

THE GREEK FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXAMINATIONS FOR
THE STATE CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY



**THE KPG HANDBOOK
PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS
AND SPECIFICATIONS**

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Series editors: Bessie Dendrinos & Kia Karavas

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THE KPG HANDBOOK: PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS AND SPECIFICATIONS

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*On occasion of the 10th anniversary of the KPG exams,
this volume is dedicated to our colleague,*

Professor Antonis Tsopanoglou,

*who has not only been a conscientious vice-president (and
president) of the KPG central examination board, but a person
whose knowledge, commitment and hard work was decisive
for the development of our examination system.*

Introduction

KPG: organization and development

This Handbook provides practical information about the examinations leading to the “State Certificate in Language Proficiency,” nationally and internationally known as the KPG (an acronym for the Greek title *Kratiko Pistopiitiko Glossomathias*). The KPG certificate is issued by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, which also administers the examinations using the same resources as for the national university-entrance exams. From the first administration in 2003 of the exams in four languages, the system has grown into an institution visually represented in Appendices 1a, 1b and 1c. Preparation for the examination suite began in 2002, when a team of foreign language teaching and assessment experts from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki were appointed by the Greek Ministry of Education as members of



the first Central Examination Board (CEB). It was they who designed the system and organized the exams in English, French, German and Italian, administered for the first time in 2003 at B2 level of language proficiency. Since then, the system has grown to include two other languages (Spanish and Turkish) and exams on the basis of which all six levels of language proficiency may be certified. As a matter of fact, this year, ten years after the first exam administration, the C2 level exams are being administered.

The system has grown greatly in its 10 years of operation, thanks to the dedication and expertise of the university scholars and other experts who became involved from the start,* but also thanks to the funding, through the Ministry of Education, which made it possible to carry out multifaceted research for the validation of the system (see Appendix 2) and the training of examiners and script raters for all languages. Today, the KPG examination suite challenges well-established in Greece international proficiency tests.

Given that KPG certificates are issued by the Ministry of Education of a member state of the European Union, they are recognized by all other member states. Of course, they are also recognised by the Greek state, which considers a certificate of language proficiency as an important

credential for employment. Of course, individuals' trust in an examination system is a whole different matter. Which certificates people trust the most is an issue which has to do with the reputation or face validity that a system has built over the years because of its quality. Promotion and advertisement of the system is equally important, as we know by our experience with goods in a free market.

KPG Milestones

- 2002-03: The system was designed and the basic rules and regulations were produced and published.
- 2003-04: The Common KPG Framework was produced and published, complemented by the specifications and sample B2 level exams for English, French, German and Italian. Exams in those languages were administered for the first time, on a pilot basis.
- 2004-05: Regular exams in the four aforementioned languages were carried out and the systematic training of oral examiners and script raters for each language began.
- 2005-06: The C1 level specifications were published. They were accompanied by sample exams in the four aforementioned languages. The administration of the C1 level exams followed six months later.
- 2006-07: The B1 level specifications were published. They were accompanied by sample exams in the four aforementioned languages. The administration of the B1 level exams followed six months later.
- 2007-08: Work in support of the KPG was carried out within the framework of a funded project described below. During this period of time: (a) the intergraded A level exam was designed and specifications with sample exams were published. Six months later, the A1+A2 intergraded exam was administered in English, French, German and Italian; (b) a sample for the B2 level exam in Spanish was designed and published, and six months later the exam was conducted.

Within the framework of another funded project described below, the following actions were accomplished:

- 2010-11: The intergraded exam for B1+B2 levels was designed and specifications with sample exams were published. The B1+B2 intergraded exam was administered in the four aforementioned languages for the first time in May 2011.

- 2012-13: The intergraded exam for C1+C2 levels was designed and specifications with sample exams were published. The C1+C2 intergraded exam in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish is being administered in November 2013. Moreover, the C1 level exam in Turkish was published and this too is being conducted in the exam period of November 2013. Finally, as ICT has entered the world of KPG on other levels and one of those levels is the construction of a KPG e-school which is to help candidates prepare for the KPG exams, gratis, with brief online courses. The e-school is also for teachers who want, without charge, to be trained and access special materials for the preparation of their students for the exams, as well as for parents who need advice on proficiency testing, and finally for KPG examiners and script raters who have restricted access to training courses.
- 2013-14: Teams of experts from the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki have been working since 2010 towards developing the e-KPG, in collaboration with the Computer Technology Institute of the University of Patras. The three universities in partnership have produced a platform for an electronic version of the exams to be administered on-line as of 2014 (alongside the pen- and-paper exams) and a platform with a distance-learning scheme for off-line training of examiners and script raters.

The KPG examination suite

The KPG is a system which is based on the belief that degrees of literacy in several languages and a multilingual ethos of communication help people face the challenges of globalisation, and facilitate mobility and growth. It is grounded on an appreciation of languages which are considered essential for employability, and on the conviction that multilingual people acting as intercultural mediators are a valuable asset to Europe. Many of us involved in creating the KPG are of the opinion that in a multicultural Europe, with its linguistic diversity and variety of institutions, it is imperative to have language qualifications which are mutually recognised. Thus, we developed a suite of national foreign language exams, leading to the certification of different levels of language proficiency on the six level scale of the Council of Europe, as recorded in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR), respecting that this document provides a common basis for the recognition of qualifications in all member states.

A Level Basic User		B Level Independent User		C Level Proficient User	
A1	Breakthrough	B1	Threshold	C1	Effective operational proficiency
A2	Waystage	B2	Vantage	C2	Mastery

Table 1: CEFR language proficiency levels

In other words, the KPG, which is a uniform system of language proficiency assessment, serves the European objective of having common standards for the levels of proficiency across languages and across states.

The KPG is a context-sensitive examination suite. It has been built as a 'glocal' exam battery; that is, it takes into account local needs, global conditions of knowledge and production, as well as international concerns regarding testing and assessment. The lower level exams (A1+A2) are addressed to people under 15 years of age, and levels B and C to people who are 15 plus. However, there is no age limit for candidacy, and the hundreds of people who have sat for these exams are from 10 to 60 years old. The average ages of those sitting for the exams however are:

- A level exams: 11-12 years old
- B level exams: 14-16 years old
- C level exams: 16-30 years old

Eligible to sit for our exams are people who are living, studying and/or working in Greece, and have a basic knowledge of Greek. Actually, Greek is the language considered to be the common language of KPG candidates and it is used when there are test tasks requiring the candidate to function in the role of mediator, relaying information from Greek into the target language.

The ultimate aim of the exams is to certify that those who succeed in the exams have a particular level of language proficiency in one of the languages in which the exams are offered, i.e. English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Turkish, and later in other European languages as well.

Pen-and-paper exams are held twice a year (November and May) for all languages except Turkish for which exams are held in November only for B and C1 level candidates. November is the only exam period when the A level pen-and-paper exams are administered. These exams are (inter) graded. This means that, in a sense, it is two exams in one sitting:

- A level (A1+A2)
- B level (B1+B2)
- C level (C1+C2)

This 'double' administration is cost effective for both the administrators and the candidates, who have a greater chance with the intergraded tests to be certified in one of the two levels of proficiency. On the whole, the KPG exams are not as costly as international proficiency tests. The fees are about half of those charged by international proficiency tests and they are administered in many parts of the country, which mean that candidates from rural areas and islands do not have to pay for travel and accommodation, as for most of the international exams. Moreover, the speaking tests are carried out on the weekend that all other parts of the exam are administered, which means that candidates do not have to move for a second day.

As of April 2014, candidates will have the opportunity to sit for an e-version of the KPG exams in any of the 6 languages; i.e., computer-adaptive language tests which will be administered at computer terminals, authorized as examination centres. Computer-adaptive tests are uniquely tailored to each individual test-taker because the test tasks and items are selected and fitted to the individual test-taker, each test ends when the candidate's proficiency level is located. Therefore, computer-adaptive tests are usually shorter than pen-and-paper tests, in terms of the number of test tasks and items involved and the time needed.

The main characteristics of the KPG examination suite are that:

- The exams are affordable to everyone because they are not a commercial profit-making enterprise.
- The point of reference of the exams is not language itself but *language use*, in social contexts, in a socially meaningful manner to candidates
- They treat all European languages as equal.
- They make full use of the literacies candidates have in (at least) two languages,
- They promote the parallel use of languages, translanguaging and mediation and intercultural awareness.

What the KPG exams assess

The KPG exams adhere to a functional theory of language, which is understood as social practice, and set out to assess how candidates *use* the target language to create socially purposeful meanings rather than whether they have a wide range of vocabulary and a firm knowledge of the formal properties of the language in question. Exams aim at measuring candidates' ability to comprehend and produce oral or written discourse and, more specifically, the extent to which candidates can:

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- understand messages in different types of oral and written texts
- make language choices that indicate language awareness and one's ability to negotiate socially situated meanings
- produce context-appropriate speech and writing
- act as mediators and, from B1 level onwards, extract information from a Greek text so as to relay it in the target language either orally or in writing.

In order to assess candidates' performance, as referred to above, test papers for the modules below are designed to follow specifications which are common to all KPG languages (see Chapter 1):

- **Module 1:** Reading comprehension and language awareness
- **Module 2:** Writing and written mediation
- **Module 3:** Listening comprehension
- **Module 4:** Speaking and oral mediation

Test papers are assembled and graphically designed after selecting items from an Item & Test Bank that has been developed for each language. Material for the tests is selected and items are prepared by experienced item writers working under the direction of the Scientific Director of the exams for each language, who is responsible for the types of texts used in tests (their subject matter, the social meanings therein, etc.) and who is in charge of the team that pretests and checks tests for their validity and reliability after piloting procedures.

The marking of test papers is conducted in two ways: The responses to the multiple-choice items are marked electronically through Optical Mark Recognition, while the short answers in the reading and listening comprehension test papers (Modules 1 and 3), the scripts for the writing test paper (Module 2) and the oral production on the basis of the speaking test (Module 4) are assessed and marked by trained evaluators, on the basis of centrally defined assessment criteria (see Appendices 3 and 4).

Sample papers for each level of proficiency (with answer keys) are available on the KPG websites (http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/past_papers.htm). This allows everyone to prepare for the exams they are interested in, and also enables them to check whether their proficiency is adequate for KPG certification at any given level.

Level of exam difficulty

The KPG is a proficiency-testing system –not progress or achievement testing– and it does not aim at formative or summative assessment of a language learnt in a formal education setting. In other words, KPG

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does not test what students have learnt in school, but what they already know or, rather, what they can do with language, regardless of whether they have been taught how to do that in a formal school context or not. The exams in all KPG languages aim to discern whether candidates who sit for the exam of a particular level do indeed perform at that level of language proficiency – irrespective of where they learnt or acquired the target language. In order to determine the degree of difficulty of each level, KPG takes into consideration the following:

- The can-do statements of the CEFR, which contains lists of what one is expected to do at each level of language proficiency.
- The KPG performance descriptors for each level of proficiency.
- An estimate of the language proficiency developed after a certain number of hours of systematic study of the foreign language.

Regarding this last point, note that an estimate of the number of study hours for language study required by adults for the six-level scale as set by the CEFR is the following:

Level	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Additional Hours	60	90	150	200	150	100
Total Hours	60	150	300	500	650	750

Table 2: Estimate of additional study hours required for CEFR levels

Figure 1 below graphically depicts the additional study hours required for each of the levels, taking into consideration the can-do statements of the CEFR.

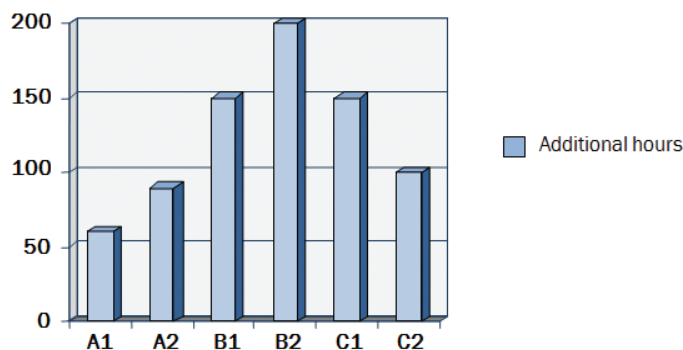


Figure 1: Additional study hours required for CEFR levels

Another means used by the KPG to determine the degree of exam difficulty is by systematic analysis of the test items after each exam administration. The Scientific Director for each language and the team of experts that they work with have defined the medium 'index of difficulty' for the items of each level, having decided that from one exam period to the next, exam results can deviate up to a maximum of 10 percent. It is in this way that test validity and consistency is ensured.

It should be made clear at this point that neither the CEB nor the expert language teams responsible for the exams of each language are responsible for deciding on the level of exam difficulty; rather, the responsibility lies with the Council of Europe that has specified the levels of language competence in the CEFR. It is this internationally-acknowledged level of exam difficulty that the KPG examination battery has adopted from the beginning in order to preserve the validity of the examination system and, as a result, to reinforce the credibility of the language certificates issued.

Special characteristics of the KPG exam battery

The characteristics that are unique to the KPG exam battery and in this sense differentiate it from the international examination systems, are summarized below.

- As previously mentioned, the authorizing body for the KPG examination and certification system is a state authority –the Ministry of Education. This constitutes one important difference between the KPG and other language exam and certification systems, some of which have been very popular in Greece for many years and with which the KPG coexists without being in a competitive relationship with them. The KPG simply aims to provide a service which, unlike international examination batteries, caters to the local population and has an overriding asset: certificates bear the seal of the Ministry of a European Union member state, and they are therefore automatically recognised in all other member states.
- The KPG is the only language proficiency assessment system that offers intergraded tests – up until now for A1/B1 or A2/B2 levels, and as of November 2013 for the C1 and C2 levels. The A level exam has been designed for young candidates from 10 to 15 years of age, but it is also being designed for older candidates in adult education classes.
- The KPG is linked to the foreign languages school curricula, establishing the connection between the KPG and the school

system, which it has – or on which it is hoped to have – a backwash effect. Actually, there are plans to create a more direct link between the KPG and foreign language teaching and learning in primary, secondary and tertiary education as well as in adult education centres, in the so-called second chance schools, and in educational programmes in the workplace.

- The KPG is the only language examination battery which is especially designed for Greek users of the foreign language and takes into account the social circumstances for its use. Hence, the KPG is the only system which aims to fulfill the communicative, social, vocational, and educational needs of people living, working and studying in Greece.

KPG funding

KPG in its initial stages was funded exclusively by the state, but in 2007, upon approval of the grant proposal composed by Prof. Dendrinou with the help of Prof. Tsopanoglou, the KPG received a substantial grant from the European Social Fund (75%) and the Greek State (25%), and it was decided that three institutional bodies would execute a project whose acronym is SAPIG. These three bodies were: (a) the Special Office for the Programmes of the European Support Framework of the Ministry of Education (b) the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and (c) the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.

The aim of the project was to develop the exam battery for the four most commonly taught languages in Greece (English, French, German and Italian) and to introduce exams in a fifth major language (Spanish). Funded from March 2007 to December 2008, the project aimed at securing the necessary human and material resources for the system, producing a series of electronically supported data banks and operational programmes to safeguard and manage the data, as well as a comprehensive information system to be used by all involved or interested in the KPG exams.

Each institution was responsible for carrying out its own share of the project, which in fact entailed several sub-projects, various action plans, and tasks that were completed within a very strict time frame. The limited space here allows for but a brief summary of the work carried out. Though such a synopsis does no justice to the immense effort that has gone into the implementation of the sub-projects, the large amount of work that was done by a great deal of people, and the impressive outcomes in each case separately, it does provide the reader of this Handbook with an idea about the firm foundation upon which the KPG is being built.

The part of the project assigned to and implemented by the Special Office of the Ministry of Education, entailed the construction of a comprehensive information system in the form of a portal which includes a variety of sub-systems important for the management of KPG human resources (including candidates, test developers, researchers, examiners, script raters and other parties interested in the KPG exams), for the management of KPG exams materials, tests and test items and for the on-line delivery of diagnostic e-tests. Also, the Office was responsible for a nationwide campaign to inform the public about the KPG exams and to create conditions of transparency.

The University of Thessaloniki, responsible for the KPG exams in French and Italian, developed, as part of its share of the project, material banks as well as item banks for these languages, making it possible to easily develop tests of different levels of language proficiency, on the scale set by the Council of Europe (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2), while it designed the A level intergraded tests in the aforementioned languages. It also implemented a nationwide programme for the training of examiners for the exams in French and Italian, and it created a marking scheme for the evaluation of candidates' scripts and trained script raters in using the specially designed rating grid. Moreover, thanks to the project grant, the University of Thessaloniki carried out a large-scale study regarding the Greek foreign language market interests in designing and administering KPG exams in different languages for special purposes (e.g., professional, academic, etc.). Various other actions were carried out as a consequence of project funds, including a conference in Thessaloniki presenting to educators and other interested parties the work carried out in Thessaloniki and Athens in support of the KPG.

The University of Athens also developed materials and item banks for English and German, as did the Thessaloniki teams, and it designed the A level intergraded tests in these languages, as part of its own share of the project. Moreover, it generated a unique examiner and script rater training programme for English, which it implemented throughout Greece, with trained trainers acting as multipliers. It also created a training programme which it implemented on a nationwide basis for German examiners, and, in addition, it developed exams in Spanish and administered them on a trial basis. There were, however, a number of other sub-projects that did not concern single languages but were relevant to all the languages.

One of these subprojects had to do with the (re)planning of the whole system of the KPG, leading to the articulation of its established and newly developed practices, the re-writing of the Common KPG

Framework and the exam specifications for consistency, the literature regarding exam administration –including the Handbooks for Exam Centres and KPG Evaluators– and other related Handbooks concerning the system, including this one. An important action of the sub-project entitled ‘System Planning’ was the development of a mechanism for the linguistic description of the tasks in all languages and the creation of an information system which can electronically analyse task data with a view to comparing test tasks in all languages and levels of the KPG exams and not only.

Another sub-project carried out by the University of Athens was concerned with the design and administration of the KPG exams to people with special needs. Its main aim was to investigate how best to adapt the test papers in all KPG languages so that they are more easily accessible by and cater for the needs of people who are hearing or visually impaired, people who suffer from dyslexia or have kinetic problems. The last sub-project concerning all KPG languages that the University of Athens carried out resulted in several publications that inform interested audiences on aspects of the KPG –such as this one– and two Handbooks that are to serve as reference books to oral examiners and script raters.

Various other accomplishments which were a result of the funding will appear separately in future publications and websites that report on KPG actions and research, such as the KPG site hosted by the University of Athens (http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/en_index.htm). Most important also was the research regarding the exams being conducted at both universities. While research carried out in and for English at the University of Athens is briefly described at <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/research.htm>, there are a series of publications which have also contributed significantly to the development of the system. One can find them at <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/publications.htm>.

Building on the products and services produced as a result of the SAPIG project, a new project entitled “Differentiated and (Inter)Graded National Foreign Language Exams” (with the Greek acronym DiaPEG) was secured for 2010-2013. Funding is from the European Union and the Greek State through the operational programme “Education and Lifelong Learning” and it is carried out by the University of Athens in partnership with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and in collaboration with the Computer Technology Institute of the University of Patras.

Its aims, in brief, are to develop further the KPG exam system to include:

- differentiated exams which cater to the needs of candidates of different age groups, candidates with special needs, etc.

- (inter)graded pen-and-paper exams for the three basic levels of language competence, i.e., the A level exam (Basic User), the B level exam (Autonomous User), and the C level (Proficient User)
- (inter)graded adaptive e-tests for all levels of language proficiency in all KPG languages
- exams in two additional levels of language competence for the most recently introduced language in the KPG system, Turkish.
- distance learning and training opportunities to KPG examiners and script raters of all the KPG languages.
- linking the KPG exams with the foreign language learning in school
- dissemination of information about the KPG exams to the general public and to special interest groups
- evaluation and assessment of the quality of the system through internal and external procedures

There are in total 19 subprojects, 11 of which are being executed by the University of Athens as described below and the rest by the University of Thessaloniki. For more detailed information see <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/diapeg1.htm>.

