



Stage 6 Languages Continuers Courses

Higher School Certificate Oral Examination –

General Information for Teachers

Applies to Stage 6 Languages Continuers courses in:

- Armenian
- Croatian
- Dutch
- Filipino
- Hindi
- Hungarian
- Khmer
- Korean
- Macedonian
- Maltese
- Modern Hebrew
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Serbian
- Swedish
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese

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Stage 6 Languages Continuers

Oral Examination – General information for teachers

Introduction

This document provides general information for teachers preparing students for the HSC Continuers oral examination in Armenian, Croatian, Dutch, Filipino, Hindi, Hungarian, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Maltese, Modern Hebrew, Polish, Portuguese, Serbian, Swedish, Tamil, Turkish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

Other relevant documents include:

- Stage 6 [Language] Continuers Syllabus
- Previous *Notes from the Marking Centre*
- Marking Guidelines for Stage 6 [Language] Continuers 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 will be assessed in the examination.

Outcomes

The student:

- 1.1 uses a range of strategies to maintain communication
- 1.2 conveys information appropriate to context, purpose and audience
- 1.3 exchanges and justifies opinions and ideas on known topics
- 1.4 reflects on past, present and future experience
- 4.1 recognises and employs language appropriate to different social contexts.

The HSC Continuers oral examination has two sections, a general conversation that takes approximately 7 minutes and a discussion that takes approximately 8 minutes. The student may support the conversation and discussion with objects such as photographs, pictures, diagrams and maps, but no notes or cue cards are permitted. No other materials with printed text, eg posters, brochures or scrapbooks, are permitted.

Conversation

In the conversation, the student is asked questions relating to his/her personal world for example: life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. 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 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 should 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 the student has the opportunity to demonstrate both depth and breadth in his/her 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.

Relevant elaboration is encouraged, especially if 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, 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.

Discussion

The aim of the discussion is to demonstrate the student's ability to explore with the examiner the topic of the in-depth study the student has selected. At the beginning of the examination, the student will be asked to indicate the subject and possibly provide some information relating to the topic, after which, a discussion of the topic takes place. During the discussion the student could be asked, for example, to identify issues, express ideas and justify and substantiate opinions related to the chosen topic. In addition, the student will be expected to make reference to the texts read and resources studied.

When deciding on the subject of the in-depth study, teachers and students should consider whether the topic provides an opportunity for the student to:

- study at least three texts
- present a point of view
- engage with the examiner in a discussion of issues.

In addition, when preparing for this section of the examination, students should consider a number of factors:

- ***The appropriateness of the topic***
Students should carefully consider the topic to ensure that it meets the requirements of the syllabus. Topics which involve, for example, descriptions of places of interest or cultural festivals may preclude discussion.

Similarly, students should be familiar with any technical vocabulary related to the topic they select. This is especially relevant for any technology-based topics.

- ***Choice of texts***
Students should ensure that they study a range of texts, which can include literary, informational texts and those from electronic sources. It is recommended that texts not come from a single source such as the internet.

- ***The use of supporting objects***
As detailed in the External Examination Specifications, the syllabus allows students to support the discussion with individual objects such as photographs, pictures, diagrams and maps. However, it does not include items such as cue cards, notes, scrapbooks, posters, magazines, newspapers or photo albums. There must be no written information or annotations either in English or in the language being examined. Students need to be reminded that supporting objects serve only as a prompt and in no way contribute to the mark awarded.
- ***The suitability of supporting objects***
Any object, image or photograph brought to the examination must conform to broad community ethical standards. All material will be checked prior to the examination. Students will not be permitted to take into the examination any item or items which are deemed to be inappropriate or do not conform to the identified specifications.

Conversation and discussion

Responses are assessed holistically, not question by question. Students should 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.

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

The examiner will not correct the student or assist with sentence construction or responses in any way. The examiner will not offer assistance to the student by providing vocabulary or expressions in [Language], or any translation of words into English.

Throughout and after the oral 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.