
- F. Travel and tourism
- G. Business, work and employment
- H. Environment
- I. Health
- J. Technology

4GK01 Paper 1 consists of three parts.

In **Part 1: Reading** candidates are required to convey their understanding of written Greek through a series of reading tasks and in response to two texts found in a special extracts-booklet.

They have to answer four questions on each text and then compare the two texts, stylistically but also in terms of how they express their position in relation to a certain topic. Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following skills:

• Read and respond to material from a variety of sources

• Scan for specific information

• Interpret and infer explicit and implicit meaning, including writers' thoughts, feelings and ideas

• Understand and analyse how writers create effect

• Select and use relevant evidence from the text to support their answer

• Make comparisons between texts

In **Part 2: Summary**, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to summarise a short text by writing four main points clearly and accurately.

Part 3: Grammar assesses the candidates' understanding of grammatical usage in a series of exercises. Candidates are expected to demonstrate their awareness of the rules of grammar and of the relationships between parts of speech in a text and apply the conventions of grammar in order to produce and manipulate content pertinently and accurately.

Summary of performance

In general, performance was good in questions that required short answers in Greek with substantiation from the source text. There were good responses in Section C, which was grammar-focused. Levels of accuracy in the application of language were generally good, as the candidates were familiar with the assessment requirements in this section and paid attention to spelling and grammar. Areas of weakness were often evident in questions 4, 8 and 9, particularly in relation to the organisation and linking of ideas, substantiation of claims, spelling and the orderly presentation of writing. A big number of candidates wrote overtly and unnecessarily long responses in Parts 1 and 2. These responses often contained digression, repetition and marred the performance of otherwise able candidates.

Comments on performance in individual sections

Part One: Reading

Candidates are advised to allocate approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes to Part One, which is worth a total of 49 marks. They must read two text extracts and answer all questions. The following objectives are assessed.

- Read and understand a range of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and Opinions (AO1)

- Understand how the writer uses techniques to create effect (AO1)

- Compare and contrast information (AO1).

This year's candidates performed particularly well in questions 1-3 and 5-7, whereas performance in questions 4, 8 and 9, which required extensive responses ranged in quality.

Question 1

This was worth 1 mark and was a rather straightforward recall question. The vast majority of candidates gained one mark. Those who did not, answered by copying long extracts from the text verbatim, without the necessary manipulation and rephrasing, as required by the rubric. An example of such a response that did not gain marks was των χρηστών του διαδικτύου. An example of a response that gained one mark is οι χρήστες του διαδικτύου.

Question 2

This was worth 2 marks and required the processing of information in the candidate's own words, substantiated with a short quotation from the extract. The quotation ought to be indicated with the appropriate punctuation marks. Many candidates performed well by constructing responses in their own words and by providing appropriate substantiation from the source text that confirmed the validity of their response. Unfortunately, many candidates did not read the question carefully and instead of answering on the negative effects of Greeklish to the Greek society they made reference to the Greek language.

The same erroneous pattern of responses was also observed in question 3, 6 and 7 and students are reminded to study the mark scheme for questions 2, 3, 6 and 7, in order to gain a better grasp of how these questions should be answered.

Candidates are also reminded that adherence to the requirements of the rubric (με δικά σας λόγια) helps them to demonstrate that they understood the source text and are able to convey their understanding in accurate, clear language that is their own.

An additional caveat relates to the length of the answers. It was counterproductive on the part of certain candidates to answer with whole paragraphs of repetitive narrative, writing in additional sheets and often with no indication that their answers continue in additional sheets, stopping mid-sentence in the space provided. Supporting quotations should also be exact and succinct, maybe a phrase and certainly not whole paragraphs that leave it to the examiner to tease out the correct evidence. Such all-inclusive answers that lacked precision and clarity did not gain full marks.

Question 3
This question was worth 4 marks. 3 (a) required that candidates scan the text to locate the correct information and relay it in their own words. Most candidates performed successfully and provided the correct details regarding the two positives of digital language. Some candidates though failed in locating the answer and answered that the digital language contributes to the progress of electronic communication.

