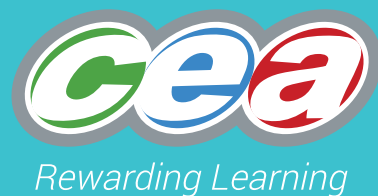


GCSE



Chief Examiner's Report Irish

Summer Series 2022



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2022 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCSE IRISH

Chief Examiner's Report

Subject Overview

The Summer 2022 series of examinations presented candidates with the first opportunity to engage in Summer examinations since Summer 2019. With this being the case, it was refreshing, as an examining team, to be able to recognise and credit the hard work and effort put in by both candidates and teachers right across all examination centres through the formal examination process.

I wish to take this opportunity to commend the sterling work carried out by teachers and support staff in ensuring that candidates were well versed and sufficiently prepared to deal with the rigors of external examinations. With this series being just the second full examination series for this GCSE Irish Specification, it is pleasing to see that candidates have been guided to positive outcomes through dedicated teaching and learning.

The examination team strive to ensure that the breadth of the GCSE Irish Specification is included across the four assessment units in order to afford all candidates every opportunity to engage fully, at their own level of attainment, with the examination process, leading to positive outcomes for all. Many candidates showcased their high levels of linguistic ability and were awarded marks in the top mark bands across the various units accordingly.

Particular recognition is due to those candidates who opted to complete Unit 2, the optional omissions unit. A significant number of candidates opted to enter this unit and many completed it with a high degree of competence. I wish to praise both the candidates and their teachers for recognising and honouring the valuable learning that is to be gained from the spoken word.

I wish to thank those teachers who took the opportunity to feedback their opinions on the 2022 examinations. All opinions and concerns were given a due hearing, and despite some teachers having concerns for their candidates, I believe that fair and positive outcomes have been reached for all candidates, whilst being examined within the parameters of the specification.

As teachers continue to deliver the 2017 GCSE Irish Specification, I hope that this examination series provides us with a realistic insight into the achievable standard and quality of assessment indicative of GCSE Irish. As many of the 2022 cohort of candidates continue into AS Level courses and other pathways of study, I hope that they bring with them a positive learning and assessment experience of GCSE Irish, and wish them every success in their future studies.

Assessment Unit 1 Listening

Foundation Tier

Overview

Generally, candidates coped well with the examination. Overall, they responded positively to the multiple-choice questions which were designed to help candidates achieve their potential. However, it is important to point out to candidates to always read the rubrics carefully as there were examples this year of a small number of students selecting additional answers. It was also noted that the number of answers left blank was higher than in recent years.

The fact that there are sixty marks available in this paper is reflected in the range of vocabulary being tested. It is worth pointing out that the Core Vocabulary list which is in the CCEA GCSE Specification is an essential guide in assisting candidates to prepare for the Foundation Listening examination.

- Q1** This question was generally answered quite well by most candidates, but some found the time challenging in Part (b) and some gave ‘Maths’ as the answer for Part (e) instead of ‘Thursday’. It might be useful for candidates to use their five minutes’ preparation time highlighting or underlining key words in questions so that they can focus more on the type of information or vocabulary to listen out for to successfully target answers when they hear the excerpts.
- Q2** Vocabulary for items of furniture proved very accessible for candidates and nearly all candidates achieved marks in this question.
- Q3** This question was extremely well answered by candidates. Almost 50% of candidates scored full marks.
- Q4** The response to this question was very pleasing. A majority of candidates scored good marks in this question.
- Q5** Most candidates achieved some marks in this question, but parts of it proved challenging for some. Although ‘1st April’ was equally accepted as ‘April Fool’s Day’ as an answer for Part (a), some candidates found the date tricky. In Part (b) *salann* proved to be a difficult word for a number of candidates. Parts (c) and (d) were better answered by candidates. Generally, candidates gained at least one mark by understanding ‘school bag’ or ‘window’ in Part (c), and approximately half of the candidates achieved a mark in Part (d) as they understood the word *príomhoide*.
- Q6** Whilst the vast majority of candidates gave two answers for each part of this question, some candidates did not answer the second part of each section. The format of this question has been used several times in previous years and examples of it can be practised by referencing past papers. In Part (a) the vast majority of candidates ticked (iii) for *ticéad* but a surprising number of candidates did not identify the month correctly. Parts (c) and (d) proved more challenging for candidates than Parts (a) and (b).
- Q7** Very few candidates did not manage to score in this question. *Siopa spóirt* proved almost universally accessible but *teach pobail* proved difficult for candidates. Candidates scored well in Part (c) but a lot of candidates did not understand *carrchlós* in Part (e).
- Q8** Generally, candidates handled this question quite well, and only a minority did not score at least one mark in each section. However, some candidates mistakenly ticked (iv) in Part (a) as they had heard *tinn*. Candidates are reminded of the importance of not only identifying key lexical items, but also of understanding them in context.

