

# **Modern Greek (continuers)**

2011 Assessment Report



Government  
of South Australia

**SACE**  
Board of SA

# MODERN GREEK (CONTINUERS)

## 2011 ASSESSMENT REPORT

### OVERVIEW

Assessment reports give an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

### GENERAL

In 2011, twenty-nine students presented themselves for the examination with the same number submitting work for moderation from seven schools.

Moderation of the school assessment resulted in adjustment to some grades for a number of schools. There was a wide variety of standards presented for moderation. It was evident that teachers who had familiarised themselves with the Stage 2 subject outline and school assessment requirements had prepared their students well and based their assessment decisions appropriately on the performance standards.

### SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

#### Assessment Type 1: Folio

The folio is made up of three different assessment types: interaction, text analysis, and text production. As all schools had ten or fewer students, all students' work was presented for moderation. Schools have the choice (as stated in the learning and assessment plan) of asking students to complete between three and five assessments for their folio, including at least one assessment of each of the above assessment types. Most schools chose to complete five assessment tasks (one interaction task, two text analysis tasks, and two text production tasks).

The interaction assessment task has to give students an opportunity to interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions, or experiences in Modern Greek. Some schools allowed students to give an oral presentation, even though the learning and assessment plan clearly indicated an interaction. Some schools did not follow the assessment description or the assessment conditions indicated on the approved learning and assessment plan. Changes to the learning and assessment plan should be indicated on the addendum page of the learning and assessment plan.

The text analysis was the assessment type of most concern. Students need to analyse sufficient text to show that they can perform at the highest level of the performance standards. Teachers must ensure that the assessment design criteria, as outlined in the assessment task sheet and in the learning and assessment plan,

have been assessed. Specific feature IR2 (Analysis of the language in texts) would most logically be assessed by a text analysis assessment task, yet many students were not given the opportunity to address this specific feature using this assessment type. Questions should be designed to give all students the opportunity to perform at all levels of the performance standards.

Grades allocated in the text production tasks were by far the most consistent. A variety of tasks were presented to students and they were designed to meet all levels of the performance standards.

## **Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study**

The in-depth study allows students to demonstrate research into and personal reflection on an aspect or aspects of a topic— preferably one that the student is interested in — and then present a written response in Modern Greek, an oral presentation in Modern Greek, and a reflective response in English.

The majority of schools managed this task very well and students achieved a very high standard. The best responses showed clear evidence of research and were elicited using a clear set of guidelines in the task description.

The written responses in Modern Greek were, in the majority of cases, of high standard and with good choices of topics.

Some examples of topics chosen this year were:

- Byzantine Empire
- Rembetika
- Chios
- El Greco
- Turkish Occupation of Greece
- Aghia Sophia

and the 'old favourites' of migration and famous Greeks. Tasks should be designed carefully so that students are guided in their research and are able to extract relevant information from various sources.

The oral presentations were a mixed standard. The better presentations were a good standard and presented an interesting and relevant aspect of the research. Teachers should note that the subject outline requires the three assessments to be different in context, audience, and purpose. The response for the oral task cannot be the same as the response for the written task. Some students presented a written piece which was almost identical to their oral presentation.

The reflective response in English also proved a challenge for some students. Students would benefit from careful guidelines in the task description, including suggestions about what they need to address in order to write a good reflective response. In some examples there was a paragraph or two where students reflected on their learning, but then lapsed into a recount of the information they had in their Modern Greek written response.

Word count is very important here, as is the opportunity to address specific feature IR3 (reflection). If students exceed the word count of 600 words, and they have not addressed any reflection in the first 600 words, then their grade will be affected and they may not be able to achieve at the highest level described in the performance

standards. Many responses were about 800 words. Teachers need to guide and support their students carefully in order for them to have the opportunity to achieve at the highest level.

## **EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT**

### **Assessment Type 3: Examination**

#### **Oral Examination**

##### *Section 1: Conversation*

The oral examination of 10–15 minutes comprises a conversation and a discussion of the student's in-depth study.

In the conversation section, students converse about their personal world. Topics covered typically include life, family and friends, home, local environment, school, hobbies, interests, aspirations, and travel. Most students performed well in this section, reflecting thorough preparation.

