
A-LEVEL

MODERN HEBREW

Unit 1 Reading and Writing
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

All students completed the paper within the time allowed. Most were clearly at ease with the level of demand of the exam, and there were a high proportion of outstanding examples of a very high standard of response. In most cases these were clearly the work of native speakers. While it is pleasing to see such a high proportion of native or near-native speakers, it is disappointing that the number of students who have studied Modern Hebrew through the education system falling.

Examiners saw a very small number of very poor scripts from students who appeared not to have prepared adequately for the exam. Teachers should consider whether it is in these students' best interests to be entered for the exam.

Section 1 Comprehension

Almost all students scored well in this section.

Part (a) consisted of multiple choice questions while part (b) was a gap-fill exercise. This year it seems that students generally found these questions very accessible; none of the questions proved awkward or ambiguous. While the majority of students failed to score full marks in part 1(a), a very high proportion of students did so in part 1(b). As always, teachers should remind their students that the tasks in this part of the exam can vary from year to year and should prepare their students for a range of language exercises, instructing them as to how to answer the different types of task. None of the questions proved awkward or ambiguous.

Part (c) demonstrated that the great majority of students understood the passage given without any great difficulty. This year, however, more than 50% of students gave only partial answers to a number of questions. In many cases answers were lifted from the text or used partial sentences rather than full ones, which meant full marks could not be awarded. There were also answers which stopped in the wrong place or gave unnecessary information. Fewer students wrote the answers in their own words than in previous years. Teachers should encourage students to give full but relevant answers and to ensure that they read both text and questions carefully. Out of 30 marks, 20 are given for Response to written language (AO2) and the other 10 for Knowledge of grammar (AO3). Teachers should remind students that copying from the passage is unlikely to score well under AO3. Students who used their own words, wholly or partially, will be awarded marks for their efforts.

Section 2 Translation

This year a greater number of students performed well in this section in comparison to last year. Most were familiar with the required vocabulary, but at times were less familiar with the correct term or nuance in English. Most of the words that proved difficult for students were those which had more than one meaning or nuance in English. When a word had more than one possible translation, students often interpreted the word incorrectly. Teachers should encourage students to consider the different possibilities within the sentence when making their choices.

There was one sentence in the second paragraph which proved to be a stumbling block for a number of students. This was largely due to students' difficulties in forming a correct sentence in English when translating a lengthy Hebrew sentence. Teachers are advised to practice translating both compound and complex sentences from Hebrew to English.

Some students tried to paraphrase rather than produce an accurate translation. Here, students were rewarded in cases where the translation did not deviate too much from the general sense of the original passage.

A very small number of students were unable to understand the passage well enough to give a coherent translation. Some made spelling mistakes in their English but were only penalised for this when the mistakes were serious enough to impede communication.

Section 3 Essay

It appeared that the content of the stimulus passage this year did indeed fire up the imagination of the students. The topic does concern most, if not all, youngsters and, as such, many students raised a good number of arguments in support of volunteering. However, not all of them remembered to deal equally with the requirements of both parts of the stimulus.

This section showed the ability of students to express themselves freely. The high proportion of Hebrew speakers taking the exam led to a high standard of language being used in the essays. There were some outstanding examples of excellent responses using rich and vivid language as well as using the appropriate register.

Many students wrote much more than the required number of words. In some of these cases there were repetitions and ambiguities. Teachers are advised to emphasise to their students that longer answers are not necessarily awarded more marks. Teachers are also urged to remind students to leave some time for thoroughly checking their responses at the end of the exam.

A very small number of students failed to understand the theme of the stimulus and wrote essays on a completely different topic.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.
[UMS conversion calculator](#)