

GCSE

Gujarati

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J734**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) Spoken **J034**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) Written **J134**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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A811 Listening

General Comments:

This is the fifth listening paper available under the new specification and the majority of candidates sat the paper.

This paper contains a similar style of questions to the legacy Listening paper but it is now a single tier paper with exercises becoming more difficult through the test and targeting specific grades.

Due to a change in the subject requirements for Modern Foreign Languages this test now has instructions and questions in English; therefore candidates with a good command of English language achieved higher marks. All questions must be answered in English and candidates who answered the questions in Gujarati did not gain marks.

The multiple choice and matching questions proved to be very accessible and the majority of candidates scored high marks on these exercises.

The exercises requiring short responses in English proved a little more challenging, especially for new arrivals and candidates whose command of English language is weak. Also candidates with a good command of English but weak in understanding Gujarati suffered. As in previous years, candidates lost marks because of lack of precision or detail in the answers provided.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Exercise 1: Jinal's activities at home

Questions 1-5

Multiple choice tick box exercise with icons. Nearly all the candidates achieved full marks for this exercise.

Exercise 2: School subjects

Questions 6-12

Identifying the correct subject icon for the answer and putting the appropriate English letter against the correct name allowed most candidates to gain full marks.

Exercise 3: Miraj is talking about his friend

Questions 13-18

This exercise is similar to Exercise 2 but this time words have to be selected instead of the icons. As the word list was in English, most candidates did well, as they could read and understand the meanings of the English words and achieved good marks.

Some candidates got some answers wrong.

Q13 – Instead of 'nearby', some selected 'far away'.

Q16 – Instead of 'clever', a few selected 'polite'.

Exercise 4: Neha's town in Gujarat

Questions 19-24

This exercise required candidates to listen to the conversation in Gujarati and complete the sentences briefly in English by using interpreting and translation skills.

Question 19 – Good responses. Most candidates got the gist of the question. A few wrote 'north' instead of 'on a hill' and lost a mark.

Question 20 – Good responses from most candidates. Some candidates wrote 'morning' instead of 'weekends'.

Question 21 – Good overall answers. Some candidates wrote 'the king's servants' instead of 'the king' and lost a mark.

Question 22 – Some candidates wrote 'relaxing' instead of 'luxurious/comfortable'.

Question 23 – Some candidates lost marks by writing 'celebrations/festivals' instead of 'picnic'.

Question 24 – Many candidates got this question correct.

Exercise 5: Going to the cinema

Questions 25-31

Short answers in English were expected. Most candidates provided good responses but those who wrote half answers or did not give specific details lost marks.

Question 25 – Good responses. Most candidates gained marks.

Question 26 – Good responses from most candidates. Some confused 'Dad going on business near the station' with 'Dad working at the station' and gave an incorrect response.

Question 27 – Many candidates confused 'Andh kishor' and 'guide dog' with a boy named 'Kishor' or 'Nand Kishor'(God Krishna), and 'cow and dog' ('gaai kutro') with 'guide dog'.

Question 28 – Good overall answers.

Question 29 – Most candidates answered correctly.

Question 30 – Most candidates gave the correct response.

Question 31 – Most candidates gave the correct response. Some confused 'Persuading mother to allow them to have a dog' with 'wanting/getting a dog'.

Exercise 6: Celebrating festivals

Questions 32-37.

Nearly all the candidates scored full marks in this exercise. Matching the statement to the name proved to be an accessible task despite the more demanding listening text.

Exercise 7: Holiday accommodation

Questions 38-41

As this exercise was quite stretching, a variety of answers were given by candidates. The difficulties encountered seem to be either a misinterpretation of the Gujarati or a lack of precision in the answers in English.

Question 38b – Candidates who correctly identified the answer as 'relationship improving/becoming closer' gained a mark.

Question 39a & 39b – Most candidates gained a mark.

Question 40a – Candidates who did not understand the accommodation as 'bed and breakfast' lost a mark.

Question 40b-41b – Many candidates gave the correct responses and gained marks.

