

RUSSIAN

SEC 26

SYLLABUS

AIMS

The aims of this syllabus are to:

- (a) develop the ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication;
- (b) offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), intercultural awareness and notions of human universal values;
- (c) contribute to the cognitive and affective development of the candidate;
- (d) provide intellectual stimulation and enjoyment.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

SPEAKING (A2) Candidates must show an ability to:

- (a) give descriptions of aspects related to everyday affairs and situations;
- (b) exchange relevant information on familiar and social matters;
- (c) discuss practical issues;
- (d) express personal opinions on common problems;
- (e) make simple transactions in social situations;
- (f) receive required information;
- (g) respond adequately in a guided dialogue.

LISTENING (A2) Candidates must show an ability to:

- (a) understand short, concrete texts;
- (b) identify the main point/s of short clear texts;
- (c) extrapolate essential ideas from short texts of concrete type.

READING (A2+B1) Candidates must show an ability to:

- (a) read short, simple texts on common, concrete topics;
- (b) elicit the overall meaning of short texts containing some unfamiliar words. This implies reading with understanding letters, advertisements, prospectuses, menus, lists, notices, signs, brochures and short newspaper articles;
- (c) identify specific information;
- (d) understand direct regulations, simple instructions, and short descriptions.

WRITING (A2+B1) Candidates must show an ability to:

- (a) describe common events and experiences;
- (b) write simple narratives;
- (c) express ideas, opinions and emotions in letters, notes, and messages.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Candidates will be assessed on their communicative language competence which has the following components:

- (a) basic linguistic competences which may include: lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic, and orthoepic;

Grammatical competence must include the following:

The Alphabet;

Nouns: feminine/masculine, neuter, singular/plural (including the more common irregular ones);

Declension of nouns;

Adjectives: indefinite; demonstrative; interrogative; possessive;

Declension of adjectives;

The Verbs: conjugation of verbs;

All the tenses - present, past and future of the Indicative. Aspects: perfective and imperfective and their uses;

Use of the infinitive;

Present Conditional;

Past Conditional;

The imperative mood, negative form of the imperative;

The infinitive used as imperative;

The impersonal construction;

Reflexive verbs;

The modal verbs;

Prepositions;

Formation of adverbs;

Adjectives and adverbs expressing quantity;

Regular comparison of adjectives and adverbs (and the irregular forms most commonly used);

Superlative: absolute and relative;

The Pronouns: Subject personal pronouns, Demonstrative pronouns, Interrogative pronouns, Relative pronouns, Possessive pronouns, Reflexive pronouns, Indefinite pronouns;

Direct speech, Indirect speech.

(b) sociolinguistic competences which may include linguistic markers of social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk wisdom, register differences, dialect and accent;

This component must include basic vocabulary connected with such topics as:

- Personal Identification: introducing oneself; getting acquainted with others.
- The Family: introducing and talking about members of the family.

- Nationality: identifying and meeting people from different countries; asking and giving information about country of origin and country of residence.
 - Residence: where one lives; describing one's house in a particular street in a city or town.
 - Location: asking and giving information about the neighbourhood; street and city activities.
 - Means of Transport: travelling in the city by different means of transport; at the Bus station; taking a taxi; on the ferry boat; using a private car.
 - Numbers and Time: asking and giving the time; describing daily activities at different times such as waking, going to school or to work, taking meals, travelling; asking how much or how many.
 - Seasons and weather: weather preferences; describing inside and outside activities on different seasons.
 - Months and days of the week: giving information about particular major feasts or activities in certain months; planning what to do during the week or in the forthcoming months; describing one's activities or routine during the week.
 - A telephone conversation: calling someone asking 'what' and 'when'; giving information about 'what', 'where' and 'when' regarding an appointment, an activity or an event or to set up a meeting.
 - Colours: describing one's hair, eyes; favourite colours; personal items; colour of rooms or furniture in the house, school or place of work.
 - Shopping: bargaining and buying expressions; at the greengrocer; at the butcher; at the fishmonger; at the clothes shop; at the confectionery; at the bookshop; at the computer shop; at the sports shop.
 - Down-Town: holding a conversation and/ or describing events that take place at the bank; at the post-office; at the Internet-Café; at the cinema; in the public garden; in the library.
 - Eating Out: at the restaurant; at the school canteen; at the coffee shop or bar; ordering a meal, drink or snack; likes and dislikes for types of food; food allergies.
 - Sports: types of sports; preferred type of sports; in the sports ground; watching a match either live or on TV.
 - Favourite Hobbies and Pets: types of pastimes; describing one's favourite hobby; pets in the house; describing one's favourite pet; how one takes care of it and spends time with it.
 - The Human Body: naming external parts of the body; at the doctor's clinic; visiting a patient in hospital; at the pharmacy; phoning for an ambulance in an emergency.
 - Travelling Abroad: at the travel agent; at the Consular office for visa application; at the airport; at the railway station; at passport control and customs.
 - In a Foreign Country: at the hotel; renting an apartment; visiting historical sites; visiting places of interest; at the national museum; at the souvenir shop; sending a post-card home.
- (c) pragmatic competences which may include discourse competence and functional competence.