The most successful students provided extensive, relevant responses to the questions asked. They were able to move the conversation forward confidently, displaying a good command of the language and an extensive vocabulary. These students also readily clarified, elaborated on, and justified their opinions and ideas and paid particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress, and tempo.

Successful students possessed a sound working knowledge and mastery of all the tenses and were able to use complex structures including passive and subjunctive moods. They were also at ease using the second person plural when addressing examiners and asking for clarification if they did not understand the examiners' questions.

Other students were able to discuss a wide range of topics, but it was evident that they were not fully prepared. Common errors included incorrect article and gender, and syntactical errors e.g. *η επανάσταση ξάπλωσε σ'όλη την Ελλάδα, αξιόπηστο πηγή.*

A few students had difficulty in responding to a variety of topics. They appeared to understand the questions, but they needed considerable prompting with their answers and their responses were very simplistic. They were unable to advance the conversation as their vocabulary was limited and their expression poor. They frequently resorted to Anglicisms and rote-learned material. They often confused genders e.g. *η μάθημα, τα φίλες μου, τα γονείς μου, πολύ αρέσω.*

##### *Section 2: Discussion*

The discussion section of the oral examination relates to the in-depth study where students are required to discuss a topic that they have researched at length — one that relates to an aspect or aspects of a topic associated with 'The Greek-speaking Communities' or 'The Changing World' themes. As part of the discussion, students may be asked questions relating to their reflective response. This proved quite challenging for a lot of students, as they were not able to transfer the information they had compiled in English for the reflective response into Greek to support their answers. Many were simply repeating facts and repeating information.

Those students who had chosen their topics wisely and had researched them at length stood out from the rest of the student cohort. They were thoroughly prepared and were able to maintain and advance the discussion appropriately and effectively. They maintained the discussion and used the texts and resources studied to support their ideas and opinions. They demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of their topic and were skilled in expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions. They had also mastered the linguistic elements of the language and used an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures effectively.

Unprepared students found this section very challenging. Several students had not been guided sufficiently and they struggled to respond to the questions and were unable to reflect on their own learning.

The problems that students encountered with the use of the language were similar to those they encountered in the conversation. The stronger responses were clear and thorough with a depth of information. These students had the appropriate vocabulary and grammar required to discuss their topic with ease resulting in an interesting discussion. They were also able to reflect on their learning effectively.

### **Written Examination**

Section 2, Reading and Responding Part A, proved the most difficult for students again this year. Questions that required text analysis or language evaluation still proved challenging for many students.

#### *Section 1: Listening and Responding*

Overall, this section was answered very well. The majority of students were able to identify the information in the texts and respond appropriately.

This year there were five unrelated texts of varying lengths and types. For all texts, the questions and answers were in English.

Q. 1: This question was answered very well and the majority of students were able to name the features of the gym that would appeal to Elli.

Q. 2: Both questions about this text were analytical questions. These questions proved to be challenging for students.

Part (a) proved more difficult. Students had to describe Katina's language and then reflect on her attitude.

Part (b) was answered slightly better; students were able to describe Makis's character as revealed by the text.

Q. 3: This text proved to be the easiest in the listening and responding section, with a considerable number of students achieving full marks.

Q. 4: Questions on this text were answered very well, with part (b) being proving to be the easiest. Students were able to compare the speakers' views on personal image. Students who supported their answers with evidence from the text were the most successful.

Q. 5: This text proved to be the most difficult in the listening and responding section, especially part (b). Students were able to identify the reasons why many people

believed it was important to uphold customs and traditions. However, in part (b) many students confused the 'speaker's' belief which was opposite to that held by many.

### *Section 2: Reading and Responding*

#### **Part A**

This section proved the most difficult for students again this year.

Q. 6: This text was about Greek Shadow Theatre — Karagiozis. The text outlined the history of the folkloric shadow theatre — its origins, how it arrived in Greece, and why and how its popularity grew. This text carried 8 marks distributed over a four-part question.

Q. 6 (a): Students who answered this question correctly, distinguished between 'how' the shadow theatre come to Greece and 'where' it came from.

