

GCE

Dutch

Advanced GCE **A2 H593**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H193**

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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F881 Dutch Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments

Candidates performed well this year and the level of knowledge of most candidates was good. However, candidates who prepared for the exam did better, because they knew what to expect. It is useful for candidates to learn how to write a summary of a text, which can be done in bullet points. Candidates are reminded to take care that when questions are asked in English, answers should be in English and when questions are asked in Dutch the answer should be given in Dutch.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A: Listening and Writing

For the Listening element of the exam, candidates are in control of their own audio player. They are allowed to stop the CD at any point to write down their answers or to replay a section. It is important for them to take this time to read the questions thoroughly.

Question No. 1

The first question was about how to learn to act. It was a multiple-choice question. Not all questions were answered correctly, but overall the questions were answered well.

Question No.2

Question 2 was about a trip on an old ship for youths without a job, where they learned to work as a team so they were more prepared to get a job. Candidates had to choose words from a grid and put these in the text provided. Again, most candidates did rather well in this exercise but it was obvious that candidates who had practised this type of question performed better. There were no obvious problems.

Question No.3

The candidates heard an interview with Marina. She spoke about an invention designed by some students. The students didn't want to help their mother shopping by pushing a trolley around, so they invented a self-driving trolley that followed the correct shopper. The candidates listened to the interview in Dutch and had to answer in English. Again, most candidates did rather well although it was sometimes difficult for the candidates to write in English when they knew what was said in Dutch.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Question No.4

This task is linked to the last listening exercise. The candidate is asked to write an email to an agent asking for help promoting a new invention. Five sentences are given to the candidates and although the candidates don't have to translate the letter word for word, the complexity of the sentences should be equivalent to the English suggestions. This is a problem for the less able candidates as they simplify the sentences and don't show they have knowledge of Dutch to a GCE standard. Candidates do need to know when to use verbs in past and future correctly at this level. Most candidates did very well.

Question No.5

The story the candidates had to read was about a girl who was offered money by a homeless person so she could catch the last bus home. When the candidates have read the text, they have to put infinitives from a table at the end of the text that has been rephrased. This was a difficult exercise for several candidates. The sentences in the exercise follow the sentences in

the text. The candidates have to use the verbs given in the table and cannot use their own words. It is obvious when candidates have practised this type of exercise.

Question No.6

Question 6 consists of two parts. Both were taken from a newspaper article about “burn out”. In the first part, the candidates had to look for synonyms in the text. Candidates who did well realised that if the question asked for a verb they had to find a verb in the text, and the same for a noun or an adverb.

In the second part, the candidate had to find the right word in a multiple choice question. The words examined are diverse and show whether the candidate has insight in the Dutch language at a reasonable level.

Question No.7

The text used in this question is from a newspaper article. It is about a farmer and his wife who develop supporting activity to increase their profits, because just being a farm doesn't pay the bills. Most candidates had a reasonable idea what the article was about and could answer most questions. To get full marks candidates don't only have to show that they understand the text, but also that they have enough understanding of the Dutch language, and can write the answers in full sentences, preferably using their own words.

Question No. 8

The candidates were asked to read a newspaper article about dieting. The article suggested that it was better for young people to eat healthily than to skip meals. The candidates were asked in 8a what the author thought about dieting. Again, it was very obvious which candidates had practiced this type of question.

In 8b the candidates were asked what they thought about all the advice they heard, and how they would react. Some candidates agreed with the article and gave some examples why. Others were very engaging and explained about a variety of diets and what the benefits were. Some of the candidates pointed out that although the article said that dieting should be banned, the suggestions made in the article were also ideas to change what people ate and that, according to them, was a diet. Most candidates showed good knowledge of the Dutch language in this piece of writing.

F882 Dutch Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments:

This year's exam was done well. The candidates were well prepared and there were no issues with particular parts of the exam paper. It is helpful in the preparation of candidates to remind them of the topics for this exam paper. All topics can be found in the specifications which can be found on the OCR website (<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/by-subject/languages/>).

Most candidates indicated clearly if they had (part of) an answer written down elsewhere. This is helpful to examiners as all papers are scanned in and the examiners only see the scanned version of what the candidates have written in the designated space.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A Listening and Writing

In the first part, Listening, the candidates can control the audio player themselves. The recording itself is fast, so it is good practice to read the questions for each exercise first so the candidates can familiarise themselves with the topic. All candidates answered the first question in English, as was required. For the second exercise answers needed to be given in Dutch. Most candidates attempted to write in proper sentences in this exercise, which is needed to acquire most of the 10 language marks available in this exercise.

Task 1

Open questions in English.

This year's topic was on how the Netherlands could become a test ground for self-driving cars. The text was a monologue in the form of a news item. Most candidates did not have any problems with this exercise.

Opgave 2

Open questions in Dutch.

