



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In Greek (4GK1) Paper 02

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Publications Code 4GK1_02_2306_ER

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Introduction

This paper is an externally assessed written examination of 1 hour and 30 minutes. Candidates are required to choose two extended-response writing tasks, which are worth 25 marks each. They are advised to write between 300 and 350 words for each title and split the time available equally between the two tasks. The number of words is approximate and candidates will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended in the word count, provided that their responses are pertinent, purposeful and within the scope of the question. Lengthy responses may result in considerable digression, irrelevance and lack of focus.

The forms of writing could include: a discursive essay, a narrative or a descriptive account for a school assignment, a letter to a friend, a response to a newspaper article, an article for a school magazine, an email, a blog, a speech or an information leaflet. For a candidate to gain marks in this paper, evidence of accuracy of language must be accompanied by good organisation of the main thesis/ideas, relevance to the task and focus on the purpose and intended reader(s). Irrespective of language skills, a response will not be deemed satisfactory if it fails to show a clear focus on purpose and appropriacy with regard to the intended audience. Each question addresses one or more of the following writing purposes: to argue, to narrate, to describe, to persuade, to inform, to explain.

In general, candidates must demonstrate the following skills:

- Communicate meaning effectively in written language in a variety of forms, genres and styles.
- Focus writing on a particular purpose and audience.
- Write imaginatively, using a variety of techniques.
- Use a wide range of suitable vocabulary and accurate spelling.
- Employ a variety of sentence structures for effect and structure work effectively.
- Use complex structures.
- Use the rules of grammar and the conventions of writing to create effect, variety and interest.

Question 1

Q1 elicited an essay for the school newspaper on the topic of 'hatred and fanaticism in modern society'. The readership of this essay would most likely consist of the school community of pupils, teachers and parents. The scope of the essay was expected to address, among others, forms and causes of the phenomenon, its consequences on society and suggestions on how to address the problem.

In addition to expectations regarding an explanation of the concept of hatred and fanaticism and how it affects today's society, by nature of the medium in which it is published (the school newspaper), the piece was expected to possess certain textual and linguistic features specific to the fact that the essay was intended to be read by the public and therefore arouse public interest by advocating either a specific view or a number of views.

A good number of candidates succeeded in defining, comparing and contrasting concepts and even posing questions that aimed to stimulate a thinking process and pique the interest of their audience. Those students managed to analyse several aspects of the topic and give a range of examples of both hatred and fanaticism.

On the other hand, though, several candidates presented only one dimension of fanaticism (especially sports fanaticism), while others focused their essay only on bullying, racism or hatred expressed via internet. Some other students confused the emotion of hatred with that of envy or jealousy. Moreover, regarding the consequences of hatred and fanaticism, the majority of students limited their answer to the psychological consequences that fanaticism and hatred have to the victims or to the violent deeds of fanatics. Only a few students extended their answer to the repercussions of the phenomenon on the society. The part of suggestions on how to tackle the problem was better dealt by the majority of students, who included school, family, and government into their answers.

Question 2

Q2 elicited a speech which meant to be addresses by the candidate to their classmates regarding the creation of a book club. Many candidates wrote coherent and pertinent responses, with ideas that followed a logical sequence and did not digress from the topic.

Most candidates were able to write an essay that could motivate the audience, pose questions and ask them to think on the benefits of reading. Addressing the classmates in first-person or second-person plural and including questions to the audience were anticipated as virtues for the communicative style. A minority of candidates, though, strayed away from the concept of book club to a games club or a homework club.

Responses that scored marks from the top bands of the communication and content grid wrote subtle, sophisticated and thoughtful arguments that showed good levels of mature thinking, ability to explain and justify and appropriate application of register consistently. These pieces were well linked, often employed sophisticated vocabulary and structures and revealed the writers' literacy skills and analytical thinking.

Question 3

Q3 elicited a narrative about an incident that made the candidate think and left them concerned. This incident, narrated in retrospect, was to include not just a description of the experience, but also convincing and interesting details that would explain why that incident made a negative or positive impression on the narrator and troubled him. In this respect, the challenge for the writer of this piece was to write with appropriate pace that builds anticipation and to provide the necessary textual and linguistic details that characterise a story that relies on variety and interest. Such characteristics include, for example, vivid detail that serves the purpose of setting the scene without becoming irrelevant and repetitive.

