

# Further information on Higher Modern Languages Course Assessment

(November 2013)

## Higher Modern Languages: Cantonese, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Mandarin (Simplified), Mandarin (Traditional), Urdu

### Key messages

SQA is currently developing Course and Unit assessments. This document outlines our progress in Course Assessment for the Higher Course in Modern Languages.

The new Modern Languages Higher Courses will maintain the standard of the current qualification at Higher and will continue to be benchmarked against SCQF level 6, as well as ensuring that the level of demand for candidates is consistent with other Higher qualifications. The Course develops the skills of reading, listening, talking and writing in the modern language, in the contexts of society, learning, employability, and culture.

There are two Units in this Course — Modern Languages: Understanding Language; and Modern Languages: Using Language.

The Modern Languages Higher Courses have been designed to build upon the skills, knowledge and understanding developed at National 5 and to provide clear progression from National 5. The course will provide opportunities to develop breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, and the application of skills, through the study of the modern language in the contexts of society, learning, employability and culture.

Course Assessment will have two components: a question paper (worth 70 marks) and a performance of talking (worth 30 marks). The question paper will be externally assessed, and the performance will be assessed internally and awarded a mark in accordance with marking instructions provided by SQA. Personalisation and choice will be provided in the performance component, when candidates can choose a subject on which to deliver a presentation and take part in a conversation.

The question paper will cover the skills, knowledge and understanding detailed in the Course Specification and in the Course Assessment Specification. The assessment samples the knowledge and understanding required to apply the skills of reading, writing and listening in the modern language.

The performance will assess the skill of talking in the modern language. Candidates will deliver a presentation and take part in a conversation in the modern language.

## Points of change and points of stability in Modern Languages

	Points of Stability	Points of Change
Skills	Reading, writing, listening and talking skills are developed.	
Knowledge	Knowledge and understanding required to understand and use detailed and complex language.	The 4 language skills are developed in the contexts of society, learning, employability and culture.
Question stems / command words		Greater clarity on use of command words in questions, followed through to marking instructions.
Unit Assessment		2 Units (Understanding Language, Using Language); increased flexibility in approaches to gathering evidence. In reading and listening, the overall purpose questions will assess the candidate's ability to draw meaning from their understanding of the whole text.
Course Assessment	Question Papers which assess the skills of reading, writing and listening in the modern language; Performance which assesses the skill of Talking in in the modern language.	Question Papers: Paper 1 — Reading and Directed Writing (1 hour 40 minutes); and Paper 2 – Listening and Writing (1 hour). In Directed Writing, candidates must address four bullet points from one of the chosen stimuli. In Reading, candidates must translate a short section of the text into English.
Types of Question	Reading and Listening questions will be broadly similar in approach, namely understanding of main points and detail.	In Reading and Listening, the overall purpose questions will assess the candidate's ability to draw meaning from their understanding of the whole text. Command words will be used consistently to provide clarity of questions.
Marking instructions	Will continue to be available.	Substantially more detail and advice and guidance for centres in how marks are allocated to a range of responses. Greater clarity in marking principles.
Level of demand	Benchmarked against SCQF level 6 and current Higher.	Improved alignment with other subjects at Higher.
Marks		100 marks: 70 from question papers, 30 from Performance.

## **Higher specimen question papers – Reading and Directed Writing; Listening and Writing (publication by 28 February 2014)**

The purpose of these question papers is to demonstrate application of the skills of reading, listening and writing.

These question papers will give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

- ◆ reading, listening and writing skills in the modern language in the contexts of society, learning, employability, and culture
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of detailed and complex language required to understand and use the modern language
- ◆ knowledge and understanding required to apply the language skills of translation
- ◆ applying grammatical knowledge and understanding

The question papers will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. The Reading and Directed Writing question paper is worth 40 marks and the duration will be 1 hour 40 minutes. The Listening and Writing question paper is worth 30 marks and the duration of this question paper will be 1 hour.

### **Paper 1: Reading and Directed Writing**

The Reading task will assess the candidate's ability to read one written text in the modern language of approximately 600 words (650-800 Chinese characters). The text will be based on one of the following contexts: society, learning, employability or culture.

Candidates will respond to questions in English about the written text. Marks for each of these questions will be in the range of 1-3 marks. The penultimate question will be the overall purpose question to assess the candidate's ability to draw meaning from their understanding of whole text. This is an unsupported question and will be worth 2 marks.

The last question will be the translation of a section of the text into English. The text for translation will be divided into five sense units. For each sense unit, 2, 1 or 0 marks will be awarded: 2 marks for a full translation, 1 for partial translation, and 0 for an unsuccessful attempt. The translation will be worth 10 marks, and the other questions will be worth 20 marks in total. Candidates can use a dictionary and glossary (included if appropriate).