- Q9** Most candidates scored marks in this question, but some did not pick up on the word *madadh* in Part (a). Part (d) was the main discriminator in this question.
- Q10** Candidates responded very well to this question, and good marks were scored by the majority of the candidates.
- Q11** This question proved to be accessible for candidates and was well answered.
- Q12** This question was effectively handled by candidates and it was answered very well. Only a small minority of candidates did not achieve a mark in this final question.

Higher Tier

Overview

The majority of candidates handled the examination well. In general, the paper successfully offered candidates the opportunity to perform to the level of their ability. Assistant examiners reported that there were some challenges throughout the paper which allowed for differentiation, but that a number of questions were well answered by most candidates.

Candidates responded positively to the variety of question formats, and to the multiple-choice questions, in particular, which allowed candidates of all abilities to access marks. It is worth pointing out the importance of reading all the rubrics carefully as there were examples this year of some students selecting additional answers. It was also noted that the number of answers left blank was higher than in recent previous years.

The fact that there are sixty marks available in this paper is reflected in the range of vocabulary being tested. It is worth pointing out that the Core Vocabulary list, which is in the CCEA GCSE Specification, is an essential guide in assisting candidates to prepare for the Higher Listening examination.

- Q1** This question was very successfully answered with the majority of candidates scoring high marks, but some candidates found Part (a) difficult where they did not pick up the word *madadh* and they opted for Option C - *deirfiúr mhór*. Part (d) was the main discriminator in this question.
- Q2** Only a handful of candidates missed out on achieving marks in this question. For some the words *casacht* and *staidéar* proved difficult. A common mistake in Part (d) was to opt for H – *obair an tí* instead of A – *staidéar*. Candidates who chose A may have focused on the word *obair*. This highlights the need to avoid homing in on individual lexical items without taking into account the phrase or full context.
- Q3** Generally, the response to this question was very pleasing, and candidates scored good marks.
- Q4** Candidates responded very well to the overall format of this question including Part (b) where it was essential to get the answers in the correct order.
- Q5** This question proved to be a good discriminator. Part (b) was largely well answered, but Parts (a) and (c) were difficult for some candidates. *Oirthear* was only understood by the best candidates.
- Q6** This question was quite well answered. Nearly all candidates successfully answered Part (c), however, some candidates were not familiar with the words *bia mara* in Part (b).
- Q7** This question allowed for differentiation between candidates. Generally, candidates responded well to the vocabulary for the part-time jobs in this question, but the second part of the answers proved more difficult for some. Candidates need to be reminded that they must write their answers in English in Section B of this paper.

- Q8** Most candidates managed this question very well and answered it effectively.
- Q9** Generally, this question was answered well, but some candidates seemed to confuse 'museum' and 'theatre' in Part (c).
- Q10** This question was more challenging and the parts within the question were designed to allow for differentiation between candidates. Statistics show that over 90% of the candidates gained a mark in Part (a), and over 70% gained at least one mark in Part (c) of this question.
- Q11** The multiple-choice format of this question facilitated candidates to achieve their potential and it was reasonably well answered.
- Q12** This question proved more difficult, but this is to be expected at this stage of the paper. The final question enables the most able candidates to achieve marks to allow them to access the top grades. Assistant examiners reported that candidates frequently missed out on the mark for Part (b) and answered 'May' instead of 'June'.

Assessment Unit 2 Speaking

Overview

Although it was not compulsory for candidates to enter for this unit in 2022, it was encouraging to see so many candidates avail of the opportunity to showcase their ability to use the spoken language, and examiners were impressed with the amount of work and effort that had gone into the preparation for this element of the assessment. This series was actually only the second time that this unit had been externally assessed, and although some issues did arise, the conduct and outcomes of the assessment were pleasingly successful.

