



General Certificate of Education

General Studies 6761

Specification A

GSA4 Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - June series

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Unit 4 Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

Unit 4 Question 1

(GA4F French)

This component is an objective test for which the following list indicates the correct answers used in marking the candidates' responses.

1.1	C	1.11	C
1.2	D	1.12	C
1.3	A	1.13	A
1.4	B	1.14	B
1.5	A	1.15	B
1.6	C	1.16	A
1.7	D	1.17	D
1.8	C	1.18	D
1.9	D	1.19	B
1.10	A	1.20	B

Unit 4 Question 1

(GA4G German)

This component is an objective test for which the following list indicates the correct answers used in marking the candidates' responses.

1.1	C	1.11	D
1.2	B	1.12	B
1.3	A	1.13	A
1.4	B	1.14	D
1.5	C	1.15	B
1.6	D	1.16	B
1.7	C	1.17	D
1.8	C	1.18	A
1.9	A	1.19	C
1.10	A	1.20	D

Unit 4 Question 1

(GA4S Spanish)

This component is an objective test for which the following list indicates the correct answers used in marking the candidates' responses.

1.1	A	1.11	B
1.2	C	1.12	D
1.3	D	1.13	C
1.4	A	1.14	B
1.5	B	1.15	D
1.6	C	1.16	C
1.7	B	1.17	D
1.8	A	1.18	A
1.9	C	1.19	B
1.10	D	1.20	A

Unit 4 Question 1

(GA4E European Culture)

This component is an objective test for which the following list indicates the correct answers used in marking the candidates' responses.

1.1	D	1.16	A
1.2	A	1.17	D
1.3	D	1.18	A
1.4	C	1.19	C
1.5	A	1.20	C
1.6	A	1.21	D
1.7	B	1.22	B
1.8	B	1.23	D
1.9	C	1.24	A
1.10	B	1.25	C
1.11	B	1.26	D
1.12	D	1.27	D
1.13	C	1.28	A
1.14	A	1.29	B
1.15	B	1.30	C

GSA4 Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

Question 1 – Objective Test Questions

As expected the number of candidates attempting the foreign language component fell quite sharply in this series compared with June 2006. Approximately, reductions were 53% in French, 55% in German and 35% in Spanish. The introduction of the Themes in European Culture as an alternative to a language proved popular accounting for 52% of the Unit 4 entry.

Modern Foreign Language

Performance in all three languages, however, improved from last June, with French showing the greatest increase. Only German showed an improvement from January 2007, whereas French and Spanish remained static, although at this stage it was felt that candidates opting for the language component would show a greater ability to negotiate presented material. All three languages retain a comparable level of demand and continue to produce pleasing outcomes in performance.

The statistics suggest that the ability of entrants is higher this summer and the papers presented few if any serious difficulties. Although the number of easy questions is increasing (identified with a facility over 65% and answered correctly by a large proportion of the candidates), the papers discriminate well and show an improvement in the identification of ability and knowledge. The Spanish paper remains the most successful in this.

Once again there was an improvement upon scores at pre-test. There were greater margins than last June, but the improvement in French was considerable.

The figures for this summer

Mean facility (with June 2006 scores in brackets for comparison):

French 68% (59%), German 62% (58%), Spanish 61% (53%)

The mean mark for this series (with the standard deviation in brackets):

French 13.7 (3.8), German 12.3 (3.9), Spanish 12.2 (4.6)

Improvements on pre-test:

French +16%, German +7%, Spanish +9%

The only element of note in all three language papers is the frequency of easy questions since in no paper were found any difficult questions (with a facility below 35%), questions with notable distractors, questions which discriminated poorly, and no questions were rejected.

French

Easy questions were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17 and 18.

German

Easy questions were 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Spanish

The easy questions were 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

European Culture

This was the first session of this paper and it seems to have worked very well.

There was a pre-test mean overall facility of 51% which rose to 59% in the actual examination - a little below the language facilities but this is perhaps to be expected now that the language papers are more likely to be tackled by more able linguists. The discrimination was a little lower than the pre-test point biserial value, but it was still (at 0.30) well within an acceptable range.

Several questions proved relatively easy and these, pleasingly, came from across a range of AO1 and AO3 answers. Specifically, questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 16, 21, 24, 26, 28 and 29 had facilities above 65%.

Question 20, an AO1 question expected the answer that Freud was a major influence on surrealism, proved to be the most difficult question on the paper, with a facility of only 32%. This was particularly unexpected as its pre-test score was 53%. It did, however, discriminate well, so abler candidates were still able to identify the correct alternative.

Question 15, another knowledge-based question, discriminated relatively poorly. It was the only multiple completion question on the paper and required knowledge of Franco. It was correctly answered by 56% of candidates. The reason for the lower discrimination seems to be that many of the least able candidates overall answered this question more successfully than average candidates. The most able candidates also tended to opt for the correct alternative.