Common patterns of errors in 3 (a) were in connection to responses that were based on direct quotations, rather than the candidates' own words, and were therefore deemed unsuccessful in gaining marks. In 3 (b) candidates were asked to provide the appropriate explanation as to why technophobia is associated with age and they answered by repeating the question without further elaborating their answer, while some others used the substantiation in order to answer the question.

Questions 4 and 8

Questions 4 and 8 invite candidates to identify and explain how the writers of the texts use discourse, persuasion modes and various techniques (linguistic or structural) to create effect. This question usually starts with 'Explain how the writer presents…' and requires that the candidates use evidence from the text to support their answer. Modes of persuasion may include establishing ethos, pathos and the authority and credibility of the speaker. Various linguistic and textual techniques include the use of a certain narrative tone and verb person, repetition, rhetorical questions, cohesive devices such as transitional phrases, linking words and subordinate clauses, paragraphing, use of connectives, alliteration, extended metaphor, personification, simile, oxymoron etc. A good response in questions 4 and 8 (and by extension question 9) does not list uncritically and with unnecessary wordage that extends beyond the allocated space *all* the techniques that the candidate was taught. Instead, it selects four to five different techniques and modes of persuasion that are relevant for the particular text and are evident in the selected quotations that serve as proof of the claim. An answer should follow the pattern of Point / Evidence / Explanation; an answer that identifies a technique, but fails to explain how this creates effect, and what type of effect, is incomplete. The most common pattern of unsatisfactory performance related to precisely this: a list-like, overtly long piece that identified the use of certain techniques or modes of persuasion without explaining why or how such use provokes and gives rise to a strong engagement on the part of the reader. An observation such as 'η συγγραφέας χρησιμοποιεί Αόριστο για να δείξει ότι η πράξη έγινε και Ενεστώτα για να δείξει διαχρονικότητα΄ constitutes a rather basic claim that does not contribute very much to a clear explanation about how the writer of the first passage creates effect. Tenses are also used functionally, to convey a time line and sometimes a time line is simply that, it is not a technique.

Other instances of confusion related to verb persons, tenses or the identification of parts of speech. Accuracy and clarity are important aspects of good performance at this level of demand. Words were identified as φορτωμένες instead of φορτισμένες, standard collocations such as ρητορική ερώτηση were conveyed as ρηματική ερώτηση, and quite often there was a misidentification of verb person that was not followed by an explanation of why a certain person constitutes a linguistic technique that serves persuasion. When using a statement such as 'η μαθήτρια χρησιμοποιεί β' πληθυντικό πρόσωπο', which does not mean very much in and of itself, was often substantiated with inaccurate evidence from the text 'καταλαβαινόμαστε'.

In addition, it was often quite disheartening to see so many candidates write without concern or with indifference to the conventions of good spelling and effective organisation of ideas. Even

though linguistic structures in themselves are not directly tested in this question, they contribute to an impression of a clear and convincing explanation and as such they affect the assessment of the response.

A good number of candidates had secure knowledge in Greek as a first language and wrote a clear and detailed explanation of how the writers created effect and controlled discourse through linguistic and structural techniques in passages 1 and 2. They provided appropriate and appropriately cited evidence that fully supported the points being made. These candidates supported the identification of a linguistic technique with explanation of its effect and provided appropriate substantiation.

In conclusion, questions 4 and 8 carry 10 marks each and are marked according to specific criteria. A good response must be written in accurate Greek, with words properly spelled and accented and offer a perceptive and analytical explanation of how the writer uses linguistic and structural techniques to create effect. These claims must be consistently accompanied by evidence from the text that fully supports the point being made. The indicative responses in the MS offer examples of performance that could gain marks from the top band of the response mark grid.

Question 5

This question was worth 1 mark and was a rather straightforward recall question. The vast majority of candidates gained one mark. Those who did not, answered by repeating part of the question or by not justifying how Greeklish releases the young people from stress.

