



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The overall performance of most students on the 2012 Sinhala oral examination was very good.

Students were better prepared for Section 2 – Discussion than for Section 1 – Conversation. In Section 1, they frequently hesitated when responding to assessors' questions or gave inadequate information. Many students' vocabulary was rather limited and needs to be improved. In Section 2, it was evident that students had used various resources and they presented a very good range of information. However, some topics did not give students the opportunity to present or elaborate on their ideas and opinions. It is important that the selected topic provides sufficient scope.

Section 1 – Conversation

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Some students found it difficult to advance the conversation and needed frequent support from assessors in order to continue. However, many students had a very good level of understanding and responded well to the questions asked, expanding the conversation to reveal more information where appropriate. A few students were unable to use repair strategies, even when English words were used. Most students had excellent pronunciation and intonation, but some struggled to use the appropriate stress and tempo.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Some students were well prepared and performed well according to this criterion. However, there were a few instances that revealed gaps in preparation; for example, students being unable to elaborate on information, and inadequate breadth and depth of content. Some students found it difficult to express their ideas and opinions or to clarify them in conversation; for example, when speaking about their family members, friends and school.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Students consistently used the appropriate style and register. Generally, the grammar used was appropriate, even though the range of vocabulary used was often limited.

Section 2 – Discussion

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Most students carried the conversation forward readily and confidently, and demonstrated a good level of understanding of the topic chosen. In many instances students used good repair strategies and had very good pronunciation and intonation; however, improvement is needed with stress and tempo.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Most students demonstrated thorough preparation and presented relevant and appropriate responses to the questions. However, some topics did not give the students the opportunity to present their ideas and opinions. A few students had not prepared well and needed support to extend the discussion for the required time.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

A very good range of vocabulary and appropriate structure was used by many students. Errors were usually self-corrected and the appropriate style and register was used. However, there were a few instances where rote-learning was evident, mostly at the start of the discussion.