Recordings

The quality of the recordings for the most part was excellent; however, we did have some issues, including a lot of background noise. Centres should be mindful that this is an examination and conditions should be such that neither the candidate nor the teacher conducting the examination should be distracted by excessive noise. Care also should be taken to ensure that the recording device is placed near to the candidate, particularly in the case of a candidate who is very softly spoken. It would appear that uploading a large number of candidates is quite time consuming, so centres need to be aware that they need to factor this time element into their assessment schedule. It is also important that extreme care is taken when uploading tasks to ensure that all details are accurate, and that full recordings are provided.

Question 1 Role-plays

In general, the Role-plays were well received and candidates performed well in them. It may be helpful to teachers and candidates alike, however, to take note of the following advice:

- Candidates do not have to answer in full sentences if a phrase conveys full communication e.g., *Cá ndeachaigh tú ag deireadh na seachtaine? – go dtí an dioscó* – is perfectly acceptable.
- However, if a candidate does use a verb, then the verb must be in the correct tense – *Cá ndeachaigh tú ag deireadh na seachtaine? – Chuaigh mé go dtí an dioscó* (two marks) but *Téim chuig an dioscó* (one mark).
- If a candidate uses just a phrase but a preposition is required, then the preposition must be included in the response – *Cá ndeachaigh tú ag deireadh na seachtaine? go dtí an dioscó* (two marks) but *dioscó* (one mark).

- Candidates do not have to extend their responses in the Role-plays – short, accurate responses are the most successful.
- Candidates should also take care in ensuring that they give as much information as possible on their Role-play Preparation Sheet, and that what they write is legible.
- The Role-play task that required the candidate to ask a question was the task that candidates found most challenging, so perhaps giving candidates practice in asking questions would be a good teaching point for the future.
- Teachers need to be aware that it is not acceptable to deviate from the script of the Role-plays. Teachers cannot rephrase or translate a stimulus, nor can they use a stimulus of their own; they must keep strictly to the script provided.
- Teachers should ensure that they keep the candidates' preparation sheets until after the remark period as they can be requested in the case of a 'missed element' in the Role-play, or if a recording is incomplete.
- Teachers also need to be mindful of the candidate's choice of Role-plays in relation to the rest of the examination e.g. if a candidate chooses Context for Learning 1 for his/her Role-play and the Pre-Release Topic is from Context for Learning 2, then the unprepared conversation MUST be based on topics from Context for Learning 3.

Question 2 Pre-Release Topic

This element of the examination was very successful. Candidates had prepared well for the assessment, and it was evident that they both appreciated and used the fact that they had control over this element. Candidates tended to showcase their language skills well in this task, and the fluency and confidence of the better candidates were impressive. Again, it might be helpful to all to take note of the following observations:

- Candidates should strive to extend their answers, giving as much information as they can without turning their response into a mini-presentation.
- Candidates should listen carefully to the tense in which they are asked a question and respond in that tense.
- Candidates should try to incorporate language which gives their response a 'natural feel' e.g. *creid é nó ná creid, leis an fhírinne a dhéanamh*.
- There is no longer a requirement for a candidate to ask a question in this element of the assessment.
- Candidates should include Past, Present and Future tenses in their responses and endeavour to use a variety of language structures e.g. indirect speech, prepositional phrases.
- Candidates should ensure that they give and justify their opinions – say what you think and why.
- Teachers should ensure that they ask open-ended questions to allow the candidates to extend their answers and avoid one sentence responses.
- Teachers should include questions in Past, Present and Future tenses.
- Teachers should ensure that candidates get the opportunity to give and justify their opinions.
- Teachers should be mindful of the time factor – this element of the assessment should not exceed four/five minutes.
- Teachers can rephrase a question in this element but cannot translate it.

