

GESE – Sample exam marks and rationales

Grade 10

Havisha

Result: Merit

Formal topic presentation phase

Grade: C **Area for improvement:** Pronunciation

Rationale

Havisha has chosen a suitably complex subject for her presentation, though it could have been more discursive in nature. Havisha speaks fluently and with conviction, using language of an appropriately advanced level, but is hindered by first language influence on her speech patterns and also by the use of too many unnecessary pages of notes. Please note the syllabus advises that candidates bring only brief notes in the form of a handout into the examination room so that they are not a distraction during the presentation. Havisha brings the presentation to a conclusion, but unfortunately she fails to invite questions and comments from the examiner as required.

Topic discussion phase

Grade: B **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

In the following discussion Havisha takes responsibility for initiating and maintaining the flow and relates her contributions well to those of the examiner. Several of the language functions of the grade are exploited, including expressing beliefs, defending a point of view and developing an argument. Generally, there is a good level of accuracy and appropriacy in the use of the language items of the grade.

Interactive phase

Grade: B **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

The Interactive phase develops well, with Havisha mainly taking responsibility for initiating and maintaining the flow, as well as successfully relating her contributions to those of the examiner. Havisha demonstrates her ability to use a good, but not wide, range of the relevant language functions accurately and appropriately.

Listening phase

Grade: C **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

In the Listening phase, two out of three of Havisha's responses are appropriate.

Conversation phase

Grade: A **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

By the time the Conversation phase is reached, Havisha appears to have lost her initial nervousness and she participates promptly and fluently in a discussion on the 'Roles in the family' and 'Youth behaviour' in the current era. There is comprehensive coverage of the communicative skills, with Havisha sharing the responsibility for the direction and maintenance of the conversation. In addition, she uses a wide range of the language functions and language items of the level.

Grade 10 continued

Alessandro

Result: Fail

Formal topic presentation phase

Grade: D

Area for improvement: Communicative skills, Grammar

Rationale

Alessandro starts by giving his presentation an identifiable structure in a rather basic way ('*Firstly... Then... Thirdly... In the end...*') but, as he does not use signposting in the presentation itself, this leads to a lack of cohesion. Although potential discursive, Alessandro's presentation is almost exclusively factual in nature and therefore does not lend itself easily to the coverage of the target functions. Few complex structures, if any, are used. Additionally, there are also many basic errors below the grade and, because Alessandro appears to have memorised his script almost verbatim, his range of stress and intonation patterns, as well as the pronunciation of individual words, suffer and make him difficult to follow. He does not invite comments or questions at the end.

Topic discussion phase

Grade: D

Area for improvement: Communicative skills, Pronunciation

Rationale

Because of the non-discursive nature of his presentation, the examiner struggles to discuss the topic and needs to focus on Victoria, rather than Stevenson. Alessandro simply responds to the examiner's questions, rather than initiating and engaging. Although there is an attempt at developing an argument, his limited range of appropriately sophisticated language means that his contributions fall short of achieving their objective. Additionally, there are also many basic errors below the grade. The flow is halted by the candidate constantly repeating himself and, again, the pronunciation of individual sounds places some strain on the listener.

Interactive phase

Grade: C

Area for improvement: Pronunciation

Rationale

The interactive phase develops relatively well, with Alessandro taking some responsibility for the direction and maintenance of the interaction. By asking questions and inviting comments, he also demonstrates that he is sensitive to turn-taking. There is an acceptable coverage of some of the functions of grade (expressing beliefs and defending a point of view) but basic grammatical and lexical errors as well as first language interference, both at single word and sentence level, detract from his overall performance. The task, however, is fulfilled, if only partially.

Listening phase

Grade: C

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Two responses are correct.

Conversation phase

Grade: D

Area for improvement: Communicative skills, Lexis

Rationale

There is little in the way of conversation in this phase as Alessandro does not share responsibility for its maintenance and development; rather, he passively responds to prompts and questions from the examiner. There is limited evidence of coverage of the functions and language items of the grade, and inaccuracies are highly evident, even when simple structures are used. He needs to build up a larger and more varied stock of vocabulary to deal with the subject matter.

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Grade 11

Saprina

Result: Pass

Formal topic presentation phase

Grade: D **Area for improvement:** Communicative skills, Lexis

Rationale

Unfortunately, Saprina has not been well advised on the suitability of her chosen topic. She talks about the history of the Venice carnival, a subject which is purely informative and does not involve any discursive language, ideas or opinions for the following discussion. As a result, the language used is not sufficiently complex for this level and there is very little evidence of the language functions, grammar and lexis of Grade 11. Please note at the Advanced stage, it is very important that candidates' topic presentations are discursive in nature. Failure to do so has a negative effect on the assessment.