Most of the candidates succeeded in describing convincing incidents while managing successfully to develop the second part regarding the effects that this incident had on their mindset and wider perception of society scoring marks from the top bands.

The candidates whose responses scored marks from the lower bands failed to present an incident but chose to narrate about an experience (e.g., impressions from a travel) or an event read on the news or watched on a video. A few students did not gain high marks, because they did not clearly analyse the impact that this incident had on their mindset.

Paper Summary

The majority of candidates who sat this examination performed well. They were able to communicate a range of relevant points and those at a higher level of competence demonstrated clear focus on the task and the intended reader. Many were able to score highly from the top bands of the response criteria for Communication and Content (15 marks total) and Accuracy and Application of Language (10 marks total).

Although Q1 proved to be the most popular it was Q2 that yielded the best performance from the candidates who chose it. Candidates should take care to read the advice listed on the front of the paper. There were instances of discrepancy between the question chosen and the answer provided and responses to two different questions being written in the same answer space. Candidates must also take care with their presentation. Illegible writing that mixes Greek and English characters and contains an inordinate amount of crossing out of words and sentences goes contrary to expectations for a legible and clear response.

The following are areas of strength identified in responses to all three questions:

- Absence of ambiguity and good communicative competence.
- Consistent evidence of relevance with content that was mostly on topic.
- Appropriate application of grammar, including a mixture of basic and complex structures.
- Employment of vocabulary that was impressive in range, although not always appropriate to the task or the purpose of writing.

The following are areas that need improvement:

- Lengthy responses that provided detail that was detrimental to the narration/argument and often veered into irrelevance (Q1 and Q3).
- Insufficient engagement of the purpose of writing and the profile of the intended reader, often resulting in inappropriate use of register and loss of focus (Q2).
- Undeveloped discussion of concepts, in favour of empirical narration that avoided a more neutral position and exposition of an issue; explanations/analysis that focused mostly on the 'self' rather than the relevance of an issue to the community or its impact on society (Q1).
- Insufficient subtlety and creativity with regard to rendering convincingly an aspect of the question that was essential for a full explanation (e.g. the concept of the 'hatred' in Q1 and the concept of the 'incident' in Q3).

To conclude please consider the following:

- Ensure that there are plenty of opportunities to practice writing for specific purposes and audience under timed conditions. Familiarisation with the conventions of writing, for example, composing a letter to the editor of a media outlet or speech to inform and persuade one's fellow students about a certain issue, ensures that the writing task stands more chances of being securely focused on the purpose and intended reader.
- Cultivate familiarisation with the assessment criteria, so that requirements are clear.
- Choose questions carefully so that writing takes place from an informed position (when writing discursively) or from a position of experience and creative imagination that the candidate is at ease with.
- When writing with the purpose of analysis and persuasion, it is advisable to consider different positions in an argument whilst always making it clear where one stands in relation to an issue. A clear introduction and conclusive remarks that link clearly to and are justified by preceding arguments are essential components of this genre.
- When writing with the purpose of narration in order to interest/entertain, it is important to consider that there is enough variety, subtlety and creativity in the piece to fulfil the expectations that a reader has of such pieces.
- Write succinctly but comprehensively and use the recommended wordage and bullet points as yardsticks of successful performance; avoid lengthy essays that spill over to an extra booklet as these contain digression and often a breakdown of cohesion and accuracy.
- Use language imaginatively, persuasively, to interest or to inform and describe, without neglecting to also use a range of complex structures accurately.
- Allow time to proof-read writing responses in order to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy.
- Indicate the position of the stress, where needed; this is not optional. Take care to spell inflections correctly, as inaccurate spelling in high frequency vocabulary and grammatical endings often hinder clarity and detract from the effectiveness of the piece as a whole.
- Apply the conventions of register consistently and appropriately.
- Be reminded of the importance of clear Greek and careful presentation.

Thank you for choosing to teach and study this qualification.

