



## **Oral component**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

On the whole, students were well prepared for the oral examination and demonstrated a high capacity to converse in Croatian.

Areas of strength included:

- very good preparation
- ability to obtain additional information from various sources
- capacity to support and elaborate on ideas using visual evidence
- extensive vocabulary
- good understanding of grammar
- ability to communicate on a wide range of issues
- very good pronunciation, intonation and tempo.

Areas of weakness included:

- inadequate preparation by some students
- occasional use of anglicisms
- occasional English influence on sentence structure
- incorrect case endings
- inaccurate tenses
- emotional and subjective choice of Discussion topic.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Section 1 – Conversation**

The Conversation part of the examination engaged students, who were asked to convey their thoughts on topics such as family, friends, school, aspirations, interests, leisure time and Croatian culture. A great majority of students displayed a very good capacity to respond to a variety of questions in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way.

A good understanding of grammar, as well as familiarity with everyday vocabulary and expressions, enabled students' responses to flow naturally. Most students linked effectively with assessors and moved the conversation forward with spontaneity and confidence. On the whole, students displayed good repair strategies and were able to promptly self-correct when necessary.

Some students experienced difficulty in fully understanding some questions and others needed support with the pronunciation of more complex words. Students not confident in Croatian were inclined to use a narrower range of grammatical structures and vocabulary. The most frequent mistakes included case and tense endings and occasional anglicisms.

#### **Section 2 – Discussion**

Most students came well prepared for this section of their examination and conveyed high quality information about the chosen Detailed Study, a comprehensive vocabulary, solid knowledge of grammar and effective repair strategies.

There were three topics studied in detail across school centres: 'Zagreb, Croatian Capital City', 'Dubrovnik' and 'Migration'. This year, 'Migration' was approached from a very subjective angle and some students had difficulty in coping with the associated emotional charge of the topic.

Students referred to a broad pool of resources in preparation for the Detailed Study, including handouts, books, magazines, video tapes and DVDs, interviews with guests, items from the Internet, brochures and posters. A variety and depth of information enabled some students to give highly relevant responses. Their superior performances translated into excellent marks for criterion 2.

# 2006 Assessment Report



However, some students were not prepared adequately and had little to talk about. Students must understand that they need to be well prepared to discuss the general topic, regardless of whether they want to specialise in one particular area. In order to diversify and enrich their performance, it would be useful for students to consider including in their discussion perspectives acquired through the senses (what they would see, hear, smell, etc).

Most students brought in supporting material. This was mainly in the form of posters containing illustrations of the main points for discussion. Support material can be of great assistance to students in keeping them focused on relevant information and can act as a good agent to dispel students' nervousness. However, students are reminded that electronic devices are not permitted in examination rooms; this includes PowerPoint presentations.

Although students demonstrated a high level of language skills, a lessened degree of grammatical accuracy was noted in the Discussion part of the examination. This indicated less familiarity with the vocabulary and sentence structures needed when discussing specifics of the Detailed Study. On a very few occasions poor linguistic skills hampered the student's ability to engage in an in-depth discussion. Common mistakes included errors with case endings, inaccurate words, occasional pronunciation difficulties and sporadic English interference with sentence structure.