The second task was an interview with a couple who had moved to the east of the country to grow their own food. There was a good mixture of factual questions and questions on opinions or feelings. Overall the exercise was done very well.

Section B Reading and Writing

In the second section of this exam the candidates have to read two texts, each accompanied by a series of exercises to show comprehension and language skills. The first text was on 'Onze taal', the second text was about 'De fiets'.

Exercises 3-7 on 'Onze taal'

Opgave 3

The candidates had to find words or expressions in the text, which were synonyms of the words or expressions in the exercise. Some candidates found it difficult to find the synonym for 'verdeling' ('versnippering') and went for 'gesplitst'. In this exercise it is important to check if the

words from the exercise can be put back into the text. *'verdeling'* is a noun, whereas *'gesplitst'* is a past participle. Candidates should be trained to look for a noun if a noun needs to be replaced. The same problem occurred with (h) *'een recht'*, which often had *'gedemocratiseerd'* as chosen synonym by the candidates.

In general however, this exercise was done well.

Opgave 4

In this exercise the candidates needed to match two parts of a sentence. This is an exercise in grammar (finding a sentence with the correct structure) but it is also important to look at the meaning of the newly formed sentence. The new sentence needs to give the same information as was given in the original text i.e. *'Het is goed voor een taal om te veranderen'* is grammatically correct and might be true, but the meaning of this sentence can't be found in the original text.

Opgave 5

This exercise in which sentences needed to be completed in Dutch was done well. Again it is important that the meaning of the sentences match the information from the text.

Opgave 6

Candidates had to complete the sentences in this exercise. It was mostly done well. A number of candidates forgot to check the completed sentence, which could lead to mistakes like using two verbs, ie *'In de sociale media wordt... is de schrijf- en spreektaal niet gescheiden.'* A small number of candidates gave definitions of (a part of) the first part of the sentence, which was unfortunately not the task.

Here it is important as well for the candidates to form sentences that mirror the meaning of the original text.

Opgave 7

This exercise with open questions about the whole text did not pose any particular problems.

Exercises 8-11 on 'De fiets'

As in last year's exam, candidates seem to be well acquainted with this topic, which helped in the understanding of the text and questions.

Opgave 8

This exercise is much like exercise 3, but the candidates have to come up with their own definition or synonym of a word from the text, which is more challenging. Most candidates managed this exercise reasonably well. If they did not find a synonym they managed to give an appropriate description. It is important here to be precise in the description, ie the synonym for *'ritjes'* should indicate somehow that the word is a diminutive, so 'a distance from A to B' on itself would not qualify for a mark, 'a short distance...' would.

Task 9

No particular issues occurred in this exercise.

Opgave 10

The transfer of meaning exercise was done well. Apart from the transfer of meaning it is also important to produce correct English sentences in this exercise to receive full marks.

Opgave 11

This last exercise provided a chance for the better candidates to show how well they understood the text. The last two questions about the 'poldermodel' proved a little challenging. Most candidates managed well.

Section C Writing

As last year, candidates seemed very well prepared to write a well-structured essay, starting with an introduction and leading to a strong conclusion. The majority of the candidates used examples from Dutch or Flemish speaking communities, as the task required.

In the preparation of candidates it is very important to show them the mark scheme, so they know what is important when they write an essay. A few candidates produced essays that were too short. It would be wise to aim for approximately 250-300 words.

The first question on society, Q.12, about a special court to convict vandals quickly and require them to do community service was not chosen often.

The second question in this category, on unemployment and food banks (Q13) was popular. Candidates offered wonderful solutions to the problem.

Of the questions on the environment, the second question was much more popular than the first (Q14), which was about wasted energy in governmental buildings. The second question (Q15) was one of the most popular questions this year. Candidates were truly inspired by the introduction and wrote wonderful blog-style essays. Most of them used good arguments too.

The following two questions were on science and technology. Q16 was popular. This question on the use of robots in society triggered a variety of responses. It was a topic chosen by candidates who had a clear opinion about the issue. Q17 about the overuse of social media was very popular too. Reading the essays gave the impression that quite a few candidates wouldn't mind using their smart phones a bit less.

The last two questions of the exam were on Culture. The first one, Q18 on the use of 'Zwarte Piet' in the Sinterklaasfeest, sparked real debates. Candidates who picked this topic came with interesting view points and clearly knew what they were talking about. The viewpoints varied a lot but were mostly backed up by great arguments. It was a very popular title and did make interesting reads.

The second question in this category (19) was chosen by a few candidates. They needed to write a letter to a museum director to make the exhibitions more interactive and creative. The candidates who chose this question wrote lovely letters stating their opinions.

Candidates seemed well aware of the different text types they should and could use (blogs, essays, letters etc.) which ensured they received as many marks as possible. A good number of candidates were well informed about Dutch issues.

Well done to all.

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