

GCSE

Persian

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J735**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J035**
J135

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

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.

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

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A821 Listening

Centres should continue preparing candidates for the listening task as before as the overall performance has been very successful. It is recommended to use OCR's published glossary of words to prepare weaker candidates. Using Persian in non-every-day topics i.e. news etc, within the same range of words, can stretch and improve strong candidates further.

A822 Speaking

General Comments:

Over all candidates performed very well. The teachers / examiners conducted the exam well. It is important for the teacher/examiners to follow OCR recommendations and observations when conducting the exam to ensure the best possible outcome for candidates.

Part 1

The accuracy of presentations was high. Teacher/examiners must explain to candidates that they may use prompts for their presentations. Candidates in this section of the test performed better than in the second part.

The most popular topics chosen for the presentation were holidays, home, family and food, school life and sport.

In the first part, questions should be related to the topic chosen by candidates; however it is important for teachers /examiners to make sure their questions relate to the candidate's choice. On occasion questions asked in this section of the test were not appropriate and not always relevant to the conversation.

Part 2

In this section candidates are presented with 3 topics from which they may choose a topic, however there were instances when the topic was chosen by teacher / examiner or that the candidate's choice was ignored by the teacher / examiner.

In this part, questions should be related to the topic chosen by candidate, however teachers /examiners quite often asked questions about other topics. On occasion questions asked in this section were not appropriate and not related to the conversation. Teachers / examiners are reminded OCR has provided different questions for different topics that can be used in this part of the test.

It is important for the teacher/examiner to encourage the candidate to talk and not to spend too much time expressing their own opinions about different subjects. Most popular topics chosen in part 2 were holiday, home and local area, sport and TV, films and music.

Comments and recommendations

Type of questions

- The questions asked should allow candidates to express their opinions therefore **open ended questions must be asked. Teacher / examiner can help candidate to express themselves and expand their opinions**
- Teachers / examiners **must avoid asking ambiguous questions.**
- The exam is aiming to test candidate's skills therefore **teachers/examiners must avoid talking more than candidates.**

Teachers / examiners

- Teachers/ examiners should instruct candidates prior to the test about timing and advise them to talk colloquially.

- Teachers/ examiners should be patient and **must not interrupt candidate and distract them.**
- Teachers/ examiners **should not** mark white mark sheet or give any indication to the candidate about the outcome of the test Teachers/ examiners **must make themselves familiar with OCR instructions** prior to the exam.
- Teachers/ examiners must follow OCR instructions and take in to account that the exam has two parts and two different topics should be discussed during the exam.
- Teachers / examiners are reminded the exam is neither an interview nor interrogation so candidate can be helped with a friendly manner to express their opinions. The teacher/examiner needs to be aware that any vocabulary supplied by them to the candidate will not be credited in the test. It is teacher/ examiner's responsibility to manage the conversation and ask appropriate questions to ensure that candidates can express themselves at greater length and complexity.
- In the second general conversation candidate has the right to choose a topic from the list presented by teacher / examiner. Teachers / examiners should ask questions related to the topic chosen and must not change the topic in the middle of conversation.
- It is teacher / examiner's responsibility to make sure the list of topics presented to candidate does not have overlap with the first topic chosen by the candidate in previous part.
- Teachers / examiners **should listen to candidate properly and avoid asking repetitive questions.** (e.g. if the candidate says (s)he does not have any brother, teacher / examiner should not ask where candidate is going with her / his brother in weekend)
- Teachers / examiners **must not ask questions related to candidates personal life and privacy.**
- Teachers / examiners should ask questions which take into account the candidate's age and experience and not ask questions outside the experience of the candidate.

Technical issues

- Teachers / examiners should make sure the recorder is close to the candidate not themselves.
- **The exam should be conducted in a quiet place** as background noise may distract candidates.
- Both parts should be recorded on one CD not on separate CDs.
- Once a recording has started it must not be paused at any point until the test is completed

Centre's responsibilities

Centres should follow OCR instructions and deadlines. It is important that centres ensure that any teacher/examiner is properly briefed and has a good knowledge of the language tested.

A823 Reading

General Comments:

The exam results this year show that the candidates seem to find the paper accessible and no major problem has been identified in their dealing with the different sections of it. The overwhelming majority of the candidates seem to have sufficient knowledge of Persian and adequate familiarity with the exam format.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

Exercise 1: Qs 1-5

Straight forward set of questions which were very well answered.

