GCSE
POLISH
8688/WH: Writing (Higher)
Report on the Examination

8688
June 2022

Version: 1.0

General Overview

There were around 5000 entries this year and this number meant it was back to the pre-pandemic level, if not higher. The quality of work produced was encouraging. The paper differentiated relatively well and students were able to score marks over a variety of questions. The quality of work seen in the overlap questions was of a higher standard than at the Foundation tier. The variety of vocabulary, ability to use a range of tenses and more complex language was at times impressive and students were also able to express and justify opinions well. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that many answers would benefit from further justification and illustration and from keeping to the suggested bullet points. While spelling was generally at a good level, some answers were written phonetically, which affected communication and this was reflected in lower marks for the quality of language.

Question 1

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to 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.

Similarly to last year, students were provided with one extra option, namely 01.3. Most of the students chose either Question 01.1 (by far the most popular) or 01.2 and both covered topics with which students are very familiar, namely technology in 01.1 and healthy living in 01.2. The bullet points were well understood and most of the students were able to respond successfully to all of them. Nearly 80% of students scored seven or more marks in 01.1, and for those who chose 01.2 that figure reached 85%. There was a number of answers to 01.1, however, where some students in reacting to bullet 2 failed to produce an answer using the past tense. A good example would be *używam komórki cały czas, najczęściej do słuchania muzyki.* Some students failed to see that bullet 4 was asking about the impact of technology on relationships in the future and wrote about future changes in technology. Question 01.3 which was on the topic of school and future plans proved to be the least popular. Additionally, those who chose this topic did perform less successfully than those choosing 01.1 or 01.2. 74% achieved seven or more marks for Content and 59% scored in the highest band for Quality of Language (QofL). Some students found bullet point 2 in 01.3 challenging, although those who did understand it wrote about such events with details and were able to see the benefits of seeking and participating in them.

Many answers were detailed and contained original and interesting thoughts on the prescribed topics. Students attempted to use a variety of language, e.g. different adjectives, particularly around expressing opinions; they used a variety of structures with references to various time frames and appropriate linking words.

On the other hand, the quality of language could be higher as students lost marks for major grammar errors and frequent inaccuracies which affected communication. Those students who chose 01.2 performed best in this criterion, as 70% of them scored in the highest band for QofL.

Some students, as seen in previous years, were under the impression that they should not be writing more than the recommended number of words (around 90 words in Q1) thus carefully counting written words and limiting themselves to a couple of sentences for each bullet point. This

sometime resulted in leaving out the last bullet point or stopping in the middle of the sentence. It is worth reiterating that the whole student's answer is read and marked.

Advice to students

- Mention **all** of the bullet points. Attempt to write something about them rather than omitting them. Tick off the bullet points on the question paper once they have been covered.
- Identify which bullet points target the different time frames and check that your verb formation is accurate.
- Make sure you **include opinions** as required by the task.

Question 2

For this question, there are 15 marks for Content, 12 marks for Range of Language and 5 marks for Accuracy. Students are required to write approximately 150 words in total about two different bullet points. Both bullet points must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullets.

The quality of answers this year was mixed. Option 02.2 which focused on the topic related to home and the area in which students live was most popular, whereas option 02.3 which provided an opportunity to write about school rules and possible future changes in schools proved to be least popular. Many students were able to provide detailed responses, conveying a lot of information, and justified opinions. 65% of those who chose 02.2 scored 12 or more marks for Content, while for 02.1 and 02.3 that figure was 54% and 59% respectively. Interestingly, those students who chose 02.2 also scored highest for Range of Language and Accuracy.

Whereas many students were able to write fluently in response to both bullet points, there were some who found some difficulty in addressing the more open-ended tasks, and sometimes wrote just simple statements, e.g. *Szkoły się nie zmienią* or *Rola celebrytów jest duża,* which are basic and very general sentences. More able students produced sentences in style *Wydaje mi się, że ten fim był interesujący, bo nie tylko nauczyłem się wiele faktów o historii Japonii, ale zrozumiałem na czym polegał honor wojowników* or *Lubię okolicę, w której mieszkam, ale gdybym mogła to w przyszłości chciałabym otworzyć centrum dla młodzieży, takie miejsce, gdzie organizowane byłyby koncerty albo jakieś inne spotkania dla ludzi w moim wieku. Obecnie tego właśnie brakuje w moim miasteczku i dlatego tak trudno poznać nowych ludzi i nawiązać ciekawe znajomości.* It was indeed fascinating to read the many interesting ideas students shared in response to bullet point 2 in option 02.2, e.g. *budowanie centrum dla bezdomnych, częstsze sprzątanie zanieczyszczonych ulic* or *zwiększenie bezpieczeństwa poprzez wprowadzenie regularnych oraz częstych patrol policyjnych.* There were still some very detailed answers focusing on just one bullet point, which was a shame as this meant an automatic loss of marks.