Question 3 Unprepared conversation

This element of the assessment was perhaps not as successful as the other two elements. The advice given for the conduct of Question 2 is, of course, equally relevant to the conduct of the unprepared conversation, and candidates should ensure that they prepare as well for this element as they do for the Pre-release topic as it does carry the same number of marks. Again, candidates and teachers alike may find the following points helpful:

- Teachers should ensure that the unprepared conversation covers the required Context for Learning e.g. Role-plays (CL2), Pre-Release (CL3) then Unprepared Conversation MUST be from CL1. All three Contexts for Learning must be covered in the Speaking Examination.
- It is not necessary to ask questions on all the topics from the chosen Context for Learning e.g. if CL2 is chosen, then it is sufficient to ask questions on Travel or Tourism.
- Teachers should be mindful of the time element. The length of the unprepared conversation should be more or less the same as the length of time devoted to the Pre-release topic.

General

The standard of responses in the Speaking Examination this year was high and the quality of the work was excellent. We are mindful of the burden of administration of this examination and the number of things that both teachers and candidates have to keep their eye on to ensure a successful outcome. Both teachers and candidates alike are to be congratulated for the hard work and effort that was so evident in this series and I wish all concerned equal success in 2023.

Assessment Unit 3 Reading

Overview

This is only the second instance of Unit 3 being examined in the 'new' 60-mark format since the introduction of this specification in 2017, affording 25% of the total marks to the skill of Reading. The 12-question layout, with a 4-question overlap across the Foundation and Higher Tier papers, allows for a gradual progression in the level of language being assessed, which in turn allows for a natural discrimination between candidates, ultimately leading to a fair and appropriate range of marks.

Candidates were presented with a variety of question styles in English and in Irish including gap-filling, written response in English, translating into English, selecting from three pictorial options, selecting from three written options.

In general, candidates coped well with the format of the various question styles; however, it is worth highlighting that candidates should only select or provide the exact number of answers asked for. When providing written answers, candidates should try to discriminate between what information provides an accurate answer and what information is irrelevant to the question asked of them.

Foundation Tier

Approximately 15% of the overall cohort opted to sit GIH31, Foundation Tier Reading. The team of examiners reported the following observations whilst marking the work of candidates from various centres.

- Q1** This initial question allowed candidates to engage with the question paper whilst dealing with basic, familiar language. More than 98% of candidates were awarded full marks in this question.
- Q2** The majority of candidates achieved three out of a possible four marks. Common mistakes included only selecting two or three answers instead of the required four. Some candidates failed to recognise *anraith glasraí* as vegetable soup.
- Q3** This question based on ‘Occupations’ allowed candidates the opportunity to engage with full sentences in an accessible manner. Over 80% of candidates achieved full marks in this question.
- Q4** Some candidates found this question challenging as they were required to link various weather types with the allocated countries. Some candidates opted to provide answers based on their own pre-conceived notions of weather such as it being ‘warm’ in ‘France’ instead of in ‘Spain’ as indicated in the stimulus. Some candidates struggled to provide a concise answer of ‘wet’ in response to the word *fliuch* and instead offered specific weather forms such as ‘rain’ or ‘raining’.
- Q5** On average, candidates achieved at least three out of the four marks available for this question. Common mistakes included mistaking ‘computer’ for ‘laptop’.
- Q6** This question, based on common items of clothing, presented some challenge for many candidates. On average, candidates achieved four of the six marks available. In order to deal effectively with this style of question in the future, candidates might consider paying close attention to the minimum core vocabulary list available in the specification.
- Q7** Although this question required candidates to engage with slightly extended stimulus, over 75% of candidates achieved full marks. Examiners reported that only a small number of candidates made the mistake of selecting more than two possible answers.
- Q8** This question required candidates to translate Irish sentences into English, based on the familiar topic of ‘School’. This presented some challenge to many candidates. Examiners noted that candidates who did not achieve marks in this question fell into two general categories: those who provided inaccurate, additional information in their answers; and those who failed to communicate the exact meaning of the message in the sentences. For future learning, candidates are advised to pay close attention to the detail of the sentences, including tenses and the use of adjectives.
- Q9** This is the first of the overlap questions which appear on both the Foundation and Higher Tier papers. Candidates were required to engage with questions and answers in Irish. The majority of candidates achieved highly in this question, with Part (f) presenting the most challenge. Some candidates failed to recognise *leath i ndiaidh a hocht* as 8:30 and instead opted for 8:15.
- Q10** The stimulus for this question was presented in a ‘menu style’ allowing candidates to deal with the various pieces of information individually. Despite the subsequent questions being multiple choice, only approximately 60% of the candidates on average achieved the marks across the 6 parts of the question. Some candidates struggled to make connections between the stimulus and the appropriate correct answers, e.g. that a *bainisteoir* would be *ag obair* in a restaurant.
- Q11** Despite the stimulus for this question being an extended piece of text, it is worth noting that Question 11(a) was the third best answered question on the whole paper, with nearly 95% of candidates getting the answer correct. It is pleasing to know that almost every candidate was able to achieve positively at this late stage of the paper.
- Q12** In this final question, candidates were presented with their highest level of challenge. Notably, 85% of candidates achieved the correct answer for Question 12(b), however,

