

GCSE

Dutch

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J733**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J033 J133**

OCR Report to Centres June 2015

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All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

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A801 Listening

General Comments:

The listening component of this Dutch exam went well overall. Most candidates listened carefully to the recording. For the listening component, answers do not have to be long. It should help to prepare the candidates using the prescribed vocabulary list for Dutch, as this list is used in the entire exam.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Exercise 1

This first exercise about Harry and his pet was done very well by the candidates. A very few candidates did not know the word for 'dog' (hond) in Dutch, and guessed the wrong pet.

Exercise 2

The second exercise was a monologue by Mel, who talked about her school and hobbies. Most candidates understood this monologue very well. A few candidates found Q.6 a little tricky, opting for the icon with the biggest building (modern groot gebouw).

Exercise 3

For Exercise 3, a text about a mobile snackbar close to a school, candidates were allowed to choose words from a list, which made the exercise more straight forward. Still, the options listed made it necessary for the candidates to listen carefully to the text. Especially Q 15 ('The school is afraid the *neighbours* will complain') was sometimes missed by candidates choosing '*parents*' from the list. Also for Q17 (The street is quite *clean*) weaker candidates sometimes chose '*crowded*'. Both answers would have made sense but weren't in line with what was said in the recording.

Exercise 4

The text about the rapper Dennis was understood quite well by most candidates.

Exercise 5

In this recording some people talked about their plans. The exercise was done reasonably well. Most candidates did not have any problems understanding with whom everyone was going to undertake their plan. The plans themselves were sometimes a little harder to understand, noticeably the knitting club from Marian and the repair shop from Ellen. Candidates found the word 'colleagues' very difficult to spell, which did not matter in the way we marked the answers. In preparing candidates for the listening exam, please stress that spelling will not be marked. As long as the word written down can be understood by the Examiner, marks will be allocated.

Exercise 6

This exercise was an interview with Richard, who built a model car. The exercise was done well by most candidates. Some weaker candidates missed out on the details.

Exercise 7

The topic in exercise 7 was an interview with the youngest forester in the Netherlands. The text was done well by the stronger candidates. Some questions were done well by the majority of the candidates (for example Q34 (sheep) and Q39 (a youth camp)). Some candidates thought that Jan (Q35) was a vet, because Bika had to warn him if one of the sheep was ill (or missing), but most candidates realised this was only an example of the tasks Jan had and realised he was the manager (or boss, leader).

Exercise 8

The last exercise of this paper turned out to be more difficult than some candidates expected. At this point in the exam it is important to listen very carefully to the details in the recorded text. The topic was 'sleep patterns' and how they can be changed. Q 40 and 41 were often missed if candidates did not listen carefully enough. ('For a morning person it is *okay* to use an iPad before going to sleep') Most candidates managed this question quite well.

A802 Speaking

General Comments:

The speaking component of this Dutch exam went very well. Most candidates seemed well prepared, coming to the speaking test with interesting presentations. The tests were conducted well too. Most Examiners have a very supportive way of interviewing the candidates, asking many open questions to ensure the candidates have the best opportunity to receive full marks. Most recordings were of good quality, recorded in a quiet room without much noise from outside.

Most Examiners managed the time for the speaking test very well: after a minute's presentation they started to ask questions about the topic for about 4 minutes, leaving 5 minutes for the General Conversation. It is very important to keep to the prescribed length of the test, in order for the candidate to show their skills.

There were a few Examiners who stopped the recording between part 1 and part 2. This is not allowed. Please make sure the recording is not stopped at all during the whole examination. In some cases, where there were extenuating circumstances in which the recording was stopped, Centres kindly provided a letter to explain what had happened. This is very helpful.

Most Examiners and Centres made sure this year that the Speaking Mark Sheet was filled in (details of the candidate, date of the test and the topics for the Presentation and the General Conversation). This was very helpful.

Please make sure the candidates choose the topic for the General Conversation themselves, at the start of Part 2. Some candidates had already chosen the topic before the recording started. This practice gives them an unfair advantage to the candidates who only see the topics during the test.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Part 1 Presentation

Most candidates were well prepared and started part 1 of their speaking test with an interesting presentation. Presentations about a topic which truly interests the candidate work the best, because in these presentations the candidate tends to talk enthusiastically about the topic, increasing the chance to receive a top mark. Most examiners showed an interest in the presentation and asked good questions about the topic introduced by the candidate. The candidates seemed well prepared in presenting an introduction to a conversation, rather than a fully finished presentation. This is good practice as it helps the teacher/examiner to ask meaningful questions about the topic.

