



A-LEVEL POLISH

7687/1

Report on the Examination

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General Overview

Following last year's decrease in the number of entries, it was encouraging to see an increase in numbers of students sitting the exam this year. The quality of work produced was, on the whole, of a good or a very good standard. As in previous years, some questions discriminated very well, including Q3 (non-verbal F/T/N) and Q5 (translation). In Section B some essays, especially on the topics 07 and 08, lacked the knowledge and depth required for achieving marks in the higher bands. The students who chose topics 06 or 09 seemed to be better prepared and as a result were awarded more marks for their answers.

SECTION A

Question 1

This question was well answered, especially 01.2 and 01.3 with the vast majority of students scoring full marks. The least successful section was 01.1 where many students failed to explain how large families are portrayed in the press. Some students simply copied a part of a phrase from the first paragraph, with the 'attack of barbarians' being the most frequent.

Question 2

Generally, students performed well in this question, with nearly half of the students scoring six marks out of the seven available for AO2, and almost 70% of students scoring four or five marks for AO3. Those who failed to gain marks did so because of lifting from the text or made grammar errors which affected communication. It is worth reminding students that they should aim to write summaries in their own words, avoid lifting from the text and aim for the recommended length of 90 words.

Question 3

This 'true/false/not in the text' task was generally well done. Questions 03.1, 03.4, 03.7 and 03.8 were very straightforward with most students answering them correctly. The rest, and especially 03.5 and 03.6, were answered less successfully, with the latter proving to be particularly difficult, possibly because of the word *pełnometrażowy*, which was erroneously seen as a key word. As in previous years, Q3 discriminated well between lower and higher attaining students.

Question 4

This was well answered by many students. Question 04.2 seemed to be most challenging, with only a third of the cohort scoring full marks. In question 04.4, some students mentioned only positive values (without adding that these values related to migration and impact of Polish emigrants on the countries they moved to), which was not enough to score a mark; all in all the question was answered well.

Question 5

This was the translation task. There was a wide range of marks scored and the question discriminated well between lower and higher attaining students. Very few scored full marks, but around 75% of students did manage to gain at least six marks out of ten and this was a better result than last year. Some phrases or vocabulary proved to be quite challenging. Below are some examples:

- erroneous renditions of *zaledwie* (English *only*) – it was translated as *more than, around, less than*
- *filia* was often omitted, despite the fact that the text included the word *kampus* which could have helped to understand and translate it
- *uczelnia* was often translated as *school*, which was accepted
- *doświadczenie* was often (surprisingly) rendered as *opportunity*, as opposed to *experience*
- only most able students translated *zabytkowy park* accurately – most translated it erroneously as *ancient or national*
- *łowieckie* was often translated incorrectly as *fishing*
- idiom *rzut kamieniem* was challenging for many (it was often translated literally as *stone's throw*), but equally a fair number of students translated it correctly as *very close*
- *punkt wyjścia* was often rendered as *exit*, which in this context was not accurate
- finally, and rather surprisingly, vocabulary related to directions (*wschodniej and środkowo-wschodniej*) seemed to be a challenge for many, even though one would expect it to be basic knowledge.

It is worth asking teachers to widen (when possible) the range of stimulus materials and help students to build up a more extensive and varied vocabulary. Also, it is recommended that students read a variety of books, newspapers, magazines, and online resources in contemporary Polish.

SECTION B

Students were required to write one essay on the research topic which should have been chosen at the beginning of the course. They had to use information available from the source text provided in the exam paper and link this information to the knowledge gained during their individual research. Those students who demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of the research topic and were able to present relevant information supporting/illustrating their arguments scored the highest number of marks for AO4. Similarly to last year, those who chose topics related to communism in Poland (Q6) and the resistance movement (Q9) performed better than students who opted for either Q7 (racism) or Q8 (tourism).

Students who used a good or wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the context and the task, and who showed a good grasp of grammar and were able to manipulate complex language accurately, were able to score marks in higher bands in AO3. It is worth noting that many students were able to do so.

Regarding AO2 and understanding and using the information provided in the source text, it is worth reminding all students that it is best to read the text a couple or more times, including after reading the essay question. Many students were able to use all information successfully, but there were some who failed to notice the connection between the question essay and the contents of the text, thus they did not score highly for AO2.

Question 6

This was the most popular choice. Some students produced essays that were detailed and fully relevant to the question set. They showed an excellent knowledge and understanding of the censorship and its impact on Polish society during the era of communism and were able to score high marks for AO4. Those who scored less well were not able to provide enough relevant arguments or support them with relevant and appropriate evidence (eg censorship and propaganda as ways to control and manipulate society, language, the press, education, lack of

personal freedom, the culture of distrust and fear). Students wrote in generally good language, showing a good grasp of grammar and a good range of vocabulary relevant to the context and the task. Most students scored seven or more for AO3, which was a very pleasing result.

Question 7

This topic was chosen by around a quarter of all students. Similarly to Q8, this topic seems to be perceived as relatively easy, but the essays showed that not many students were thoroughly prepared for it. It would be fair to say that the quality of essays was on a par with last year's. A vast majority of answers lacked relevant knowledge, and only a small number of students were able to provide support for their arguments (from the historical, political or cultural context). Instead, many essays contained widespread stereotypes (eg "*Poles are usually seen as racists, and this is what many of my friends at school say*") being an often used illustration). On the other hand, there were students who explained and argued the case of existence of racism in Poland as a result of historical events, with some contesting and challenging some widely spread stereotypes. Some essays contained very thoughtful and mature arguments supported by the information gained during research and a good or very good evaluation of the topic. Many students generally showed a good level of Polish language, hence scoring highly for AO3.

Question 8

This was the second most popular choice in this section. As in the case of Question 7, the topic around tourism is being seen as relatively easy, but this year as in previous years failed to produce very good results. The most common misconception seems to be the belief that frequent visits to Poland and the awareness (without any significant details) of just a few most popular tourist attractions constitutes a good research of this topic. This was evident as some students based their essays on their travels to Poland and were describing some food they ate (pierogi, oscypek, pierniki, ciastka kremowe), without linking it to the question set. Some answers simply focused on the source text and contained information about Poznan and St. Martin's croissant. Those students who did not mention any other culinary route scored lower marks for AO4. On the other hand, these students usually performed well in AO2 and AO3.

Equally, there were some excellent and detailed essays analysing culinary and tourist attractions of Malopolska and Zakopane region, which seems to be by far the most popular for this year's cohort. Delicacies from Torun and Pomerania region were also mentioned, which was interesting as these regions seem to be gaining in popularity in recent years.

Question 9

Again, the topic related to the resistance movement during WWII was least popular (chosen by less than 10% of students this year), but those students who chose it performed relatively better than others. Many students scored sixteen or more marks for AO4 which was the highest for all research topic questions. The arguments were often illustrated with factual and detailed knowledge about the civil resistance movement and the information, arguments and evaluation were presented in a clear and sophisticated choice of language, hence scoring high marks for AO3. Some students shared their ways of conducting the research and it was interesting to find out that many use varied sources and methods, including visiting museums, following historical channels, reading various text books or WWII focused blogs.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.