For the cultural component candidates are expected to have a general knowledge of geography, history, personalities, and other aspects of Russia.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Candidates will be required to take two papers of two hours each.

Paper I – This paper is to be taken by all candidates. It is designed to test: aural/oral skills; the active control of the usage of Russian; spoken fluency and the ability to extract information.

Part One of Paper I consists of the following: Reading aloud/ Reading Comprehension and Conversation.

Part Two of Paper I consists of a Listening Comprehension, Dictation and Cultural component.

Paper II – There will be two versions of this paper: Paper IIA and Paper IIB. Candidates are required to indicate on the registration form which paper they wish to sit for. No change in the choice of paper will be allowed after the registration period.

Paper IIA will contain questions that are more demanding than those in Paper IIB. This paper is designed to test the ability to write a passage of continuous prose in Russian, as well as the ability to read, understand and interpret a text in Russian.

Paper IIA consists of a reading comprehension and an essay.

Paper IIB consists of a reading comprehension and a short essay/message.

Paper I (2 hours)

Part 1

- (a) Reading aloud/reading comprehension (15%) – 10 minutes.

A text of 150-200 words will be set. After reading the passage aloud to the examiner (5%), the candidate will be given a set of questions to be answered orally on the passage (10%). The intention of this part of the paper is to test intonation, pronunciation, and understanding of written Russian.

- (b) Conversation (10%) – 10 minutes.

This will take the form of a role-play or guided dialogue (“complete your part of the conversation”). The aim of this part is to test the skill of verbal communication.

Candidates will be given 15 minutes to prepare both the reading comprehension text and the topic of conversation.

Part 2

- (a) Listening comprehension (10%) – 45 minutes.

A passage of 250-300 words will be set in Russian. The text will be read three times in all and candidates are encouraged to start writing their answers after the first reading. The aim of this component is to test the aural skill.

(b) Dictation (10%) – 40 minutes.

A passage of 150-200 words will be set. It will be read aloud straight through, then in repeated breath groups and finally straight through again. Candidates will be required to write the whole passage, during the reading of the repeated breath groups. The third reading will allow candidates to check their work prior to handing it in. This part of the paper aims to test the candidates' grasp of the written language.

(c) Cultural question (5%) – 15 minutes.

Candidates are expected to have a basic knowledge of different aspects of Russia (brief history, geography in general, customs and a few prominent figures such as writers, composers, scientists). Multiple choice questions, fill-in-the-blanks and other exercises considered appropriate by the examiners will be given. Questions will be set in Russian and need to be answered in Russian.

Paper II (2 hours)

Either Paper IIA (2 hours):

(a) Comprehension (25%): The comprehension passage (250-300 words) will be followed by different grammar exercises (10%) and questions set on the passage (15%). All questions will be in Russian and are to be answered in Russian.

(b) Writing task of about 250 words (25%), which can take the form of a free composition, letter or picture composition in Russian.

Or Paper IIB (2 hours):

(a) Comprehension (25%): The comprehension passage (150-200 words) will be followed by different grammar exercises (10%) and questions set on the passage (15%).

(b) Writing task of about 150 words (25%), which can take the form of a free composition, letter, or picture composition in Russian.

Paper I + Paper IIA should be pegged at level B1 (CEFR) and candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIA may qualify for a grade within the range 1 to 5 (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5); the results of candidates who do not obtain a Grade 5 shall remain Unclassified (U).

Paper I + Paper IIB should be pegged at levels B1 and A2 (CEFR) and candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIB may qualify for a grade not higher than 4 (i.e. grades 4, 5, 6, 7); the results of candidates who do not obtain at least a Grade 7 shall remain Unclassified (U).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Candidates who obtain Grades 1, 2, and 3 will be assumed to have reached level B1. The results of candidates who obtain Grades 4 and 5 will indicate level B1 (CEFR) (lower scale) in the language. The results of candidates who obtain Grades 6 and 7 will indicate level A2.

Grades 1, 2 and 3 mean excellent realisation of the tasks set. This means use of an extensive range of vocabulary, collocation and expression which have to be entirely appropriate to the tasks set. It means effective use of stylistic devices, register, and format; use of a wide range of structures. Tasks have to be skilfully organised and coherent, and there must be an excellent development of the topic with a minimum of mistakes.

Grades 4 and 5 mean satisfactory realisation of the tasks set. Tasks contain a reasonably natural use of a range of vocabulary and expression. They contain evidence of stylistic devices, and register and format are generally appropriate. Tasks reveal an adequate range of structures and are clearly organised and generally coherent. There is an adequate coverage of topic with some non-impeding errors. The performance achieves the desired effect on the reader.

Grades 6 and 7 mean poor attempt at the tasks set. The work is severely limited and contains an inaccurate range of vocabulary and expression. There is no evidence of stylistic devices, and there is little or no attempt at register and format. There is a complete lack of structural range and tasks are poorly organised, leading to incoherence. They have little relevance to topic, and/or are too short with numerous errors, which distract and often impede communication.