The Directed Writing task will assess the candidate's ability to produce one written text using detailed and complex language. The written text will be in response to a stimulus supported by four bullet points which the candidate must address. Candidates will write between 120-150 words (150-180 Chinese characters). Candidates will choose one stimulus from a choice of two: there will be one stimulus for each of the two remaining contexts that are not sampled in the Reading or the Listening assessments. The Directed Writing will be worth 10 marks. Candidates may use a dictionary.

### **Paper 2: Listening and Writing**

The Listening task will assess the candidate's ability to listen to and understand a monologue

and conversation in the modern language. The two items will be linked thematically, and will be based on the contexts that are not sampled in the reading text or the directed writing questions.

Candidates will respond to questions in English about the monologue and conversation. The questions will be worth a total of 20 marks: 8 marks on the monologue and 12 marks on the conversation. Marks for each question across both parts will be in the range of 1-3 marks.

The last question on the monologue will be the overall purpose question to assess the candidate's ability to draw meaning from their understanding of the whole monologue. This will be a supported question worth 1 mark in which candidates have to choose one correct answer. The Listening task across both the monologue and conversation will be from the same context. Candidates may use a dictionary.

The Writing task will assess the candidate's ability to produce one written text in the modern language, in response to a stimulus with a limited number of questions which serve as prompts for the candidate. Candidates will write between 120-150 words (150-280 Chinese characters).

(For sample questions from the current draft of the Specimen Question paper, please see Appendix 1.)

### **Higher Performance (publication by 31 March 2014)**

The Performance will sample the skills, knowledge and understanding in the Course Specification and in the Course Assessment Specification by requiring candidates to deliver a presentation in the modern language on one of the four contexts (society, learning, employability or culture) and take part in a conversation using detailed and complex language. The conversation will follow on from the context of the presentation and develop into at least one other context. The presentation should last between 1½ and 2½ minutes. The conversation should last between 4½ and 6 minutes.

This performance will give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ the ability to use detailed and complex spoken language, as part of a presentation and conversation
- ◆ the ability to take part effectively in a natural, spontaneous conversation
- ◆ the ability to use language accurately to convey meaning in the modern language
- ◆ the ability to maintain interaction as appropriate to purpose

(For further information from the current draft of the Modern Languages Performance, please see Appendix 2.)

# Appendix 1

The following are extracted from the texts, questions, marking principles and marking instructions from the draft Specimen Question Papers for Higher Modern Languages, to illustrate the approaches which may be used.

The extracts come from a number of the Modern Languages specimen question papers.

**Please note, the extracts of texts, questions, marking principles and marking instructions are examples only.**

## Paper 1 Section 1 – Reading

Selon le psychologue, Martin Lescaux, on a besoin de partir en vacances pour toutes sortes de raisons. Tout d’abord, il est nécessaire de s’éloigner du bureau. Tant de gens sont obligés de faire des heures supplémentaires, et par conséquent ils rentrent épuisés à la maison où ils doivent encore s’occuper des enfants. Puis, on recommence la même routine le lendemain.

Alors, partir en vacances est une bonne occasion de se reposer, d’oublier la routine et de faire ce qu’on veut.

According to the psychologist, Martin Lescaux, why do people need to go on holiday?

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## Draft General Marking Principles for Higher Modern Languages Reading

*This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this Paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the specific Marking Instructions for each question. The marking schemes are written to assist in determining the ‘minimal acceptable answer’ rather than listing every possible correct and incorrect answer.*

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific Marking Instructions for the relevant question. If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed Marking Instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your Team Leader/Principal Assessor.
- (b) Marking should always be positive, i.e. marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (c) Award a mark to each answer. Marks are not transferable between questions.

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For live reading Marking Instructions, there will be a process of illustrating other acceptable answers.

### Draft Marking Instructions for example question above:

- ◆ To escape from work
- ◆ Many people have to work extra hours and are exhausted
- ◆ They still have to look after children when they go home

2

Any two of the three points for one mark each.

Markers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding to award marks to candidates' responses.

Markers should ignore extraneous material that does not contradict the answer.

## Paper 1, Section 2 – Directed Writing

German

Context - Culture

On your return from a gap year abroad, you write an article in German for the Modern Languages Department website of your school/college.

**You must include** the following information and **you should try to add** other relevant details:

- where you went **and** why you went there
- how you funded your gap year
- what you learned about the country
- your opinion of a gap year

### Draft Marking Instructions for Directed Writing

The marking of the directed writing task will be based on assessors awarding a pegged mark. There are three criteria for each pegged mark. Each pegged mark contains a commentary for each of the three criteria which illustrates the level of response expected. The criteria are:

- ◆ Content
- ◆ Accuracy
- ◆ Language resource (variety, range, structure)

There are 6 pegged marks: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 and 0.

## Paper 2, Section 1 – Listening

Donc, le gouvernement veut introduire un nouveau système, où on va avoir une journée plus courte. Il y aurait un maximum de sept heures de cours par jour et la journée finirait à 17 heures.