Despite writing a lot, as in previous sessions, some students failed to indicate that they were stating their own opinions. Teachers and students should be reminded that opinions may be expressed simply, e.g. *Lubię …, … podoba mi się.* Any positive or negative adjective is **only** classed as an opinion or a justification if it is preceded by something like '*Myślę, że …, Uważam, że …, Wydaje mi się, że …* Students who failed to add that, scored fewer marks. Additionally,

when the language used was inaccurate or inappropriate (e.g. colloquial *mam to wywalone*, spoken *gadaliśmy*), there was an impact on marks awarded for Content as well as for language.

Similarly to Question 1, it seemed that some students were under the impression that they should not be writing more than the recommended number of words thus leaving out the last bullet point or stopping in the middle of a sentence, so it is worth reiterating once again that the whole answer is read and marked.

Advice to students

- Read the bullet points, ensuring you know exactly what they require in terms of response.
- Ensure that what you write relates to the bullet points in some way.
- If you have time at the end of the exam, check that your verbs and spellings are accurate.
- Make sure to include opinions with justifications.

Question 3

The translation was generally done well, but only 26% of students scored five or more marks for Conveying the key messages. If one of the key messages contained a minor error or errors, it was still credited. However, an accumulation of such errors had an overall effect on accuracy which was reflected in the mark for Application of grammar. There was usually a direct correlation between the two marks.

Most frequent issues faced by students are listed below.

My friend Zosia	This was generally done well.
invited me to her wedding.	This was generally conveyed correctly.
I was surprised,	Again, this was done well.
when I got an invitation,	As above.
as we have not kept in touch recently.	Recently was often omitted and many students translated this phrase in present, e.g. *nie jesteśmy w kontakcie, nie mamy kontakt, nie rozmawiamy do siebie* which was inaccurate.
According to a Polish tradition,	Some found this phrase challenging and translated it simply as *w polskiej tradycji,* which technically could have been accepted, but given the context, it affected the message in TL, so was deemed inaccurate. Other renderings include *przez polskie tradycje*
we will celebrate for two days.	This was generally done well.
Zosia met her fiancé	Fiancé proved to be very challenging and not many students were able to translate it accurately. Various spelling versions were accepted though, e.g. *narzyczony, nażecony, nazycony.* Other renditions include *męża, wybranka, księcia, druha, druga połowa* also *miłość* which were inaccurate. There were

	also students who translated is as finance or *oszczędności.* One can only assume that this is a result of stress experienced in exam conditions.
while studying in Wroclaw,	This did not pose major problems, although *Wrocław* was translated by some as …*Warszawa*
the city in southern Poland.	*City* was often translated as *miasteczko* which is inaccurate. *Southern* was translated by many as *zachodni, na zachodzie* and sometimes capitalised.
The area is known	*Area* was very often translated as *miasto* which is incorrect. Renderings like *region, rejon, obszar, okolica* were all accepted. Some students translated it as *miejsce* but it is a bit problematic, because it points towards Wrocław (which was mentioned in the previous sentence), while in this context *area* means *this part of Poland, that region* and relates to a much wider geographical region.
for its famous castles,	*Famous* was sometimes omitted, and some translated is as *popularne*.
mines and national parks.	National parks attracted a variety of ideas, e.g. *parki nacjonalne, okoliczne parki, parki krajowe.*

Advice to students

- Practise high frequency words and phrases.
- Check carefully that you **do not miss out any** parts of the translation by accident.
- If you are not sure how to translate something, have a go as it may score you a mark. Leaving it blank will not.
- Check **verb tenses** (whether they match the original text) and endings.
- Last, but not least, try to read, listen to or watch something in Polish as regularly as you can – this will definitely help to widen your vocabulary and increase the chances of success in all of the tasks during the exam.

Concluding Remarks

It is worth pointing out that the spread of marks was comparable to previous years, as was the difficulty of the paper as a whole.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.