

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE Chinese (4CN0)
Paper 03

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Publications Code UG031884

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Examiner Report

This is the second year for this separately endorsed speaking paper. It is pleasing to find that the candidates continued to perform well and the majority of them achieved high grades. The topics and exam procedures remained the same as last year.

There are two sections in this speaking paper covering three different topics. Section A is a picture based presentation and discussion. The candidates give an introduction to their chosen picture in one minute, followed by discussion with the interviewer for three minutes. Section B consists of two separate conversations on two different topics chosen by the interviewer, each conversation lasting for three minutes. The assessment is 10 minutes in total.

The five topic areas were:

- A – Home and abroad
- B – Education and employment
- C – House, home & daily routine
- D – The modern world and the environment
- E – Social activities, fitness and health

They were equally attempted by all candidates. Topic areas A, B, C, and E continued to be the favourite topics and those who attempted these topics normally managed to give a good accounts using to their own experiences well. Topic D still appears to be more challenging. Candidates who chose this topic area for their Section A exam were well prepared and performed well, but this was not the case for the unprepared conversations in Section B. Some candidates, especially the weaker one, had limited knowledge or language to express their views and opinions. Candidates are reminded they should be well prepared for all the topic areas for the exam.

Section A

The candidates were generally well prepared and they normally gave a good account on their chosen pictures. It was found that the interviewer plays an important role in the following discussion. Many interviewers managed to exploit the candidates' knowledge and language skills by asking opened-ended questions to elicit opinions, imaginative ideas and predictions. Those who didn't, limited their candidates' performance. In some cases, the interviewer allowed the candidate to give a monologue on the chosen topic without interactions. These discrepancies in conducting the examination had adverse effect on candidates' communication and spontaneity marks. Hence, centres are advised to follow the guidelines when conducting the examination so that candidates can have the maximum chance to achieve good grades.

Section B

On the whole, this section was well conducted. Many interviewers managed to carry out genuine conversations with candidates, asking appropriate questions to

elicit their knowledge of the topics and various language skills. As this section consisted of two unprepared conversations on two different topics chosen by the interviewer, the performance of the candidates varied. For the competent candidates, they continued to perform well; but for the weaker ones, some appeared to struggle in the conversations, lacking the knowledge and language skills to respond appropriately. This section differentiated the language abilities of the candidates. It was commonly found that candidates scored lower marks in this section than in Section A.

Further guidance for centres

- Always include a picture which can provide a context for discussion in Section A.
- Always ask open-ended questions to elicit ideas and opinions, not just facts.
- Do not use the same picture / set of questions for the whole cohort.
- Allow individuality in Section A: different candidates might wish to focus on different topics . The topic chosen should be in favour of candidates' interests and knowledge.

Administration

Centres should note the following:

- It is always helpful for the examiners to receive the scripts in candidate number order.
- Always include the Candidate cover sheet. This can be found in the Teacher's guide Appendix 2 which can be downloaded from the Edexcel website.
- Include the picture for Section A.
- Place the microphone in favour of the candidate.
- Listen to the recording and check if it is audible and clear before sending to the examiner.
- Label the cassette/CD/MP3/memory stick with the candidates' names in the order that they are heard on the recording.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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