only approximately 34% of candidates on average were able to identify the correct answers to Question 12(e) and Question 12(f). This last question, although still accessible to many candidates, allowed the most capable of this cohort to forge ahead and achieve the higher end of marks available.

In general, candidates are to be commended for their high achievement; many were able to achieve marks from questions drawing from a variety of topics on the GCSE Irish Specification. Although many efforts are made to ensure that candidates are examined on familiar vocabulary from the Minimum Core Vocabulary list, it is worth remembering that candidates are also required to deal with other less familiar vocabulary within the relevant topics taken from the three Contexts for Learning.

Higher Tier

Approximately 85% of the overall cohort opted to sit GIH32, Higher Tier Reading. The team of examiners reported the observations below whilst marking the work of candidates from various centres.

Similarly to Foundation Tier, candidates were presented with a variety of question styles in English and in Irish including gap-filling, written response in English, translating into English, selecting from three pictorial options, selecting from three written options.

In general, candidates coped well with the format of the various question styles; however, it is worth highlighting that candidates should only select or provide the exact number of answers asked for. When providing written answers, especially those worth two marks, candidates should try to discriminate between what information provides an accurate answer and what information is irrelevant to the question asked of them.

- Q1** This introductory question allowed candidates to engage with familiar language from the familiar topics of Shopping and Celebrations. The pictorial, multiple choice layout was very accessible for the majority of candidates. Approximately 95% of candidates achieved all 6 marks available for this question.
- Q2** In a similar way to Question 1, this question allowed candidates to engage with familiar language, this time using short written responses to gap-fill sentences. Approximately 80% of candidates achieved full marks for this question. Question 2(f) which required candidates to recognise a list of vegetables as *glasraí* proved most challenging.
- Q3** This question was well answered, with almost 85% of candidates achieving all 6 marks available. Questions 3(b) and 3(c), which involved familiar vocabulary such as *gasúr*, *dlíodóir* and *deartháir* proved to be the most challenging for some candidates
- Q4** A little under 80% of candidates achieved full marks in this question. The most successfully-answered questions were Question 4(b) and Question 4(d) which involved numbers and money-related issues. Question 4(e) proved to be the most challenging element of this question with many candidates struggling to distinguish between *níos saoire* and *níos daoire*.
- Q5** This translation was, in general, well answered by the majority of candidates with approximately 80% achieving the full marks available. It is worth noting that concise and accurate translation led candidates to gaining the maximum marks available. For future examinations, candidates should be advised to ensure that the message in each statement must be translated accurately.
- Q6** This multiple-choice question dealing with basic food items was well answered by most candidates. Approximately 85% of candidates achieved full marks in this question.

- Q7** This question, based around the topic of Social Media, proved to be more challenging for many candidates. Approximately 63% of candidates achieved full marks for this question. Common mistakes included not providing sufficient information in answers, and for Question 7(c) some candidates failed to refer to the stimulus provided and instead offered their own opinions on the subject in question.
- Q8** Approximately 65% of candidates achieved full marks for this question based around the topic of Voluntary Work. Common mistakes included candidates offering their own assumptions on the topic rather than referring to the stimulus. For Question 8(c), some candidates failed to provide two pieces of information in their answer, and many confused the word *earraí* with *éadaí*.
- Q9** This question was well answered by the majority of candidates with over 85% of candidates achieving full marks. Despite this being a more challenging topic from the GCSE Irish Specification, many candidates picked up on familiar language within the stimulus, which guided them to the correct answers from the three options available.
- Q10** This question, based around the topic of Future Plans, allowed for the higher-ability candidates to demonstrate their keen understanding of the language. Approximately 50% of candidates achieved full marks in this question. Questions 10(b) and 10(c) presented most challenge to candidates with many failing to recognise *a chur i dtaisce* and *innealtóireacht*.
- Q11** This question, based around the familiar topic of Travel and Tourism, was presented in an accessible, multiple-choice pictorial manner. Approximately 67% of candidates achieved full marks in this question. The most successful question was Part (c) with over 82% of candidates recognising the familiar vocabulary *linn snámha*.
- Q12** The final question on this paper required candidates to provide written answers, in English, to questions based on a passage about Healthy Lifestyle. The most challenging aspect of this question was Part (c) and Part (d). Many candidates struggled to achieve two out of two marks in these questions due to their offering answers which were based more on assumptions rather than on the information contained within the stimulus.