Exercise 8: Sport

Questions 42-47

This exercise was targeted at the very best candidates and required short answers in English. Examiners are looking for precision and detail in the answers and candidates who either did not understand what was being asked or provided ambiguous or imprecise answers lost marks.

Question 42 – Candidates who gave 'sports facilities' as the answer gained a mark.

Question 43 – Candidates who gave 'working on the farm/field' gained a mark.

Question 44 – Candidates who gave 'no facilities' as the answer gained a mark.

Question 45 – Most candidates got the gist of the question and responded appropriately, i.e. 'Clear/clean up the land'.

Question 46 – Most candidates gave the correct response.

Question 47 – Most candidates gave the correct response.

A812 Speaking

General Comments:

The paper was considered a suitable and fair examination and an appropriate test for the whole ability range. An improvement can be noticed in the whole of the examination. Most candidates made effective use of their time, especially where the tests were conducted in such a way that they were able to demonstrate their full linguistic ability. There was evidence of some excellent preparatory work on the part of the teachers and candidates, exploited to good effect by skilful questioning in the test, which elicited in some cases a high standard of Gujarati with some candidates producing a mature exposition of their opinions and ideas.

Almost all the teachers followed the criteria for the time limit of one minute for the presentation topic and a total of ten minutes for the whole of the examination. Examiners would nevertheless like to remind teachers that only 10 minutes of the test will be assessed and if the test is longer than 10 minutes only the first 5 minutes of each part will be assessed. Examiners would also like to encourage teachers to offer candidates the choice of topics for Part 2 during the recording. **Candidates should not be informed of the three topics for General Conversation before the start of the test but, if the topic was simply stated by the conducting teacher, Examiners marking the tests were often unsure when candidates had made the choice.** Some teachers did not give the students a choice and discussed all three topics.

Candidate responses overall were of a good standard and demonstrated secure knowledge of the language and enjoyment of the subject. Some of the presentation topics were not only well prepared but also interesting and imaginative, with a good range of factual information and justified individual ideas and points of views.

Most candidates were well prepared both in terms of the Gujarati language they could produce and also in their understanding of the format of the examination. Very competent performances were in evidence and some were indeed excellent. The more able candidates demonstrated extensive vocabulary, good application of tenses and a range of language structures.

Many teachers encouraged the candidates to show their linguistic ability. However, some of the candidates were not encouraged to give detailed answers with opinions and justifications, using a variety of structures, tenses and vocabulary. While some candidates may need encouragement with simple closed questions, the more able should be given the opportunity to expand their answers to open questions and teachers should give candidates the opportunity to use a variety of tenses.

The conducting teachers should encourage candidates to use features which will gain access to the higher bands of the marking grid in both the Presentation and Discussion and in the General Conversation. The use of different structures and tenses in one part of the test will only count towards the quality mark in that part. To gain access to the highest marks throughout the test candidates must be encouraged to use different structures, tenses and clauses in **both** the Discussion of the Presentation **and** the General Conversation.

When the conducting teachers used English words and phrases in the questioning and prompting this had an effect on the candidates' answers and did not encourage them to keep to only Gujarati vocabulary.

Digital recordings on CDs have made a further improvement to the quality of the recordings received from Centres.

Examiners reported that very few tests are being submitted on USB memory sticks. Centres should note that OCR will accept recordings **only** on CD in future and the recordings must be **submitted in MP3 format**.

Comments on Individual Questions:

PART 1

Presentation and Discussion

Many topics were well presented and demonstrated good preparation in advance of the test. Some of the presentations were well organised with facts, as well as candidates' own ideas, opinions and justifications. However, a few candidates had not prepared their presentation topic well and so the presentation did not contribute much to their mark for Part 1. Well prepared candidates were able to present the topic of their own choice with a degree of enthusiasm and accuracy. They offered a range of opinions, points of views and justifications and were able to access higher marks. The timing of this part of the test was largely accurate.