A number of candidates managed to include different tenses (past tense, present tense and future tense) in the presentation, together with some opinions and justifications. This is a very clever way of making sure all necessary skills are shown by the candidate and it can make the rest of the speaking test more relaxed. It is important to realise though that language is assessed separately in part 1 and part 2 of the test.

Exercise 2 General Conversation

It is important that candidates choose the topic for the General Conversation during the speaking test, at the start of this section. The candidate has a choice of three topics, unless one of the topics has already been used for the presentation.

Most candidates managed to have an interesting conversation with the Examiner. The questions in the booklet can help the Examiner, but everyone is free to have a conversation with the candidate in their own way as long as the candidate has the opportunity to give opinions and justifications and use different tenses. An easy way for the Examiner to ensure opinions are given is to ask a simple 'why' question, or ask the candidate to expand on a statement (ie: 'waarom?' 'vertel eens?').

Although it is not always possible, the candidate always has the best chance of a high mark if he or she is allowed to talk about something close to their heart. Having to describe the colours of their bedroom can be a good starting point, but questions about what their house or bedroom means to them (Which room in your house do you like best? Why?) can trigger more interesting conversation.

Conclusion

As last year, most teacher-examiners had familiarised themselves with the Teacher's instructions. This meant the speaking tests ran smoothly in the majority of cases. Many thanks for the good work of many Examiners and the excellent preparation of the candidates.

Many Examiners seemed to be well supported by the Centres as well. Most Centres who had to make use of an Examiner who was not used to this task, supplied a supervisor to sit in with the exam. This can be very useful. It is very helpful to have paper work and recordings in order. Thank you very much to all those Centres and Examiners who worked hard to make sure all was done well.

A803 Reading

General Comments:

The reading examination consists of 8 exercises with Dutch texts and mainly English questions.

Exercise 2 is a matching exercise with icons and statements in Dutch, while the final exercise requires candidates to complete sentences briefly in Dutch.

Most candidates did very well in the multiple choice and matching exercises. Candidates need to have a good look at the examples.

Most candidates answered many questions correctly in the English open ended questions in exercises 5 and 7. All texts need careful reading. Short answers are required as shown in the examples. Some candidates write very long answers that are often not clear enough to gain marks. Answers in Dutch do not score.

Some candidates could not express themselves well enough in English to answer questions correctly. A small number of candidates did not always tick a box in the matching exercises. In the last two exercises candidates did not always answer all the questions. Candidates appeared to have enough time to answer all the questions.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Exercise: Questions 1-5

This exercise was done well. A few candidates did not recognise the pineapple in Q5.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-12

Almost all candidates received full marks. Occasionally Q12 received a wrong answer as the candidates didn't read the whole statement and thought that Jan keeps fit meant that he was running, though the second part of the statement said that he was working in the garden.

Exercise 3 Questions 13-18

This was a short text with multiple choice questions in English. The exercise was generally well done. Q17 needed very careful reading of the text. Although the shoe shop was mentioned, Emma bought boots(B) and her friends flip flops. The other questions occasionally received an incorrect answer.

Exercise 4 Questions 19-24

There were two Dutch texts about Moving abroad with six statements in English. Candidates needed to tick one out of three boxes per question. Extra careful reading of both texts is important. Most candidates performed well. However in Q21 where the statement was that 'he lives near a wood' many candidates ticked both instead of Menno (in the text about Chris it mentioned there were wolves in the forest). A few candidates didn't answer Q23.

Exercise 5 Questions 25-31

This exercise had a slightly longer Dutch text, about a new type of traffic light which had a rain sensor to change the light to green more quickly when it rains. The open ended questions were in English. Brief answers were required. Many answers were long and sometimes the extra words made the answer invalid.

Some candidates struggled to find correct English answers. Some candidates did not perform well in Q29, as they answered that this traffic light was most helpful for car drivers.