The KPG exams can serve as a Best Practice example of what I have called elsewhere ‘glocal’ language proficiency testing. It is a paper recently published (Dendrinou 2013),¹ Viewing high-stakes language proficiency exams as ideological apparatuses involving processes that produce, reproduce or resist specific forms of knowledge and communication exchange. The paper considers the concerns linked with global or international [English] language testing in the context of the cultural politics of ‘strong’ (and ‘weak’) languages, but it moves beyond critique to claim that locally-controlled testing suites may serve as counter-hegemonic alternatives to the profit-driven global language testing industry. The pro-glocal language testing arguments –using the KPG exams as a case study– are political, economic and also linguistic. Specifically, in glocal testing, attention is turned from the language itself to language users (taking into account their experiences, literacies and needs) which may well serve multilingual education, as one of the key objectives of the European Commission’s new strategy for education 2014-2020.

1 Dendrinou, B. 2013. *Social meanings in global-glocal language proficiency exams*. In Dina Tsagari, Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous & Sophia Ioannou-Georgiou (eds.), *Language Testing and Assessment around the Globe: Achievements and Experiences*. Language Testing and Evaluation series. Peter Lang.

In acknowledging below only some of the people who have contributed to the development of the KPG, I should like to state that my own contribution to the examination suite has been from the position of President of the Board for seven out of its ten years of operation. From this position, which I still hold today, I had the opportunity to articulate the aims of this new institution and their social perspective. Also, I had the opportunity to determine the content and the theoretical framework of the examination battery, while as Scientific Director of the KPG exams in English, I had the unique opportunity of shaping the format of the test papers, and giving the exams in English their theoretical grounding, ideological orientation and sociolinguistic character. Moreover, during all these years I have carried the heavy responsibility and had the privilege of directing the multifaceted KPG-related research projects carried out at the RCeL, which has supported this publication.

Bessie Dendrinou
Athens, 2013

* ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Antonis Tsopanoglou, Professor of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, has made the most substantial contribution to the system. Vice-president of the Exam Board from 2002 to 2006, President from 2006 to 2009 and then again Vice-president from 2009-2013, Antonis Tsopanoglou's involvement has been a critical in the establishment and the development of the KPG examination system, especially since he has had the key role in organizing and articulating exam specifications in the form of rules regulating the exams. As a testing expert, he has been responsible for the use of quantitative measures of analysis to insure exam validity. From 2002 until today, he has served as Scientific Director of the KPG exams in Italian, which were commissioned to the Department of Italian Studies of the University of Thessaloniki from the start and was the lead figure in determining their format and character.

The input of Prof. Vasso Tokatlidou, who served on the first Exam Board from its beginning until 2005, was significant as she was constructively involved in all aspects of the design of the system. At the same time, as she was the first Scientific Director for the KPG exams in French, she and the people she worked with at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki determined the nature of the B2 level exam in French. The work for the exams in French was continued by Prof. Teta Symeonidou-Christidou who was appointed Scientific Director and member of the CEB in 2005. The work for the exam in French is directed by Asst. Prof. Rinetta Kiyitsioglou, who also served as Vice-president of the CEB for a short period of time –from 2008-2010.

The person responsible for the KPG exams in German was Prof. Frederiki Batsalia, who was Scientific Director and a member of the CEB from 2003 to 2007. In 2007, Prof. Wilhelm Benning took over the exams in German, and served as Vice-president on the

Introduction

CEB until the end of 2008 and Scientific Director of the exams in German –a responsibility now undertaken by Prof. Katerina Mitrallexi, also from the Department of German of the University of Athens.

Other people who have contributed to the establishment and growth of the KPG, either as members of the CEB, research associates of the University Language Teams or as test designers, are the following people: Aikaterini Zouganeli, an English language teacher and foreign language education advisor to the Minister of Education 2002-2005, now research fellow at the RCeL, Vassilis Hartzoulakis, ELT and ICT specialist, who has been an important member of the English team from the start; Arygro Proscoli and Eudokia Balassi, who are on the professorial staff at the Departments of French and German, respectively, of the University of Athens and who served on the CEB for years; Angeliki Psaltou-Joycey from the Department of English of the University of Thessaloniki, who was on the CEB from 2004 to 2010, and Maria Charitou, former president of the Panhellenic Association of State School Teachers of English and now an English school advisor, who served on the CEB for the first two terms.

A most important contributor to the system more recently is Asst. Professor Kia Karavas from the Faculty of English of the University of Athens and Assistant Director of the RCeL. She has been serving on the CEB since 2010 but she has also been involved with the KPG exams in English. She is responsible for the oral exams and the training of examiners. Bessie Mitsikopoulou, Assoc. Professor at the University of Athens, has made an important contribution to the e-KPG.

There are many other people who have been providing significant input to the development of the exams and the establishment of the examiner training programme in each of the languages. Among them are Asst. Professor Daphne Wiedenmayer and Olga Lascaridou for German, Prof. Ethymia Pavlaki for Spanish, and Prof. Eleni Sella for Turkish.

The Common KPG Framework

INTRODUCTION

This section looks at the philosophy behind the KPG examination system, presenting information about the various types of language and cultural knowledge which are assessed by the exams, and refers to the general requirements of target language use for the comprehension and production of texts, articulated as CAN DO statements.

The KPG uses the levels of proficiency set by the CEFR and has adopted the recommendations of the Education Committee of the Council of Europe which had been announced for the first time in 2002. The recommendations called for every EU member state to adopt specific measures for the advancement of multi-linguism and foreign language learning, as well as the development of a certification battery of language proficiency. Such an examination system would include the use of standardized, comparative indicators of language proficiency, ensuring that its certificates of proficiency could be easily identified and officially recognized throughout Europe, thus facilitating the mobility of workers and students.

The main objective of the KPG examination battery is to test the candidate's ability to make socially purposeful use of the target language at home and abroad. The KPG exams measure 1) candidates' ability to comprehend and produce oral and written discourse, 2) their ability to act as mediators across languages, and 3) their awareness of how the target language works to produce socially purposeful meanings. The use of language for such purposes presupposes that the candidate has developed not only a relative level of competence in her/his language proficiency, but also knowledge of the way language functions, the ability to make appropriate language choices, and the skills to understand and communicate in the foreign language.

1.1 General expectations

The KPG examination battery has been designed on the basis of the view that language constitutes a general symbolic or semiotic system rather than an autonomous system of meanings. This means that words and

sentences do not have meaning on their own, but that meaning is shaped according to the use of language in a particular communicative situation and under specific social circumstances. In other words, meanings are developed by the way in which language is used and may also include non-verbal forms of communication such as images, diagrams, signs, and sound effects. Consequently, comprehension and production of meanings will require knowledge of the various uses of language in different social situations and contexts of communication, as well as in different oral, written or multi-modal texts². Therefore, KPG candidates are expected to show that they can use the language to understand or construct meaning from different types of oral, and written texts. This type of knowledge is something that candidates cannot be taught but must consciously acquire, either through language use or experience.

More specifically, it is expected that candidates will have developed:

- 1) **Language awareness.** Awareness regarding the use of language through items and tasks which require candidates to make suitable and appropriate choices in terms of language use, genre, style and register. For example, to be aware that there would be a difference in style (i.e. formality, strategies, etc.) between a) a summary of an issue written to be published in a newspaper and a summary of an issue presented verbally to friends, or b) a conversation with a teacher and a conversation with a friend.
- 2) **Cultural awareness.** Appropriate language choices in any situation require knowledge of the sociocultural context in which the target language is used, since the way language is used is indissolubly linked to the culture that produces that language and which, in turn, the language mirrors. Therefore, candidates are expected to have developed to some extent cultural awareness. This means that, according to their age and level of proficiency, candidates are expected to demonstrate a certain degree of familiarity with basic textual and communication practices since language production depends on the context in which it is produced.



² Multi-modal is characterised the text that uses more than one semiotic modes, e.g. language, image and sound. Text multi-modality is a particularly common phenomenon of modern society. Advancements in communication and technology have resulted in visual and acoustic forms of semiosis that can be used in parallel with the linguistic mode.

In the KPG exams, cultural awareness is tested indirectly, from the way in which candidates are asked to use the target language. Moreover, it is taken for granted that KPG candidates are conscious of the similarities and differences in the way the Greek language and the foreign language are used, since the exams are directed at individuals who live or have lived in Greece, and thus, they know the Greek language and are familiar with the Greek culture. Therefore, candidates are also expected to show that they have developed:

- 3) **Intercultural awareness**, which is assessed indirectly from the language choices they make in various communicative situations, both within and outside their own cultural contexts. Additionally, candidates' intercultural awareness is also assessed from the way in which they use the target language to perform mediation tasks and relay information from Greek into English, thus acting as **mediators**. The KPG exams assess **mediation** skills at B and C levels through writing and speaking tasks as well as at A1 and A2 levels through reading and listening comprehension tasks.

1.2 Illustrative descriptors for leveled performance

On the scale set by the Council of Europe and in line with the overall aims of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* as well as the present Common KPG Exam Framework, illustrative descriptors for leveled performance have been produced indicating the communicative abilities candidates are expected to have acquired, as indicated in Table 3 below. It should be noted that candidates are expected to have the abilities for all preceding levels as well as the abilities for their particular level, e.g. candidates at B2 level would be expected to have all the abilities shown for B2 level as well as those of the preceding levels A1, A2 and B1.

	Level	Abilities/performance
Proficient user	C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand any type of written and oral text as long as it does not require specialized knowledge from scientific and technical fields.• Develop arguments and evaluations based on summarized information contained in oral or written texts.• Express themselves fluently and with grammatically correct speech on any topic they are presented with, even in situations where the written or oral texts they are required to produce are very demanding.

	C1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand texts which are relatively long and at a high level of difficulty. • Express themselves fluently in a variety of communicative contexts by responding suitably to a text and by using the appropriate form, register, language and structure. • Use the language fluently according to the social, educational or professional demands required by the task. • Produce clear, well-structured oral and written texts even on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent user	B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main points in a text of a medium level of difficulty on various topics, even if the text contains abstract meanings or technical information encountered in everyday life (e.g. how to use an electrical appliance). • Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers or non-native speakers with an excellent command of the target language possible with little or no difficulty for either party. • Produce oral and written texts on different topics, developing arguments to support their view.
	B1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main ideas in written and oral texts about various social issues, work issues, education, recreation/entertainment etc. • Use the foreign language in various everyday simulated communicative situations (e.g. when traveling overseas, in conversation with foreign visitors to the country, in the workplace, during recreational activities, etc). • Produce a cohesive and coherent oral and written text expressing her/his views on topics or themes that concern the general public or on personal issues regarding experiences, plans, intentions, etc.
Basic user	A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand frequently used expressions, sentences and signs related to everyday experiences. • Communicate (in a simulated situation) with native speakers or with those who know the target language about simple topics in everyday life, exchanging information about habits, issues relating directly to their needs, issues to do with their families, their work, where they live, etc. • Describe simple everyday conditions that concern them and their immediate environment.

	A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand and produce (in writing or orally) expressions that are used to fulfill everyday communicative needs (e.g. to ask for information about an event, to greet, to thank, to talk about what they like, etc.).• Give information (for themselves or for others) and to ask simple questions about everyday objects or situations.• Communicate on simple topics in everyday life, provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is willing to assist in the communication process.
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Table 3: Illustrative descriptors for leveled performance

1.3 Socially purposeful use of language

How well candidates convey meaning in a foreign language can be examined and assessed through various tasks requiring use of the language as a social practice, for social purposes, and in a particular social frame, such as while listening to a discussion, after reading an article, while conversing with someone unknown to them, or when writing a message.

Depending on their level of proficiency, KPG candidates are generally expected to be able to use language in specific personal and public domains of social life, as well as in texts on social, educational and professional topics, in any of the ways indicated below.

Informative

- Selecting and utilizing to its fullest extent information from a variety of spoken or written texts.
- Selecting and utilizing to its fullest extent the gist of information in a spoken or written text.
- Conveying information in a written, oral or multimodal text.

Interpersonal

- Establishing and maintaining social contact for the purpose of exchanging information, ideas, opinions, emotions, experiences, plans, etc.
- Participating in social situations which demand interpersonal contact in order to resolve an issue, make joint decisions, and design and plan actions.
- Participating in a face-to-face dialogue for the purpose of acquiring goods, services and public information.

Creative

- Composing spoken or written texts on the basis of a stimulus (e.g. an image, narration, personal letter, musical piece, etc.).

- Producing written, spoken or a multi-modal form of text using the most appropriate linguistic, rhetorical, graphical, textual and other elements.
- Producing written, oral and multimodal texts in an original and personal style.

Mediatory

- Relaying from one language to another the general meaning of or specific information in a written or oral text.
- Relaying from one language to another by means of an image, design, table, etc. information which appears in a written or oral text, and vice versa.
- Relaying from one language to another the meaning of language subtleties (e.g. idioms, gestures, attitude, etc.).

1.4 Assessing communicative performance

Because the KPG examination battery is based on the language perspective that language use depends largely on the context of situation, comprehension and production of written and oral discourse is measured with tasks that create real conditions for language use. In other words, the use of language needs to be correct and appropriate to a) the type of text candidates are exposed to, and b) the communicative event in which they are asked to engage in.

In particular, KPG test items, even at the lower A1+ A2 levels, assess the use of language in terms of the context of situation rather than the understanding and production of single words, phrases or texts that are detached from their communicative context. As the level of language proficiency increases, the demand for candidates to understand and use the language according to the communicative event is greater.

For example, from levels B1 and above, exam items start to focus gradually on the relationship between the people involved in the communication (i.e. candidates are requested to make different types of lexical and grammatical choices depending on the type of interaction, whether it is a) a formal or friendly one, b) between individuals of different ages, sex, social class or status, c) between individuals who have either common or different knowledge, d) between individuals from a different culture, etc). In addition to the relationship between interactants, the exam items focus on other factors such as a) the purpose of the communication, b) the type of social activity and c) the communicative context.

Moreover, the conditions in which language is produced can be either intracultural (i.e. between people of the same culture) or intercultural (i.e.

between people from different cultures), but the type of discourse, or any other form of semiosis used in the KPG exam material, depends on sociocultural contexts such as those shown below.

Social situations

- The family
- Education
- Social crises/problems (e.g. accidents, illnesses, reaction to natural phenomena, etc.)
- Meetings with friends, acquaintances, strangers
- Recreation (e.g. individual or group participation in activities, trips, excursions, sport events, games)
- Entertainment (e.g. information about plays or films, art exhibitions, as well as the production of books, audio cds, videos, etc.)
- Public gatherings (e.g. political rallies, town meetings, etc.)
- Interviews meetings and conferences
- Legal proceedings and trials
- Implementation of laws and regulations

Social activities

- Everyday routines (e.g. in relation to personal hygiene, dressing, household maintenance and management)
- Selling, buying, promoting goods (e.g. analysing/writing advertisements)
- Supply, demand and use of public and private services (e.g. medical) and public facilities, amenities and services (e.g. public transportation and communication)
- Entertainment and leisure activities (e.g. participation in games/sports, hobbies, reading, watching television/listening to the radio, going out with friends, etc.)
- Use of new technologies (e.g. explaining how to use an appliance or device or what something does/how it works)
- Occupational contacts (e.g. observation of and participation in meetings or events organised by firms, companies, associations)
- Educational contacts (e.g. participation in education-related discussions and presentations such as lectures and talks, seminars and classes, publications, problem solving, educational assignments and activities)

Social domains

- Home, family, friends and acquaintances
- Workplaces (e.g. office, company, shop)
- Places related to travel (e.g. ports, railroad stations, airports) and means of transport (e.g. airplane, train etc.)

- Accommodation and holiday lodgings (e.g. hostel, student accommodation, hotel)
- Shopping facilities (e.g. supermarkets, shops)
- Citizens' bureaus/public services
- Public open air spaces (e.g. street, park, squares)
- Hospitals, surgeries, clinics
- Sports facilities
- Theatre, cinema, concerts, etc.
- Restaurants, cafeterias, canteens, etc.
- Schools and places related to education
- The internet

Interpersonal and social relationships

- Family members
- Friends, acquaintances
- Individuals which are related at occupational and/or social levels
- Learners/students and teachers
- Citizens/individuals who work in government offices, in public or private services, in other private or public bodies and/or are responsible for law/rule enforcement
- Clients and staff in companies, offices, shops, publishing companies, museums, hotels, banks, public transportation, etc.
- Journalists or members of the mass media in general and their audiences
- Artists and entertainers and their audiences
- Athletes and their fans

Social institutions

- The family
- Various social networks
- Public administration
- Politics
- Public health
- Professional activity
- Volunteer activity
- Education
- Sports
- The media
- Literature and art
- Publications
- Advertising

1.5 Text types and language use

KPG exam items aim at assessing the degree to which candidates, depending on their age and level of proficiency, can comprehend and produce a suitable written or oral text that includes vocabulary, sentence structure and style appropriate to the circumstances of communication. Generally, the higher the level of proficiency, the more candidates are expected to recognize the characteristics of the target language and use it appropriately for different language purposes or under different circumstances (e.g. in a public interview or professional conversation, to express a personal experience or to refer to an accident, to give instructions for a recipe/the use of an appliance).

The specifications for each of the levels of proficiency determine the type of text candidates are asked to comprehend or produce in order to complete a task. As it has already been mentioned, the texts used in the KPG exam material can be either written or oral, and may be accompanied by images and/or sound. Table 4 below illustrates the types of text which KPG candidates are expected to comprehend and use to produce language:



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Professional or personal telephone conversations • Interactive discussions or conversations • Public discussions • Monologues • Personal accounts, story telling, narration of events • Reports (news, event, experience) • Operating instructions, directions etc. • Humorous texts (stories, jokes etc.). • Texts with rules and regulations • Recipes and/or menus • Labels and/or texts on packages • Programmes of activities or events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements • Small ads and announcements • Tourist brochures • Advertising or information leaflets • Articles or other text types from newspapers or magazines • Public announcements, public notices etc. • Personal or professional letters • Email messages • Texts from the internet • Personal or professional memos • Visiting cards, best wishes cards • Job descriptions • Signs in public places • Book abstracts • Book presentations
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Table 4: KPG exam text types

1.6 KPG task requirements for the comprehension and production of language

According to their age and level of proficiency, candidates are expected to have developed the required communicative abilities for active participation in various social situations, and to be able to engage actively and effectively in different social activities (see section 1.5 above). In addition, they are expected to have developed the required level of literacy in the foreign language in order to be able to take part in activities that originate from a wide range of text types (see Table 4), and depending on their level, also to be able to engage in even more demanding types of text. Thus,

- at A1+A2 levels, a task may depend on a menu or a personal message from mother to child, on an advertisement or announcement, on a best wishes card or visiting card, on a public sign, caption, comic strip or sketch depicting a story.
- at B1 and B2 levels, a task can be based on an advertisement or promotional pamphlet, a magazine or newspaper article, a biographical note, a book or film presentation, a theatrical production, the news or radio broadcast, an interview with a public person, etc.
- at C1 and C2 levels, in addition to the text types mentioned above, lengthier texts of higher communicative demands are expected. For example, a task may depend on an extract from a) a scientific magazine, b) a public lecture of academic or political nature, c) a text of contract, agreement, warranty, d) a literary text (e.g. narration, novel or play), and e) a review for a book, theatrical play, film or work of art.

1.6.1 Reading and listening comprehension

As has been outlined above, candidates are expected to be able to understand a variety of both written and oral text types according to their level of proficiency. This means that the higher the candidates' level of proficiency is, a) the more demanding the texts are expected to be, and b) the wider the varieties of both text types and types of oral discourse they engage in are. Similarly, the higher the candidates' level of proficiency, the more demanding the reading comprehension tasks which test their language awareness are. Thus, while at lower levels, candidates are required to choose the right word in order to complete a phrase or to put sentences in the right order, at higher levels, they are asked to comprehend fully the meaning of a phrase, of an extract, or text, to guess who wrote or said something, to whom and for what purpose, or where the person speaking was, etc.

