

# How to approach the HSC Continuers

## **Korean Continuers** **How to approach the exam** **Advice - speaking**

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### **About the exam**

The oral examination is worth 25 marks.

The oral exam is designed to assess your knowledge and skill in using spoken Korean.

Section 1, Conversation will take approximately seven minutes and Section 2, Discussion on in-depth study approximately eight minutes.

Section 1 will consist of a general conversation in Korean between yourself and an examiner about your personal world, e.g. your life, family and friends, school, interests and aspirations for the future. The examiner will not be your own teacher.

In Section 2, you will indicate to the examiner the subject of the in-depth study chosen for Discussion. The in-depth study may be selected from any of the sub-topics suggested for study or may range across the prescribed themes and topics.

You may support the Conversation and Discussion with objects, such as photographs, diagrams and maps.

For most students the oral exam will be conducted face to face with an examiner. Under special circumstances, for example for students in isolated areas, the oral exam may be conducted by telephone.

The oral exam will be recorded on a tape recorder.

You may not use dictionaries in this section.

### **When is it held?**

The oral exams are held earlier than the written HSC exams. The Board of Studies sends out a timetable to all schools and about two weeks before the exam date you will be notified of the venue for your exam. If you have not received your exam details one week before the exam date, contact the Board of Studies immediately.

Take your advice letter to the examination centre. It will help with the registration procedure.

### **Preparing for the exam**

The best way to prepare for the exam is to listen to and speak Korean as much as possible. Practise as much as you can with your teacher and, if possible, your fellow students and Korean-speaking friends.

Get into the habit of recording your conversations under exam conditions. By doing this you will become more confident speaking into a tape recorder.

Furthermore, when you replay the tape you will be able to see which aspects of your speaking skills require further attention, for example, intonation, sentence structure, variety of vocabulary etc.

Make sure you understand all the vocabulary for Section 2. It is not a good idea to memorise whole paragraphs without understanding the meaning.

Make a summary of key words and phrases for each syllabus topic and sub-topic in the syllabus. You can download the Korean Continuers syllabus from the Board of Studies website.

[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/pdf\\_doc/koreanc\\_syl.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/koreanc_syl.pdf)

Revise these lists regularly and try to incorporate some of the words and phrases into your responses. As a guide see the resources section for each topic.

Remember that you will need to be able to understand and respond to the questions asked by the examiner. Improve your listening skills by listening to as much Korean as possible. See [preparing for the listening and responding exam](#). Also, make sure you know the meaning of the following key question words and phrases:

언제  
누구와  
누가  
누구에게  
무슨  
몇  
어디로  
어디에서  
무엇  
뭘  
떨  
어떤  
어떻게

You should also be familiar with phrases that examiners may use to change topics.

For example:

다음 질문하겠어요.

.....에 대해 얘기 할까요?

자, 다음으로 넘어 갑시다.

### **At the exam centre**

You may bring refreshments including a bottle of water and study materials to the examination centre, however, nothing may be taken into the actual examination room. You should be prepared to wait. Some students may have to wait several hours.

### **In the exam**

The speaking skills exam is your chance to display your full range of vocabulary and knowledge of Korean language structures. You need to be able to adapt this knowledge to different situations.

There will be only one examiner in the exam room with you. A supervisor may be present as well but will not be involved in the exam.

During the exam, the examiner will not be marking you. Your recorded conversation will be marked at a later date by a team of markers.

You may not use a dictionary or refer to written notes in the speaking exam.

As you are speaking to a person in authority it is best to respond in fairly formal Korean. Refer to yourself as 저 (not 나). Call the examiner 선생님.

The questions asked by the examiner will focus on the first theme - The Individual from the syllabus. However, if relevant to the questions asked by the examiner, you may choose to draw on knowledge from topics in the other themes. For a list of the themes and topics in the Korean Continuers syllabus, go to the Board of Studies website.

[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/pdf\\_doc/koreanc\\_syl.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/koreanc_syl.pdf)

The number of questions asked is not fixed. If you are able to expand and elaborate your responses, fewer questions will be asked. You can also address some questions to the examiner.

Speak confidently, clearly and at a steady pace.

Try to sound convincing by using appropriate intonation, emphasis and correct pronunciation. There is no need to panic if you do not understand what the examiner is saying. If you let the examiner know that you do not understand, s/he will repeat or rephrase the question for you. If you are still having difficulty the examiner will move onto another topic.

If you do not understand you can say:

다시 말씀해 주세요.  
잘 모르겠어요.

If the examiner is speaking too fast, you can say:

천천히 해 주세요.

Don't worry if you make a mistake. You can say 미안합니다 then correct yourself.

Answer the question directly first to show that you understand it, then expand your response.

Do not learn prepared answers by heart and recite them, regardless of the question of the examiner, otherwise, your response will sound unnatural and forced.

You do not need to tell the truth about your personal world. However, instead of saying 아니오 to any questions, it would be better for you to make up some answers and most importantly expand your answers.

### **What the markers are looking for**

- Understanding of the questions asked by the examiner.
- Ability to respond and use a range of strategies to maintain conversation.
- Ability to respond to questions and sustain conversation in a relevant way.
- Fluency: ability to maintain a good language flow. Try to maintain a consistent pace without pausing for too long. Inaccuracies and mispronunciation may also affect fluency.
- Accuracy of language e.g. correct affixation and word order.
- Ability to use an appropriate level of language for context, purpose and audience.
- Accuracy of pronunciation and intonation.
- Range and variety of vocabulary and language structures.
- Ability to structure, sequence and (where necessary) develop ideas and opinions.
- Sociocultural knowledge and appropriateness.