The Presentation titles varied from familiar topics such as Home Life, Local Area, School Life, Education and Work Experience, Special Occasions and Festivals, to more individual and challenging topics such as - Bhagwan, Life and Death, My Temple, Global Warming, Healthy Lifestyle, Swadhyay Activity, The Recession, Trees, Facebook, Face Time, Life in England and India, The Olympics, The Environment, Pollution, Swaminarayan, Nelson Mandela, Sachin Tendulkar, A Wedding in the family. Some centres appeared to have operated a 'template' approach, with all presentations following the same format, which was formulaic, pre-learnt and often delivered too quickly. Subsequent discussions were based on the very same questions. Such an approach did not tend to facilitate the achievement of the highest marks and is therefore not recommended.

Discussion of Presentation

Where a full discussion of the topic took place, many candidates were able to respond well to teachers' questions. Some teachers did an excellent job, bringing out lengthy responses with candidates' ideas, opinions and justifications. The most successful performances were from candidates who had chosen a topic in which they were genuinely interested and to which they could respond positively in the ensuing discussion. Candidates should be given the opportunity to respond to unprepared questions on their presentation topic. Examiners reported some instances where the questions asked during the discussion covered the same basic information that the candidate had used in their presentation, which gave limited scope to score highly for Content and Communication, and some candidates were not given the opportunity to respond to unprepared questions on their presentation topic.

Some candidates were not given ample opportunity to display their knowledge and use different tenses during discussion of their presentation topic. If a candidate has presented mainly factual information in their presentation, the questions should be used to get the candidate to express opinions, viewpoints and justifications and, if they have stuck to the present tense, the questions should encourage the candidate to use a greater variety of structures and tenses during the discussion.

The majority of discussions were of an appropriate length, which allowed the candidates to develop ideas they had suggested in the Presentation. In a few cases where this section was longer, it was clear that the candidates grew tired and did not perform at their best. Some candidates were not given the opportunity to discuss the topic with the teacher for the full 4 minutes allocated time.

PART 2

General Conversation

As the candidates were given a choice of topic, most used their initiative in this part of the test. Where teachers asked open-ended questions, candidates gave a range of opinions and justified them. The most able responses demonstrated extensive vocabulary, good application of tenses, and a range of language structures, thereby accessing the top marks in both Content and Communication and Quality of Language. Some candidates were not given ample opportunity to display their knowledge and use of different tenses during the discussion of the topic.

There was evidence of some excellent preparatory work on the part of the teachers and candidates, exploited to good effect by natural questioning in the test, which elicited a high standard of Gujarati, with some candidates producing a mature exposition of their opinions and ideas. Many teachers conducted this part of the test very skilfully and their excellent preparation was the key to high performance from candidates.

Pronunciation and Intonation

For non-native speakers the Pronunciation and Intonation was mostly accurate though there were some minor errors. Almost all the candidates earned high marks in this area.

Administration

The majority of the Centres are to be congratulated on the efficiency of their administration, the quality of the recordings and the sympathetic manner in which the speaking tests were conducted. The completion of the mark sheets was mostly handled efficiently. However, a few poor quality recordings presented a major problem for examiners.

Centres are encouraged to check the quality of the recording before sending it to OCR examiners. It is essential that Working Mark Sheets are completed appropriately and **recordings are checked prior to dispatching and submitting** to the OCR examiner, to avoid sending **damaged** or **blank CDs**. Centres are also to be reminded that the test **should not be marked by the teachers conducting it**.

In a speaking test, the candidates' responses depend on the teacher/examiners' input, administration and conduct of the test; therefore preparation and forethought by the teachers is vital to enable the candidates to perform well. It is very important that teachers conducting the test read the Teachers Instructions Booklet in conjunction with the specification and familiarise themselves with the format of the examination.

A813 Reading

General Comments:

The paper was of high standard and quality and the questions were appropriate for the specification. Most situations and texts provided were accessible and relevant to candidates' experience. Overall, candidates performed well. Congratulations are due to Centres who have worked hard in preparing these candidates.

It appeared that extended texts presented difficulties to lesser ability candidates, who were randomly guessing the answers. In particular, they found it difficult to respond to Q.30 in Ex. 5, Q.38, Q.41 and Q.42 in Ex.7 and Q.46 in Ex. 8. Many candidates copied chunks of text in Ex.8 and, if it was felt that they wanted assessors to pick out the correct part, they were not awarded marks.