Obviously, as the candidates' level of proficiency increases, the cognitive processes which are required for the accomplishment of a task become more demanding. Consequently,

- At A1+A2 exam levels, candidates may be requested to a) understand information plainly stated in simple, brief texts of the type referred to in Section 1.6 above, b) fill in missing words in a text, c) arrive at the meaning of a word from its context, d) identify the relationship between two or more short texts, and e) understand written instructions, orders, and recommendations.
- Gradually, at B1 and B2 exam levels, they are asked to a) understand the general meaning (gist) of a text as well as the purpose for which it was written, b) infer the social identity of the writer or speaker, c) respond appropriately to suggestions, instructions, orders, or announcements, d) gather general information and locate specific information in a relatively lengthy text which is likely to be accompanied by an image, photograph, table, graph, design, etc., e) understand the meaning of various parts of a text and how the arrangement of information contributes to the development of the text as a whole, f) understand how the arrangement of a text determines the meaning of the language choices made by the author.
- At C1 and C2 exam levels, candidates are likely to be required to perform additional tasks, such as a) understand what the tone (i.e. ironic, humorous, etc.) of a text might mean, b) infer the author's position on an issue s/he exposes or raises in the text, and her/his feelings about it, c) understand the different views or opinions expressed in a written text or in a discussion, even when they are implied rather than stated explicitly, d) hypothesize about what the effects or consequences of the information included in a text might be, and e) come to certain conclusions based on the information included in a text or make predictions as to what will happen.

Texts for reading comprehension

At the higher levels, (i.e. B2 and above), candidates are asked to read increasingly lengthier authentic texts drawn from various sources (e.g. magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, encyclopaedias, books, maps, catalogues, the internet and multimedia sources, etc.) which candidates can easily come across in their social surroundings.

In order to ensure that the exam format is consistent, the layout of these authentic texts is reconsidered together with the accompanying features

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they contain, such as graphics, images, tables, etc. At this level, they are also expected to understand more specialized uses of the language, including its social varieties and idioms.

At the lower levels, (i.e. B1 and below), candidates are asked to comprehend shorter texts that may either be authentic (e.g. greeting cards, signs, catalogues, headlines/captions, etc.) or have been especially written for the exam. What is important, however, is that the language and layout of the texts that were especially designed for the exam are a simulation of authentic texts. This ensures that the meaning candidates are asked to comprehend and engage in is developed within the context of the text, which is

the case in reality as well. In other words, context contributes to meaning-making and understanding.



Generally, an important point to keep in mind is that KPG candidates are expected to understand the standard form of the target language, which the KPG examination battery views as ‘pluricentric,’ i.e. its use is legitimized and adapted in not only one but in various cultural centers. For example, the English language examination deals with Englishes. In other words, it uses written and oral texts that are not exclusively in British English or American English. On the contrary, considering the impact of English as a global language today, and its role as a lingua franca, or contact language, all level exams include texts which may be in standard Australian or Canadian English, standard English spoken in the USA or England but also perhaps in Ireland, Wales and New Zealand, India or South Africa, etc. Moreover, the texts are usually written by native speakers of the target language. However, in some cases texts may also be produced by non-native speakers who use the target language for international communication.

Texts for listening comprehension

KPG candidates at the higher levels (i.e. B2 and above) are asked to listen to authentic texts which are increasingly lengthier and more densely

packed with information (e.g. public or private speeches, dialogues and conversations, interviews, radio broadcasts, news, advertisements, extracts from theatrical works, etc.) or especially created texts that simulate authentic texts. Often, however, even at C1 level, a technical modification is made so that factors not related to the candidate's level of proficiency but which may affect comprehension are eliminated (e.g. poor sound quality).

Both the type of discourse and the genre vary from one examination period to another. The speakers' accents and styles, as well as the dialect they use can vary as well, both from one exam period to another and within the same exam, particularly at the C2 level. It should be noted, however, that the degree of such variation depends on the exam level, i.e. the lower the level, the less variation. For example, at B1 level, most of



the texts are uttered by one speaker and a conversation is rare, compared with the higher levels (i.e. B2, C1 and C2).

The texts are heard twice up to C1 level, but at each listening the candidates are usually requested to respond to different questions. However, the number of times a text can be heard depends on the difficulty of the test items that must be answered each time. Similarly, as the level increases, the texts are more likely to be heard in their natural surroundings (where there may be distractions in the background, such as commotion, music or other types of noise), as well as be delivered at their natural rate and speed.

Candidates at the lower levels (i.e. B1 and below) are asked to listen to texts in stages, each of which is usually not more than one minute long and is often uttered by one speaker. However, even when there is a dialogue at B1 level, as also happens at B2 level, the flow of speech tends to be normal and not distracting. When music or background noise accompanies the message, it does not overpower speech.

Finally, at the lower levels (i.e. B1 and below), the texts are either scripted or simulations and have usually been written for the purposes of the exam. As mentioned above, they do not exceed one minute; in fact, the texts at A1 and A2 level are made up of only one or two phrases. At B1 level, the candidates may sometimes be required to listen to something being read to them, e.g. a children's story. The rhythm and speed of speech are controlled so as not to cause problems in text comprehensibility. Generally, the texts are uttered slowly and clearly, two times.

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The information relating to the listening comprehension texts and procedure for each exam level is summarized below.

A1 level

What candidates listen to

- Scripted exchanges and utterances recorded by professionals (or non-professionals) acting out a role. The situations are one or two sentences or utterances, but they contain naturally spoken language.
- There is neither a great range of text types nor speech styles.

How it is delivered

- Texts are heard twice and occasionally three times at a rather slow speed, even if this sometimes seems unnatural.
- There is no background noise.
- The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' native speakers of the target language, and it is always very clearly articulated.

The listening tasks

- Aim at assessing a message delivered in a single utterance or an exchange of two turns.

A2 level

What candidates listen to

- Scripted exchanges and utterances recorded by professionals (or non-professionals) acting out a role. The situations involve minimal talk – a single utterance or a brief exchange (up to three turns), but they contain naturally spoken language and are designed to reflect normal, daily circumstances.
- There is neither a great range of text types nor speech styles.

How it is delivered

- Texts are heard twice and occasionally three times at a rather slow speed, even if this sometimes seems unnatural.
- There is no background noise.
- The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' native speakers of the target language, and it is always very clearly articulated.

The listening tasks

- Aim at assessing a message delivered in a single utterance or an exchange of two-three turns.

B1 level

What candidates listen to

- Mainly semi-scripted and simulated texts. There are readings of stories, tales, fables and other types of texts commonly read aloud. If authentic texts are used, they are checked to ensure that neither pace nor tempo creates a problem of understanding.
- The simulated texts deal with real issues in real situations, and the speakers produce natural language that is not rehearsed, but comes naturally in an ad-libbed way from a situational prompt.
- There is neither a great range of text types nor speech styles.
- The text types are usually monologues. If dialogues are used, they are short and simple and always include two interactants.

How it is delivered

- Texts are heard twice at a rather slow speed, as long as they don't sound unnatural.
- The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' native speakers of the target language.
- Other sounds and naturally occurring features may be in the recording, but not while someone is speaking, or in a way that interferes with what is being said.

The listening tasks

- Aim at assessing comprehension of a message delivered in longer stretches of talk.

B2 level

What candidates listen to

- Mainly authentic and simulated texts are used rather than scripted texts. The style of speaking is natural, but intervention is often made to ensure that the speed is not problematic for this level.
- There is a variety of text types, although there is not a great range of style and register.
- Monologues are short (up to one minute and a half in length). When there are two speakers, the flow of the discussion is not distracting (i.e. no upsetting pauses and interruptions), and turn-taking is sequential.

How it is delivered

- Texts are usually heard twice at an acceptably normal speed and pace.

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- Occasionally, there is background noise and music which in no way interferes with intelligibility – it does not overpower speech.
- While the pronunciation is generally that of ‘educated’ native speakers of the target language (including dialects), occasionally there are L2 speakers with standard and very clear speech.

The listening tasks

- Aim at assessing comprehension of a) the gist of the text, b) specific ideas in the whole text and in parts of it, c) what is directly stated or implied, and d) what certain words or expressions mean in the specific context.
- Usually candidates have to respond to a different question at each listening.

C1 level

What candidates listen to

- Mainly authentic texts are used. If necessary, there is technical intervention to ensure that the speed of speech does not impede communication.
- The type of discourse, genre and register vary to some extent from one examination period to another.
- While the pronunciation is generally that of ‘educated’ native speakers of the target language (including dialects), occasionally there are L2 speakers with standard and very clear speech.
- Texts are one-two minutes long, and sometimes there are two-three people taking part in a conversation.

How it is delivered

- Texts are usually heard twice, though often candidates have to respond to a different question at each listening.
- Texts are delivered at a normal speed and pace, with (minimal) background noise.

The listening tasks

- Very often tasks concentrate on assessing candidates’ ability to understand: a) the gist of the text or its main message, b) to whom it is addressed and why, c) who the person speaking is, d) what is implied, etc.
- Other tasks may concentrate on assessing ability to understand specific/detailed information, viewpoints and attitudes – either directly or indirectly stated.

C2 level

What candidates listen to

- Only authentic texts are used, with a totally natural flow of speech. There is no technical intervention to change the rate of speech.
- There is variation from one exam period to another in type of discourse, genre, and register.
- Texts run up to four minutes and usually involve two-three people holding a formal discussion or taking part in a conversation.

How it is delivered

- Texts are usually heard once.
- Texts are delivered at a normal speed and pace, with natural background noise.
- The pronunciation is generally that of ‘educated’ native speakers of the target language (including dialects).

The listening tasks

- Very often tasks concentrate on assessing candidates’ ability to understand information not directly stated, aiming at assessing their ability to ‘listen’ between the lines.
- Other tasks concentrate on assessing ability to understand detailed information, viewpoints and attitudes – either directly or indirectly stated.
- Some tasks (i.e. summarizing, note-taking etc) concentrate on assessing candidates’ ability to: a) evaluate information in a text and b) select only the information that is important for completing the task (i.e. evaluative listening).

1.6.2 Written and oral production

Depending on their level of language proficiency, KPG candidates are expected to produce language that is correct and appropriate to the communicative context or situation. Candidates’ language errors in general, especially at the lower levels (i.e. B1 and below), are not assessed or even considered, provided that they don’t create problems in communication.

Writing and written interaction

Depending on their level of proficiency, KPG candidates are expected to produce written texts that serve socially determined or defined purposes, always following the rules for language use required by the genre.



A1 and A2 levels

At A1 level, candidates are expected to produce the correct words or phrases based on the text framework they are given, while from A2 level and above, candidates are expected to produce continuous discourse. In particular, at A2 level, candidates may be asked either a) to write a message or a note about their personal life or simple

everyday issues, or b) to produce a simple information pamphlet, an advertisement for a house, a poster for an event, etc.

B1 and B2 levels

B1 and B2 level candidates are expected to produce a wider variety of text types, using continuous discourse, in order to: a) describe a certain fact or an experience, b) develop an argument on a topic of public interest, or c) present a piece of work, a product, a process or a procedure. They are gradually requested to produce complete texts which use the language characteristics and the structure of the genre required by the task, e.g. an article, a report, an entry in an encyclopedia, an announcement, a letter, a text to appear in a forum, etc.

At B1 level, candidates are expected to produce: a) a description, b) a statement of personal experiences or facts, and c) other types of short texts for which they use their background knowledge based on their everyday experiences. Candidates are often given a model or sample of the genre they are requested to reproduce.

At B2 level, candidates are asked to: a) produce the language appropriate for the genre without being given a model, although prompts are usually given providing the necessary information for the task, or how the text may begin or end, etc., b) focus on one issue, discussing its positive and negative aspects, c) present ideas for the solution of a problem, d) express requests and make suggestions, e) provide or ask for clarification and explanations, f) comment on facts, or g) express their feelings and experiences.

C1 and C2 levels

At these levels, the communicative situation becomes interactive, i.e. candidates are asked to produce a text based on another written text which they are asked to read and comprehend. They may be asked, for example,

1) to explore and come up with the advantages and disadvantages of an event or point of view, 2) to support a suggestion towards the solution of a problem by explaining the advantages and disadvantages it involves, 3) to support an opinion by providing arguments and drawing conclusions, etc. Candidates may also be given a task based on a text (such as an article, report or public notice), and asked to: 1) draw a conclusion from the text or write an ending for it by following the style, structure and ideas in the original text, or 2) produce a different genre for the same or a related to the original text issue (e.g. if the original text were a newspaper article, the candidate might be asked to write a letter to the publisher on the issue raised within the article).

Speaking and oral interaction

According to their level, KPG candidates are expected to converse with their Examiner, to answer questions, to discuss an issue with their co-candidate, and to produce a one-sided talk on a variety of topics (see Section 1.5).

Additionally, from level B1 and above, candidates are asked to produce continuous discourse in response to certain stimuli, (e.g. an image, a question, or a text) (Table 5 below).



Level	Task
A1 and A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk about themselves, their immediate environment, events (e.g. an exhibit, a play, a school celebration, etc.) or objects (e.g. books, clothing, etc.).• Describe things, situations, places and people.• Talk about the kinds of relationships people have.• Guess what someone else/others is/are doing or about to do, etc.• Ask questions based on multi-modal texts

B1 and B2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take on a role and talk from the position of the person they are playing the part of in order to a) give information, b) express opinions, c) draw conclusions, d) predict what will happen or e) guess what happened.• Talk about issues on the basis of visual stimuli, usually photos, which are more complex than those of A level.
C1 and C2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop their opinions on a social issue.• Support a point of view.• Discuss a problem that is mainly social or (hypothetically) professional.• Interpret the messages delivered in humorous or literary texts• Summarise the content of Greek texts (spoken mediation) in order to transfer the writer's attitude towards an issue/ his arguments in support of a point of view/ the aim of the text, etc.

Table 5: Common KPG Speaking test task types

1.6.3 Oral and written mediation

The assessment of mediation performance is a unique characteristic of the KPG exams in relation to all the other international examination batteries. The KPG candidate is required to prove that s/he is able to act as mediator and, more specifically, produce written or oral discourse in the foreign language on the basis of a text in Greek.³

Oral and written mediation commonly occur in everyday life, and we often take on the communicative role of mediator in our own native tongue. However, the task is more demanding when the mediation is *to* and *from* a foreign language (which is also a frequent practice), or when one party knows the foreign language and the other doesn't, or doesn't know it to the same degree.

To determine what mediation means, it is useful to begin by saying that mediation involves different functions and activities. For example, when someone intervenes in a communicative situation where some individuals find it hard to communicate because they don't speak the same language or don't use a common code of communication, we have

³ See *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment*, Council of Europe, 2001.

a type of verbal mediation during which the mediator selectively transfers the information that is of interest in the particular situation. As regards printed materials, mediation occurs when we read a text or listen to a dialogue in one language and we transfer certain information or the basic meaning of that text into written form in order to achieve a particular communicative goal.

Mediation skills are necessary in the professional or educational fields, in public or in private domains, and generally wherever information is required to be reformulated or rephrased from one language or code into another.

Despite the importance of being able to mediate and the fact that it is an aspect of language proficiency anticipated by the CEFR, most foreign language teaching programmes do not aim at the development of this ability.⁴ Additionally, marketing considerations may be one of the reasons why no other assessment and certification system besides the KPG tests mediation skills. Another reason for the exclusion of mediation from other assessment batteries is perhaps the way in which mediation is defined by the CEFR, which may create confusion between mediation and translation/interpretation. The two, however, are markedly different. In a nutshell, the latter require unconditional respect of the content of the source text, and the aim of the translator or the interpreter is to render every single message of the original text. Equally important is the requisite that the target text be in the same textual form as the source text. On the contrary, mediation has no such constraints. The aim of the mediator, unlike the translator or the interpreter, is to *select* from the source text information *relevant to the task* at hand and to render it appropriately for the context of situation (Dendrinos & Stathopoulou, 2010; Stathopoulou, 2013)⁵.

KPG candidates from B1 level and above are expected to use their world knowledge and their communicative abilities as bilingual users of Greek and the target language to function in the role of mediator. In the KPG examination battery, candidates' mediation skills are assessed by an activity in both Module 2 (writing and written mediation) and Module 4 (speaking and oral mediation).

4 Dendrinos (2006) explains the reasons why mediation has been excluded until now from foreign language programs, and explains the term mediation in her article titled 'Mediation in communication, language teaching and testing', (*Journal of Applied Linguistics* No. 22, 2006: 9-35) in which she brings in examples of KPG mediation tasks.

5 Dendrinos, B. and Stathopoulou, M. 2010. Mediation activities: Cross-language Communication Performance. *ELT News*, May 2010.

Stathopoulou, M. 2013. Task dependent interlinguistic mediation performance as translanguaging practice: The use to KPG data for an empirically based study. PhD thesis, Faculty of English Language and Literature. University of Athens.

In general, candidates are expected to:

- 1) understand the basic meaning in a Greek written text and: a) relay the key information into the target language, b) discuss a topic or make/form a written comment in the target language, using the Greek text as a stimulus, and c) summarize, explain, interpret or freely render a Greek text into the target language.
- 2) choose the most important information from a Greek text for a communicative situation and: a) explain it or comment on it in the target language, b) re-phrase it into simpler or more appropriate form to the communicative situation in the target language, and c) interpret or explain words, phrases or one or more points of a dialogue, a professional discussion, a commercial or personal exchange, a conversation of an educational nature, etc.
- 3) use a Greek text (e.g. a text promoting a place) as an model for the production of a similar text in the target language.

In A1 and A2 exams, KPG tests mediation skills at the comprehension level rather than at the production level. Therefore, the tasks involve reading or listening comprehension which, however, is checked through questions in Greek instead of the target language. If this were not the case, the tasks would require a level of target language production that candidates at this level are not required to have. Additionally, taking into consideration the young age of the candidates to whom the A1+A2 exams are addressed (10-15 years of age), the task instructions are made accessible in Greek as well as in the target language to ensure that they are perfectly understood.

Common KPG exam specifications

INTRODUCTION

The academic coordinators for each language view the KPG exam items as a ‘measurement tool’ for assessing language proficiency. Since these items are used for *certification* of candidates’ level of competence, they are constructed ad hoc and are only used once. This particularity calls for the establishment of strict *specifications* for item writing, so that every KPG examination at every level and for every language will have the same features as the preceding ones and the ones that will follow. Such specifications are clearly stated in the Common KPG Framework for the exams (see Chapter 1).

2.1 KPG exam characteristics

The implementation of common exam specifications for all levels of language proficiency aims at ensuring:

- 1) **the standardization of exam items.** *Standardization* refers to the format of an examination, which should be ‘fixed.’ This means that the number of items in each test paper of the exam is stable and the task types remain the same from one examination period to the next. Standardization protects candidates from unexpected changes in the exam format, which could seriously affect their performance. Moreover, the *reliability* of the examination system is thus secured.
- 2) **the reliability of exam items.** A measurement tool is characterized as reliable if it yields consistent, stable, and uniform results every time it is used to measure the same characteristic (or *variable*, as this is called in research methodology) of a subject, as long as there is no change in the quality or quantity of this variable caused by external factors (e.g. conditions of administration; test instructions; candidate’s fatigue, etc.).
- 3) **the validity of the whole certification process.** *Validity* refers to the degree to which the test actually measures what it claims to measure. It is vital for a test to be valid in order for the results to be accurately applied and interpreted. The validity of the procedure presupposes the reliability of the measurement tool. The more

reliable the measurement tool, the more we can rely on the conclusion drawn.

Among the various types of validity, *construct validity* (i.e. the degree to which conclusions can be generalized from a specific measuring procedure to a wider underlying theoretical concept) and *content validity* (i.e. the extent to which a measurement tool represents all aspects of the variable we are testing) require special attention.



The need to control the degree of item validity renders both the content of the Common KPG Framework and the can-do statements set forth by the CEFR for every level of language proficiency important.

- 4) **The transparency of the KPG exams.** A fourth quality of the KPG examination system is transparency. For this reason, the KPG provides all the necessary information about its operation in electronic (www.minedu.gov.gr and www.rcel.enl.uoa.gr) and printed form to all those interested, i.e. candidates sitting for the exams, language teachers, employers (who are usually the ultimate receivers of the certificates), etc.

2.2 Common KPG exam specifications for all languages and levels

The KPG examination battery construct, the number of items, the time duration, the typology of tasks, the issuance of certificates, and any other features of the KPG system, are common to all languages that are certified. The examination for each level of language proficiency assesses the following:

- 1) Audio reception (Listening comprehension)
- 2) Visual reception (Reading comprehension)
- 3) Audio/visual reception
- 4) Spoken production (Speaking)

- 5) Written production (Writing)
- 6) Spoken interaction (Conversation)
- 7) Written interaction (Correspondence and electronic mail)
- 8) Oral mediation
- 9) Written mediation

2.2.1 Format and aims of the exam

The exam items for all KPG levels and languages are subdivided into four test papers (modules), each of which aims to assess the use of the target language for comprehension and production of written and spoken discourse:

Module 1 aims to assess reading comprehension (02), as well as language awareness.

