

Reports for the Units

June 2010

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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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CONTENTS

Advanced GCE Dutch (H593)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Dutch (H193)

REPORTS FOR THE UNITS

Unit/Content	Page
F881 Dutch: Listening, Reading and Writing 1	1
F882 Dutch: Listening, Reading and Writing 2	3

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 and to take care that when questions are asked in English the answer should be in English and when questions are asked in Dutch the answer should be given in Dutch.

The articles chosen for Section B are taken from Dutch newspapers or magazines. The texts are kept as close to the original as possible, so that candidates see the same type of texts that they will have been reading in newspapers or magazines. It is possible that vocabulary used in these articles is not in the main dictionaries, but can be understood from the context. The articles are chosen to suit the level of an AS student.

In this paper, for example, there are questions such as Opgave 2 that demand an overall understanding of the text and require candidates to explain words or sentences they may not know, or that have a different meaning in that context. Examples of this are *daar kun je je geen buil aan vallen*, *cultding* and *uitsmijter*. By reading the text carefully candidates will be able to understand these words within the context and will be able to explain the gist of what is meant.

Although there were errors in the exam paper, candidates did not have problems answering the questions affected.

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.

Exercise 1

The first question was about how the law on divorce has changed and what a lawyer and a divorcee thought about the system. In the main this question was answered very well. A few candidates had difficulty with question 1(a), the answer to which should have been that children were important. The correct answer to question 1(i) was that they never argued. Some candidates chose one of the two distractor options. Similarly, some candidates found question 1(j) difficult and answered incorrectly.

Exercise 2

This question was about the possibility of a school uniform being introduced in the Netherlands. The candidates had to choose the correct word to complete the text. Some candidates did not use the words in the grid and used other words instead. However, most candidates answered this question without many problems. The only word that they found difficult was the word *nette*. Some chose the word *kleurig*, as they heard *keurig* on the recording.

Exercise 3

Most candidates answered all questions in this task very well. The text was about a mother whose son had drug problems, who had started a group to help other mothers in her situation and raise awareness. The only question that posed a problem was 3(b) where candidates needed to know that *blijven zitten* meant that a school year had to be repeated.

Exercise 4

The letter writing of most candidates was excellent. Even in the few lines the candidates were asked to write many of them showed that they could manipulate the language well.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Exercise 5

In this exercise, candidates had to read about three restaurants and then fill in a grid identifying the differences between them. Most candidates answered these questions well.

Exercise 6

Although this was a short exercise, it differentiated very well. Although a lot of candidates did well in this question, they found the subject matter and questions more difficult. All questions had a similar level of difficulty.

Exercise 7

This exercise was based on a newspaper article about the change in shopping behaviour and advertising in times of recession. Candidates found 7(d) difficult, as they had to explain an expression by understanding the context. Similarly, they had difficulty with 7(f), where they had to explain what the author meant by *wanstaltige reclame*. In 7(g), candidates had to explain why the meat shown in an advertisement was bright orange. Stating that it was because the Dutch colour is orange was a common mistake. Some candidates found 7(k) difficult to answer, but many could interpret from the text what the author meant by *daar kan je je geen buil aan vallen*.

Exercise 8 (a)

Candidates were asked to read an article about interest in history in the Netherlands and how this could make a multicultural society a more cohesive group.

Candidates were asked to summarise the article. It was clear that those who had practised this skill and were able to give a concise, well-written answer.

Exercise 8 (b)

Candidates had to discuss whether they thought considering your own history was important in a multicultural society. Candidates who had had plenty of practice made a plan and demonstrated their writing skills in an effective and grammatically correct composition.

F882 Dutch: Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments

The first year of the F882 examination went well. There were no unexpected difficulties in the paper. Overall, candidates were well prepared.

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.

There were two Listening texts in this section. The general meaning of both texts was understood by the candidates. The first text was well understood by most candidates.

The topic and gist of the second text did not cause any problems either. However, the questions accompanying the second text on the Eco Disco were more difficult than those on the first text and not all candidates managed to get full marks on all questions. Some candidates did not give a precise enough answer. For example, to answer the question about what measures are taken to economise on water, writing 'they use their own cup' was not enough. Candidates should have mentioned that the consequence of making everyone use their own cup was that there would be fewer dishes.

Section B: Reading and Writing

This section consisted of two texts, each with several exercises on comprehension of the text.

The first proved to be a very good differentiating text. It is good practice for the candidates to re-read the text after they have completed exercises on the meaning of words, such as exercise 4. Many candidates give the meaning of the word, but not the meaning as it was used in the text.

In exercise 5 it is important to read the sentences carefully, to ensure that the missing words make a grammatically correct sentence.

Exercise 6 was done quite well by most candidates.

Exercise 7 tested fairly difficult comprehension of the text and was therefore only done well by high-scoring candidates.

Most texts found the second text (*Anne Frank Boom geeft geen krimp*) a little easier.

Exercise 8 gave candidates an opportunity to demonstrate their grammatical skills. It is important in this type of exercise to write a grammatically correct sentence which also makes sense as far as content is concerned. Due to the misprint in this exercise, where question 8(d) should have directed candidates to look at paragraph 8 instead of 7, information taken from paragraph 7 was allowed as well.

Exercise 9 did not cause problems for the higher-scoring candidates. Candidates can practise this type of exercise in lessons with every text they read.

Reports on the Units taken in June 2010

The translation of the third paragraph (exercise 10) did not cause any problems for the candidates, despite the mistake in the rubric, where the end of the paragraph should have read *'de boom al twaalf jaar onderhoudt'*.

Exercise 11 was done quite well by most candidates.

Section C: Writing

It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to write a well-structured essay, starting with an introduction and ending with a conclusion. Most candidates had read the instructions well and made sure they wrote what was requested in the assignment (i.e. an article, a letter, a pamphlet etc.) The themes of environment and integration were very popular, with many candidates writing about personal experiences, which made very interesting reading. Thank you for this.

Please be aware that the candidates need to refer to an area where the target language is spoken (Belgium or the Netherlands mainly) when giving examples of their experiences.

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