

General comments

Practical examination

Candidates were well aware of examination processes and procedures and appeared relaxed and comfortable. They were well prepared, demonstrating a thorough knowledge of course content and contexts. Most of the candidates were able to maintain a conversation for the full 12 minutes and demonstrated some good insights into the topics. The discussion of the stimulus was not done as well as the conversation, with answers remaining on a superficial level most of the time.

Grammatical accuracy, or the lack thereof, was clearly an issue. It was noted that while rote learning responses is good for preparation and vocabulary, it can hinder the natural flow of a conversation. Candidates were generally quite fluent and confident.

Advice for candidates

- Maintain eye contact throughout the interview.
- Select the stimulus item wisely.
- Express your opinion on the topics.
- Be original in your responses.

Advice for teachers

- Explain to your students what to do if they recognise the examiner.
- Talk students through the process of the examination, including what they can expect a marker to say at the beginning of the interview and at the end of Part B.

Written examination

Candidates appeared to have adequate time to complete the paper. Almost all managed to answer all questions although one or two seemed to have to cut their time on the extended answer short. One or two did not complete some of the comprehension questions but overall the paper was well attempted. Questions appeared to be largely accessible to candidates in terms of the relevance of content.

The paper appeared to be of an appropriate level of difficulty overall. Text 4 appeared to be more challenging than the others in general. Questions 32 and 35 were the most popular questions of the writing section and overall were better handled than the other questions in the written section. The longer the writing went on for, the more frequent the errors and more off-topic candidates tended to go. Those who kept closer to the word limit tended to be more succinct, accurate and demonstrated better editing. It was evident that the stimulus and extended answers were not well proofread with basic errors of word order, verb ending and spelling being somewhat of an issue in many responses.

There were some questions which were very successful at discriminating candidate ability. Questions 14 and 15 of Text 3 and Questions 29 and 30 of Text 6 did this well. The first response for Question 27 'Swiss salaries are the best in the world' was answered as true by all but one candidate. Other successful differentiators were Questions 25(a), 25(b) and 'in moderation' in 25(c).

Some questions elicited similar and incorrect responses – '*Freiraum*' in Question 20 was often translated as 'free room' rather than 'own space/breathing space' or 'freedom' which could have been clarified with accurate dictionary use. Similarly, '*Firma*' in Question 13 was creatively translated as 'film' and 'cinema' and even 'castle'. Candidates should also realise that in Question 26 Switzerland is landlocked and cannot therefore have any 'magical seas' and that 'See' is 'lake' in this context. With Question 16, candidates appeared to look for the question mark in the text and work backwards, leading to an incorrect response of 'to live alone or with

friends' as his question rather than 'if it is time to move out'. This was also a good point of differentiation.

Advice for candidates

- Proof read your work carefully.
- Adhere to the word limit.
- You need to consider the mark allocation of questions.

Advice for teachers

- Explicitly teach your students how to use a dictionary.
- Ensure students are aware of the differences between text types.
- Explain to your students that writing more than the suggested word limit is of no benefit to them, especially when it is simply repetition.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Practical examination

Part B: Discussion of stimulus (19 Marks)

Most candidates demonstrated strong comprehension skills, however responses prepared by the candidates varied and were at times quite superficial.

Part C: Conversation (20 Marks)

Candidates demonstrated excellent comprehension of the topics, however responses varied in terms of detail and examples provided.

Written examination

Section One Response: Listening (43 Marks)

This section was characterised by poor translation and dictionary usage.

Section Two Response: Viewing and reading (62 Marks)

Candidate responses frequently contained too much information. More time needed to be spent on understanding what was required of each question and providing a succinct response.

Section Three Written communication Part A: Stimulus response (20 Marks)

This year, candidates were much better at linking their responses to the stimulus and relating rote-learned information to the question. There were still basic grammatical errors but overall, candidates use of register and text type was good.

Section Three Written communication Part B: Extended response (20 Marks)

In this section, the candidates' lack of familiarity with certain text types was evident. There were also missed opportunities to relate rote-learned knowledge to the topic. This was compounded by basic grammatical errors of word order, verb ending and spelling.