Overall, candidates are to be commended for their high achievement. Many candidates succeeded in accessing marks from a range of questions based on a variety of topics contained within the GCSE Irish Specification. The high achievement of pupils, engaging with both familiar and some less familiar vocabulary across the specification, is testament to the efforts of both candidates and teachers alike.

Assessment Unit 4 Writing

Overview

This is the third year that the writing element of this examination has been offered in the format of an examination as opposed to controlled assessment. Both teachers and candidates are still adjusting to this ‘new’ format of assessment. Assistant examiners found that the paper was accessible to all candidates with the majority of candidates engaging well with each question, assisted by the clear rubric in use throughout the papers.

The papers at both Foundation and Higher Tiers provided opportunities for candidates of varying abilities to display their knowledge and skill to achieve marks. Communication and accuracy remain key components in the awarding of marks for the skill of writing. While correct spelling and grammatical accuracy are important considerations in the marking of this particular skill, some leniency was applied this year as reflected in the application of the mark scheme.

Foundation Tier

In Questions 1 and 2, the emphasis is on communication for marking purposes.

- Q1 (a)** This was a very open-ended question allowing candidates to display their breadth of vocabulary. A small number of candidates identified activities as opposed to places, or used English, and this meant they were unable to be awarded marks for their response. The nature of this question meant that most accurately-written nouns were permissible providing that they made contextual sense.
- (b)** While the rubric requested candidates to provide a ‘suitable phrase (of 2-3 words)’, a large number of candidates responded with a sentence, at times penalising themselves by making mistakes. The open-ended nature of the question meant candidates could use their vocabulary as they saw fit. Some candidates responded to the instruction with a description (*thar barr*), a weather phrase (*iontach te*) or an activity (*obair bhaile*). It should be noted that it is not necessary for candidates to use a verb in responding to this question.
- Q2** Candidates mainly dealt well with this question, and used appropriate sentence structures to form their responses. Candidates are reminded that full sentences should be used in the responses required in this question. On occasion, where candidates had written too much information, it often gave rise to errors in both spelling and grammar. In a minority of instances, candidates opted not to answer questions, or provided irrelevant information. Some candidates struggled with sentence structure in Question 2(e) about whether or not they enjoyed their day – *is maith liom* was a common response.

In Questions 3 and 4, marks are awarded for communication and accuracy.

- Q3** This question caused difficulty for a number of candidates. The closed nature of the sentences to be translated resulted in inaccuracies in vocabulary, verbs and sentence structure. That said, many candidates attempted each part of the translation with reasonable degrees of success. A fair number of candidates were able to use accurate vocabulary and structures leading to partial or full marks depending on the response.
- Accuracy is key for this section, and candidates are reminded that all elements of the sentence must be accurately translated. The most-challenged candidates did not attempt to provide any responses to this question.
- Q4** Candidates had a choice of three questions. The option for Context 1 on Social Media and New Technology was least chosen while the majority opted to provide an answer to the Context 2 or Context 3 elements in equal numbers.

Candidates were expected to write approximately 20-25 words per bullet point with five clear paragraphs, equally balanced. Some candidates addressed two or three out of five bullet points relatively well, but fell down especially in addressing bullet points four and five.

In addition, throughout the essay, candidates are expected to include some ideas and opinions, and justification for these. The most-successful candidates presented such essays and demonstrated a reasonably proficient command of the language at this level. In those instances where candidates did not perform as well, it was usually as a result of missing or incomplete bullet points, a lack of grammatical knowledge to construct logical sentences or insufficient vocabulary, leading to blank spaces or the inclusion of English.