Module 2 aims to assess written production (05, 07), and from B1 level it also assesses written mediation (09).

Module 3 aims to assess listening comprehension (01, 03).

Module 4 aims to assess oral production and interaction (04, 06), and from B1 level it also assesses oral mediation (08).

The common characteristics of KPG exams are as follows:

- 1) **Task design.** The design of all exam tasks takes into consideration both the can-do statements that specify language use, as they are described in the Common KPG Framework (Chapter 1) and the performance descriptors for each exam level. Only tasks which assess the specified uses of language and which conform to the common KPG task typology (see Table 6 this chapter) can be included in the exams.
- 2) **What test items assess.**
 - a) At A1 and A2, B1 and B2 levels, the test items of a single task do not aim at simultaneously assessing the comprehension and production of foreign language texts. However, at C level, the first activity of the writing test requires that candidates understand a written text and respond to it by producing a text of their own.
 - b) The test items of a single task do not aim to assess many different communicative language uses at the same time.
- 3) **Task instructions.** At B1 level and above, the task instructions for all test papers are in the target language. At the A1+A2 intergraded

level, the instructions are given in both languages: Greek, which is considered the KPG candidates' common language, and the target language. Under no circumstances, even at the lower levels, are the candidates asked to express themselves in Greek.

4) **Arrangement of tasks.** In Modules 1 and 3 of all levels, the items appear in groups of 'tasks' based on the intended goal/s, i.e. the assessment of one or more communicative language uses. Candidates are asked to prove that they have comprehended written and spoken texts by answering a specific number of items. (In this case, the term 'text' refers to anything the candidate reads or listens to, apart from the instructions for each task.) In Module 4, candidates answer questions based on pictures and texts that are included in a coloured booklet (Candidate's booklet).

5) **Answer Sheets.** For the items in Modules 1, 2 and 3, there are special Answer Sheets onto which the candidates transfer their responses.

a) For Modules 1 and 3, the Answer Sheets are single pages in



the form of an electronically printed sheet with special boxes. Candidates answer each multiple-choice item by filling in the correct answer box on the sheet; for the open-ended (i.e. gap-filling/short answers) items, candidates write one or more words on the Answer Sheet.

b) For Module 2, there is a Writing Answer Booklet in which the candidates produce their texts.

6) **Testing procedure.** The first three papers are tested one after the other, with two short intervals in between. In Module 4, candidates are tested on a separate day in pairs, and the exam lasts 15-30 minutes in total, depending on the level. The allocated time for each candidate is about 7-15 minutes.

2.2.2 Distribution of items, marks, and allocation of time

The following specifications are common to all languages and to all levels of proficiency:

- Every test paper, at each examination period, consists of the same predefined number of test items depending on the level of language proficiency.

CHAPTER 2: Common KPG exam specifications

- The time given to candidates in every examination period is the same and specific to each level of the exam, as indicated in the different level specifications.
- The distribution of test items for the assessment of reading comprehension in Module 1 is equivalent, with a 10% margin of variability.



For the A1+A2 level exam specifications see Table 7 (Chapter 3), for the B1+B2 level exam specifications see Table 10 (Chapter 4) and for the C1+C2 level specifications, see Table 13 (Chapter 5).

2.2.3 Success in the exam

As it is the case for most exam batteries of language proficiency certification, the maximum possible score a candidate can receive for any one level of a KPG exam is 100 in total. The 'pass' mark is 60, as set by law. Candidates must gain at least 30% of the maximum possible marks in Modules 1-3 in order for a total score for the examination to be calculated. The maximum possible score of 100 marks is distributed in the four test papers of the exam.

The decision of the Central Examination Board that each test paper does not carry the same marks, i.e. that there is a small variation between the total marks for some test papers (5 marks up in Module 2, and 5 down in Module 4), is based on the view that this leads to a more objective evaluation. International testing literature indicates a greater difficulty for candidates when their abilities to produce spoken language as opposed to written language are being examined. In addition, a candidate's produced script is assessed by two markers. In cases that the mark assigned is considered unfair a third marker or a member of the Exam Committee is invited to assess the script.

2.2.4 Text types

The types of texts for the KPG exam at all levels are selected on the basis of the following two criteria:

- a) their suitability in terms of subject matter, exam level and style of writing,

CHAPTER 2: Common KPG exam specifications

- b) their suitability for item writing, i.e. for the task they are meant to stimulate. Suitable texts should yield the appropriate number and type of items.

For more information, see the relevant section for each exam level in Chapters 3-5.

2.2.5 Task typology

The typology of tasks the KPG test development team of each language has agreed on for all exam levels involve the following categories, which are divided into two basic groups: closed (choice and completion) and open-ended, as indicated in Table 6 below.

Modules 1 and 3	
Closed type tasks (converging production)	
Choice	Completion
1	Multiple choice with three or four options
2	Correct or mistaken, right or wrong, true or false
3	Matching
4	Ordering
5	Multiple choice completion
6	Short answer
7	Cloze and selective/modified cloze
8	Rearrangement or sequencing
9	Crosswords and brainteaser puzzles
Modules 2 and 4	
Open-ended tasks (diverging production)	
10	Spoken or written response on the basis of a stimulus (verbal or visual) in the target language
11	Open ended written response resulting from Greek language prompt(s)
12	Producing a summary of and/or taking a position on the content in a complete or partial Greek language text
13	Dialogue – Conversation

Table 6: Common KPG task typology

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All the task types of the examination must conform to the KPG item typology presented above. However, in order to avoid excessive standardization, item writers are allowed to vary the tasks and their position within the exam up to a maximum degree of 15% from one examination period to the next. It should be noted that no substantial change can be made unless those concerned (i.e. potential candidates, teachers and parents, etc.) have been given at least one year's notice. Changes or information about the KPG are announced electronically at the RCeL website (www.rcel.enl.uoa.gr) or at the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs website (www.minedu.gov.gr).

Specifications for the A1+A2 level KPG intergraded exam

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the specifications for the A1 (*Elementary knowledge*) level certificate or the A2 (*Basic knowledge*) level certificate in the KPG exams.

The formal features of the A1+A2 level intergraded exam, which are similar to those of the B1+B2 and C1+C2 level exams, are listed below along with the new features characterizing this exam.



- 1) The primary objective of the KPG at the B1, B2, C1 and C2 levels is to respond to candidates' social needs, by granting them certification which can be used for occupational purposes. Certification at levels A1 and A2, however, aims mainly to assess knowledge and skills developed by candidates in the course of their language training within or outside the state educational system.
- 2) The KPG exam aims at assessing how well candidates use the language to understand oral and written texts or to produce socially meaningful messages. It does not aim at assessing their knowledge *about* the foreign language, or about grammar and vocabulary. Therefore, grammatical terminology has deliberately been avoided by test designers.
- 3) The A level exam does not include mediation activities at the level of production which ask the candidate to relay information from a source text in Greek to a text in the target language. Rather, it contains mediation activities at the level of comprehension. Moreover, Greek is used in task rubrics in order to help candidates understand what they are expected to do.

3.1 Format and aims of the exam

As all other level exams, the A1+A2 level intergraded exam consists of four test papers. Each test paper aims at assessing specific communicative uses of language through the following activities:

CHAPTER 3: Specifications for the A1+A2 level KPG intergraded exam

- **Module 1:** Reading comprehension
- **Module 2:** Writing
- **Module 3:** Listening comprehension
- **Module 4:** Speaking

Module 1 of the exam aims at assessing a) candidates' ability to understand written and multimodal texts, and b) their language awareness with regard to lexical and grammatical elements as used in utterances and brief texts.

Module 2 aims at assessing candidates' ability to produce messages and short texts in writing, given instructions and cues. Writing at this level is very controlled.

Module 3 aims at assessing candidates' ability to understand spoken language which is linguistically simple and concise. The messages candidates are asked to listen to are on predictable, everyday topics, and they are all studio-recorded so that speech is slow and clear, with no background noise interfering.

Module 4 aims at assessing candidates' ability to deliver a message orally and specifically, (a) to respond to personal questions (two questions for each level, i.e., four questions in total), (b) to respond to questions about something that s/he sees in one or more pictures (two questions for each level, i.e., four questions in total) and (c) to answer questions about one or more multimodal texts belonging to the same thematic category (2 questions for A1 level) and to ask questions relating to missing information in one of the multimodal texts (3 questions for A2 level).

3.2 Performance descriptors

3.2.1 A1 level

The A1 level candidate, according to the CEFR, has a limited command of basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns, and a limited vocabulary. On the basis of this knowledge, s/he is expected to be able to understand and use everyday language familiar to her/him to satisfy her/his basic communicative needs. S/he can introduce her/himself and others, ask and answer questions about personal details, such as where s/he lives, people s/he knows or things s/he owns. Finally, s/he is expected to be able to interact in a simple way provided that her/his interlocutor speaks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

This section includes the A1 level performance descriptors for reading comprehension and language awareness, listening comprehension, and written and oral production and mediation, i.e. it presents what A1 candidates should be able to do in each of the four modules of the exam.

Reading comprehension

A1 level candidates must be in a position to understand the overall meaning of a very simple text as well as specific details expressed in simple words and grammatical structures; e.g. texts concerning personal details, familiar everyday practices, common social situations and needs. More specifically, they are expected to be able to:

- 1) recognise familiar names, words, time expressions and simple sentences (e.g. on posters, postcards, simple announcements, brief descriptions, notes) in common everyday situations, reading a single phrase at a time, and rereading them when necessary,
- 2) follow brief and straightforward instructions (e.g. on how to make something) or simple directions (e.g. on how to get from point X to point Y, on foot or by public means of transport, etc.),
- 3) understand the basic content of simple informative and/or descriptive uni- or multimodal texts,
- 4) understand specific information in a simple text (containing simple grammatical structures, sentence patterns and limited vocabulary on everyday topics),
- 5) understand the most common international words/phrases such as 'email,' 'service,' 'fax,' 'iPod,' 'TV,' etc.,
- 6) recognise common signs such as 'No smoking,' or 'Keep off the grass,' (and their context of use), or expressions such as 'Pleased to meet you,' or 'Sorry, next time!', etc. (and their context of use),
- 7) guess the meaning of unknown words and phrases on the basis of (mainly) their linguistic context,
- 8) classify information provided in one or more written text/s, and
- 9) locate and use information contained in lists or other short texts.

Writing

A1 level candidates must be able to produce a written message using simple expressions, structures and vocabulary. They are expected to be able to:

- 10) write a short text about their daily plans, basic needs, experiences and intentions, as well as about those of people in their immediate environment,
- 11) refer to themselves, familiar or unknown people, real or imaginary ones,
- 12) give simple information about themselves (e.g. where they live, what they do, etc.) or even specific details (e.g. on a form related to shopping or on an application form) or about their family, friends and acquaintances (e.g. name, age and date of birth, name-day etc., nationality, address and so on),
- 13) answer questions on a questionnaire, quiz or crossword puzzle or complete a leaflet, instructions, a user manual, etc.,
- 14) request simple personal information from others, such as the kinds of information described above, by means of a message, note, letter, etc.,
- 15) produce an elementary short narrative, linking words and phrases by means of simple linking words such as *and*, *but*, *or*, or *then*, and
- 16) produce a written text making appropriate use of information from various sources.

WEEKLY NEWS Int.
Nutrition Survey

1. MALE ☐ FEMALE ☐
(tick Male or Female)

2. Age: _____

BREAKFAST

3. What do you usually have for breakfast? (write two things only)
_____ and/or _____

LUNCH / DINNER

4. How often do you have meat for lunch?

5. How often do you have fish for lunch?

6. What are two of your favourite vegetables?
_____ and _____

7. What do you usually have for dessert? (write two things only)
_____ and/or _____

SNACK

8. What kind of snack do you have at school? (write two things only)
_____ and/or _____

OTHER

9. What do you like to drink? (write two things only)
_____ and/or _____

Thank you!

Greene / Spring 2013
Code No 003669

All about Health and Nutrition

Listening comprehension

A1 level candidates should be able to listen carefully to a message, an exchange, an announcement, etc., and understand what it is about and/or specific information therein. The audio texts they listen to are simple in structure, they contain high frequency vocabulary and common, everyday expressions. The information in the audio text is about everyday and familiar events that take place inside or outside the home and the school.

At this level, only scripted exchanges and utterances which have been recorded by professionals acting out a role are used. The situations are of one or two sentences or utterances and they are delivered naturally, with very clear articulation. The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' speakers of the target language.

CHAPTER 3: Specifications for the A1+A2 level KPG intergraded exam

Texts are heard twice and occasionally three times at a rather slow speed, even if this sometimes seems unnatural for normal conversational behaviour. There is no background noise and speech is always very clearly articulated. The tasks commonly aim at assessing a message delivered in a turn or an exchange of two turns.

Candidates are expected to be in a position to:

- 17) understand common, standard expressions used in personal exchanges,
- 18) understand information, plainly formulated, concerning personal and family matters, or their immediate environment,
- 19) understand what a text is all about, what the main idea is, what the gist of the text such as an announcement, a face-to-face exchange between friends, a telephone message, a very simple story, etc. is all about,
- 20) recognise international expressions used in everyday communication,
- 21) identify difficult names or addresses when they are spelled out,
- 22) understand the function of a statement and, for example, identify it as an apology, an order, a request, etc., on the basis of intonation and other linguistic markers,
- 23) transform elements from the phonemic to the graphemic system (listen and write it down correctly, e.g., when dictating a message), and
- 24) classify pieces of information (or words) contained in one or more oral texts.

Speaking

A1 level candidates are expected to be in a position to demonstrate that they are able to use common, familiar everyday expressions so as to meet specific practical needs, and exchange information with others, provided that they speak slowly, clearly and are prepared to help by repeating, simplifying or reformulating information. In other words, candidates must be able to ask and answer



simple and clearly formulated questions that do not contain idiomatic language. More specifically, they must be in a position to:

- 25) answer simple questions concerning familiar topics (e.g. people they know), personal details (e.g. where they live, their surroundings, etc.), or routine issues (e.g. places they go to, what they buy at the supermarket, etc.),
- 26) express a sequence of events (or actions) by placing them in some sort of order (e.g. temporal) or connect phrases using simple conjunctions (e.g. *and*, *but*),
- 27) handle numbers, quantities, qualities of things, simple directions and the concept of time (e.g. 'what I am going to do next week or at 3.00 o'clock,' 'what I did last Friday,' etc.),
- 28) describe a person, an object or a place using simple lexicogrammatical structures
- 29) respond to simple statements and familiar topics related to everyday events in the immediate environment,
- 30) use simple everyday polite forms of greeting, leave taking, introducing oneself, saying 'please,' 'thank you,' 'I'm sorry,' etc.,
- 31) make simple comparisons between persons, objects and daily activities, and
- 32) respond to simple texts of instructions, descriptions or other types of information using elementary language, and ask for clarifications using simple phrases.

3.2.2 A2 level

The A2 level candidate, according to the CEFR, has a limited command of basic grammatical structures and limited vocabulary, but is expected to be able to a) comprehend and to use everyday expressions familiar to her/him and very basic phrases aiming to meet specific needs, b) introduce her/himself and others and ask and answer questions concerning personal details, such as where s/he lives, persons s/he knows and things s/he owns. S/he can converse in a simple manner provided that her/his interlocutor speaks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

This section includes the A2 level can-do statements for reading comprehension and language awareness, listening comprehension, and written and oral production and mediation, i.e. it presents what A2 candidates should be able to do in each of the four modules of the exam.

Reading comprehension



A2 level candidates must be in a position to understand the gist of a text and its main points, as well as specific information contained therein. The texts they are asked to read are of course simple and short, containing everyday language and high frequency vocabulary. They are texts about everyday needs,

about entertainment, the whereabouts of things and people, etc. They are very simple and short personal notes and letters, small ads, timetables, simple e-mail messages, post cards, common traffic signs, regulations (e.g. safety regulations), leaflets with instructions, signs and notices in public places (e.g. in department stores, restaurants, railway stations, workplaces, in the street, etc.).

More specifically, candidates are expected to be able to:

- 1) identify what kind of a text it is and what is its context; where it is likely to appear, who the writer is and who the readers are, as well as what its purpose is,
- 2) understand the overall meaning of a text on a specific topic, concerning everyday activities or describing plain facts, feelings and wishes,
- 3) locate specific information in the text,
- 4) understand directions (about how to get from one place to another) and instructions (e.g. in user manuals for various commonly used household appliances),
- 5) understand texts which contain common international terms and expressions,
- 6) understand the general and specific information in texts accompanied by or contained in simple graphs, diagrams, etc., and
- 7) understand the social meanings of utterances in a text and information indirectly stated (e.g. how the writer feels about something, whether s/he likes or dislikes the person, situation discussed).

Writing

A2 level candidates are expected to be able to express in writing –through the use of simple structures and vocabulary – their views on personal, family, social issues, routine topics, etc., to state their own everyday

needs, experiences, intentions, plans, as well as those of people of their immediate environment. They should be able to produce coherent texts containing relative clauses and phrases, indicating that they are able to use the basic tense system. More specifically, they are expected to:

- 8) produce short, simple texts (e.g. a note to a friend, a postcard, an email message, a chart, a questionnaire, etc.), giving and/or asking for information on everyday events,
- 9) write their impressions, plans, goals, emotions, problems and familiar topics related to their immediate surroundings in general (e.g. an experience at school or at home),
- 10) write/list the main points of an event they experienced, a book they read, a film, they watched, etc.,
- 11) express in writing their opinion on familiar issues and justify it in very simple terms (e.g. 'Oranges are good for you because they have a lot of vitamin C.'),
- 12) talk about themselves in interpersonal types of communicative texts (about their family, their experiences, their friends, their likes and dislikes, etc.),
- 13) suggest solutions to simple problems,
- 14) write a real or an imaginary person's bio-note,
- 15) narrate a story, tale, etc.,
- 16) describe places, objects, people, etc., and
- 17) fill in a form or make a questionnaire.

Listening comprehension

A2 level candidates should be in a position to understand the main idea and the secondary points of short messages or dialogues on topics related to common, familiar and predictable (family, social or educational) issues.

Only scripted exchanges and utterances are used. The situations, recorded by professionals, acting out a role, require minimal talk – a single utterance or a brief exchange (up to three turns). The scripts acted out contain naturally spoken language and language written to be read in normal daily circumstances. There is neither a great range of text types, or styles of talk. The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' natural speakers of the target language.

Texts are heard twice and occasionally three times at a rather slow speed, even if this sometimes seems unnatural for normal

conversational behaviour. There is no background noise and speech is always very clearly articulated. The tasks commonly aim at assessing comprehension of a message delivered in a single utterance or an exchange of two or more turns.

Candidates are expected to be able to:

- 18) understand messages concerning personal and family issues, with topics related to their immediate environment, their hobbies, shopping, local geography, etc.,
- 19) understand the gist and main points of straightforward, simple telephone messages, advertisements or announcements related to everyday matters,
- 20) understand simple instructions for constructing objects, or directions (e.g. how one can get from point X to point Y),
- 21) locate and understand pieces of information in speech recorded 'live', as long as it is clearly and slowly articulated, has no background noise, and it refers to issues related to everyday activities (e.g. education, leisure time, daily shopping, etc.),
- 22) understand the main idea and the main points of brief excerpts from television or radio programmes concerning current affairs (e.g. events/ news items), provided that the language is simple and clear,
- 23) understand formulaic expressions, international terms and very simple technical information, such as operating instructions for commonly used household appliances,
- 24) comprehend information indirectly conveyed – such as the feelings of the speaker, with reference to paralinguistic features including pronunciation, stress and intonation, and
- 25) understand descriptions of past, present and future events.

Speaking

A2 level candidates must demonstrate that they are in a position to use the target language in everyday situations to seek and provide basic information. They should be able to use simple structures and vocabulary, basic cohesion devices and their pronunciation/ stress should be intelligible. They should be able to describe someone or something, introduce themselves and others, talk about living conditions, daily habits, and likes/dislikes (e.g. of their family, of people in their immediate environment) about personal and family issues, hobbies, shopping, educational background, etc.)