Ex.1: Questions 1-5

Candidates found this opening exercise about food and drink easy and did well.

Ex. 2: Questions 6-12

In this multiple choice exercise, candidates were able to recognise the relevant pictures, except in Q.8, where some candidates failed to differentiate between the pictures about books from magazines and chose B as the answer instead of C.

Ex.3: Questions 13-18

Another question with visuals to be matched with the appropriate statements was answered well by a great majority of the candidates.

Ex.4: Questions 19 – 24

Here candidates were expected to read a short text in the format of an e-mail which was followed by multiple choice verbal responses. Mostly candidates understood the gist of the text and answered well. A few candidates got 1 or 2 questions wrong in this exercise.

Ex. 5: Questions 25 – 30

This was a challenging exercise targeted at grade C candidates. They had to comprehend slightly extended text, which was in the form of a diary, and extract details and points of view. Questions were in English to be answered in English. Many candidates answered the questions well but a few found difficulties with some of them as detailed below.

Question 25: This was answered well by candidates but a few gave answers like 'relieved', 'relaxed', 'blessed', 'stress free', 'calm' and 'excited' and did not score a mark. Very few gave the alternative accepted answer 'trees with flowers' but a few candidates gave answers such as 'nice trees', without mentioning the flowers, and so missed a mark.

Question 26: Most candidates gave the correct answer apart from a few who said 'the weather was good' and did not get a mark.

Question 27a): There were many incorrect answers with an element of guesswork. Candidates wrote, 'Amount of people', 'many people', 'get lost', 'pushing' and 'pulling to get on the train'.

These additional words about train were unnecessary and detrimental to gaining a mark as they changed the meaning to the answer.

Question 27b: Fairly well attempted by most of the candidates but a few gave answers like ‘get lost’, ‘she was lost’, ‘didn’t meet her family’, ‘didn’t like so many people’ and such other answers which did not get a mark.

Question 28: Most candidates gave the correct answer but a number wrote incorrect answers like ‘her brother felt excited, relieved, happy, amazed, angry, unhappy, frustrated’ or ‘he did not buy any shoes.’

Question 29: Here answers like ‘Geeta bought him a pair of shoes’ or ‘Geeta showed him another style’ were not awarded a mark.

Question 30: This last question in this C grade exercise was a challenge for many candidates. All kinds of different answers were provided and the inference answer ‘they had to climb up the hill’ was often not given.

Exercise 6: Questions 31 – 36

This was a slightly longer text in the context of a blog. Here the candidates had to understand the text and the complete the statements, choosing from multiple choices responses. They were structured so that those who guessed the answers would not score well. Overall the questions were well answered.

Ex. 7: Questions 37 – 42

This exercise was targeted at Grade A candidates. An article about smoking, alcohol and drugs is a topic candidates are very familiar with. As it is a topic with issues for young people, discussed at school, and is of interest to young people, it was well received by candidates.

They were expected to read, understand the text and, besides identifying the main points and points of view, they also had to recognise attitudes and emotions. They had to draw conclusions as well.

This exercise was of a type where questions and answers are in English. The candidates were expected to be precise and exact in their responses in to gain marks. Some candidates did try to answer in English without understanding the text and did not gain marks.

Q.37: This question was mostly answered well, with answers like ‘scientists’, ‘parents’, ‘politicians’, ‘the Government’, ‘the council’. Some candidates did some guesswork and provided answers like ‘teachers’, ‘doctors’, ‘health workers’, ‘social workers’, ‘the World Health Organisation’, showing they had discussed the topic at school, and provided viable answers. However, these answers did not gain the marks, as the answers had to be within the context and respond accordingly.

Q.38: As this is a grade A question, a precise answer was needed and both elements ‘physical and mental health can suffer’ were needed to gain a mark.

Q.39a and b: Here two answers for 2 marks were needed and the correct answers were smoking cigarettes or cigars (1mark) and chewing tobacco (1 mark), where chewing was necessary to gain a mark. Most candidates managed to gain 1 mark. Chewing tobacco was poorly answered.

