

## **GCSE**

### **Dutch**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J733**

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

## **OCR Report to Centres June 2016**

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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:

This year's Dutch listening exam went well overall. For a minority of the candidates the use of English in the answers caused some problems. It should help to prepare the candidates using the prescribed vocabulary list for Dutch.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Exercise 1

This exercise about Peter's favourite sport was done very well by the candidates.

#### Exercise 2

The talk of Anita about her after school job did not seem to cause any difficulties for most candidates. Some candidates found Q.9 on Anita's opinion about her work difficult.

#### Exercise 3

In Exercise 3 Dirk tried to arrange a meeting with a friend, but everyone offers reasons why they won't be able to do something. The exercise was done very well by all candidates.

#### Exercise 4

At this point in the exam slightly more precise listening and answering will be required to receive full marks. In this exercise we heard Kim talk about a topic that was a bit different. A couple of times a week she would have dinner in front of her web cam to promote eating together, even for people who are on their own. The exercise was more challenging for some candidates, especially Q19, where the answer was frequently not precise enough to qualify for the marks.

#### Exercise 5

This was about the good and bad things about secondary school. Some candidates were not precise enough in their answers, for example in Q26, where the answer to 'the worst thing' was 'waking up early'. It is important to give the full answer here, not just 'waking up'. Some candidates did not know the correct word for 'school party', giving 'festival' as the answer. This answer was fairly close, but not good enough, as a 'festival' is quite different from a 'party'.

#### Exercise 6

This multiple choice exercise was about Tamara who lived abroad for a while. It will be important at this level for the candidates to listen very well to the recording, as the distractors will all make sense to someone who hasn't heard the monologue. For example in Q34, where it might have been logical to feel a little homesick at the beginning. The correct answer was 'after a couple of months'. Most candidates answered the questions well.

### **Exercise 7**

In exercise 7 'A different kind of museum' candidates could hear Olaf talk about a hobby of his: making mini-museums. The language used in this interview was more complex and it was therefore more difficult to filter out the correct information. Overall the exercise was done very well by the better candidates, but as was to be expected weaker candidates found several questions tricky.

### **Exercise 8**

The last exercise of this paper was about an orchestra whose members made their own instruments from recycled materials. At this point in the exam it is important to listen very carefully to the details in the recorded text. Most candidates managed this question quite well, but some candidates were confused by the 'false friend' of the dutch word 'pols' and answered 'pulse' instead of 'wrist'. When in doubt about the correct translation of the Dutch word, it might help to describe the item instead (i.e. 'a bone').

## A802 Speaking

### General Comments:

The speaking component of this Dutch exam went very well. Most candidates were well prepared and the one minute presentations which started off the test were about interesting topics close to the candidates' hearts. The tests were conducted well too. Most Examiners have a very kind way of interviewing the candidates, asking many open questions to ensure the candidates have the best opportunity to earn full marks. The majority of recordings were of very good quality, recorded in a quiet room without much noise from outside.

Most Examiners quizzed the candidates about the minute's presentation to allow the candidates to show their language skills. For the second part of the exam – the General Conversation- the candidates have to choose the conversation topic out of a list of three. It is an important part of the test that the candidates only see the choice of topic at the start of part 2, not halfway through the recording.

A few recordings were on the short side. It is very important to keep to the prescribed length of the test, in order for the candidate to show they can maintain a conversation in Dutch for 10 minutes.

There are still a few Examiners who stop 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, thank you. Please note that a copy of the Speaking Mark Sheet is provided in the Teacher's instructions booklet.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Part 1 Presentation

Quite a few candidates used 'my life' this year as the presentation topic for Part 1. It is interesting to listen to and works as well as a topic on a hobby or a sport. Most importantly the presentation topic should truly interest the candidate, so they can 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, which produced a natural sounding conversation.

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.

The most well prepared 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. Many teachers asked questions about the past and the future, to enable candidates to show they could use different tenses.

## **Exercise 2** General Conversation

As mentioned in the general comments of this report, 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 should not be used as a list of questions to interview the candidate without creating a dialogue. Examiners are encouraged 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?').

Candidates tend to perform best if they are 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 whether or not the candidate likes those colours and why or why not, can trigger more interesting conversation and lead to topics that inspire the candidate to talk about other likes and dislikes. Some Examiners asked the questions one by one without responding to the answers of the candidate. This makes the conversations stunted and does not help the candidate to demonstrate their skills.

## **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 Examiners seemed to be well supported by the Centres. 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 eight exercises with Dutch texts and mainly English questions.

Most candidates did very well in the multiple choice and the matching exercises.