What would be the changes to the school day? 2

### Draft General Marking Principles for Higher Modern Languages Listening

*This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to questions in this Paper. These principles must be read in conjunction with the specific Marking Instructions for each question. The marking schemes are written to assist in determining the 'minimal acceptable answer' rather than listing every possible correct and incorrect answer.*

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific Marking Instructions for the relevant question. If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed Marking Instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your Team Leader/Principal Assessor.
- (b) Marking should always be positive, ie marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (c) The utmost care must be taken when entering and totalling marks. Where appropriate, all summations for totals must be carefully checked and confirmed.
- (d) The Marking Instructions indicate the essential idea that a candidate should provide for each answer.
- (e) The answers for each question must be based on the listening item.

For live Listening Marking Instructions, there will be a process of illustrating other acceptable answers.

#### Draft Marking Instructions for example question above.

- ◆ School day would be shorter
- ◆ There would be a maximum of 7 hours of classes a day
- ◆ Pupils would finish at 17.00/5pm

2

Any two of the three points for one mark each

Markers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding to award marks to candidates' responses.

Markers should ignore extraneous material that does not contradict the answer.

## Paper 2, Section 2 – Writing

### SPANISH

Pablo ha hablado en el programa de radio de sus pasatiempos y de lo que hace para mantenerse en forma. Y tú, ¿qué haces para estar en forma? , ¿Tienes muchos pasatiempos? ¿Crees que es importante tener pasatiempos sanos?

Pablo has spoken on the radio programme about his hobbies and how he keeps fit. How do you keep fit? Do you have a lot of hobbies? Do you think it is important to have healthy pastimes?

### Draft General Marking Principles for Higher Modern Languages Writing

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the specific Marking Instructions for the relevant question. If a specific candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed Marking Instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your Team Leader/Principal Assessor.
- (b) Marking should always be positive, ie marks should be awarded for what is correct and not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (c) With reference to *Content, Accuracy and Language Resource*, Process: assess the overall quality of the response and allocate it to pegged mark as outlined in the specific Marking Instructions.

### Draft Marking Instructions for Writing

The marking of the writing task will be based on assessors awarding a pegged mark. There are three criteria for each pegged mark. Each pegged mark contains a commentary for each of the three criteria which illustrates the level of response expected. The criteria are:

- ◆ Content
- ◆ Accuracy
- ◆ Language resource (variety, range, structure)

There are 6 pegged marks which are as follows: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 and 0.

## Appendix 2

This performance will give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ the ability to use detailed and complex spoken language as part of a presentation and conversation
- ◆ the ability to take part effectively in a natural, spontaneous conversation
- ◆ the ability to use language accurately to convey meaning in the modern language
- ◆ the ability to maintain interaction as appropriate to purpose

This talking performance will have two sections: a presentation in the modern language based on one of the four contexts, followed by a conversation with the assessor, which moves into at least one other context.

### **Draft General marking principles for Higher Talking Performance**

*This information is provided to help understanding of the general principles that will be applied when marking candidate responses in this performance. These principles are reflected in the detailed Marking Instructions that will be used to mark the performance.*

- (a) The candidate's performance will be marked in terms of content, accuracy, language use and interaction in conversation, in accordance with the grade descriptions given in the Course specification, using General marking principles and Marking Instructions.
- (b) Although the length of the Presentation should normally be 1½–2½ minutes and the conversation 4½–6 minutes, no automatic penalty is to be applied to performances which fall outwith this duration.
- (c) The overall candidate's performance should be allocated to one of the appropriate pegged marks using the specified criteria.
- (d) For each of the sections— presentation and conversation — the assessor should select the pegged mark descriptor which most closely describes the evidence presented. Candidates may not perform at a uniform level across all of the characteristics described, but assessors should consider the performance as a whole and identify the pegged mark which describes the best fit.
- (e) There are three sets of Marking Instructions (MI): there is one set of MI for the Presentation worth 10 marks, and two sets of MI for the Conversation: one worth 15 marks, and one worth 5 marks. Assessors should allocate a pegged mark for the Presentation. Assessors should then allocate two pegged marks for the conversation, one from each set of MI provided for this purpose.

## **Draft Marking Instructions for the Performance (Talking)**

The marking of the Performance — Presentation will be based on assessors awarding a pegged mark. Each pegged mark contains a commentary which illustrates the level of response expected. There are six pegged marks, which are as follows: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 and 0.

The marking of the Performance — Conversation will be based on assessors awarding two pegged marks. Each pegged mark contains a commentary which illustrates the level of response expected. The first set of marks worth 15 illustrates the content, language use and accuracy used by the candidate and the level of interlocutor input. There are 6 pegged marks as follows: 15, 12, 9, 6, 3 and 0. The second set of marks worth 5 illustrates the candidate's ability to sustain a natural conversation and the interaction of the candidate in the conversation. There are 3 pegged marks which are as follows: 5, 3 and 0.

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