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# **MODERN HEBREW**

Unit 1 Reading and Writing  
Report on the Examination

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2675  
June 2016

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Version: 1.0

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## General comments

All students completed the paper within the time allowed. Most were clearly at ease with the level of challenge of the exam. There were a high proportion of outstanding examples of a very high standard of response. In most cases these were clearly the work of native speakers. However, this year it appears that there were a number of native speakers who were not prepared for the requirements of the exam, which has resulted in poor results in some cases. Teachers are reminded that a good knowledge of Modern Hebrew alone does not guarantee success in the exam. There were a small percentage of very poor papers.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Section 1 – Short Response to Passages

Almost all students scored well in this section.

#### Part (a) and (b)

Multiple-choice questions. This year it seems that students found the reading comprehension component very accessible. The great majority of students scored full marks in Part 1 (a). A similar percentage of students scored 5 out of 6 marks in Part 1 (b). As always, teachers should remember that this part of the exam can vary from year to year and that students should be exposed to a whole array of language exercises. Teachers are advised to instruct students as to how to tackle the various types of exercises. None of the questions proved awkward or ambiguous.

#### Part (c)

This part demonstrated that the great majority of students understood the passage given without any difficulty. This year, even more so than in the last 2-3 years, the vast majority of answers were copied from the text. This included copying only partial sentences, stopping at the wrong places, or giving unnecessary information. Fewer students wrote the answers in their own words. Teachers are encouraged to instruct students to give full but relevant answers. Teachers should also encourage students to ensure they read both the text and the questions carefully. This will avoid incorrect assumptions and, in turn, giving incorrect responses. Out of 30 marks, 20 were awarded for 'Response to Written language' (AO2) and the remaining 10 were awarded for 'Grammar and Structure' (AO3). Teachers need to remind students that it is almost impossible to award AO3 marks to students who just copy from the text. Those who used their own words (wholly or partially) were awarded marks for their efforts. This year, some students answered questions using the wrong information from the text (for example, answering Question 6 with information that was correct for Question 9). Teachers are advised to remind students that the questions appear in the same order that the information appears in the text. They also need to continually impress upon students how important it is to read the questions very carefully.

### Section 2 – Translation into English

This year a number of students found some parts of this section challenging. Although most students were familiar with the majority of the vocabulary, at times they were thrown by the word *tikshoret* which has more than one meaning/nuance. The translation of the beginning of the text was tackled very well, however many students chose to translate this word as *communication*, rather than *media*, which caused problems when they translated the rest of the passage. This particular word appears in the A-level specification as one of the topics to be studied and is also a word that appears on the vocabulary list for GCSE. This confusion could have been easily avoided had students read the passage first from beginning to end, rather than starting to translate it

straightaway. Reading through their own work would have also helped them to realise that the translation of some sentences did not make sense. Teachers should encourage their students to always read the passage in full before embarking on the translation task. The benefits of doing this can be huge. Teachers should encourage students to consider the different possibilities within the sentence when making their choices. Some students tried to paraphrase, rather than produce an accurate translation. Here, students were rewarded in cases where the translation did not deviate very much from the general sense of the passage. There were a small number of students who were unable to understand the passage well enough to give a coherent translation. There were also a number of outstanding translations.

### **Section 3 – Response to Stimulus**

This year it appears that the content of the stimulus passage did not capture the imagination of the students, even though the topic does impact upon the lives of the great majority of students. Many students produced a narrow range of rather simple arguments for and against in both parts of the task. In some cases this affected the marks awarded for 'Response to Written Language' (AO2). When practising essay writing, teachers need to continue to encourage their students to raise several different aspects which are relevant to the stimulus, so that the end result is rounded and multifaceted. At the same time students need to remember that personal reaction is also a great contributor to success in this part of the examination.

In many cases, there was a basic lack of knowledge of the most fundamental grammar and structures of the language.

There were a number of students who wrote much more than the required number of words. There were only two students who failed to write the minimum number of words required.

Teachers are advised to emphasise to their students that longer answers are not necessarily awarded more marks. Teachers are also urged to remind students to leave some time to thoroughly check the accuracy of the language in their essays.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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

### **Converting Marks into UMS marks**

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

[UMS conversion calculator](#)