A large number of candidates answered many questions correctly in the English open ended questions in exercises 5 and 7. Other candidates did not seem to be able to express themselves sufficiently well in English to score marks here.

All texts need careful reading. Short answers are required as shown in the examples.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Exercise: Questions 1-5

This exercise was completed well.

#### Exercise 2 Questions 6-12

Not all candidates received full marks. In this case Q10 was not answered correctly as candidates didn't seem to know what 'zolder' meant (attic, not cellar).

#### Exercise 3 Questions 13-18

This was a short text about celebrating Sinterklaas with open ended questions in English. The exercise was generally well done. Q14 was occasionally answered in Dutch (Duitsland instead of Germany). Q15 needed very careful reading to write the answer in correct English. (She comes a few days before (not earlier) the event.)

#### Exercise 4 Questions 19-24

Six statements in Dutch about why people play sports had to be matched with six questions in English. This exercise was done well. Only occasionally the candidates mixed up the statements but there did not seem to be statements that were more difficult than the others.

#### Exercise 5 Questions 25-31

This exercise had a slightly longer Dutch text, a blog about Utrecht. The open ended questions were in English. Brief answers were required. Many answers were long and sometimes the extra words made the answer invalid. Q 25 'What do Utrecht and Amsterdam have in common?' was often answered incorrectly as many candidates did not seem to know the word '*gracht*' (canal) and had answers such as 'they both have bridges or harbours'. Some candidates struggled with Q26 'Why is Utrecht not a good town for drivers?' - with answers that Utrecht looked after the environment, but did not explain that cars were not allowed in the centre of town.

#### Exercise 6 Questions 32-37

This again was a longer Dutch text. It was a set of text messages comparing the schools in the UK and the Netherlands. Although the exercise was done well the last two questions were not answered correctly by many candidates. In Q36 the problem was that many candidates did not know what '*natuurkunde*' (physics) was. For Q37 the candidates needed to read the text carefully. In Holland the student had to study ten subjects and was allowed to choose four of those and the rest were obligatory. Many answered that she could choose ten subjects.

**Exercise 7 Questions 38-43**

This Dutch text dealt with staying safe on line. Candidates had to give answers to open ended questions in English. Many candidates responded well. Some found it hard to answer in English. The main reason why answering the questions was difficult was that the candidates knew more about the subject than the text gave. This led to answers that might have been correct but were not mentioned in the text. Those candidates who answered in short succinct sentences did better than those who wrote longer answers. Overall the weaker candidates struggled with these questions.

**Exercise 8 Questions 44- 49**

This final exercise consisted of a Dutch text and statements. The text is the introduction of a girl whose hobby is acting. 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 did not answer any of the questions. Others answered many of the questions correctly.

Q44 The candidates needed to read the text correctly as Tanja started to act when she was at primary school.

Q45 Most candidates found the correct noun in the text.

Q46 There were several answers possible and most candidates who attempted the question answered the question correctly.

Q47 This was an easy question for those who read carefully as it asked what the last role was that Tanja played and not the last but one.

Q48 Many candidates found the right answer in the text.

Q49 Many candidates answered this question correctly.

## A804 Writing

### General Comments:

The examination was generally well done. Many candidates appeared to have chosen their two questions with care.

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.

Writing far too much - either far too long an essay or by 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.

This year it was stipulated above each question what type of writing should be used, question 1 had to be an email, question 2 an article for a sports magazine, question 3 a blog post, question 4 a report and question 5 a letter. Many candidates differentiated really well and it was a joy to see how they tried to make their exam questions look different. Some candidates went off task, which can easily be avoided by using the bullet points suggested in the question paper. 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).

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.1

This question was chosen by most candidates. Candidates were asked to write an email to a Dutch friend about the facilities in their local area. This subject was chosen by the majority of candidates. The main facilities were shops, parks, a swimming pool and a football pitch. The candidates who followed the suggestions given in the exam used future and past tense and gave opinions and did in the main well.

#### Question No.2

Candidates were asked to write an article about keeping fit. Many candidates wrote in detail about a plan they devised to keep fit.

#### Question No.3

The blogpost the candidates were asked to write had to be about the candidate's favourite music. The writing in this part of the exam was interesting. Candidates tried to explain why they like the music and why they preferred a singer, artist or band

#### Question No.4

Candidates were asked to write a report about a house swap. This was for some candidates the opportunity to write about very nice holidays. Some candidates came up with lovely ideas of what they had done in Holland and what they did while they were there. The places they wanted to go to next were very interesting.

#### Question No.5

Candidates were asked to write a letter about their work experience. Those candidates who had undertaken work experience produced successful writing in relation to this question.

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