Question 2

General Comments

The overwhelming difference between this examination session and the trend of recent examinations was the number of candidates who attempted all six essays. Care has been taken in setting the papers to point out clearly that only one essay is required. It appears three times on the front page (once in bold) and in bold above the essay questions. As many as 40% of candidates in some centres were trying to write convincing essays to six different questions in the 45 minutes available. Some were even trying to answer all 6 questions in one continuous stream. Unsurprisingly the mark for the best essay of such candidates rarely rose above level one of the mark scheme and has depressed the overall mean mark for the paper. It is very worrying that candidates can be entered for this examination without knowing how many essays they will be expected to write.

There were, as always, some excellent answers. The qualities that raise an answer to the highest mark level include careful analysis of the whole question; appropriate information clearly exemplified and illustrated and discussed from a variety of standpoints; good levels of understanding with a degree of subtlety and recognition of nuance; structured in such a logical way that the arguments are logically ordered and can be clearly followed. Many of the candidates are able to do this - some to an outstanding standard - and often quite concisely.

Many of these criteria, though not at such a high level of achievement, also apply to levels 2 and 3 of the general mark scheme. Preparation for these essays, especially for those candidates who do not write essays in their other subjects, might include exercises to develop the variety of skills required by the mark scheme.

Question 2.1

Was popular and relatively straightforward in its requirements. Candidates were asked to examine two statements and then to analyse and exemplify the tensions that the two may engender in combination. Many students were able to offer an analysis of the first statement (that laws should be upheld) and knew the reasons for state laws. The second statement (that religious adherents should follow religious law) was attempted less often. The tension between the two was often well done. Some candidates were unable to distinguish between religion and culture/race and were uncertain about what constituted a religious requirement. Conflict over the wearing of religious attire was often attempted and often their factual knowledge of the situations they described was only partial. Inevitably, as elsewhere on the paper, the assertions often outweighed the exemplification.

Question 2.2

On the nature of 'truth' was to be argued by means of examples. This is, of course, also true of other questions. Exemplification was offered and some of it was known in depth, with fine distinctions being made between mathematical, scientific, empirical, religious, forensic and legal truths and proofs. More simplistic answers concentrated on truth as opposed to lies. Many candidates were less willing or able to find examples to illustrate what cannot be proven.

Question 2.3

Was often well done. Some candidates had an encyclopaedic knowledge of film and put it to stunning effect. Few candidates were distracted into relating the plot and many were prepared to discuss the issues of importance and effectiveness. Many candidates really appreciated that a degree of comparison might be useful though only the best carried it off effectively. Spirited answers often came from those candidates who took issue with the claim and offered alternatives for the crown of 'the most important and effective art form.' Weaker candidates merely equated importance with popularity and then with effect. It was interesting how many candidates were unaware of the enormous popularity of cinema-going at times in the last century and appropriated it for their own generation.

Question 2.4

Was neither popular nor well done. As with 2.5 it is, at essence, a question on artistic criteria. Again, many assertions were made but few examples were cited. Only the better candidates were able to say what could be learned from great figures of the past and especially those who had a personal interest and experience. The discussion on creativity was frequently ignored and therefore the mark was adjusted accordingly. Sometimes this was done very well and again it was possible, with convincing argument, to present a case either for or against the proposition.

Question 2.5

Sadly, few candidates went beyond Shakespeare and Beethoven (and most knew nothing about the latter). Beethoven's case for being a greater artist than Beyoncé was usually his deafness. Shakespeare's was frequently both his death and his invention of many of the commonly used phrases and words in the English language (most of which, according to the OED have Old English or Middle English roots predating Shakespeare's time). Nevertheless, a good number of candidates managed to structure their essay around criteria such as universality, longevity, dramatic intensity and originality; use of language, poetic imagery, depth of language/ harmony, melody and form which they applied to acknowledged figures or works of greatness but, in many cases were unable then to transfer to Soap Operas and Pop Music.

Question 2.6

Referred to similar territory to 2.1 in most answers. This was generally quite weakly done. Some were able to write refreshingly about rights of free expression but were weaker on responsibilities. Roy 'Chubby' Brown figured frequently in answers though very few were able to articulate his motivation. What really was disappointing were those who could not differentiate between types of humour and satire hardly got a look in. As to cartoons - those who knew about the Danish experience often used it well. Several hit the mark with 'The Simpsons' but those who tried to force 'Tom & Jerry' or 'Scooby-Doo' into the mould of the question did not get very far. Political cartoonists were unknown. Notions of Political Correctness were discussed but there was an occasional rant of quite shocking intensity.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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