



A Level **Polish**

7687/1

Report on the examination

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General Overview

The number of students sitting the exam this year has increased more than 20% in comparison to previous year, but the performance was very much comparable to 2024. The quality of work produced continued to be on the whole of a good or a very good standard. Questions 2, 5 and Section B discriminated well between lower- and higher-attaining students.

Despite the growing interest in the specification and availability of a good number of past papers, there was still a number of students, most of whom choosing very popular topics 07 or 08, who produced answers lacking the knowledge and depth required for achieving marks in the middle or higher bands for AO4. Comparably to previous session, students who chose topics 06 or 09 seemed to have been better prepared and on average were awarded more marks.

Section 1

Question 1

This question was well answered, with over half of students scoring full marks in 1.1. In question 1.2 over two third of students were awarded three or more marks. For some reason many students used the expression *zajmowali się wojowaniem*, which was not a correct answer. The least successful question was 1.3 where slightly over half of students failed to mention the loss / disappearance of the Tatar language, thus scoring 1 mark out of 2.

Question 2

This year students performed well in this summary task question, with nearly of all students scoring six marks out of seven available for AO2, and two third of all students scoring four or five marks for AO3. The text about one of the poems by Adam Asnyk was well understood and the idea of making progress, but at the same time respecting the past and previous generations, seemed to be timely and easy to relate to. Most of students did not have any problems with finding text corresponding to bullet points one and three. However, for some students finding similarities and differences between ideas in Polish Romanticism and Polish Positivism was quite challenging. Many of these students copied large chunks from the source text, scoring some marks for AO2, but losing out on the AO3 due to the lifted language.

Many students were not familiar with the name of the poet, and would incorrectly use it in their summaries. This however did not affect students' ability to score a maximum number of marks available.

There was a number of long (well over 90 words) and short summaries. It should be reminded that if an answer contains around 50% of the words required, it is highly unlikely that it contains all necessary content for AO2 or shows an adequate level of quality of language needed for higher bands for AO3 and is therefore self-penalising.

Question 3

This true/false/not in the text task was generally well done. All questions, apart from 3.3 and 3.5, were answered correctly by a vast majority of students.

Question 4

There was a wide range of marks scored and the question seemed to perform rather well. In question 4.1 more than three quarters of all students were awarded full marks. Question 4.2 was very straightforward, rather opposite to question 4.3 where just less than half of this year's cohort did score a mark. Those who did score a mark there answered correctly that the author was encouraging reading traditional books as opposed to just reading, or reading e-books. There were some unexpected answers, including *fizyczne książki*, *prawdziwe książki*, *zwykłe książki*, *wytarte z kurzu normalne książki* and all were accepted.

Question 5

The translation task was well answered. Nearly 80% scored at least seven marks out of ten which was comparable to previous sessions. The topic of education was familiar and the text contained a variety of different structures and a number of high frequency Polish vocabulary, including some used in previous year, eg. *założono*, *system kształcenia*, *możliwość*, *dostęp*, *sytuacja polityczna*. Below are examples of vocabulary that caused most problems:

- *Trzeciego Wieku* was sometimes translated as *Third Era* or *Third Century* (both were not accepted)
- *włączenie* was often rendered as *bringing*, which was not accurate
- erroneous renditions of *system kształcenia* – it was often translated as *shaping system*
- *utrzymanie* was often rendered as *strengthening*
- *ówczesnym* was very often omitted, or translated as *current* which was inaccurate
- *możliwość* was often translated as *ability*, which was not accepted
- *sześćset* was sometimes rendered as sixty
- *dziedzin* was sometimes translated as *backgrounds*
- *kwantową* was sometimes omitted.

It is worth reminding teachers to use as wide (when possible) range of sources and materials as possible, to help students to build up varied vocabulary, knowledge of idioms, become familiar with different styles and provide opportunities to practise both Polish grammar and spelling.

SECTION B

Students were required to write one essay related to the research topic which would have been chosen at the beginning of the AL course. They had to use information from the source text provided in the exam paper (AO2), link this information to the knowledge gained during their individual research, and write an essay on the question set.

Similarly to previous years, essays on the topics related to communism in Poland (Q6) and the resistance movement during WWII (Q9) were of a better quality than essays of students who chose either Q7 (racism in Poland) and Q8 (tourism in Poland).

Those students who were well prepared and had in-depth knowledge and understanding of the chosen research topic, were able to present additional relevant information supporting

their argument and form an appropriate conclusion, thus scored the highest number of marks **for AO4**.

Students who used a good or wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the context and the task, showed a good grasp of grammar and were able to manipulate complex language accurately were able to score marks in higher bands **in AO3**. Around 80% of students scored 6 or more marks in this category.

There was a wide range of marks for **AO2**. Most students used the information in source texts very effectively, some used very little of information from the source text, with some not used it at all. It is difficult to see whether the last category failed to see the connection between the text and the question set, or whether they were unaware of the requirement to use it. Whatever the answer, it is unfortunate to see some students losing marks in this section.

Question 6

This was the most popular choice in Section B. Many students produced essays that were detailed and fully relevant to the question set. They showed an excellent knowledge and understanding of the continuous opposition and fight between communists and the Catholic church. Many students showed a detailed knowledge about repressions of priests (with examples of Fr Popiełuszko or Bishop Kaczmarek) or Church institutions, the role of the Cardinal Wyszyński and John Paul II in opposing the communist ideology and their impact on people's morale, resilience and determination. Most answers contained a valid evaluation of the question set, with some students arguing that the fight still continues and the current situation of the Church in Poland is a direct result of years in opposition during the communist era. It was fascinating to see such high level of analytical and critical thinking.