More specifically, they must be able to:

- 26) ask and answer questions related to common aspects of everyday life, such as traveling, food, shopping, entertainment, means of transport, television programs, school, etc., or to convey and retrieve information pertaining to quantities, figures, prices, etc.), and to exchange ideas and information concerning familiar issues in predictable everyday situations,
- 27) describe (or list) places, events (personal or not), incidents, daily habits, emotions (likes/dislikes), experiences or impressions,
- 28) provide simple 'for and against' arguments on a familiar issue,
- 29) list the main points of a topic which they have seen, heard, or read about,
- 30) speak about their personal future plans or planned actions,
- 31) express an opinion or attitude in simple terms or make simple comparisons,
- 32) address (or respond to) invitations, suggestions, apologies, etc.,
- 33) ask for clarifications or for help,
- 34) express a sequence of events using simple language structures using expressions like 'at first,' 'then,' 'later,' 'finally,' and conjunctions like 'and', 'but', or 'because,'
- 35) repeat something in a proper manner (showing that they understand how one speaks in which situations), to act out a dialogue or a role appropriately.



3.3 Distribution of items, marks and allocation of time

The number of items in each test paper is stable in the A1+A2 level intergraded exam, as in all other levels. In other words, the number does not change from one examination period to the other and it is as follows:

Module 1: 50 items. The first 40 are objective-type items and automatically scored, while the last 10 are open-ended items evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained script raters. Each correct answer carries a full point (mark). This means that the maximum possible marks for this intergraded test paper is 50 (i.e. 25 maximum for A1 level and 25 additional maximum for A2 level).

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Module 2: 4 activities. In this test paper, candidates can get a maximum of 60 marks (i.e. 30 maximum for A1 level and 30 additional maximum for A2 level) (see Appendix 4).

Module 3: 20 items. The first 10 are objective-type items and automatically scored while the last 10 are open-ended items evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained script raters. Each correct objective-type answer carries two full points (mark), whereas each short answer carries three, which means candidates can get a maximum of 50 points in this part of the exam (i.e. 25 maximum for A1 level and 25 additional maximum for A2 level).

Module 4: 3 activities. The first involves candidates in dialogue with the Examiner (a type of personal interview), the second involves them in performing on their own (one-sided talk) based on visual prompts, and the third involves them in one-sided talk again, but this time they are based on multi-modal texts. In Module 4, the 40 marks (i.e. 20 maximum for A1 level and 20 additional maximum for A2 level) are divided according to assessment criteria (see Appendix 3).

For details of the Common KPG Exam Specifications, see Chapter 2 of this Handbook, where they are discussed at length. The table below summarizes the specifications for the A1+A2 level intergraded exam.

Module	Types of items/tasks	Number of items/tasks	Weighting	Mark		Time (minutes)	Text size (words)	
				Max.	Min.		Given	Produced
1	Choice	40	1	40	8 (A1)	65	450-750	-
	Completion	10	1	10	15 (A2)			
2	Guided written production	4	-	60	9 (A1)	40	-	ca.160
					18 (A2)			
3	Choice	10	2	20	8 (A1)	20	Not defined	
	Completion	10	3	30	15 (A2)			
4	Guided oral production	3	-	40	-	20	Not defined	
Total minimum score required for			A1 certification		60			
			A2 certification		120			

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Maximum possible score for	A1 certification	119		
	A2 certification	200		

Table 7: A1+A2 intergraded common exam specifications

The total time for the written part of the examination (Modules 1, 2 & 3) is approximately 125 minutes. Modules 1 and 2 are conducted together with no break in between, so the actual time allowed for the completion of these two modules is 105 minutes. There is a short break (30 minutes) before Module 3. Module 4 is conducted separately, on a different day.

3.3.1 Success in the exam

The highest possible mark a candidate can get for the whole A1+A2 intergraded exam is 200 points, i.e. 100 for A1 level items and 100 for A2 level items. (See Chapter 2, Section 2.2 for more information about scoring and weighting of items according to the Common KPG Specifications.)

- For the calculation of the A1+A2 intergraded exam results, the thresholds shown summarized in the table above are taken into account.
- A successful candidate is one who has secured at least 60% of the highest possible grade, as set by law, provided that s/he has secured at least 30% of the highest possible mark for Modules 1-3 of the exam. The mark in Module 4 counts toward the overall grade, but the minimum of 30% is not required for this part of the exam.
- Wherever in the calculation of the percentage we come up with a decimal number with a decimal part equal to or greater than half a point, the grade is rounded off to the next higher mark.

Thus, what needs to be initially checked (for all candidates) is whether their mark for any test paper of the exam is lower than the A1 level threshold of 30% of the highest possible score for each test paper, that is:

Module 1: 8 marks

Module 2: 9 marks

Module 3: 8 marks

Module 4: no minimum required

- If candidates have not achieved these minimum scores, they fail the exam.
- Candidates who achieve an overall grade (i.e. from all modules) lower than 60 (i.e. 1-59) also fail the exam and do not get a certificate.

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- Candidates who achieve an overall grade ranging from 60-100 points are granted an A1 certificate.
- Candidates who achieve an overall grade ranging from 101-119 points (who would be considered to have failed at the A2 level) are also granted an A1 certificate.
- Candidates who achieve an overall grade ranging from 120-200 points are granted an A2 level certificate, provided that they have achieved grades equal to or higher than the A2 level threshold of 30% of the highest possible score for each test paper, i.e.:

Module 1: 15 marks

Module 2: 18 marks

Module 3: 15 marks

Module 4: no minimum required

In summary, checking whether the candidates have achieved at least 30% of the highest possible grade per test paper will be carried out in two phases:

- once, in the beginning for all candidates, in order to determine whether they achieved the minimum required for A1 level certification, and
- a second time, after the marks for each test paper have been calculated, only for those candidates who have achieved an overall grade of 120 or more, which is the minimum required for A2 level certification.

3.4 Size of texts

In Modules 1 and 3, candidates are asked to demonstrate that they have comprehended written and audio texts respectively. In this case, the term 'text' denotes whatever the candidate reads or listens to, with the exception of the task rubrics.

In **Module 1**, texts may be very brief and consist only of a few words (the title of an article, the caption of a picture or graph, an



announcement over the loudspeaker, etc.) or they may be somewhat longer. They cannot, however, be longer than 150 words in the case of A1 level tasks, or 200 words in the case of A2 level tasks. The overall length of texts must range from 450 to 750 words in total for both levels.

In **Module 2**, candidates are asked to write two-four short texts, the total word limit of which is approximately 160 words.

In **Module 3**, texts cannot be measured in terms of how many words they contain. However, they can be measured in terms of time, knowing that the time allowed for this test paper is limited to 15-20 minutes, that each text is heard at least twice, and that candidates are given time to read rubrics and items as well as to transfer their answers onto the answer sheet.

Module 4 contains pictures and multi-modal texts which function as stimuli for oral production. As is the case for texts in Module 3, the word limit depends on the time available for this test paper and the task.

3.5 Text types

The texts included in the A1+A2 level intergraded exam as stimuli as well as the texts candidates will be required to produce in writing or orally, should all fall under the categories listed in Table 8 below and concern both A1 and A2 levels. In this table, types of texts are grouped on the basis of two variables: a) the type of discourse (i.e. whether they are written or oral texts) and b) whether they are texts that candidates may be asked to comprehend or produce.

	Written discourse	Oral discourse
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informal familiar discourse (e.g. poster, postcard, announcement, note, email)• Descriptive discourse (e.g., in a small advertisement, such as describing a lost dog; in an email, such as describing one's room)• Informative discourse (e.g. on a leaflet, sign, label, signboard, ticket)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informative discourse (e.g. notice in a public place)• Message (e.g. answering machine)• Common expressions concerning predictable everyday/ routine issues• Interview• Listing objects, events, etc.• Simple instructions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form to be filled in• Catalogue/list/programme• Simple instructions and directions	
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informal familiar discourse (e.g. brief message or note, postcard, email)• Informative discourse (e.g. for a leaflet, publication, sign)• Statements about themselves, friends or imaginary characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informal familiar discourse (asking for and giving information about oneself)• Use of expressions related to greeting/ leave-taking/ introducing oneself or others, etc.• Answers to questions about experiences and personal details or about friends, family, etc.• Interview

Table 8: A1+A2 level intergraded exam text types

The most common sources of texts are:

- all printed publications in general (books, newspapers, magazines, leaflets),
- manuscripts,
- posters, signs, signboards and any kind of brief text for the general public,
- the telephone,
- the radio,
- TV,
- the cinema,
- the internet (website, email, chat, forum, etc.),
- DVDs, CDs and any other digital device containing written or multimedia texts,
- cassettes, records and all other types of recorded oral texts, and
- video-cassettes, and all other types of recorded audiovisual texts.

3.6 Task typology

All the task types in the KPG examination battery are divided into two basic categories: closed and open-ended items and activities (Table 9).

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The assessment of a candidate's performance motivated by closed items is objective since there is only one specific answer, but the assessment of performance motivated by open-ended items tends to be subjective and depends on the raters' judgement. In order to minimize subjectivity, test developers design specific criteria for the assessment and marking of open-ended items and activities, particularly for those in Module 2 and Module 4 of the exam. Script raters and oral examiners are trained to use the assessment criteria and rating grids.

Modules 1 and 3	
Closed type tasks (converging production)	
Choice	Completion
1	Multiple choice (with three or four options)
2	True/False or Yes/No questions
3	Matching
4	Ordering
5	Multiple matching
6	Short answer (controlled or open-ended)
7	Gap-filling on the basis of linguistic context (cloze)
8	Connecting sentences or paragraphs
9	Crosswords and brainteaser puzzles
Modules 2 and 4	
Open-ended tasks (diverging production)	
10	Open-ended (written or oral) response prompted by cues or visuals
11	Relaying information (either in written or in spoken form) from a simple graph /diagram

Table 9: A1+A2 level exam task typology

In the case of the A level exam, the rubrics for the tasks are given in both the target language and Greek, which is considered to be the candidates' native language.

However, it should be noted that candidates are not asked/expected to express themselves in Greek at any time in any KPG exam, no matter what the level.

Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the specifications for the B1 and the B2 level certificate in the KPG Exams. Based on the CEFR (2001), certification at B level indicates a target language user who is an *independent user* of the foreign language, which means that s/he is able to operate successfully – though s/he may face difficulties – in most usual communicative conditions without aids or support. In particular, s/he is expected to be in a position to communicate in writing as well as by speaking, whenever it is necessary.



In particular, B1 level reflects the *Threshold* level certification. At this level, the candidate is expected to be able to understand the main point of clear, standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Moreover, candidates are expected to be in a position to deal with most situations likely to arise when they are using the target language at home or abroad, in various social contexts. They can produce a simple coherent text on topics of personal or social interest and they can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

B2 level represents the *Vantage* level certification. The candidate of this level is expected to be able to understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Additionally, candidates are expected to interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. What is more, they should be able to produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and independent disadvantages of various options.

4.1 Format and aims of the exam

The intergraded B level KPG exam, like all the KPG exams, consists of four modules and follows the Common KPG Exam Specifications (see Chapter 2 for details). However, unlike the A level exam, the B and C level exams assess candidates' written and oral mediation skills as well:

- **Module 1:** Reading comprehension and language awareness
- **Module 2:** Writing and written mediation
- **Module 3:** Listening comprehension
- **Module 4:** Speaking and oral mediation

Module 1 assesses reading comprehension skills and language awareness. Candidates are required to skim and scan several texts and respond to test items designed to assess a variety of reading skills (e.g., understand the gist of or partial meanings in a text, make inferences or guesses on the basis of the text). Moreover, some items are designed to assess the candidate's ability to make language choices that are correct and appropriate to the linguistic, discursive and social context (e.g., complete a sentence with the correct form of a given word).

Module 2 assesses candidates' ability to produce written discourse and function as mediators through written production.

Module 3 assesses candidates' listening comprehension skills.

Module 4 assesses speaking production and oral mediation. The tasks and texts become increasingly more complex as moving from the B1 level activities to the B2 level ones.

4.2 Performance descriptors

4.2.1 B1 level

This section includes the B1 level performance descriptors for reading comprehension and language awareness, listening comprehension, written and oral production and mediation, i.e. it presents what B1 candidates should be able to do in each of the four modules of the exam.

Reading comprehension and language awareness

Reading comprehension

Module 1 of the B1 level examination aims at assessing whether candidates can read and understand straightforward factual texts on

CHAPTER 4: Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

topics of common interest⁶. They are expected to be able to skim through the text and grasp the basic idea, as well as understand what the text is about. They should also be able to locate specific information by scanning a text about everyday events in private and public life.

In particular, candidates are expected to be in the position to:

- 1) recognise the source of a text, such as an advertising leaflet, letter, instruction sheet, holiday brochure, etc., and guess to whom it is addressed (i.e. who the target reader is),
- 2) comprehend texts of simple structure that concern everyday life activities and events, likes and dislikes, hopes and emotions, etc.,
- 3) get the gist of a text, i.e. grasp its main purpose and what it is about,
- 4) understand a text, even if it contains unfamiliar vocabulary – guessing by the context what the unknown words mean,
- 5) understand instructions on how to use various common appliances, electrical devices, etc.,
- 6) comprehend information presented through tables and with the aid of simple graphics (e.g. histograms, bar charts, pie charts) that are included in simple/ simplified short texts about familiar subjects,
- 7) comprehend the general conclusions in simple articles where a variety of arguments are developed.

Language awareness

The use of appropriate forms of language and correct patterns of speech in different social circumstances requires language awareness on the part of the candidate. In other words, it requires a) knowledge of basic rules of the lexical, grammatical and phonological system of the target

ACTIVITY 1

1.1 Read the text and choose the best answer (A, B, or C) for items 1-2.

1. This text focuses on Lincoln's
A. childhood. B. influence after death. C. adult life.

2. The writer's attitude to Lincoln tends to be
A. positive. B. critical. C. indifferent.



1.2 Read the text about Abraham Lincoln again, and choose the best answer (A, B, or C) for items 3-6.

3. When he was a child, Lincoln
A. could not read. B. was a bad pupil. C. read a lot.

4. Why did Lincoln move to Springfield?
A. To find a job. B. To train as a lawyer. C. To study.

5. What is Lincoln famous for?
A. His power of speech. B. His sense of freedom. C. His dislike of the South.

6. How did Lincoln die?
A. He was killed. B. He was in a tragic accident. C. Crying out for freedom.

⁶ This description is adapted from the illustrative scales for overall reading comprehension ability, provided by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Teaching, Learning and Assessment*.

language, and b) knowledge of how the target language functions to produce social meanings in oral and written texts of different discourse, genre and register. Candidates' language awareness is assessed through tasks which require that they make choices to indicate that they understand which use of language is more appropriate in specific circumstances. It is assessed through items which require them to make conscious linguistic, stylistic and textual choices which serve specific communicative purposes.

More specifically, candidates are expected to be able to:

- 8) choose the most appropriate word or phrase based on the context of the text,
- 9) restore the coherence of a complex sentence, after having understood its parts, by choosing the most suitable language link,
- 10) determine, by referring to language indicators, the most suitable order of information.

Writing and written mediation

Module 2 aims at assessing whether candidates can produce a coherent and cohesive piece of writing by expressing their views/opinions on topics of personal interest as well as topics that concern the general public. B1 level candidates are expected to be able to produce texts referring to their experiences, plans, intentions, etc. In the case of written mediation, they are expected to use the target language to relay information about events, positions and views that are contained in Greek language texts.

In particular, candidates are expected to:

- 11) write relatively brief/short texts (such as personal letters, electronic messages and notes) that supply or request information on everyday events,
- 12) describe experiences, impressions, plans, ambitions, intentions and feelings in personal letters or messages to friends and acquaintances,
- 13) write a clear text for an email or letter which is centred around a problem or situation and which will be read by a friend, acquaintance or relation,
- 14) clearly convey the main points of a familiar event or situation,
- 15) describe the content/plot of a book or film in communicative situations such as items 11-14 above,
- 16) give and justify their opinion on a familiar topic,
- 17) write a relatively straightforward report (e.g. to the head of a school) pinpointing the main points of a case,

- 18) supply personal information in the form of brief biographical notes, either in personal letters or in other forms of written interaction (e.g. e-mails, application forms, etc.), and
- 19) compose a short text in the target language which relays the general or specific information from one or more short Greek texts on familiar issues regularly encountered in various social contexts.

Listening comprehension

Module 3 aims at assessing B1 candidates' ability to understand straightforward factual information and to identify the main points of standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered at home, work, school and leisure time situations. Texts are usually monologues, simple dialogues or simple conversations during which the participants exchange ideas or views on a topic.

Scripted texts are mainly used, including readings of stories, tales, fables and other types of texts commonly read aloud. Sometimes short narratives are also used, and such texts are commonly simulated or acted out. When authentic texts are used, the pace and tempo does not create problems of intelligibility. The simulated texts deal with real issues in real situations, and the speakers produce normal speech which comes out naturally, in an ad-lib sort of way, from a situational prompt. The texts do not vary greatly, nor does the style of speech. The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' native-level speakers of the target language, and speech is clearly articulated in a generally familiar accent.

Texts are heard twice at a rather slow speed, but one which insures that they do not sound unnatural. Other sounds and naturally occurring features may be in the recording, but not while speakers are talking or in a manner that interferes in any way with what is being said.

B1 level candidates are expected to be in the position to:

- 20) comprehend the main points of a short dialogue between two native-level speakers of the target language whose language is clear and without any peculiarities,
- 21) pick out and comprehend information from simple live or in-situ recordings that refer to topics involving everyday actions and activities, professional life, education and free time, etc.,
- 22) comprehend both the general sense of and specific, meaningful information in a television or radio programme on current affairs topics in which the language is simple and clear,
- 23) comprehend the general sense along with certain details in a speech

- containing everyday language on topics familiar to the candidate,
- 24) follow information in simple technical texts, such as user manuals for everyday household appliances.

Speaking and oral mediation

In Module 4, B1 level candidates are expected to sustain reasonably fluently a coherent, straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest. Moreover, they are expected to:

- a) communicate with some confidence on familiar routine and non-routine matters related to everyday issues, b) exchange, check and confirm information, c) deal with less routine situations, and d) explain why something is a problem.



They are also expected to a) express thoughts on more abstract cultural topics such as films, books, music, etc., b) exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling, c) enter unprepared into dialogue on familiar topics in order to express personal opinions and exchange information

that are of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, and travel).

In particular, B1 candidates are expected to be in the position to:

- 25) describe in detail various events (whether personal in nature or not), experiences, impressions, and feelings/emotions to one or more people,
- 26) summarise the main points of a familiar topic involving everyday actions and activities, professional life, education and free time, etc.,
- 27) display abilities to make an argument on a familiar issue and present opposition to what others say about it,
- 28) suggest solutions to overcome a simple problem in a hypothetical situation involving one or more people known to them,
- 29) describe, explain and make basic hypotheses based on a visual prompt,
- 30) present the main points of a topic they have seen, heard or read about,

- 31) speak about future personal plans and scheduled movements,
- 32) relay into the target language information on a familiar topic from a short text written in Greek,
- 33) use the target language to discuss a situation from a Greek text and express how they feel about it,
- 34) use self-repair strategies to compensate for deviations in their speech and establish communication

4.2.2 B2 level

This section includes the B2 level can-do statements for reading comprehension and language awareness, listening comprehension, written and oral production, and mediation, i.e. it presents what B2 candidates should be able to do in each of the four modules of the exam.

Reading comprehension and Language awareness

Reading comprehension

In Module 1, B2 level candidates are expected to comprehend written texts, with or without accompanying visual material (e.g. photographs, diagrams, sketches, etc.)

In particular, they are expected to be able to:

- 1) identify the text type on the basis of its form, register, lexicogrammar, graphics and other characteristics,
- 2) infer the social/communicative purpose of a text (i.e. whether the text is written to inform, persuade, promote, etc) on the basis of its linguistic, paralinguistic or extra-linguistic elements,
- 3) infer the overall message of a text or its referents (e.g. to which individuals, objects, situations or phenomena it refers) mainly on the basis of the meanings expressed in it,
- 4) comprehend particular meanings within the text based on the way in which information is presented in it (e.g. with irony, humour, disagreement, etc),
- 5) infer the social identity or position of the author and audience and their potential relationship on the basis of the information, genre and register of the text,
- 6) infer the author's position or underlying attitude towards individuals, social groups, situations, events, etc. referred to in the text,
- 7) identify specific information expressed through language and/or other means (e.g. diagrams, tables, pictures, etc.),

- 8) comprehend the meaning and functional use of words and phrases within a text,
- 9) identify information within a text which expresses views, positions, etc. with which the candidate may agree or disagree,
- 10) perceive the relation between a) parts of a text based on cohesion and coherence markers, and b) two different types of text, and
- 11) replace illegible or missing parts of the text by choosing from the options provided.