Candidates, at this level of entry, should practise writing in short, simple sentences and developing bullet points with a few sentences for each one.

Higher Tier

Candidates engaged with this paper fairly well, bearing in mind the fact that schools are still adjusting to the requirements of the new GCSE Irish Specification. For some, the opportunities provided were used to show off their proficiency in the language, but for others there was evidence to demonstrate that candidates experienced difficulties around verbs, tenses and knowledge of sufficient vocabulary to develop topics and bullet points. It is important that candidates focus on regular, short, accurate writing tasks throughout their GCSE Irish studies.

Q1 This was the overlap question with the Foundation paper and was generally well answered. Candidates who used simple, concise Irish in these questions tended to score the maximum mark available. Those who used longer, more complex structures with extraneous information risked losing marks through inaccuracy.

For full communication to occur, it was important that candidates selected a verb in a tense which responded appropriately to the question.

Q2 The majority of candidates responded very well to this question on Holidays, and, for that reason, they achieved highly. In the majority of cases, candidates realised that this question predominantly required past tense verbs, though there were still some candidates who experienced some confusion with verbs.

Part 2(e) saw many candidates use the future tense correctly, or verb forms which implied the future tense such as *Ba mhaith liom dul go...* or *Tá mé ag dul go dtí an Spáinn ar an bhliain seo chugainn.*

Q3 The translation question was perhaps the most challenging for candidates, and, for that reason, candidate success varied on this question. It is vital to note that accurate translation is key in this question, and while some candidates came up with excellent alternative options to the sentences to be translated, these responses could not be credited as accurate translations.

In Question 3(a), marks could not be awarded for *spórt* as opposed to *aclaíocht* as sport does not equate to exercise. The word 'important' was also problematic for some candidates. That said, candidates did attempt this section with some degree of accuracy.

Some issues included the fact that a large number of candidates used 'Gaelic' as opposed to *peil Ghaelach*, and in Question 3(d) the verb 'relax' eluded a large number of candidates.

For Question 3(e), candidates approached the translation with a variety of structures, including various forms of the verb *éist* as opposed to the verbal noun in the form of *éisteacht* or *a bheith ag éisteacht*.

- Q4** As with the Foundation paper, candidates were given a choice from each of the three contexts, and again, Context 1, Social Media and New Technology, was the least popular choice. Distribution of responses among the other two choices was quite even.

Candidates were expected to write approximately 30-40 words per bullet point with five clear paragraphs, equally balanced. Some candidates addressed three or four out of five bullet points relatively well, but fell down especially in addressing bullet points four or five. In addition, throughout the essay, candidates are expected to include ideas and opinions and justification for those.

The most successful candidates presented such essays and demonstrated a proficient command of the language at this level, using accurate grammar, structures and a good range of appropriate vocabulary. In those instances where candidates did not perform as well, it was usually as a result of missing or incomplete bullet points, a lack of grammatical knowledge to construct logical sentences or insufficient vocabulary. Candidates, at this level of entry, should practise writing in paragraphs in which a stimulus bullet point is developed. This will result in candidates being rewarded highly for their efforts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I wish to applaud all candidates who entered for GCSE Irish in Summer 2022 and congratulate all for the great efforts undertaken by each individual candidate. The skilled and professional input and direction given by teachers across all examination centres is vital and this has been recognised and rewarded in the positive outcomes achieved by the candidates.

The senior examining team wish to acknowledge the ever-increasing pressures placed on candidates and teachers alike. We thank you all for your ongoing promotion of the language, and many of you for your constructive feedback on the Summer 2022 series of examinations. Please be assured that all concerns and views which are relayed to the Senior Examining Team are given due consideration. Ultimately, we as a team strive to continue to encourage the candidates' love of Irish whilst also ensuring the provision of the highest quality of examination materials within the parameters of the specification.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of the assistant examiners, who under the supportive and experienced direction of the principal examiners, made every effort to ensure that accuracy, fairness and consistency of approach were applied when marking the work of every candidate. The excellent team of CCEA support staff are owed a vote of gratitude for their endless guidance and advice to all persons involved in the examination process.

As we move beyond the Summer Series of 2022, I wish to thank the senior examining team for their unwavering support and high levels of professionalism. I look forward to their ongoing guidance and contributions in the future.

Contact details

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