Those who scored less were not able to provide enough relevant arguments or support them with relevant and appropriate evidence. Some, for example, would copy the source text, adding very little or just mention some information about choosing the pope without any further details. In these cases, students were not able to score more than 4 marks for AO4.

Students wrote in a generally good language, showing a good grasp of grammar and a good range of vocabulary relevant to the context and the task. Over three quarters of students scored seven or more for the AO3, which was a very pleasing result.

Question 7

This question was chosen by less than twenty percent of students. Similarly to Q8, this topic continues to be perceived as relatively easy, but the essays showed once again that not many students were thoroughly prepared for it.

A rather small number of essays contained justification, evidence, and factual information about roots of racism in Poland. Instead, students were using personal experience (*starsi ludzie w Polsce – jak moja babcia - boją się ludzi, co wyglądają inaczej (!)*) or stereotypical statements (*mało ludzi w Polsce widziało czarnoskórą osobę*). Some students mentioned events from the US, which was interesting, but given the topic and specification, was deemed irrelevant. As a result, many were scoring well for AO3, but were less successful in AO2 and AO4.

However, it is worth noting that a small number of essays contained very thoughtful and mature arguments, including factual information about events in the Polish history which proved both existence of tolerance and a lack of it; events that, in students' opinion, are shaping the current Polish society. Some students argued that Poland's long road to regaining independence and years of living under communist regime have instilled a great fear of people from other countries or cultures. At the same time, they continued, the love of travel among younger generation and the widespread and growing usage of technology is helping to promote inclusiveness and openness towards others. Some students mentioned the recent influx of migrants and mixed reactions from politicians as examples justifying their conclusions and evaluation of the topic.

Question 8

This was the second popular choice in this section. Just over 30% of students chose tourism in Poland as their research topic. Similarly to racism in Poland, the topic continues being considered as relatively easy, mostly because of personal experiences of frequent travels to Poland. Sadly, this year results are confirming one more time that this is not enough in terms of preparation of this research topic.

This year's question focused on the historical architectural monuments. The source text contained some information about the Książ castle and in the essay question students were asked to compare it to another, chosen by them, historical monument in Poland. They were asked to mention historical, cultural and tourist attractiveness of the chosen landmark.

Some students have used the source texts effectively, and compared the castle to interesting places, such as Janowiec castle, Łańcut palace, Ogrodzieniec, Gdańsk Cathedral, renaissance main square in Zamość, Solina Dam, citing their uniqueness, rich history and tourist attractiveness. Those students were able to score well for AO4. Unfortunately, most failed to do so, focusing instead on regions, national parks, food, environment. While this may seem rather out of place, it is worth pointing out that most of this information was taken from past papers - Kujawy and Małopolska regions, Białowiecki National Park and Poznań delicacies all featured in source texts in the past. Those who did not write about the question set this year and included irrelevant information were not able to score many marks.

This year's source text mentioned two additional places of interest, namely Malbork and Wawel castles, and some students used this information, adding more facts and details, scoring well in the AO4 section. However, not all students were able to do so, with some writing paragraphs containing arguments such as *Zamek w Malborku jest większy od zamku na Wawelu, ponieważ zamek na Wawelu jest mniejszy od zamku w Malborku* or *Smok to najpiękniejsza atrakcja nad rzeką wawelską, Wawel podobnie jak zamek w Książu miał dużo sławnych mieszkańców*. Needless to say, these answers were not awarded many marks for AO4.

What was unusual this year, was the number of students choosing to compare the Książ castle to ... Auschwitz. One can only assume that this rather unexpected choice was the result of focusing on the historical element of the chosen landmark mentioned in the question set. The students who simply mentioned it within the context of WWII or were attempting to describe its architectural value were not awarded many marks for AO4, but those who argued

that from the historical point of view this is an important and indeed necessary place to visit in Poland were awarded marks accordingly.

On average students scored 8 marks for AO4. In order to be awarded high number of marks for AO4 essays should include valid evidence, sound conclusions and evaluation of the question set.

Question 9

As in previous years the topic related to the resistance movement during the WWII was least popular (chosen by slightly over ten percent of all students), but those students who chose it performed better than others. Around 30% of students scored fifteen or more marks for AO4. This is comparable to Question 6 and far higher than average for students choosing Question 7 or 8.

The question this year focused on Szare Szeregi and its role in the resistance movement. The source text contained a lot of information, which was effectively used and expanded upon by students. Many essays contained facts about different military actions, in which Szare Szeregi took part, including operation Kutchera, operation pod Arsenalem, or Powstanie Warszawskie. Some students used knowledge and examples from *Kamienie na szaniec*, the book by Aleksander Kamiński describing the history of the Polish underground scout movement, which took an active role in the resistance through so called small sabotage. The names and lives of the heroes, including Zośka, Rudy, Alek, other historical facts, dates, arguments and evaluation were presented in a clear and appropriate style, using various and rich topical vocabulary, hence scoring high marks for both AO3 and AO4.

Interestingly, as in previous years 75% of students scored 6 or more marks for AO2 (ability to use the information from the source text), which was the best outcome for all Section B topics.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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