Exercise 2: Qs 6-12

Questions & rubrics were well understood and questions well answered.

Exercise 3: Qs 13-18

Questions & rubrics well understood. However **it is worth reminding the candidates that they are expected to choose the answers from the list/bank of words provided in the box. Similar words or phrases reflecting the same meaning are not accepted as correct answers and will result in their losing marks.**

Exercise 4: Qs 19-24

Rubrics well understood. No problem identified in the accessibility to this exercise.

Exercise 5: Qs 25-30

Candidates have generally understood this exercise and answered the questions well. However, to get a mark they needed to give **precise** answers to questions 27 and 28a and 28b.

The acceptable answer to Q27: 'What did Jane say she is thankful for' is:
'The dishes / food you had cooked for her' (Persian/ Iranian food without mentioning 'you had cooked') is not acceptable.

Similarly the answers to Q 28a & 28b:
'What did Jane enjoy seeing in Tehran?' require precise answers:

28a- Grand / big houses in the north of the city

28b- The Bazaar / traditional Tehran market

'Big houses' or 'The shopping mall' are not acceptable answers.

Exercise 6: Qs 31-36

Comments provided for exercise 3 applies apply to these questions. Once again the attention of the candidate needs to be drawn to the fact that as indicated in the rubrics, **all answers can be found among the words listed for them in the box.** Answers not included in the list are not accepted.

Exercise 7: Qs 37-41

Candidates need to be advised to read the text carefully before attempting to answer these questions. Answers based on the candidates' general knowledge or common sense, are not given marks. All questions are based on specific points in the text.

At this stage in the paper, candidates are expected to be able to produce full and precise answers to questions.

Example: Qs. 37a & 37b. The acceptable answers for 'Give **two** reasons for the success of the film' are:

- a. 'interesting story/subject/plot'
- b. 'very good acting'.

Incomplete answers such as 'interesting', 'actors', 'story' will not be given any marks.

Q 39. Again at this stage in the paper candidates are expected to distinguish between 'what?' & 'why?' and arrange their answers accordingly. The answer 'because his father is ill' for 'what?' and 'not to leave Iran' for 'why?' is not acceptable.

Exercise 8: Qs 42-46

Candidates also need to be reminded that at this stage in the paper, the answers need to be **precise**. Those who have copied out sentences from the text without paying attention to the question have not been given a mark.

A824 Writing

General Comments:

Generally, candidates used their Persian language knowledge appropriately to respond to their chosen questions.

Various excellent answers gave detailed accounts on the selected subject using a range of vocabulary and a great range of tenses. Brilliant answers followed the guide but also gave further illustrative detail to the description.

Exceptional answers gave a range of justifications for points made, in different tenses.

Other candidates needed to develop their style of writing beyond mere present tense and avoid crafting responses that seemed like bullet points.

A few candidates seemed to misunderstand the requirement of the chosen questions, responding in English rather than in Persian as required by the test.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

A majority of candidates answered this question. Responses showed a clear and eloquent style with an ability to provide strong explanations and justifications.

It was pleasing to see candidates use a variety of tenses in their response when considering their subject matter.

When candidates did not achieve higher marks it was usually as a result of incorrect grammar or failing to write full sentences.

Question No. 2

This question was answered well by candidates. The best answers delved into the effect of sports on a person's health.

Question No. 3

This question was not widely answered - but the candidates that attempted it generally gave strong answers that showed clear understanding.

Most responses provided a good variety of tenses, vocabulary and examples to create the type of narrative the question required.

Question No. 4

This was a well answered question. Candidates achieved higher marks when they engaged with the topic and gave exact examples of experiences.

Candidates generally did well with meeting the criteria of the question and their writing supported their chosen topic.

Most responses provided a good variety of tenses, vocabulary and examples to create the type of narrative the question required.

When candidates did not achieve higher marks it was usually because of insufficient vocabulary to express what they wished to convey.

Question No. 5

This question was answered well by candidates. Those who attempted it generally showed strong understanding of what the question required and were able to secure good marks. Strong candidates gave detailed responses with good vocabulary, tenses and justifications.

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