Language awareness

The use of appropriate forms of language and correct patterns of speech in different social circumstances requires language awareness on the part of the candidate. In other words, it requires a) knowledge of basic rules of the lexical, grammatical and phonological system of the target language, and b) knowledge of how the target language functions to produce social meanings in oral and written texts of different discourse, genre and register.



Candidates' language awareness is assessed through tasks which require that they make choices to indicate that they understand which use of language is more appropriate in specific circumstances. In other words, test items require them to make conscious linguistic, stylistic and textual choices which serve specific communicative purposes.

More specifically, the B2 level candidate is expected to be able to:

- 12) identify or choose lexicogrammatical elements which determine the specific register and contribute to the expression of specific meanings and ideas,
- 13) choose, identify or use specific words, phrases or idiomatic language which contribute to the expression of specific meanings,
- 14) identify and/or replace spelling or other types of language errors,
- 15) discern and choose words which are pronounced or written in the same way but have different meanings,

- 16) identify lexicogrammatical elements which may be appropriate for the development of a specific topic in a specific genre and text type,
- 17) make lexicogrammatical choices which are appropriate to different communicative situations and different text types, and
- 18) comprehend the functional use of words and phrases in specific texts.

Writing and written mediation

B2 candidates are expected to: a) express themselves in written language, either on their own behalf or on behalf of others, addressing a familiar or unknown person, an association or a general audience, b) use the target language appropriately for the genre and the specific communicative conditions demanded by the task, without grammatical errors which may impede communication. In order to compose a written text of continuous discourse, they are expected to draw on their personal knowledge and experience and/or information provided in the exam instructions.

More specifically, the B2 level candidate is expected to be able to do the following in writing:

- 19) introduce or present another person or her/himself,
- 20) express her/his or others' feelings, wishes, likes/dislikes,
- 21) narrate a story,
- 22) refer to or describe concisely and coherently a real or imaginary event, an experience, situation or incident,
- 23) develop a topic of general interest either in detail or briefly but concisely, and from various standpoints, as determined by task instructions,
- 24) present a book, a piece of work, an object, another text, a place or an act worth presenting and express her/his views on it,
- 25) write a composition or report presenting main and subsidiary points in relation to a situation specified by the exam instructions,
- 26) focus on an issue commenting on its advantages and disadvantages,
- 27) present an issue or problem and suggest justified solutions,
- 28) refer to/report an incident or piece of news using information s/he already possesses and information provided in the exam,
- 29) apply for something, explaining why s/he is applying, or complete a form or questionnaire,
- 30) make a proposal and justify it,

CHAPTER 4: Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

- 31) provide or ask for clarifications, explanations, information etc. (through a letter, email message, professional memo),
- 32) compose a letter or email message commenting on an event, expressing feelings and experiences and/or expressing wishes, thanks, congratulations, apologies, pleasure or displeasure,
- 33) convey a third person's words verbatim or in summary while also commenting on them,
- 34) apply to an institutional body or a non-natural entity.

B2 level candidates are expected to use their knowledge and the communicative competencies they have developed as users of two languages (Greek and the target language), in order to act as mediators – a role which is common in many communicative situations in the educational, professional or public sphere.

Candidates' ability to act as mediators is assessed through tasks which require that they use the target language to:

- 35) compose a written text about an issue, using ideas contained in a Greek text,
- 36) convey the main idea of a written Greek text,
- 37) summarise in written form information from a Greek written text, and
- 38) express in written form the overall meaning of a message expressed in a Greek text.

Listening comprehension

In Module 3, B2 level candidates are expected to comprehend authentic oral texts in the form of a personal exchange, a monologue or dialogue,



a routine talk, a talk show, or a private conversation. Monologues may be in the form of a radio programme, an advertisement, a weather forecast, or a news bulletin.

Authentic and simulated texts are used. Recordings (in naturally occurring situations, from radio or TV) are spoken naturally, but technical intervention often occurs in order to ensure that the rate and

speed is not problematic for the B2 level candidate. A variety of text types is used, and a certain variety of style and register. While the pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' natural speakers of the target language, occasionally there are L2 speakers using a standard variety of the target language and clearly articulating sounds.

Texts are up to one minute in length and usually involve one or two speakers, although occasionally there are three. When there is more than one speaker, the flow of conversation is not distracted by long pauses, significant interruptions, and overlapping talk.

Texts are usually heard twice at an acceptably normal speed and pace. Occasionally there is background noise and music, but it does not interfere with intelligibility as it does not coincide with speech.

The tasks aim at assessing comprehension of the gist of the text, specific ideas in the whole text and in parts of it, what is directly stated or implied, and what certain words or expressions mean in the specific context.

More specifically, as regards listening comprehension, the B2 candidate is expected to be able to:

- 39) infer the overall or main message of the oral text, on the basis of its linguistic, paralinguistic, or extralinguistic elements,
- 40) identify specific or subsidiary information from the oral text (e.g. information relating to time or place, or information concerning views with which the candidate may agree or disagree),
- 41) identify the main points or specific meanings of the oral text,
- 42) identify the audience and purpose of the text on the basis of its register and other text characteristics,
- 43) identify the social identity or position of the speaker/s and their relationship,
- 44) infer information which has been given indirectly and restore information which for some reason was not heard at all or was not clearly heard (e.g. due to background noise),
- 45) infer the speaker's position or attitude, or her/his views about something or someone,
- 46) infer the main points made by a speaker who is not present (e.g. during a telephone conversation where only one party is heard, candidates may be asked to infer the comments/questions of the party at the other end), and
- 47) detect and identify the functional meaning of the lexical and grammatical elements of the text (e.g. elements used to persuade, to report, to correct, etc.).

Speaking and oral mediation

In Module 4, the B2 candidate is expected to be able to produce continuous oral discourse fairly fluently and coherently while drawing on her/his personal knowledge and experience and/or on information which is provided in the exam instructions. S/he is also expected to be able to engage in dialogue with the Examiner. Her/his language must be appropriate to the communicative situation (which may be given orally or in written form through questions, instructions, an authentic written text, pictures or other visual stimuli), while her/his pronunciation and intonation must not obstruct the communication of her/his message.

More specifically, the B2 candidate is expected to be able to:

- 48) present, characterise or describe her/himself or a third person, objects and situations appropriately to the communicative situation,
- 49) narrate a personal experience or an experience of another person through experiential/personalised language expressing directly or indirectly the feelings that the experience may have given rise to (e.g. happiness, pleasure, displeasure, denial, reservation, fear, surprise, etc.),
- 50) narrate or recount an incident, a story, a book or a film by summarising events while making their chronological order clear,
- 51) convey, express or restate verbatim another person's words (presented in the form of a written transcript), paraphrased or in a different style, and to comment on or summarise them,
- 52) present an issue/topic/problem of either personal or wider social interest coherently, i.e. providing information, explanations or clarifications and expressing the feelings that it created, either for the candidate personally or for others,
- 53) present a problem by referring to its causes and to the effects it may have if not solved,
- 54) express her/his overall opinion on an issue or problem and support it with logical and concisely expressed arguments,
- 55) take a stance in relation to an issue or incident by expressing her/his position in relation to it (agreement or disagreement) and/or her/his feelings (positive or negative),
- 56) support an opinion or idea, suggest a solution for a problem, or present a solution suggested by others and express arguments for or against the suggested solution,
- 57) express demands or convey the demands of others by explaining the

reasons s/he regards them as logical or why s/he believes that they should be fulfilled, and

- 58) talk about an issue using notes, other information or visual stimuli provided (e.g. diagrams, pictures, photographs, etc.).

In addition, when taking part in a dialogue, the candidate is expected to be able to:

- 59) follow basic conversational norms and conventions of politeness assuming specified social roles,
60) evaluate questions and other information provided by the interlocutor and be able to make proposals and statements which contribute to the successful progression of the interaction,
61) answer directly or indirectly to questions posed to her/him, and
62) ask for clarification in order to ascertain her/his interlocutor's intentions and to clear up vague points.

As is the case in Module 2, B2 level candidates are also expected to act as mediators by using the target language (in this case, orally) to convey the overall meaning or specific information in a Greek text. More specifically, candidates' mediation ability is assessed through tasks which require that they use the target language to:

- 63) speak about an issue using ideas contained in a Greek text,
64) convey the main idea of a Greek text,
65) summarize or express the main information from a Greek text.

4.3 Distribution of items, marks, and allocation of time

The number of items in each test paper is stable in the B level intergraded exam as in all others, i.e., the number does not change from one examination period to another, and it is as follows:

Module 1: 60 items. The first 50 are objective-type items and automatically scored, while the last 10 are open-ended items evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained script raters. Each correct answer carries 0,8 points (choice items) and one full point (completion items), which means that candidates can get a maximum of 50 marks in this part of the exam.

Module 2: 4 activities. The first two activities, one for B1 and one for B2 level, require candidates to produce a text on the basis of instructions, cues and a model text, while the other two (one for each level) require the production of a text in the target language which relays information from a Greek text.

CHAPTER 4: Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

Candidates can get a maximum of 60 marks in this part of the exam.

Module 3: 25 items. The first 15 are objective-type items and automatically scored, while the last 10 are short answers evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained raters. Each correct objective-type answer carries two points (marks), and each short answer carries two points as well, which means candidates can get a maximum of 50 points in this part of the exam.

Module 4: 3 activities. The first involves candidates in dialogue with the Examiner (a type of personal interview), the second involves them in performing on their own based on visual prompts (one-sided talk), and the third, which is a mediation activity, involves them in one-sided talk again, this time extracting information from a Greek text and relaying the information in the target language. In Module 4, the 40 marks are divided according to assessment criteria.

Module	Types of items/ tasks	Number of items/tasks	Weighting	Mark		Time (minutes)	Text size (words)	
				Max.	Min.		Given	Produced
1	Choice	50	0,8	40	8 (B1)	85	1.500- 2.500	-
	Completion	10	1,0	10	15 (B2)			
2	Semi-guided written production	4	-	60	9 (B1) 18 (B2)	85	150- 200	ca.360
3	Choice	15	2,0	30	8 (B1)	20- 30	Not defined	
	Completion	10	2,0	20	15 (B2)			
4	Semi-guided oral production	3	-	40	-	20- 25	Not defined	
Total minimum score required for			B1 certification		60			
			B2 certification		120			
Maximum possible score for			B1 certification		119			
			B2 certification		200			

Table 10: B1+B2 intergraded common exam specifications

CHAPTER 4: Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

The total time allocated for the whole examination is approximately 215 minutes. Since Modules 1 and 2 are conducted together with no break in between, the time allowed for the completion of those two modules is 170 minutes. There is a short break (30 minutes) before Module 3. Module 4 is conducted separately on a different day.

4.3.1 Success in the exam

The total number of test items the intergraded B level exam corresponds to 200 marks, 100 marks derived from the B1 level test items and 100 marks derived from the B2 level test items. The pass mark for the KPG, as set by law, is 60. Candidates must gain at least 30% of the maximum possible marks in Modules 1-3; there is no minimum mark required in Module 4, although the marks candidates receive are included in their total score. Therefore, candidates who gather fewer than 60 marks are not provided with a certificate. Candidates who gather 60-100 marks are certified with B1 level proficiency. Candidates who gather 101-119 marks are also certified with B1 level proficiency. Candidates who obtain 120-200 marks receive a B2 level certificate provided that their score in each module is equal to or higher than 15 points (module 1), 18 points (Module 2) and 15 points (Module 3).

4.4 Size of texts

In **Modules 1** and **3** candidates are required to indicate their understanding of written and spoken texts, respectively. 'Text' here means whatever candidates read or hear, excluding the rubrics that accompany each activity.

In **Module 1**, B1 level texts may be quite short and be composed of a few words (titles of articles, captions from photographs, announcements, etc.) or they may be extended (e.g. a magazine article, an editorial, a personal letter, a story, a telephone exchange), but not exceeding 800 words. At B2 level texts are expected to be lengthier than the ones used for B1 but not exceeding 1100 words.

In **Module 2**, candidates are expected to compose four texts, the total word limit of which is approximately 360 words.

In **Module 3**, it is difficult to predetermine the size of the texts used. However, the size of the texts depends on the time available (25 minutes, 4-8 of which are used for the first listening of the texts). Within these

limitations, it can be estimated that the total number of words in the listening texts is about 1100- 1250 words.

Module 4 contains pictures and texts which function as cues for oral production. As is the case for texts in Module 3, the word limit depends on the time available for this test paper and the task, and it is therefore difficult to estimate both the size of the texts provided as stimuli and those produced by candidates.

4.5 Text types

Table 11 below presents the types of discourse and text types included in the B level exam papers. Two variables determine the grouping of discourse and text type: a) whether it is oral or written, b) whether it is discourse or text that candidates may be asked to produce or only to understand.

Text types for B2 level are similar to those for B1 level except that B2 level texts are longer and more complex.

Types of written discourse and text		Types of oral discourse and text	
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">informal discourse (e.g., personal letter or message, post card, telephone conversation)formal discourse (e.g., letters or messages to public services, to businesses, newscast)journalistic discourse (newspaper and magazine articles off- and on-line, webtexts, etc.)advertising discourse (in the press, on leaflets/flyers, labels, notice boards, etc.)pedagogic discourse (in school books, a classroom, etc.)popular discourse (e.g., scientific or medical texts written for the general public)informative discourse (leaflets, tables, charts labels, signs)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">informal and familiar/friendly (e.g. actual friendly conversations, friendly phone calls)journalistic (TV and radio)advertisements (radio, TV, micro-phones)language of teaching (in lessons, museum tours, exhibitions and archaeological visits, on the television or radio)informative (e.g. public notices)messages (e.g. answering machines)instructions (e.g. electronic games, recorded telephone information)fairy talesinterviewsrecipes (on radio or TV, or actual)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literary discourse (e.g., extract from a novel, a short story or a children's story) • reviews (e.g., of a book, a film, a sit com) • jokes and funny stories • encyclopaedia entry • strip story and comics • tickets • forms for completion • programmes, catalogues and directories • monolingual dictionary entry • instruction manual (for electrical appliances, computers, games, gadgets, etc.) • simple and short fairy tales, stories, etc. • graphics (bar charts, histograms) • crosswords and puzzles • recipes (from books and magazines) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports commentaries (e.g. football, basketball, athletic meetings and events)
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal discourse (letter or email message, text with one's personal experience, etc.) • formal 'correspondence' (letters to non-acquaintances, public services, organizations) • informative (leaflets, tables, labels) • forms (completed) • CV or personal statement • recipes (as if handwritten to friends) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal and familiar/friendly (actual) • informative (e.g. reporting events) • messages (e.g. answering machines) • recalled stories or personal experiences (either the candidate's or someone else's) • interviews

Table 11: B1+B2 level exam text types

4.6 Task typology

All the task types in the KPG examination battery are divided into two basic categories: closed and open-ended items and activities. The assessment of a candidate's performance motivated by closed items is

CHAPTER 4: Specifications for the B1 and B2 level KPG exams

objective since there is only one specific answer, but the assessment of performance motivated by open-ended items tends to be subjective and depends on the raters' judgement. In order to minimize subjectivity, test developers design specific criteria for the assessment and marking of open-ended items and activities, particularly for those in Module 2 and Module 4 of the exam. Script raters and oral examiners are trained to use the assessment criteria and rating grids.

All items in the test are organised into tasks whose purpose is to assess performance in reading or listening comprehension, and in written or oral production. The form of the tasks is specified in Table 12 below.

Modules 1 and 3	
Closed type tasks (converging production)	
Choice	Completion
1	Multiple choice with three or four options
2	Correct or mistaken, right or wrong, true or false
3	Matching
4	Ordering
5	Multiple choice completion
6	Short answer
7	Cloze and selective/modified cloze
8	Rearrangement or sequencing
9	Crosswords and brainteaser puzzles
Modules 2 and 4	
Open-ended tasks (diverging production)	
10	Spoken or written response on the basis of a stimulus (verbal or visual) in the target language
11	Open ended written response resulting from Greek language prompt(s)
12	Producing a summary of and/or taking a position on the content in a complete or partial Greek language text
13	Dialogue – Conversation

Table 12: B1+B2 level exam task typology

In order to avoid an excessively inflexible standardization of the exam format, these specifications allow designers to produce an exam that

slightly varies from period to period. In other words, designers may slightly vary activities each time, or place them in a different position in the test paper. However, only a maximum of 15% of such changes is permitted, just as in all KPG exams.

The Common KPG Exam Specifications do not allow substantial changes in the modules unless such changes have been publicly announced at least one year in advance. However, on the basis of two parameters, namely the text-type stimulus and the assessed use of the language, a number of variations for every task type may be developed. Such variations are allowed and should be expected.

Specifications for the C1 and C2 level KPG exams

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the specifications for the C1 (*Effective operational proficiency*) and C2 level (*Mastery*) certification in the KPG exams.

According to the CEFR (2001), certification at C1 and C2 levels indicates a target language user who is both highly proficient and efficient in foreign language use. More specifically, the target language user for whom such a certification is designed is expected to understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. S/he can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. S/he is also expected to express herself/himself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of proficient meaning even in more complex situations.

5.1 Format and aims of the exam

The intergraded C1+C2 level KPG exam, like all the KPG exams, consists of four test papers and follows the Common KPG Exam Specifications (see Chapter 2 for details). Like the B level exams, the C level exams also assess candidates' written and oral mediation skills:

- **Module 1:** Reading comprehension and language awareness
- **Module 2:** Writing and written mediation
- **Module 3:** Listening comprehension
- **Module 4:** Speaking and oral mediation.

Module 1 tests reading comprehension skills and language awareness. Candidates are asked to skim through or to scan complex, demanding texts of different discourses, genres, registers, styles and lengths, which they are likely to encounter in the social, professional and academic sphere, in order to respond to test items designed to assess their ability to understand the overall message and/or detailed meanings, as well as to make text or context-related inferences, draw conclusions, etc. Based on their understanding of short / long texts or statements, they are sometimes required to respond to tasks which aim at assessing how they put into use their knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, formulaic expressions, etc.

Finally, they are expected to understand messages in a single text or the relationships between different parts of a text, or between this and other texts, and to respond to items designed to assess their language awareness with regard to style and register, or their understanding of the implications of lexicogrammatical choices for particular linguistic, discursive and social contexts.

The basic differences between C2 and C1 level tasks are that for C2 level, the texts used are longer and need finer intellectual processing, and the

questions asked are more demanding as far as language functions and cognitive processes are concerned.



Module 2 tests candidates' ability to produce written discourse and function as mediators through written production.

Having other texts as prompts, the nature of the activities included in this test paper becomes inescapably interactive. The interactive strategies include the following:

- a) the production of a written text which initially presupposes the understanding of another text in the target language.
- b) the production of a written text based on information in a Greek text which requires mediation strategies. At C2 level, mediation strategies are more demanding in terms of the complexity of messages and the precision required in relaying information. Therefore, candidates' performance is also assessed in terms of the level of literacy they possess and the natural flow of the written output based on the language choices that are correct and appropriate to the linguistic, discursive and social context.

Module 3 tests listening comprehension skills. For this level, texts are not scripted. They are either authentic texts (recorded live, from the radio, from CDs, or from the internet) or simulated situations recorded in a studio. There is also a wide range of speakers involved – speakers speaking different dialects of the target language, with different accents and geographical/social varieties of speech unavoidably reflected in their

speech patterns. Candidates should be able to show that they understand the overall and specific meanings in these oral texts with relative ease (even when some messages are audibly distorted or speech is clouded with background noise or music). Also, while they may need to confirm occasional details, they must show that they can identify finer points, appreciate register shifts, and extract specific information (even if it is implicitly stated and if speakers have a marked accent or make use of idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, and some other non-standard uses of the target language).

The basic difference between C2 and C1 level tasks is that for C2 level, the oral texts used are heard only once.

Module 4 tests speaking and oral mediation. The tasks and texts become increasingly more complex as moving from the C1 level activities to the C2 ones.

5.2 Performance descriptors

5.2.1 C1 and C2 level

This section includes the C1 & C2 level performance descriptors for reading comprehension and language awareness, listening comprehension, written and oral production and mediation, i.e., it presents what C1 and C2 candidates should be able to do in each of the four modules of the exam.

