

GCSE

Dutch

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J733**

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

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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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:

The listening component of this Dutch exam went well overall. Most candidates listened carefully to the recording. For a minority of the candidates the use of English in the answers caused some problems. For the listening component answers do not have to be long. It should help to prepare the candidates using the prescribed vocabulary list for Dutch, as this list is used in the entire exam.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Exercise 1

This exercise about Marian's town was done very well by the candidates.

Exercise 2

The monologue of Mark talking about his family and their professions, was understood well by most candidates too. Some candidates confused 'neef' and 'nicht' in Q.8 and 9, which is a distinction not made in English (cousin).

Exercise 3

In Exercise 3, Frans explained what he had to do in the house to help. This exercise did not cause many problems at all.

Exercise 4

The interview with Myrte about sweets was understood quite well by most candidates. The answer to Q.17; 'millions', was sometimes confused with '4 million' as the recording says that Dutch people buy '*voor miljoenen euro's aan drop*'. Otherwise the exercise was done quite well. Centres are reminded that all the words and phrases that are questioned, are in the prescribed vocabulary list, available to all candidates.

Exercise 5

This was an interview with young people about their favourite parties. Around this point in the exam, in order to receive full marks, more precise listening will be required from the candidates.

Exercise 6

In this exercise candidates listened to a monologue by Rosa about exchange programmes in her school. Even though answers were multiple choice, it was a fairly difficult exercise as the distractors at this point in the exam are not so obvious. Stronger candidates answered the questions well.

Exercise 7

In exercise 7 candidates could hear a talk on stamps. Answers had to be written down and weaker candidates started to find this recording quite hard. Most candidates managed to give the correct answers.

Exercise 8

The last exercise of this paper, 8, was about the Dutch repeating the year in school. Quite a few candidates expected Jan Willem to say that he didn't like the idea, but he actually thought it was a good idea to repeat if you hadn't done well. The last question (41) proved difficult as well. At this point in the exam it is important to listen very carefully to the details in the recorded text. Most stronger candidates managed this question well.

A802 Speaking

General Comments:

The speaking component of this Dutch exam went very well. Most candidates seemed well prepared, coming to the speaking test with interesting presentations. 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 receive full marks. Some recordings were still a bit weak, or were made in very noisy surroundings. It would be very helpful if Centres could use a room for the examination which is as quiet as possible. It would also help if tests can start during lesson times rather than during break times.

Most Examiners managed the time for the speaking test very well: after a minute's presentation they started to ask questions about the topic for about 4 minutes, leaving 5 minutes for the General Conversation.

There were a few Examiners who stopped 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.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Part 1 Presentation

Most candidates were well prepared and started part 1 of their speaking test with an interesting presentation. Presentations about a topic which truly interests the candidate work the best, because in these presentations the candidate tends to 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.

The candidates this year seemed to be 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.

A number of 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.

Exercise 2 General Conversation

To ensure that no candidates have an unfair advantage, it is important that they are only allowed to choose the topic for the General Conversation during the speaking test, at the start of this section. Candidates have a choice of three topics at that moment, 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 everyone is free 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. It is not the idea to ask all questions from a certain topic one by one without listening to the answers given by the candidate. This part of the test should be a 'conversation'. 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?').

Although it is not always possible, the candidate always has the best chance of a high mark if he or she is 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 what their house or bedroom means to them (Which room in your house do you like best? Why?) can trigger more interesting conversation. Please avoid topics that are too sensitive as this might throw the candidate.

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 thanks for the good work of many Examiners and the excellent preparation of the candidates.

Many Examiners seemed to be well supported by the Centres as well. 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 8 exercises with Dutch texts and mainly English questions.

Question 4 is a matching question. The final exercise requires candidates to write a short answer in Dutch.

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

Most candidates answered the open ended questions in exercises 5 and 7 correctly.

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

Some candidates could not express themselves well enough in English to answer questions correctly.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Exercise: Questions 1-5

This exercise was completed well.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-12

Most candidates received full marks. There was a short text about Neil who told a friend that his school was organising a musical. The only question a few candidates had problems with was Q12 where the text said that the school would be renting chairs (not stools).