Q.40: This was answered well by about half of the candidates and many equivalent words for 'uneducated' were used and were given a mark. It is important to understand that the connotation for 'uneducated' in this text was really those who did not get a chance to go to school because of poverty.

Q.41: This was a difficult question with an inference answer to be 'from a research or increase in cases of cancer and heart diseases.' Some candidates tried to translate the text 'tobacco was responsible for 50% of those suffering with cancer.' However, some got it wrong.

Q.42: Many candidates failed to understand the text and gave various incorrect or guessed answers such as: 'It was mixed with drinks,' 'they go to parties and get addicted to drugs,' 'parents are worried about children going to parties,' none of which were awarded marks. 'Spiked drinks' was given a mark.

Ex. 8: Questions 43-47:

Again, this was a good topical subject in which candidates would be interested. It was aimed at A* candidates and answers in the target language seemed popular, as many candidates thought that they could 'lift' answers. However, some candidates decided to copy whole chunks of text and were not always awarded marks, because they either copied too much or sometimes copied the wrong phrases or group of words.

Q.43: This was well answered.

Q.44: Again, the vocabulary was understood by many of the candidates.

Q.45: Most candidates copied but only some with good ability gave the precise answers needed.

Q.46 (a) and (b): Many candidates failed to understand that the bells were inside the ball and they tried to copy the text, but sometimes the wrong words or too much of the text was copied to gain marks.

Q.47: This was the last question in the paper and was answered well by many candidates. Some did not attempt it because of either running out of time or not understanding the text and question.

A814 Writing

General Comments:

Congratulations are due to Centres and candidates: to Centres for preparing candidates well and to candidates for following the instructions very well in the whole examination compared to last year. Most of the candidates understood the rubrics and managed to respond very well using different formats such as an email, letter, blog, magazine article, and a small number of candidates even used the format of a conversation. The most popular formats were letters and emails. A few candidates used similar formats for answering both the questions and some did not use any format.

Question 1 was the most popular, followed by Questions 5, 2 and 3. Very few candidates attempted Question 4. Most of the candidates attempted two questions but a few attempted all five of them. Some candidates looked at only the topic area and ignored the specified task altogether. Therefore they could not earn good marks for communication. It is vital that the candidates address the given task, though they do not necessarily have to follow the bullet points given as guidance.

Most of the candidates followed the bullet points given for suggestions and some used their own ideas. It was noticeable that many candidates managed to give detailed information with fully developed and justified ideas and points of view, using complex language confidently with a higher level of vocabulary, variety of clause types, idioms and structures, including verbal structures and tenses, and as a result were able to access the higher levels of the marking grid. However, it was also noticed that some very able candidates gave some unnecessarily long basic descriptions of the family, for example listing each member and what they do and what they like. Candidates should be aware that bullet points are there to help those who find it difficult to think about what to write. Higher ability candidates could go directly to writing more opinions and justifications and could try to express fully developed ideas rather than wasting their space and time on lengthy basic descriptions.

The middle ability candidates expressed simple opinions and points of views with simple justifications using a good range of structures and vocabulary inclusive of different tenses and time frames. The lower ability candidates produced short pieces of information with very simple opinions without any justifications, giving basic vocabulary and structures, and they therefore did not cover the criteria for higher marks.

Quite a few candidates' handwriting was illegible but devoted Assessors spent a long time working out what the candidates were trying to write. Sometimes lengthy writing with such illegibility proved very trying for the Examiners who made sure that those candidates' writing was read in full. These candidates would benefit if they practised writing more precisely with relevant points.

Centres must be reminded that if the candidates wish to write more than an A4 sheet, additional sheets are available, provided by GCSE and GCE examining bodies, and ordinary A4 pages should not be used. Again this year some candidates continued the answer on the pages of the same paper in the space for different question's answers instead of on the additional sheet. This could create confusion for marking and wasted Examiners' valuable time.

