



Stage 6 Languages Beginners Courses

Higher School Certificate Oral Examination –

General Information for Teachers

Applies to Stage 6 Languages Beginners courses in:

- Arabic (from 2009 HSC)
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Modern Greek
- Spanish

2008

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Stage 6 Languages Beginners

Oral Examination – General information for teachers

Introduction

This document provides general information for teachers preparing students for the HSC Beginners oral examination in Arabic (from 2009 HSC), Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Modern Greek and Spanish.

Other relevant documents include:

- Stage 6 [Language] Beginners Syllabus
- Marking Guidelines for Stage 6 [Language] Beginners Oral examination
- HSC Languages Oral Examinations Timetable.

All these documents are available on the Board's website: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

General information

The outcomes listed below represent the knowledge, understanding and skills that students are expected to achieve by the end of the Higher School Certificate course, as they relate to the oral component of the syllabus. The degree to which students achieve these outcomes is assessed in the examination.

Outcomes

The student:

- 1.1 establishes and maintains communication in [Language]
- 1.2 manipulates linguistic structures to express ideas effectively in [Language]
- 1.3 sequences ideas and information.

The HSC Beginners oral examination consists of a general conversation between the student and the examiner and will last approximately 5 minutes. In the conversation, students are asked to respond to questions about their personal world as it relates to the prescribed topics, for example, friends, recreation and pastimes. Neither the number of questions nor the number of topics is predetermined. However, students can expect to be asked a range of questions covering a range of prescribed topics.

Questions may relate to a previous response or introduce a new topic. This ensures that no two students have the same examination. However, every student can expect similar opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Questions that introduce a new topic are likely to be simpler than subsequent questions on the same topic. This ensures that students have the opportunity to demonstrate both depth and breadth in their responses.

Students should use their responses to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to the syllabus outcomes and content. They should answer each question with specific information related to the question.

Questions will generally be open-ended, thus providing the student with an opportunity to express ideas, and to use a variety of vocabulary and structures that will demonstrate evidence of his or her achievement of the outcomes, rather than questions that lead to yes/no answers or answers that simply consist of lists.

Relevant elaboration is encouraged, especially if it demonstrates the student's knowledge and understanding of a range of language structures. However, students are strongly advised not to use the questions as a means of dominating the conversation with a prepared response that resembles a monologue. Performance is assessed on what the student understands and is able to demonstrate, and not on something which has possibly been prepared by another party. *In the interests of the student*, such monologues will be interrupted at an appropriate point. Otherwise, the examiner will refrain from interrupting the candidate.

The oral examination is assessed holistically, not question by question. Students should therefore not be concerned if they do not understand an individual question. In such cases, they can ask for the question to be repeated without penalty. The examiner will not offer any assistance in relation to sentence construction or vocabulary, and students should not seek such assistance. The examiner may rephrase a question. If the student does not attempt to answer the question and does not make any other comment in relation to the question within a reasonable amount of time, the examiner will move on to a different question.

Throughout and after the examination, the examiner will not give any indication of the student's performance.

Students are advised to maintain anonymity. They must not identify themselves or their school. General references to locations and people are acceptable.