Question 6

This was worth 2 marks and required the processing of information in the candidate's own words, substantiated with a short quotation from the extract. The quotation ought to be indicated with the appropriate punctuation marks.

An additional caveat relates to the length of the answers. Candidates are advised that it is counter-productive to answer in an all-inclusive way that contains irrelevant details alongside some relevant ones. Such answers did not gain full marks as it was not clear whether the candidate had understood the question correctly. In general, candidates are advised NOT to use additional paper for their answers and to offer only the relevant information succinctly.

Question 7

This question was worth 4 marks. 7 (a) required that candidates scan the text to locate the correct information as to why Greeklish corresponds to the needs of modern society. Most candidates performed successfully and provided the correct details. In 7 (b) candidates were asked to explain why the students is accusing the TV. Many candidates failed to locate the correct information in the text and were quoting the whole paragraph leaving the examiner to tease out the correct evidence.

Question 9

In question 9 candidates are required to compare the two texts in the extracts-booklet in Part One. The question may start with an invitation to compare linguistic and textual techniques, for example, «Να συγκρίνετε τους τρόπους με τους οποίους τα δύο κείμενα χειρίζονται το θέμα των Greeklish». The question also invites candidates to use evidence from the two texts to support their answer, «Να εντοπίσετε στα κείμενα λέξεις ή φράσεις που τεκμηριώνουν την απάντησή σας». A candidate cannot gain marks for making claims unless these are accompanied by 'evidence relevant to the points made'. The indicative responses in the MS illustrate the characteristics of a good response that could gain marks from the top bands of the response mark grid.

One type of response to this question could be structured by writing about the characteristics of the first passage –for example, the first writer's impressions and stylistic techniques and devices– in the first half and then use a connective device to transition to the second passage and write about the second writer's discourse features while also cross-referencing with points made earlier. This response may prove underdeveloped, if the information, even though relevant, is conveyed without a clearly stated comparison, leaving it to the reader to draw conclusions. A more sophisticated answer would compare the two texts point by point throughout, either in terms of the commonalities between the two writers or in terms of the differences, giving four to five comparing points. A good response provides a balanced account of the similarities and differences between the two texts, supported by apt analysis and appropriate evidence.

Performance in this question was generally satisfactory in terms of relevance of points and the comparative aspect. For example, 'και τα δύο κείμενα χρησιμοποιούν επίκληση στο συναίσθημα αλλά με διαφορετικούς τρόπους'. Some responses considered a range of comparisons between the texts, more often than not in relation to what was said, rather than how it was said and what it meant.

A pattern of incomplete answers treated comparisons as follows: "Και τα δύο κείμενα μιλούν για τα Greeklish, το πρώτο έχει μια πιο ισορροπημένη άποψη ενώ το δεύτερο έχει θετική άποψη". This statement, as true as it may be, does not consider the comparison in an informed way and does not attribute to it an explanation of how the writers create effect while they discuss the benefits or the negative impact of Greeklish. In addition to the necessary critical framing, a comparison ought to pinpoint not what is said but how things are said to persuade or engage the audience.

In this question, just as in questions 4 and 8 earlier, a balanced and clear account necessitates good knowledge and application of language and writing with appropriate cohesive devices, good linking between ideas and unambiguous language.

Part Two: Summary

Question 10

The source text in this question is between 340-360 words and requires a summary of 100-150 words. The text may be taken from any source – journalistic prose or fiction – but it will contain clearly identifiable main points. It is expected that candidates will write four main points and be marked on their understanding of the text and on their ability to **write clearly**. Candidates are advised to allocate approximately 30 minutes to Part Two. There is a total of 6 marks for this section and candidates are required to use their own language to summarise.

Performance in this question was good and many candidates identified at least 3 points clearly and unambiguously. Please refer to the MS for the indicative content required, in order to achieve marks from the higher bands of the assessment criteria.