Q. 6 (b): Most students answered this question well, providing relevant detail.

Q. 6 (c): Most students were able to identify how Karagiozis represents the ideal Greek — poor, uneducated, caring about what was happening around him. The best answers included that he 'philosophises about life'.

Q. 6 (d): This question was answered well and the majority of students identified that every Greek could see a little bit of himself/herself in Karagiozis.

Q. 7: This text was an article on George Dalaras and his relationship with the Greeks of the diaspora. It was a three-part question worth 7 marks.

While this was a reasonably easy text students did not fare well. It was evident by the responses to 7 (a) and 7 (b) that some students did not fully understand the questions and were not able to critically analyse the language used in the text.

Q. 7 (a): Students found this question the easiest of the three questions. The better answers mentioned that Dalaras only began to understand the significance of music to Greeks when he began collaborating with other writers/composers.

Q. 7 (b): This question proved very challenging. The better answers included an analysis of the text, which involved more than a direct translation of the third paragraph of the text. These answers included the idea that Dalaras 'was humbled, appreciative, and thankful for their appreciation of Greek music', as well as the more readily interpreted suggestion that 'he was deeply touched by their love for Greek music and their nostalgia for their homeland'.

Q. 7 (c): Overall this question was answered quite well. Many students were able to analyse the text and did so successfully.

#### **Part B**

Q. 8: The stimulus in the examination was a Letter to the Editor where the writer presented his views on the youth of today. Students were required to demonstrate their capacity to understand general and specific aspects of the text, and their ability to convey information accurately and appropriately. Their task was to write their own Letter to the Editor responding to the issues raised by the author of the text.

A wide range of abilities was demonstrated in this section. The more successful responses addressed the issues raised by the author, and presented information using the conventions of a 'formal' letter. These responses were organised, original, and used authentic vocabulary. Students were able to defend their ideas and views clearly and in a balanced and well-presented manner.

The more successful responses:

- strictly observed the word count
- included students own ideas, and supported them with evidence
- adhered to conventions of the text type required.

The grammar needed for a successful response included:

- correct articles
- adjectives that agreed with nouns
- appropriate verb tenses
- active mood
- accurate spelling/use of basic words.

Students should be reminded to use a pseudonym if the answer to a question requires a 'sign-off'.

### *Section 3: Writing in Modern Greek*

Two choices were provided this year, and students had to write 250–300 words in Modern Greek on one of the two questions. Each question required a different text type and style of writing. Question 9 was the most popular question.

A wide range of abilities was observed in this section. Stronger responses showed complex vocabulary and expressions, while weaker responses presented simple ideas and basic vocabulary.

Q. 9: Nearing the end of their stay as an exchange student in Greece, they were asked to write an article for the year book where they reflected on their experiences and also their thoughts about returning home. Many students expressed their ideas well, structured sentences correctly, and wrote in a logical sequence. The better responses addressed the last part of the question and included thoughts about returning home.

Q. 10: Several students attempted this question. This was an email to a friend to convince him or her to work overseas as a volunteer for an international charity.

Most of the students who attempted this question had very strong language skills and were able to present their ideas logically and use persuasive vocabulary. Other students seemed to choose this topic because they preferred to write an email rather than an article, but they did not demonstrate the language skills or the ideas necessary to be successful.

Common language mistakes related to:

- incorrect articles
- verb tenses, especially past perfective and past imperfective
- non-agreement of adjectives and nouns
- incorrect use of cases, especially accusative
- incorrect choice of words (from dictionaries).

## **OPERATIONAL ADVICE**

Teachers need to provide a copy of their approved learning and assessment plan (with any changes noted in the addendum) when submitting student work. This is imperative as it helps when moderating the work. Several schools omitted to do this. It is also advisable that a copy of each task is provided. Most student work had the task attached to their work, but others did not, so in these instances it was difficult for the moderators to work out the description and expectations of the task(s).

Teachers are advised to be mindful of how students' work is presented; each student's work should be separate, with tasks for the two Assessment Types in, for example, a manila folder. Heavy plastic folders are cumbersome and require a 'search' through the many sleeves to find the work. Simple packaging is the most effective.

Chief Assessor  
Modern Greek (continuers)