According to the CEFR, certification at C1 level indicates a candidate who has *effective operational proficiency* in the foreign language. More specifically, the candidate for whom such a certification is designed “... can understand a wide range of demanding and lengthy texts, and recognise implicit meaning. [S/he] can express him/herself spontaneously and almost effortlessly without much obvious searching for expressions. [S/he] can use the foreign language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. [S/he] can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.”⁷

Certification at C2 level indicates a target language user who is both highly proficient and efficient in foreign language use. More specifically,

⁷ Council of Europe (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, page 24.

CHAPTER 5: Specifications for the C1 and C2 level KPG exams

the target language user for whom such a certification is designed ‘... can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. [S/he] can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. [S/he] can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of proficient meaning even in more complex situations.’⁸

Reading comprehension and language awareness

Reading comprehension

ACTIVITY 2

Read the text below and match the meaning of each underlined word (11-17) with options A-H. There is one option you do not need.

A. equivalent	B. innovative	C. trend	D. record
E. globally	F. productive	G. quick	H. readily apparent

What is Physical Theatre?

The big question for which this site hopes to help find an answer

Physical theatre is a growing art form (11) synonymous. In Europe, especially, physical theatre is a known and recognised form, seen most prominently at festivals such as the London International Mime Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Companies such as Complicité, Théâtre du Soleil, and La Fura del Baus have been creating exciting (12) avant-garde productions of physical theatre for decades, winning awards, and travelling the globe.

Over the past few years, New York City has seen a (13) rapid growth of artists and companies creating physical theatre. This site hopes to (14) distill this growth and bring these artists together under a single umbrella.

A simple definition

Physical theatre goes beyond verbal narrative. It incorporates physical and visual elements, on a level (15) equal to the verbal ones. It is more than simply an abstract (16) message. It includes some aspects of character, narrative, relationships and interaction between the performers, not necessarily linear or (17) abstract. Also, it includes a wide variety of styles, approaches and aesthetics, possibly making use of dance-theatre, movement theatre, clown, puppetry, mime, mask, vaudeville, and circus.

In Module 1, the C level candidate will be required to perform some of the following tasks in order to demonstrate her/his ability to comprehend extensive, complex written texts and grasp the specific meaning of suggestive or idiomatic language.

More specifically, the C1 candidate, after skimming through the text, should be able to:

- 1) grasp the gist of the text – i.e., the overall message, basic idea or the general impression it creates for the reader – and/or its communicative value,
- 2) infer the attitude, position or opinion of the writer towards the issue presented in the text,
- 3) draw a message-related or context-related conclusion, and
- 4) make reliable predictions directly related to the text.

After scanning or re-reading a text, the C1 candidate should be able to:

- 5) locate specific information in the text, explicitly or implicitly stated, and use it in order to carry out a task or answer specific questions,
- 6) read between the lines and/or distinguish between fact and opinion or the attitude of the author, or tell which claim is made by which writer and/or distinguish between fact, opinion or attitude,

8 Council of Europe (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Teaching, Learning and Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, page24.

CHAPTER 5: Specifications for the C1 and C2 level KPG exams

- 7) guess about information, a point of view, etc., which is silenced, or add/replace information which is unreadable or has been omitted,
- 8) classify, transmit or compare information from texts on the basis of specific criteria,
- 9) follow to the letter complex instructions relating to the use, operation, conduct or design of a device/an appliance/etc. and respond to a given task.

In addition to the above, the C2 candidate should also be able to:

- 10) interpret information included in a text in connection with its graphic features (e.g. fonts, text format, design of titles and subtitles, etc.) or footnotes, charts with quantitative data, accompanying pictures, tables, etc.

In general, the C2 level candidate is expected to:

- handle texts which are more demanding than texts at other levels, either because of their elliptic nature or because of their complicated nature (e.g. literary texts, advertising discourse, humour etc.)
- understand specialized texts such as manuals as well as simplified scientific texts (i.e. to understand and interpret concepts which are directly or indirectly stated, and to spot details which may be inferred from the texts). These texts are related to the public and private sphere, social and professional life, the world of literature and arts, and education and science,
- be fully aware of the ways in which texts work beyond the sentence level. In other words, they should be aware of how different language elements work together to synthesize texts and various text types.

Language Awareness

The tasks and the items for the reading comprehension test are designed with the purpose of assessing the candidate's communicative competence, which presupposes *language awareness* regarding the way language is used in a variety of contexts and, more specifically, in different communicative events or situations and in different discourse environments.

In order for C1 level candidates to demonstrate their awareness of how language is used at both the sentence level and the level of an extended text (either a short or a longer text), they are expected to:

- 11) recognise the presence or absence of linguistic and metalinguistic/non-linguistic types of features (e.g., pictorial or graphic elements) which express certainty or doubt, imprecision/vagueness, conviction or hesitation, etc., and, more generally, recognise the position of the writer (positive, negative, neutral or indifferent),
- 12) specify/infer the meaning of/define unknown words and expressions or the implicit meaning of statements on the basis of contextual clues,
- 13) complete, replace or differentiate between words and expressions in the text, conveying the meaning in a way appropriate to the given context (e.g., to choose the correct definition for underlined words in a text from the options provided, etc.)
- 14) interpret the meaning of a given sentence in a text, whether or not there are clear indications about its specific role (e.g. a question which functions as a demand, or a reminder which functions as a warning, etc.),
- 15) locate/identify words, expressions, etc. or typical uses (e.g. repetition, anaphora, cataphora, ellipsis, comparison) in various parts of the same text or across related texts,
- 16) locate relations in the text or across texts through the recognition of lexical and grammatical cohesion and coherence devices (e.g. linking words and phrases, conjunctions, etc.), and more particularly those used by the writer in a text which:
 - introduces or concludes an idea or a whole text
 - makes a transition from one idea to another
 - reintroduces a theme or an idea;
 - refers to what happened or what was said earlier
 - presents various aspects of the same topic
 - specifies or explains an expression, an idea, part of a theme;
 - introduces and makes a supposition, an argument or a counter-argument;
 - refers back to another text or its writer;
 - offers or adds an example or other kinds of information/input (e.g. a diagram);
 - puts a condition or conditions to something
 - introduces the conclusion which has been arrived at
- 17) fill in or substitute meanings contained within the texts by choosing grammatically accurate expressions appropriate to the

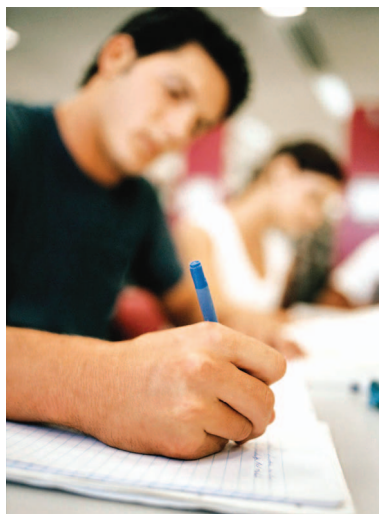
communicative situation (e.g. specific and abstract notions such as those which refer to quantity, quality, time, space or direction, or when comparing and contrasting, etc.)

In addition to the above, the C2 candidate is also expected to be able to:

- 18) express special semantic nuances through the use of a wide range of lexicogrammatical features appropriate for the given sociolinguistic situation.

Writing and written mediation

In order to demonstrate that s/he can reach a goal which demands specific communicative conditions and that s/he can use the written form in a grammatically accurate and communicatively effective manner, the C level candidate will be required to produce a text about a personal or social matter or provide detailed descriptions about real or imagined events concerning her/his personal experience or that of others. Her/his text is expected to be fully coherent, and the language s/he uses must ensure the text's cohesion and a style which takes the supposed reader into account.



More specifically, the C1 candidate is required to use the target language in order to:

- 19) summarise a Greek text so that it is appropriate to a given communicative situation or to a predefined framework,
- 20) summarily present the salient points of a Greek text, those that would interest the supposed reader,
- 21) express her/his opinion on a theme and justify/support it,
- 22) refer to events or conditions that occurred either before or after those narrated in the text proposed as input,
- 23) specify or explain an expression, an idea, or a subsidiary theme,
- 24) express a conclusion drawn on the content of a text or on its specific context,
- 25) express predictions or hypotheses directly related to the topic,

- 26) transmit/relate information or unconfirmed rumours from various Greek source materials,
- 27) express certitude/doubt about a certain subject, about other people's ideas or suggestions, or with regard to causes and consequences of an event or a situation,
- 28) express a personal estimate or interpretation with regard to situations or events,
- 29) agree with, support or comment on the writer's/someone else's opinion,
- 30) present arguments and counter-arguments about her/his own or someone else's opinion,
- 31) pose (a) condition/s or a prerequisite for accepting a proposal, an invitation, an agreement, etc.,
- 32) give/add an example or provide any other kind of input,
- 33) present/advertise a product, the activities of an organization, of a social group. etc.,
- 34) compare and contrast the advantages/disadvantages or pros/cons of other people's opinions or suggestions,
- 35) propose a solution to a problem and support it with arguments, and
- 36) give directions for actions and/or express an action plan.

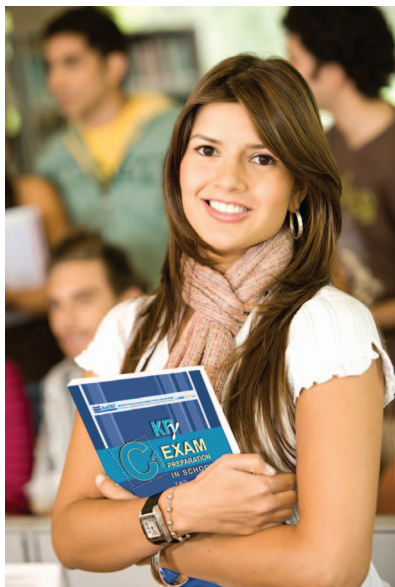
Additionally, the C2 candidate is expected to be in the position to perform the following:

- 37) produce a text which refers to situations, experiences, or facts by describing everything that has happened in a clear and precise way and in a style appropriate to the genre,
- 38) produce articles, reports or essays that present a case,
- 39) write a review about a film, an exhibition, a performance, etc.,
- 40) write detailed descriptions and narrations by including sub-themes, developing specific points or reaching appropriate conclusions,
- 41) use notes from lectures or other written sources to compose a short essay with coherence and cohesion,

Listening comprehension

In Module 3, candidates are expected to be able to follow a socially situated oral text of a personal, private or public nature, and to comprehend the subsidiary meanings conveyed in such texts.

At C1 level, authentic texts or simulations (rather than scripted texts) are



used. However, if necessary, there is technical intervention to ensure that the rate and speed of speech does not impede intelligibility. The type of discourse, genre and register varies from one activity to another and from one test paper to another. The speakers' accents and styles, as well as the dialect they use, can vary as well. The pronunciation is generally that of 'educated' native speakers of the target language. However, in some cases, texts may be produced by non-native speakers who use the target language for international communication. Sometimes, there is use of colloquialisms and non-standard forms of the target language.

Texts are one-to-two minutes long, and while frequent use of one-sided talk is made (e.g. radio news, lectures etc.), interviews and conversations involving two or three people are also common. The texts are usually heard twice, though often when candidates hear it a second time, they have to respond to different questions. Texts are delivered at a normal speed and pace, with (minimal) background noise that sometimes coincides with talk.

The C1 level candidate, keeping in mind the specific context, the lexicogrammatical choices made, and the speaker's phonological characteristics (tone of voice, style, etc.), must be able to perform certain tasks in order to prove that s/he grasps the literal or suggested meaning of the text and more specifically that s/he can satisfy the demands of the following linguistic activities:

More specifically, after having listened to the text once, C1 candidates are required to:

- 42) grasp the gist of the text, the basic or general idea it creates, and/or its communicative value,
- 43) infer the attitude, position, and opinion of one or more speakers, even when it is not explicitly stated or when it is not obvious,
- 44) grasp the nature of the relationship between the interlocutors, where they are located as well as any other information about the communicative situation,

CHAPTER 5: Specifications for the C1 and C2 level KPG exams

- 45) make well-founded predictions, which are based on and directly related to the text and the communicative situation (e.g. what happens next, or what the reaction of the listener will be),
- 46) identify the text type and its source,

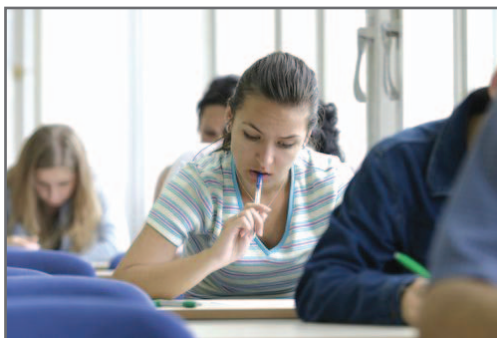
After having listened to the text a second time, C1 candidates are expected to:

- 47) locate subsidiary information needed to accomplish a task, solve a problem, or answer a specific question,
- 48) evaluate and classify information in/from a text,
- 49) relate, compare and contrast information within the same text or from different texts, or a variety of sources, visual or not, linguistic or multi-modal,
- 50) in short answers, make guesses about information or positions that are implicit rather than stated,
- 51) reconstruct information that was not heard (because of noise, music or because it was whispered) by filling in the gaps in a written text or unrelated sentences.

On the other hand, C2 level texts are delivered in their original version with a totally natural flow of speech, and occasionally with background noise, overlapping talk, interruptions, pauses, etc. Only authentic texts are used at this level, and there is no technical intervention to change the rate and speed of speech.

Texts run up to four minutes, and in most cases they are in the form of two-three people either holding a formal discussion or taking part in a private conversation. The texts are heard only once.

The C2 level candidates are expected to follow academic lectures, conversations and discussions of public or private nature, humorous talk, literary readings, political speeches, etc., and to understand both overall and partial meanings. Taking into consideration the context of the communicative encounter, the lexicogrammatical choices and the phonological features of the speakers (e.g. intonation, style, tone of voice etc.), candidates are asked to perform tasks showing that they fully understand the messages



therein though these may be implicitly stated. All activities and tasks at this level are more demanding than at B2 or C1 levels, mainly because of the loaded cognitive processes which are involved. Very often tasks concentrate on assessing candidates' ability to understand what is said but also not said. Other tasks concentrate on assessing ability to understand detailed information, viewpoints and attitudes –directly stated or implied.

Additionally, the C2 candidate should be in the position to:

- 52) make suppositions about information that is missing from the texts or that has been silenced,
- 53) identify the meaning of complicated concepts heard in lectures or presentations during which a lot of colloquialisms, regional elements or unknown terms are used,
- 54) understand concrete information in public announcements and conversations, even if some words are not heard properly because of noise (e.g. in a railway station, in an airport, in a stadium, in a restaurant), and
- 55) understand complex specialized information, such as operating instructions, product specifications and services, etc.

Speaking and oral mediation

The C level candidate is expected to be able to produce continuous oral discourse fluently, spontaneously and almost effortlessly while drawing on her/his personal knowledge and experience and/or on information which is provided in the exam material. Her/his language must be appropriate to the communicative situation, while her/his pronunciation and intonation must not obstruct the communication of her/his message in the target language.

With regard to mediation, the C1 and C2 level candidate will be called upon to perform the following tasks:

- mediate by summarising the content of a Greek written or spoken text, conversation etc. into the foreign language,
- present and develop various aspects of an issue or problem in English based on information mediated from a Greek text,

More specifically, the C1 level candidate is expected to be able to:

- 56) present and justify an opinion or express and explain why they wish for/intend to do something,

- 57) present and develop an idea or argument,
- 58) agree and support someone else's point of view,
- 59) present and develop various aspects of an issue or a problem,
- 60) make an assumption or develop possible scenarios in relation to a situation and how this will develop, how people will act, etc.,
- 61) express reservations about others' ideas or proposals or about the causes or consequences of a situation,
- 62) develop the pros and cons of one or more proposals,
- 63) propose the solution to a problem and defend their proposal by justifying why they think it would be effective,
- 64) give instructions for taking action or present an action plan,
- 65) summarise the main points of a talk or a discussion,
- 66) present a common decision or conclusion related to an issue or an action plan,
- 67) ask for explanations or clarifications,
- 68) comment on/react to previously stated positions,

In addition to the above, the C2 level candidate should be able to:

- 69) present and develop various arguments, views and ideas in a way which is appropriate for different interlocutors in different contexts,
- 70) narrate in a natural way situations, events, facts and personal accounts in a coherent and cohesive way,
- 71) use idiomatic expressions, being aware of how they are used in given social circumstances,
- 72) reword in official language something that was originally said in everyday language, transfer whatever their interlocutor has said to another audience, and vice versa (e.g. explain something to children),
- 73) make a public announcement eloquently with the proper style and language, so as to convey a message to their audience,
- 74) present a complex issue to an audience unfamiliar with it, adjusting the language according to the needs of the given communicative situation,
- 75) correct an incorrect statement,
- 76) solve a problem in English by mediating information from a Greek text in a convincing way,
- 77) use the appropriate expressions and strategies in order to give the floor to their interlocutor or take the floor (and maintain it), to intervene in a discussion, or to gain time in order to think or state the end of their contribution,
- 78) intervene in discussions relating to social issues with clear arguments and formal or informal,

- 79) develop organized ideas about an issue posed by their interlocutor,
- 80) add information from different sources in order to re-define a problem, and
- 81) describe in detail the way an activity is carried out.

5.3 Distribution of items, marks, and allocation of time

The number of items in each test paper is stable in the C level intergraded exams as in all others. In other words, the number does not change from one examination period to the other and it is as follows:

Module 1: 70 items. The first 50 are objective-type items and automatically scored, while the last 20 are open-ended items evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained script raters. Each correct objective-type answer receives a mark of 0.6, while each open-ended answer receives a whole point, which means that the maximum possible mark for this test paper is 50.

Module 2: 2 activities. The first one of which requires the candidate to produce a text, which presupposes understanding of another text in the target language, while the second one requires production of a text by relaying information in the target language from a Greek text. In this test paper, candidates can get a maximum of 60 marks in this part of the exam (see Appendix 4).

Module 3: 30 items. The first 20 are objective-type items and automatically scored, while the last 10 are open-ended items evaluated and marked (either right or wrong) by trained script raters. Each correct objective-type answer receives a mark of 1,5, while each open-ended answer receives two points, which means that candidates can get a maximum of 50 marks for this test paper.

Module 4: 3 activities. The first involves the candidates in performing on their own in order to support a point of view based on written prompts they are given in the form of a cue card. The second activity involves them in responding to questions requiring understanding of the content of multi-modal or/and literary texts, and the third, which is a mediation activity, requires from them to function as mediators by relaying orally in the target language information from a Greek text in order to

CHAPTER 5: Specifications for the C1 and C2 level KPG exams

fulfil a specific purpose based on the given task instructions. In Module 4, the 40 marks are awarded according to the KPG assessment criteria (see Appendix 3).

For details of the common KPG examination battery specifications, see Chapter 2 of this Handbook, where they are discussed at length. The table below summarizes the specifications for the C1+C2 intergraded KPG exam:

Module	Types of items/ tasks	Number of items/tasks	Weighting	Mark		Time (minutes)	Text size (words)	
				Max.	Min.		Given	Produced
1	Choice	50	0,6	30	8 (C1)	120	3.500- 4.500	-
	Completion	20	1,0	20	15 (C2)			
2	Semi-guided written production	2	-	60	9 (C1) 18 (C2)	120	400- 550	ca.660
3	Choice	20	1,5	30	8 (C1)	30	Not defined	
	Completion	10	2,0	20	15 (C2)			
4	Semi-guided oral production	3	-	40	-	30	Not defined	
Total minimum score required for			C1 certification		60			
			C2 certification		120			
Maximum possible score for			C1 certification		119			
			C2 certification		200			

Table 13: C1+C2 intergraded common exam specifications

The total time allocated for the whole examination is approximately 300 minutes. Since Modules 1 and 2 are conducted together, the actual time allowed for the completion of those two modules is 240 minutes. There is a short break (30 minutes) before Module 3, and Module 4 is conducted on a different day.