The Centres and candidates should be aware that higher level opinions and points of views with justifications are essential to gain high marks for communication. To gain higher marks for quality of language candidates need to use complex sentence structures, clauses, a varied range of vocabulary, time references and idioms, as set out in mark scheme.

There was evidence of dictionaries being used, which was pleasing, but unfortunately a minority of the candidates sometimes chose the wrong Gujarati word when an English word had alternative Gujarati words meaning different things. For example, when needing the equivalent Gujarati word for 'kind' (showing kindness towards nature) many candidates looked up 'kind' (types) listed first in the dictionary and ended up using પ્રકાર instead of દયાળુ. Other examples used were સોબતીઓ which means companion in Gujarati but was used for a company established for business, 'ડંગોરો (club), which in English would translate as 'golf club (stick)' rather than the club where they could become member, such as youth club, and these conveyed an inaccurate message. It is hoped that candidates will be taught dictionary skills if they are encouraged to use dictionaries in an examination situation.

Some candidates wrote in an organised manner and it was noticed particularly that they wrote some idiomatic language, for example લોહીનું પાણી કરવું, લોહી પીએ છે, હર્ષના આંસુ આવી ગયા, ખુશીથી પાગલ થઈ જાઉં છું, કાગની ડોળે રાહ જોઉં છું, માથા પર બેઠેલા હોય, એકના માથે બોજો ન આવે, મારાથી રાહ નથી જોવાતી, શેર લોહી ચડ્યું, હાથીની જેમ જાડી થઈ જઈશ, બટેટાની જેમ બફાઈ ગઈ, જાજી કીડીઓ સાપને તાણે, આત્મવિશ્વાસ, વિવિધતા, મંજિલ, પ્રસિદ્ધ, આયોજન, રંગબેરંગી, બુદ્ધિમાન, શેઠાઈ, ફૂલના હારતોળા, પત્તર ખાંડે, ઉપચારણ, પ્રગતિ, ભરોસો, વગેરે, and obtained the higher marks they deserved for Quality of language. Some good language which helped to express higher level viewpoints for Communication included મારા મત પ્રમાણે, મને લાગે છે કે, મારા અભિપ્રાય પ્રમાણે, મારા ધારવા મુજબ, મારી માન્યતા પ્રમાણે, મારા માનવા મુજબ, મારા ખ્યાલ પ્રમાણે, મને ખાત્રી છે, મારી ઈચ્છા મુજબ, મને આશા છે કે.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question 1

Home and local area – Your Gujarati friend in Surat asks you to write about your family life.

A majority of candidates attempted and answered this question fairly well, as it is about their own experience and a familiar context. Most wrote about their family members and the value of family life. They also stated their opinions and justified their likes and dislikes about housework.

Question 2

Health and sports – Write about a big sports event in the U.K. for a Gujarati magazine in Rajkot.

Many candidates attempted and answered this question fairly well. The most popular event was the Olympic games of 2012 in London. Other events like a football match or a cricket match were also described well by candidates. Most of them enjoyed writing about their own experience either watching the event on T.V. being present in the stadium. Some wrote about the sports day of the school or an event organised by their community. All these were acceptable as tasks set and they received marks according to their ability in writing. On the other hand, a few followed the topic area 'Health and sports' ignoring the instruction to write about 'a big sports event in the U.K.' and they lost marks for communication.

Question 3

Leisure and entertainment – Write to your cousin in Kenya about a social event in your community.

A few candidates attempted this question and successfully addressed the question by explaining how their community organises social events and celebrates most of the festivals in the U.K. in order to retain their culture and values.

Question 4

Travel and the wider world – Write a report about a charity project your school runs to help children around the world.

This was the least popular question. Very few candidates attempted this question. Most of those candidates who attempted it addressed the question by writing about a non-uniform day at school and expressing their emotions for the poor and needy children around the world, especially in India or Africa and how they would like to do as much as they could.

Question 5

Education and work – Write about your school life for a Gujarati community magazine.

Many candidates attempted this question and answered it fairly well. They enjoyed writing about their school life and different events they organise and how they enjoy their social life at school along with studying. Some again followed the Topic title and wrote about work and a career at great length rather than attempting the task that was set.

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