A pattern of unsatisfactory performance related to the following:

- Failure to summarise information without copying whole chunks of text
- Unsatisfactory use of linking and organisation skills, which rendered the identification of discrete main points obscure and ambiguous
- All-inclusive answers that conveyed too much information that may have been true but not relevant for the purposes of this question
- Summaries that were so long that could no longer be considered summaries
- Keyword type listing of main points without conveying the relevant information.

Part Three: Grammar

This section includes two 10-mark questions, each assessing different grammar skills. In exercises 11 and 12 students are required to demonstrate their understanding of grammatical usage in a series of exercises. In particular, they are required to:

- Show their awareness of the rules of grammar in order to demonstrate their understanding of textual features and the relationships between parts of speech in a text.
- Demonstrate understanding of content.
- Apply the conventions of grammar in order to produce and manipulate content pertinently and accurately.

Candidates are advised to allocate approximately 30 minutes to Part Three and are required to answer all questions.

Question 11

In question 11 students read sentences that have been isolated from the texts in the extracts-booklet. Students are asked to transform and recast the sentence using the word(s) in brackets. Please refer to the MS for indicative content.

Each sentence in question 11 has a prompt (in brackets) which must be used as cited. Students cannot change/adapt the prompt. Transformation exercises are a common feature in language testing as they invite learners to consciously manipulate language patterns, demonstrating their awareness of structures. Transformation exercises can focus on manipulating structures and/or producing new vocabulary that alters the syntax of the sentence. What is important is that the prompt must be used as is.

Performance in this question was generally good with many candidates scoring more than half of the marks available. Patterns of unsatisfactory responses related to the following:

- Absence of the position of the stress and wrong spelling that indicated weak grasp of the rules of grammatical inflections
- Changes in the prompt
- Absence of question mark when needed

Question 12

In question 12 students were asked to read a whole text of 80-100 words and then put the words in the brackets in the appropriate form. The words contained a mixture of verbs and nouns. In the text, the missing words were replaced by (α) – (ι) and were listed underneath with an example that set the tone and time frame of the piece.

Performance in this section ranged from average to satisfactory. Unfortunately, many candidates did not possess the level required to perform at a high level of competence.

Patterns of unsatisfactory responses related to the following:

- Inflectional spelling that was inaccurate and showed poor knowledge of grammar.
- Changes in the voice in which the verb was given.
- Omitting the position of the stress

Conclusive remarks

In general, performance in this examination series was satisfactory, with some excellent examples of performance that satisfied the demands of this level fully.

Teachers and candidates who embark on teaching and studying this qualification might benefit from the guidance below:

- Ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for the candidates to practise reading and responding to unseen passages under timed conditions.
- Be aware of the different assessment objectives to ensure that the content of the practice answers relates to the assessment criteria and the mark schemes,
- During practice, highlight the supporting evidence and relevant lines for answers to questions 2, 3b, 6 and 7b in the Extracts-Booklet and offer opinion in their own words in order to show interpretation of the information.
- Answer questions 1, 3a, 5 and 7a, as far as possible, in the candidates' own words.
- Write succinctly and without continuing on extra paper in questions, 1-3, 5-7 and 10, in particular, and as far as possible.
- Consider the effects of linguistic and cohesive devices within the context of the given extract in questions 4 and 8, rather than offering generic explanations of the type, 'the present tense is employed to express current action'.

- Identify points of commonality or difference in Question 9 and substantiate these with evidence from the two texts. Where possible, start with the point, rather than with the text. Points should be balanced across both texts and supported with relevant quotations or textual references.
- Substantiation from the source text ought to be indicated with punctuation marks when appropriate.
- Aim for structured, accurate, cohesive and well-developed pieces of writing in question 4, 8, 9 and 10.
- Allow time to proof-read responses in order to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy and clarity.
- Read all instructions carefully.
- Attempt every question.
- Indicate the position of the stress, where needed; this is not optional.

Thank you for choosing to teach and study this qualification.