5.3.1 Success in the exam

The total number of test items the intergraded C level exam corresponds to 200 marks, 100 marks derived from the C1 level test items and 100

marks derived from the C2 level test items. The pass mark for the KPG, as set by law, is 60. Candidates must gain at least 30% of the maximum possible marks in Modules 1-3; there is no minimum mark required in Module 4, although the marks candidates receive are included in their total score. Therefore, candidates who gather fewer than 60 marks are not provided with a certificate. Candidates who gather 60-100 marks are certified with C1 level proficiency. Candidates who gather 101-119 marks are also certified with C1 level proficiency. Candidates who obtain 120-200 marks receive a C2 level certificate provided that their score in each module is equal to or higher than 15 points (module 1), 18 points (Module 2) and 15 points (Module 3).

5.4 Size of texts

In **Modules 1** and **3**, candidates are required to indicate their understanding of written and spoken texts, respectively. 'Text' here means whatever candidates read or hear, excluding the rubric that accompanies each activity.

In **Module 1**, texts range from 3,500-4,500 words.

In **Module 2**, candidates are expected to compose two texts, the total word limit of which is approximately 650 words.

In **Module 3**, it is difficult to predetermine the size of the texts used. However, given the time allowed for this test paper (30 minutes, about 15 of which are used for the first listening of the texts), the size of the texts depends on the time available. Within these limitations, it can be estimated that the total number of words in the listening texts is 700-900.

Module 4 contains (multimodal) texts which function as cues for oral production. As in the listening test, the size of texts used as a stimulus for speaking and those produced by the candidates depend on the total time available for this test paper (i.e. approximately 30 minutes) and therefore it is hard to predetermine.

5.5 Text types

Candidates are expected to read and understand a wide range of lengthy, complex texts whether or not they are related to their own experiences or field of interest. For the C2 level of the KPG exam battery, there are texts which are normally not included in the lower levels. Thus, there are texts which are specialized in nature, as well as legal texts. Another innovation

for the C2 level is that candidates get to read literary and scientific texts which may be outside their field of experience and which they may not have prior knowledge about. The texts to be produced by candidates resemble those of C1 level, but they are more demanding and more complex in terms of the ideas included and the issues discussed.

5.6 Task typology

All the task types in the KPG examination battery are divided into two basic categories: closed and open-ended items and activities. The assessment of a candidate's performance motivated by closed items is objective since there is only one specific answer, but the assessment of performance motivated by open-ended items tends to be subjective and depends on the raters' judgement. In order to minimize subjectivity, test developers design specific criteria for the assessment and marking of open-ended items and activities, particularly for those in Module 2 and Module 4 of the exam. Script assessors and oral examiners are trained to use the assessment criteria and rating grids.

All items in the test are organised into task types whose purpose is to assess performance in reading or listening comprehension, and in written or oral production. The form of the tasks is specified in the following table:

Modules 1 and 3 Closed type tasks (converging production)	
Choice	Completion
1	Multiple choice with three or four options
2	Correct or mistaken, right or wrong, true or false
3	Matching
4	Ordering
5	Multiple choice completion
6	Short answer
7	Cloze and selective/modified cloze
8	Rearrangement or sequencing
9	Crosswords and brainteaser puzzles

Modules 2 and 4 Open-ended tasks (diverging production)	
10	Spoken or written response on the basis of a stimulus (verbal or visual) in the target language
11	Open ended written response resulting from Greek language prompt(s)
12	Producing a summary of and/or taking a position on the content in a complete or partial Greek language text
13	Dialogue – Conversation

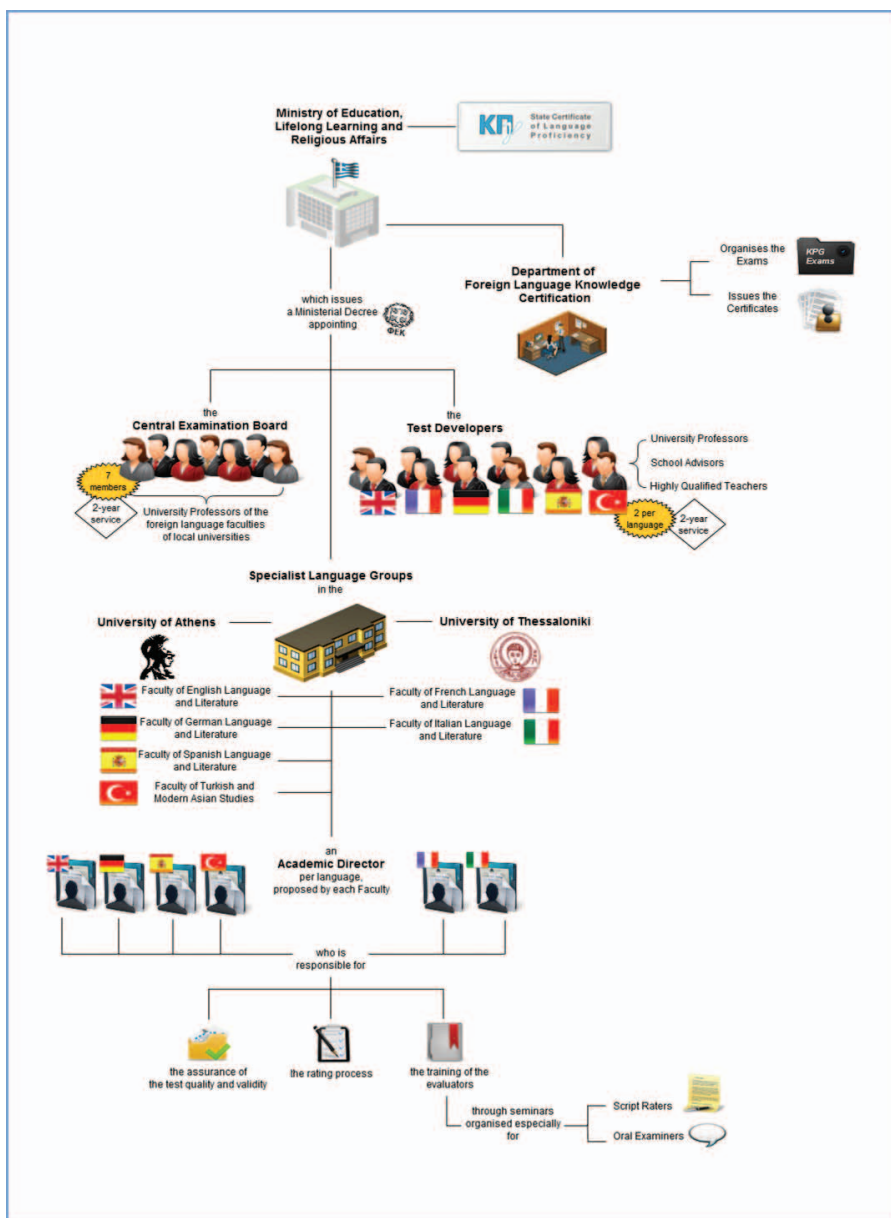
Table 14: C1+C2 level exam task types

In order to avoid an excessively inflexible standardization of the exam format, these specifications allow designers to produce an exam that slightly varies from period to period. In other words, designers may slightly vary activities each time, or place them in a different position in the test paper. However, only a maximum of 15% of such changes is permitted, just as in all KPG exams.

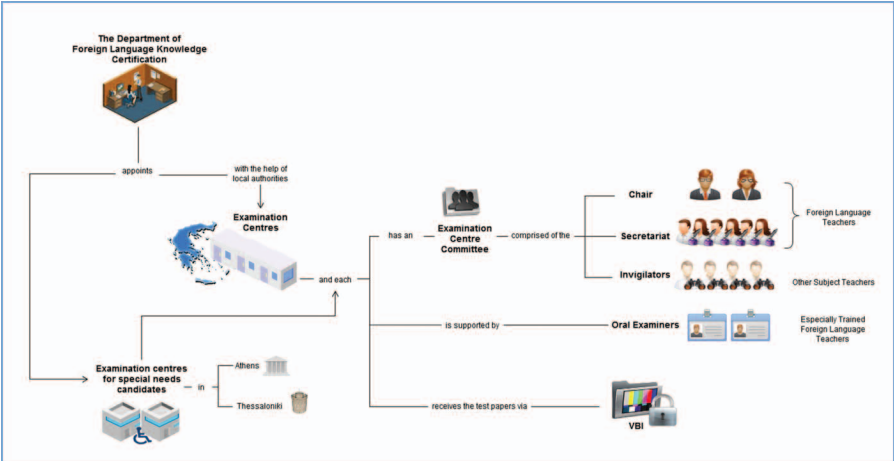
The Common KPG Exam specifications do not allow substantial changes in the modules unless such changes have been publicly announced at least one year in advance. However, on the basis of two parameters, a) the text type-stimulus and b) the assessed use of the language, one may develop a number of variations for every task type. Such variations are allowed and should be expected.

Appendix 1: The KPG organogramme

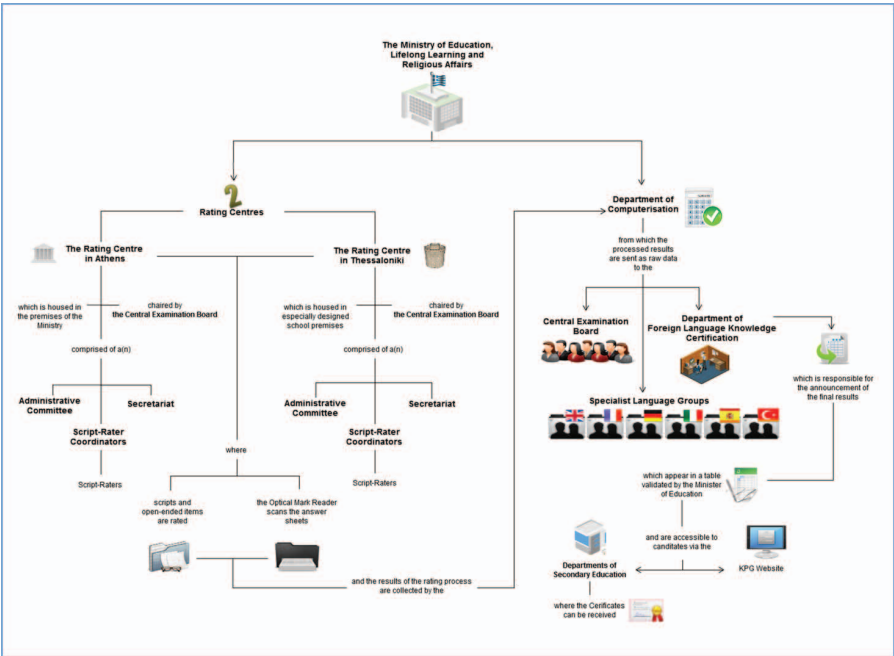
Appendix 1a: The institutions engaged in the KPG exam battery



Appendix 1b: The exam administration scheme



Appendix 1c: The rating and scoring process



Internal quality assessment and evaluation

Below are the measures taken to evaluate and ensure the quality of:

- 1) **Test development procedures and the test papers themselves**
- 2) **Exam administration**
- 3) **Evaluating and scoring papers**

The table also gives an account of the ways the KPG is developing and the research being carried out in connection with the exams.

I PRE EXAM ADMINISTRATION

1. ENSURING QUALITY OF THE EXAM SYSTEM AND THE EXAMS

- 1.1 Rules and regulations
- 1.2 Theories of language on which the exams are based
- 1.3 Theory of testing underlying the exam suite
- 1.4 Specifications
- 1.5 Detailed item writer guidelines
- 1.6 Test development team roles

2. ENSURING QUALITY AND ASSESSING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE TEST PAPERS/TASKS

- 2.1 Testing reading comprehension and language awareness
 - 2.1.1 Test development procedure
 - a) Initial version of test paper: screening by inspector(s) for approval
 - b) Test trial run by test development team
 - c) Test revised
 - d) Revised test paper piloting
 - e) Test re-revised to final version
 - 2.1.2 Evaluation prior to exam administration
 - a) Evaluation of test paper by (3) team experts
 - b) Approval of test paper by the Central Examination Board

- 2.1.3 Evaluation post exam administration
 - a) Classical item analysis & statistical analysis of test paper scores
 - b) Test takers' feedback
- 2.2 Testing listening comprehension
 - 2.2.1 Test development procedure
 - a) Initial version of test paper: screening by inspector(s) for approval
 - b) Quality check for audio files (sampling, noise, audio levels)
 - c) Test trial run by test development team
 - d) Evaluation of speakers' rhythm, tone, pitch
 - e) Test revised
 - f) Revised test paper piloting
 - g) Check for time allotted between recordings
 - h) Test re-revised to final version
 - 2.2.2 Evaluation prior to exam administration
 - a) Evaluation of test paper by (3) team experts
 - b) Approval of test paper by the Central Examination Board
 - 2.2.3 Evaluation post exam administration
 - a) Classical item analysis & statistical analysis of test paper scores
 - b) Test takers' feedback
- 2.3 Testing writing and written mediation
 - 2.3.1 Test development procedure
 - a) Initial version of test paper: screening by inspector(s) for approval
 - b) Test trial run by test development team
 - c) Test revised
 - d) Revised test paper piloting
 - e) Test re-revised to final version
 - 2.3.2 Evaluation prior to exam administration
 - a) Evaluation of test paper by (3) team experts

- b) Approval of test paper by the Central Examination Board
- 2.3.3 Evaluation post exam administration
 - a) Test development team's evaluation on the basis of actual scripts
 - b) Test takers' feedback
 - c) Script rater's feedback
 - d) Statistical analysis of test paper scores
- 2.4 Testing oral production and oral mediation
 - 2.4.1 Test development procedure
 - a) Initial version of test paper: screening by inspector(s) for approval
 - b) Test trial run by test development team
 - c) Test revised
 - d) Revised test paper piloting
 - e) Test re-revised to final version
 - 2.4.2 Evaluation prior to exam administration
 - a) Evaluation of test paper by (3) team experts
 - b) Approval of test paper by the Central Examination Board
 - 2.4.3 Evaluation post exam administration
 - a) Examiner's feedback
 - b) Observer's feedback
 - c) Statistical analysis of test paper scores

II ADMINISTERING THE EXAM

3. Preparing for the administration

- 3.1 Exam centres and examination committees
- 3.2 Exam centres for candidates with special learning difficulties and disability
- 3.3 Securing confidentiality
- 3.4 Dissemination of the exams: The VBI system
- 3.5 The role of the examination board
- 3.6 Support staff and their role

4. MONITORING EXAM ADMINISTRATION

- 4.1 The observation project
- 4.2 Monitoring the speaking test

5. EVALUATING-RATING THE PAPERS

- 5.1 Gathering and securing the exam papers
- 5.2 Evaluating and scoring the objective tests papers: Reading & Listening Comprehension
 - 5.2.1 Evaluating choice items: The use of the OMR
 - 5.2.2 Evaluating open ended responses: Sample paper expert evaluation
- 5.3 Evaluating and scoring the open-ended tests papers: Writing & Speaking
- 5.4 'Pilot' scoring
- 5.5 The rater booklet
- 5.6 Monitoring the writing paper evaluation: & Intra-rater reliability (scoring consistency)
- 5.7 Post evaluation: Inter-rater reliability (agreement)

6. THE SCRIPT RATING EVALUATION CENTRE

- 6.1 Roles and responsibilities
- 6.2 Rules and regulations

7. TRAINING EXAMINERS AND SCRIPT RATERS

- 7.1 Training the examiners: 3 phases
- 7.2 Evaluating the script raters: 3 phases

III

POST ADMINISTRATION

8. A-posteriori evaluation: validity and reliability

- 8.1 Comparing content and form features from level to level
- 8.2 Internal evaluation of exam administration:
 - 8.2.1 Responses from the invigilators
 - 8.2.2 Responses from the Script Rating Centre committee
 - 8.2.3 Responses from script raters
- 8.3 Quantitative analysis of results on the B level integrated test

- 8.4 Benchmarking B level results
- 8.5 Face validity of the KPG exams
- 8.6 Comparing test taker's scores on different test papers
- 8.7 Investigating difficulty (which was the most difficult test paper of each exam)
- 8.8 Relating test takers' scores on each test paper to the final result
- 8.9 Using the Rasch model (alongside classical item analysis) to investigate test paper validity

9. TEAM RESEARCH

- 9.1 Task Analysis project
- 9.2 Task Typology project
- 9.3 Responses from the invigilators
- 9.4 Responses from the Script Rating Centre committee on quality of the administration
- 9.5 Responses from script raters
- 9.6 Cost effectiveness of exam administration
- 9.7 Candidates: their views on exam difficulty
- 9.8 Examiner attitudes toward the speaking test and conduct during the test
- 9.9 Ways that script evaluators use evaluation criteria
- 9.10 Characteristics of scripts which have caused problems in inter-rater reliability.

10. INDIVIDUAL [RESEARCH] PROJECTS

Note: For many of the issues below papers have been published in Greek and international journals and conference proceedings

- 10.1 The "Code of Ethics" of the KPG exams
- 10.2 Ideological and political considerations related to the exams
- 10.3 A multifaceted approach to investigating reading text difficulty: The effect of text and reader variables
- 10.4 Investigating the effect of the examiner's intervention on the candidate's output
- 10.5 The world representations in reading comprehension texts of three exam batteries: A critical discourse analysis
- 10.6 Investigating the validity of speaking tasks

- 10.7 Writing task difficulty: Investigating genre-based read-to-write tasks
- 10.8 Mediation strategies: level requirements
- 10.9 Listening task difficulty
- 10.10 Investigating coherence and cohesion in KPG candidates' scripts
- 10.11 Literacy requirements in the KPG reading and listening comprehension tasks

11. FUTURE RESEARCH

- 11.1 The Greek foreign language learner profile
- 11.2 Development of an automatic script scoring system

12. DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE KPG EXAMS

- 12.1 Developing an e-test platform
- 12.2 Developing an e-platform for blended training

Assessment criteria for speaking performance in the KPG exams

Below are the assessment criteria for oral production for levels A1 to C2 in the KPG exam. The decision to use a common assessment grid and common assessment criteria across all levels was made in order to ensure consistency and reliability in the marking process and to strengthen the validity of the assessment grid. Candidates' oral production across all levels is assessed according to the 9 criteria, as shown below. Each criterion is assessed in relation to expected language performance of the level being examined. For each criterion candidates are marked on a scale of 1 to 5 where

- 1 = unsatisfactory
- 2 = nearly unsatisfactory
- 3 = moderately satisfactory
- 4 = satisfactory
- 5 = fully satisfactory

The numbers above are not scores; they constitute factors of a different weight each. Scoring is automatically estimated as the computer “reads” the Evaluation Form.

1 st Assessor	Assessment criteria	2 nd Assessor
TASK COMPLETION		
ACTIVITY 1		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVITY 2		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVITY 3		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

OVERALL LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE		
PRONUNCIATION AND INTONATION		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate pronounce clearly, stress individual words correctly and use appropriate intonation when forming sentences?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
LEXICAL RANGE AND APPROPRIACY OF LINGUISTIC CHOICES		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate use a sufficient range of vocabulary, appropriate for the situation as determined by the question/task?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate use the language accurately?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
FLUENCY		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate produce language with spontaneity and with relative ease?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
USE OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate use strategies (clarification requests, use of synonyms, paraphrase etc) to overcome gaps in communication and facilitate the flow of conversation?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
COHESION AND COHERENCE		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Are the candidate's ideas logically ordered and sentences appropriately linked?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Assessment criteria for writing performance in the KPG exams

Below are the assessment criteria for written production for levels A1 to C2.

1 st Assessor	Assessment criteria	2 nd Assessor
TASK COMPLETION		
ACTIVITY 1		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVITY 2		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVITY 3		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVITY 4		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	To what extent has the candidate responded successfully to the task requirements?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE		
SPELLING AND PUNCTUATION		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate spell words and punctuate sentences correctly?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
VOCABULARY RANGE		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Does the candidate use a sufficient range of vocabulary appropriate for the situation as determined by the task?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ACCURACY		
1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Has the candidate used an adequate range of grammatical structures correctly in order to perform the task set?	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

APPROPRIACY		
<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>	Are the linguistic choices made in the text appropriate for the situation as determined by the task?	<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>
TEXT ORGANIZATION		
<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>	Does the text produced by the candidate display the characteristics and follow the conventions of the text type as determined by the task?	<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>
COHESION AND COHERENCE		
<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>	Are ideas clearly and appropriately organized and paragraphs/sentences appropriately and correctly linked?	<div>1 2 3 4 5</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/><input type="checkbox"/></div>