Topic discussion phase

Grade: C **Area for improvement:** Communicative skills

Rationale

During the Topic discussion phase there is some hesitation when Saprina answers the examiner's questions and her grammatical range lacks evidence of complex structures. In the Formal topic presentation phase the candidate did not give a discursive presentation that would have allowed her to justify the ideas and opinions given in the presentation. As a result she was unable to demonstrate many of the language functions of Grade 11 (eg: justifying an argument, evaluating different standpoints, challenging arguments and opinions etc.) As a consequence the discussion manages to cover only isolated samples of the communicative skills, language functions and language items of the grade.

Interactive phase

Grade: D **Area for improvement:** Pronunciation, Grammar

Rationale

During the Interactive phase Saprina is frequently hesitant and tends to repeat her limited contributions, demonstrating a very restricted range of the language functions and grammatical items of Grade 11. There is also very little coverage of the communicative skills. For example, Saprina fails to take full responsibility for the maintenance of the discussion and expects the examiner to manage the interaction. She seems to misunderstand vocabulary suitable for the grade and is unable to negotiate towards a logical conclusion to the interaction. As a result the interaction doesn't proceed as required.

Listening phase

Grade: A **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

In the Listening phase, all three responses are appropriate and delivered promptly.

Conversation phase

Grade: B **Area for improvement:** n/a

Rationale

In the Conversation phase Saprina is more relaxed and confident, taking responsibility for the maintenance of the interaction and showing more willingness to challenge the examiner's arguments and opinions. She talks about 'Advertising' and 'The arts' quite fluently and uses a higher level of language than previously demonstrated. Throughout the examination there are no problems with pronunciation, stress or intonation.

Grade 12

Zoe

Result: Merit

Formal topic presentation phase

Grade: B

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

The topic of 'immigration' is clearly introduced. There are occasional hesitations, but the delivery is thoughtful and natural, with a logically-developed argument and an appropriate conclusion. Relevant examples are given to support the candidate's opinions and the range of grammatical and lexical language is adequate for this high level. Pronunciation, intonation and stress do not give rise to comprehension problems in any part of the examination.

Topic discussion phase

Grade: C

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

During the discussion of the topic coverage of the Grade 12 communicative skills is quite limited. Although Zoe maintains the discussion adequately she could have done more to engage the examiner and develop the direction of the discussion. There is evidence of several of the language functions of the grade, though a wider range of more complex structures and lexis could have been included..

Interactive phase

Grade: B

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

In the Interactive phase Zoe controls and sustains the discussion throughout, asking appropriate questions and becoming quite assertive. A good level of language is maintained, though more exponents of the functions of Grade 12 could have been included.

Listening phase

Grade: C

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Two out of the three Listening texts are understood without difficulty.

Conversation phase

Grade: B

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

The Conversation phase elicits mature, and always fully comprehensible, contributions from Zoe, with only occasional pauses. There is good, but not comprehensive coverage, of the communicative skills with Zoe taking responsibility for the maintenance and direction of the conversation and introducing her contributions to the discourse with natural turn-taking and referencing. There is also evidence of a solid command of a good range of language, with particularly good use of connecting words and phrases. The overall impression is of a proficient speaker across a variety of high level topics.

Grade 12 continued

Jakub

Result: Distinction

Formal topic presentation phase

Grade: B

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Jakub gives a formal and complex presentation with an effective, logical structure, using discourse connectors and cohesive devices. He introduces the discursive topic of obesity with a clear outline of his intentions, and develops his argument giving supporting reasons and examples. He uses a wide range of language but his lexis is occasionally rather informal (eg 'gonna' and 'kinda'). He speaks with clarity, fluency and conviction throughout, and has a high degree of grammatical accuracy. His contributions are consistently effective and appropriate but, because he over-runs, he does not bring the presentation to a satisfactory conclusion. The task, therefore, is not totally fulfilled.

Topic discussion phase

Grade: A

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Jakub engages the examiner in a meaningful exchange of ideas and opinions. He takes full responsibility for the maintenance of the discussion. He is able to deal effectively with the examiner's input and often links his own contributions to hers (eg 'You mentioned an uphill battle'). He is able to deal with in-depth questioning using all the functional language of Grade12 and displays excellent linguistic control. Intelligibility is never compromised and his contributions obviously fulfil the task.

Interactive phase

Grade: A

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Jakub takes control and sustains the interaction throughout. All his contributions are very effective and he handles the examiner's comments with ease, enthusiasm and initiative. The language functions are used naturally and he draws on his extensive range of linguistic resources to cover the language items of the grade. Impressive idiomatic flourishes such as 'slippery slope' and 'draw a line in the sand' are also in evidence.

Listening phase

Grade: C

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Two out of the three Listening texts are understood without difficulty.

Conversation phase

Grade: A

Area for improvement: n/a

Rationale

Again, in the Conversation phase, there is comprehensive coverage of the communicative skills as well as functional and other language requirements of the grade. His contributions are always very effective and he strives to take as much responsibility for the maintenance of the conversation as he can. He demonstrates no linguistic limitations, and has sufficient lexis to manage intelligibly and interestingly both subject areas presented to him.