
GCSE

POLISH

8688/WF Paper 4 Writing Foundation Tier
Report on the Examination

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GENERAL OVERVIEW

There were just over 350 entries this year for this specification. This is a group of students who in theory should have gone through the full exam preparatory course. However, as in last year, the quality of work produced was mixed. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on or formulate meaningful conclusions.

The ability to use varied vocabulary, a range of tenses and knowledge of structures was on a satisfactory level. Some students were able to express opinions, but it was evident that some struggled with it. The poor spelling continues to be a challenge for many, with some answers written phonetically in their entirety thus affecting the ability to communicate. This is reflected in generally lower marks for the quality of language across the paper.

QUESTION 1

Students are required to write four sentences about what is in the photograph. Each sentence is marked separately and is worth a maximum of two marks. Because clarity of the message is the key element, the students who were most successful in this question were those who used simple language, usually with a verb like *widzę* or *jest*, followed by something they could see in the photo. This year around 75% of students managed to gain 1 or more marks in this question. Many answers were unintelligible or ambiguous, e.g. *Naučele gada do chopak i dziewczin* or *na fotografi widzi cztery klavjatury*. Some answers had no verb or included incorrectly conjugated verb. This caused a delay or entirely broke the communication, which meant less or a total loss of marks.

QUESTION 2

In this question there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 40 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points are compulsory and must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets. Many successful responses were concise and addressed all bullet points. It seems that all bullet points (*lokalne kino, jak często się tam chodzi, co można kupić tam do jedzenia i picia oraz co się tam ostatnio oglądało*) were understood by most of the students, but many students would benefit from developing their answers further. For example, the first bullet point which required some sort of description of a local cinema (for example it is big, old, has four screens, or comfortable chairs, etc.) has proved to be a challenge for some students. Some simply wrote cinema's name (*to kino to Vue*) which was not clear enough to be awarded marks. Around 55% of all students scored eight or more marks for Content. The Quality of Language was mixed, with 60% students scoring four or more marks. Those who scored marks in lower bands wrote in a repetitive, inaccurate, inappropriate (*heja, lukalem tam Batmana*) or lifted (often erroneously) language. Examples include: *kino jest ok, tam kupic pop corn, picia to cola. ostatnio ogladales Batman*).

QUESTION 3

For this question, there are 5 marks for Conveying key messages and 5 marks for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. Given that the level of demand of the messages is aimed at covering Grades 1 to 5, the question differentiated well. It seemed that many students found the translation challenging. Less than 50% of all students scored three or more marks for conveying the message, while less than 40% managed to gain three or more marks for

application of grammatical knowledge and structures. Students are reminded to practise high frequency words and phrases and make sure they are familiar with the Vocabulary List for Foundation level which should be available to anyone preparing for the exam at this level.

The sentences in this question were divided into 12 key messages, and the main issues were as follows:

- *most difficult subject* was often omitted or mistranslated as *trudny topic, najtrudny lektura*
- many students did not attempt to translate *behind* in the second sentence
- *plaza* was often misspelt as *plaga* (eng. back translation – plague), which affected the communication
- *clothes shop* was sometimes (surprisingly!) not attempted or translated as *sklepie ubraniowy* or *sklepu ciuchowy*; *sklepie z ciuchami* and *sklepie z ubraniami* were both accepted;
- *piano* was very often rendered as *piano*, instead of *pianino*; it is worth noting that the word *fortepian* was also accepted
- *accidents* were often rendered as *akcy-* or *accidenti*
- *happen* was often translated as *są*
- *thoughtless use* was translated correctly by just a small number of students
- some students attempted to translate sentences word for word with no regard for any grammar or structures in the target language which affected the intended meaning and resulted in losing marks
- omitting words, for example *My friend Ewa* translated as simply *Ewa* or *I think Physics ...* translated as *Fizika ...*

QUESTION 4

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to choose either question 4.1 or question 4.2 (this year they focused on customs/festivals and travel respectively) and write approximately 90 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets.

The overwhelming majority of students sitting the exam in this series have chosen Question 4.2. The bullet points were well understood and most of the students were able to respond successfully to all of them. Many students conveyed a lot of information, including details and shared their opinions, for example *lubie jeździć na wakacje. Ostatnio pojechałam do Polski, odwiedziliśmy babcię i potem pojechalismy do Muzeum Kopernika. Bardzo mi się tam wszystko podobało, bo były filmy i gry* or *Na wakacje jeżdżę z rodzicami, ale myślę że z kolegami jest lepiej, bo można wszystko robić, można się relaksować cały dzień i jest mało sprzeczek. Tylko, że koledzy na pewno tak dobrze nie gotują jak mama czy babcia. Myślę, że za rok pojadę z kolegami do Grecji, bo tam jest zawsze ciepło i wszyscy lubimy pływać.* Option 4.1 which focused on customs and traditions was chosen by around a quarter of all students. Interestingly, these were also weaker answers, often missing responses to one or more bullet points, written in a repetitive language, with no variety of structures. Bullet point number one was often misunderstood and students wrote about weekly assemblies (*ostatnia uroczystość, w jakiej brałem udział to asembly w szkole*) or sport events (*ostatnio uroczystość, co byłem to był mecz piłki nożnej*). The last bullet point (*różnice między obchodzeniem różnych świąt w Polsce i w Anglii*) was often interpreted as difference related strictly to company in which people celebrate (*w Polsce to jesteśmy z rodzinami, a tu nie*), and many students did not mention wider differences between celebrating for example Christmas,

Easter or name's day. Those who did so, usually were able to score higher marks due to inclusion of details and opinions.

Students who attempted to use a variety of vocabulary and language, for example different adjectives, variety of structures and appropriate linking words, were able to score higher marks for quality of language. Having said that, a large number of answers contained many accuracy errors and were written phonetically making deciphering the message not only difficult, but sometimes not possible.

There were many students who stopped writing once they reached the recommended number of words thus finishing their answer in the middle of a sentence. Also, in attempt to write only the recommended number of words, students often limited themselves to a couple of sentences for each bullet point, which sometimes meant that the answers were not developed or did not contain enough details to be awarded marks in the highest bands. It should be stressed and reminded that the whole student's answer is read and marked.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is worth pointing out that the difficulty of the exam was comparable to previous years. On the other hand, the overall students' ability to write in the target language has gone down. One area that stands out and which significantly affects the ability to communicate in writing is the accuracy which this year was less good than in previous sessions. There were many more answers where this not only affected communication, but also prevented from conveying the message in its entirety. There may be several reasons for this and they may include lack of preparation and not enough writing practice ahead of the exam.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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