Exercise 6 Questions 32-37

This was again a longer Dutch text, a review of a Bond film. A few candidates maybe thought that they knew the answers without reading the text carefully and therefore made mistakes in Q32, Q33, Q35 and Q36. The text needed to be read carefully to answer Q34 correctly.

Exercise 7 Questions 38-44

This Dutch text dealt with Wim and his music. Candidates had to give short answers to open ended questions in English. Many candidates responded well. Some found it hard to answer in English.

Quite a few candidates had read 'worden' (to become) as 'woorden' (words), which made it difficult to answer Q38 correctly. The verb 'wilde' (wanted) was read as 'wild' (wild), which meant that Q40 was difficult to answer. In Q42 many candidates omitted to answer the 'exactly' part of the question; other candidates misread 'contact' as contract. In q24 candidates needed to explain why Wim might be able to achieve his own sound: some candidates made good suggestions but these were not mentioned in the text.

Exercise 8 Questions 45-50

This final exercise consisted of a Dutch text and statements. Candidates were required to put a Dutch word (or words) in the gaps in the statements. The words are not necessarily in the text. This exercise was challenging for many candidates. Some candidates attempted only a few of the questions or tried to insert random words from the text. Some candidates did not answer any of the questions. Others answered many of the questions correctly.

Q45 This question needed a verb. This was not easy for some.

Q46 Most candidates manipulated the noun from the text correctly.

Q47 This question was more challenging.

Q48 Many candidates knew the right noun

Q49 Many candidates filled in the right noun though quite a few filled in hoog.

Q50 Many candidates understood the text well enough to come up with a noun. Others tried the last words from the text, which were incorrect.

A804 Writing

General comments

The examination was generally well done. Many candidates appeared to have chosen their two questions with care, rather than going for the first two.

It appears that not all candidates read the cover page of the paper, which indicates that two questions should be answered with a maximum of 150 words each. Quite a few candidates answered more than two questions and many wrote far more than 150 words. Some candidates wrote significantly less than 150 words.

Writing far too much - either far too long an essay, or answering too many questions - almost always lowers candidates' marks: in most cases they have insufficient time to sustain a high standard of content, detail, quality and variety in their writing.

There were a few candidates who did not keep to the brief of the question. No marks can be given when the candidate writes about something that is not in the exam question.

Many candidates expressed themselves well and wrote each essay for a different purpose, such as a blog, an email, a letter, an article or a script of a conversation. There were some lively dialogues, but candidates need to make sure that these conversations include different tenses as well as a variety of clauses. Some candidates went off task, which can easily be avoided by using the bullet points. These guide candidates into achieving a good communication mark (producing a relevant and detailed response with fully developed points of view and justifications), as well as a good quality of language mark (with a variety of verb tenses, verbal constructions and clauses).

Q1 Candidates were asked to write about going to a new home. This subject was chosen by a majority of candidates. Many wrote about their own experience of moving home, some moving to extravagant places with swimming pools or even football pitches. Some lost marks by writing about their new house but not about moving house. There were some moving descriptions what it means to move house and how difficult it can be, but also what the positive outcome was.

Q2 Candidates were asked to write about an injury they had suffered. Many candidates described in detail the injury they had suffered, mainly by playing sports. Some forgot to write about their injury as they wrote extensively about their favourite sport, with football being a firm favourite.

Q3 The question about going to the cinema was also a popular subject. Many candidates go often to the cinema either with their friends or with their family, and can write about it in an engaging way. For this question a significant number of candidates followed the guidelines and compared watching a film at home with watching a film in the cinema, giving them a good opportunity to increase their communication marks as it invited them to give their opinions on the topic.

Q4 Candidates were asked to write about a language learning holiday. This was for some candidates the opportunity to write about very enjoyable holidays, but they forgot what the brief was. However there are many candidates who would love to learn a lot of interesting languages and speak already quite a few. For the older candidates this question was the opportunity to write about school exchanges with their problems and good experiences. They voiced some interesting opinions on the value of these trips.

Q5 Candidates were asked about their future careers. There will be a lot of male and female professional football players who have done their GCSE Dutch. Many of them will help poor children with the money they earn. Many others want to become a doctor or an engineer. Most candidates who chose this subject had a firm idea what they would like to do in the future. Some candidates wrote about the change of idea what they would like to do which gave them a good opportunity to use a past as well as a future tense.

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