Exercise 3 Questions 13-18

This was a short text written by Sarah where she talked about her younger sister (not older!). Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Exercise 4 Questions 19-24

Six statements in Dutch about holidays had to be matched with six questions in English. This exercise was answered correctly by most candidates.

Exercise 5 Questions 25-31

This exercise had a slightly longer Dutch text, about a zoo that needed help. The open-ended questions were in English. Brief answers were required. Many answers were long and sometimes the extra words made the answer invalid. Only one phrase in Dutch seemed to throw many candidates *een olifant redden* is to save an elephant, not to ride an elephant.

Exercise 6 Questions 32-37

Again, this was a longer Dutch text. It was a report about healthy living. Although the exercise was done well the last two questions were not answered correctly by many candidates. In Q36 the candidates thought that playing sports would keep them awake instead of that they could make friends. For Q37 the candidates needed to read the text carefully; you should drink fizzy drinks occasionally.

Exercise 7 Questions 38-43

This Dutch text dealt with outdoor pursuits in winter. Candidates had to give answers to open ended questions in English. Many candidates responded well. Weaker candidates or candidates who didn't read carefully struggled with this text. Q41 How do most people get to the campsite

should be answered “by bike”, however, quite a few candidates explained how people toured through the countryside.

Exercise 8 Questions 44- 49

The final exercise was a report about work experience. Youngsters from Belgium and the Netherlands had answered a questionnaire about jobs after school. The candidates had to answer the five questions in Dutch. This was too difficult for a few candidates or they didn't realise that the questions asked in Dutch should be answered in Dutch.

Q44 Most of the youngsters worked in a supermarket.

Q45 Most candidates found the correct sentence in the text, some explained in their own words why youngsters with their own company were not factored in.

Q46 Not all candidates could explain what problem the girl in the text had.

Q47 Again, if the candidates understood the text they came up with the right answer.

Q48 Many candidates found it difficult to find the right answer for what most pupils thought of their job (7/10).

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, rather than answering the first two. Many choose the question about their best friend (Q1) and the question about the school (Q5).

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. Although there were not as many candidates as the last few years, a few candidates answered more than two questions and many wrote far more than 150 words. Some candidates wrote significantly less 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.

Many candidates expressed themselves well and wrote each essay for a different purpose, such as a blog, a magazine article, a report or a letter. Some candidates went off task, which can easily be avoided by using the bullet points. 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

Candidates were asked to write a blog post about their friends. This subject was chosen by a majority of candidates. Many wrote about their best friend. Some talked about their best friend in the Netherlands, some about their best friend in the UK. There were some moving accounts about how a friend had helped them to integrate in a new town or country. Most of the candidates agreed that it was very necessary to have friends to share problems and to enjoy each others' company while going to the cinema or to an event.

Question No.2

Candidates were asked to write a magazine article about typical Dutch or British food. Many candidates described in detail their favourite Dutch food (kibbeling, hagelstag, stamppot and oliebollen). Quite a few candidates compared Dutch food with British food. Most candidates knew a lot about the food they ate and what was healthy and what was less healthy.

Question No.3

In this question the candidate was asked to write a report about festivals such as New Year, Eid or Sinterklaas. Some candidates gave an explanation of what Sinterklaas or Eid was and forgot to give opinions or points of view with justifications. There were some candidates who were in favour or against the introduction of multi-coloured Pieten. Eid was described beautifully by some candidates and a lot of them would like to celebrate it in a Muslim country so everybody would celebrate with them. The fireworks on New Year's Eve in the Netherlands was also a favourite event.

Question No.4

Candidates were asked to write an email to a friend about protecting the environment. This was the least favourite topic, but candidates who did write about it often wrote a very thoughtful

essay. Most candidates followed the suggested guidelines giving them a good opportunity to increase their communication marks as it invited them to give their opinions on the topic.

Question No.5

In this question candidates were asked to write to a friend about school life in the UK and the Netherlands. Although in the suggestions given, candidates were not asked to compare British schools with their Dutch schools most candidates did this anyway. They thought that the main difference between the two countries was the uniform. Some told about the different schooling system and most thought that the British system was better than the Dutch although the fact that Dutch pupils could leave school premises when a teacher was ill was seen as more favourable than having to stay in school.

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