# Advice - listening and responding

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## About the exam

The listening and responding section of the exam is worth 30 marks. Part A, 20 marks and Part B 10 marks.

The listening exam is presented on cassette. It is the first part of the written exam and is designed to assess your knowledge and skill in analysing information from spoken texts.

You will hear between five to seven spoken texts in Korean covering a number of text types e.g. advertisement, announcement, dialogue, message, news item. The texts will be related to the themes and topics prescribed in the syllabus. You can download the Korean Continuers syllabus from the Board of Studies website:  
[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/pdf\\_doc/koreanc\\_syl.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/koreanc_syl.pdf)

Some texts will be between 35 and 45 seconds in length, and others may be longer; that is, one reading of each text will be approximately 90-120 seconds. You will hear each text twice. There will be a pause between the first and second readings, during which you may make notes. You will be provided time at the end of the second reading to complete your responses.

In your answers you will be expected to demonstrate understanding of general and specific information from spoken texts in Korean. You may be required to identify information related to the context, purpose and audience of the text, that is, what the text is about, what it is for, and who it is aimed at.

The questions will be in English and you will be expected to respond to a variety of question types such as completing a table, chart, list, form, multiple-choice, as well as open-ended questions. You will answer in English or Korean, as specified by the question.

You may use dictionaries in this section of the exam. However, be aware that the pauses provided between the first and second readings and between items are brief. Furthermore, the cassette may not be stopped during the exam.

## Preparing for the exam

The best way to prepare for the exam is to practise. Take every opportunity to listen to Korean in a variety of contexts.

You can listen to cassettes which accompany course books, videos, past exam cassettes, Korean radio and SBS Korean news.

While in the exam you will hear each item twice, when practising you may replay a section if you don't understand. Note down new words which are repeated. If you don't know the meaning, look them up in the dictionary.

Practise using your dictionary so that you can look up words quickly. You are not allowed to use an electronic dictionary.

Students often have difficulty understanding words which have been borrowed from English. If you hear a word you don't recognise, write it down and see if it resembles an English word. e.g., homestay - 홈스테이

Listen actively. Get into the habit of listening for both general and specific information. Learn to recognise the context in which certain language is used and get

the main idea before concentrating on details.

Practise making notes while listening.

Revise your lists of key words and phrases for each topic. Don't forget basics from earlier years. Make sure you can recognise the Korean word when it's spoken.

Students who score the highest marks in this section are those who are well prepared in terms of vocabulary recognition and exam technique. Tips on exam technique are provided below.

### **In the exam**

- Read the question for each item before the text is spoken on the tape. You can underline key words. Try to predict what might be said.
- During the first reading try to understand the overall meaning.
- Take notes in either Korean or English in the space provided on the exam paper.
- During the second reading try to catch any details you missed the first time. Jot down any words you don't know and need to understand to answer a question.
- In the time provided after the second reading, process all the information and write your answer clearly. Include all relevant details required to answer the question asked. Make sure that what you write does not contradict anything you have written earlier. Check that your answer makes sense and avoid ambiguity in your answers.
- For each question, lines will be provided for you to write your answer. This will give you an idea about how much information you need to give in your answer.
- If you have any spare time you can go back to an earlier question, for example, to look up essential, unknown words in the dictionary. However, don't dwell on it or you may miss the beginning of the next item.
- Use the dictionary to your advantage. Only look up words that are vital to your understanding of the passage, and will help you answer a question.
- At the end of the exam you can fill in any missing details and make any changes. Don't leave out any questions. You cannot be given marks for blank spaces.
- Make sure that you write legibly. If you need to make changes, cross out. Correction fluid takes too long to dry, it is a good idea not to use it.
- Write your answers in blue or black pen. Do not use a pencil.
- If the question ask you to write your answers in Korean, there will be no marks for writing the answer in English. Remember this!

### **What the markers are looking for**

Markers will use the listening and responding exam to assess how well you analyse, process and respond to spoken Korean.

You will be expected to:

- identify general information
- identify main points
- identify specific details
- accurately summarise, interpret and evaluate the information
- provide the appropriate information from the text.

## **Advice - reading and responding**

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## About the exam

The reading and responding section of the exam is worth 30 marks. Part A is 20 marks and Part B, 10 marks.

It is the second part of the written exam and is designed to assess your knowledge and skill in analysing information from written texts and in analysing and exchanging information in response to a text. The texts will be related to the themes and topics prescribed in the syllabus. You can download the Korean Continuers syllabus from the Board of Studies website:

[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/pdf\\_doc/koreanc\\_syl.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/koreanc_syl.pdf)

You may use dictionaries in this section of the exam.

This section has two parts, Part A and Part B.

### Part A

Part A is worth 20 marks.

You will be required to read two texts in Korean with a combined word count of 400-500 words.

You will be required to demonstrate understanding of written texts. You may have to extract, summarise and/or evaluate information from texts.

Questions and answers will be in English.

### Part B

Part B is worth 10 marks.

You will read a text in Korean of about 150 words. It could be in the form of an email, fax, letter, postcard, message, advertisement, notice.

You will be expected to write about 150-200 words in Korean in response to the text.

You will be required to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the written text provided in the exam paper
- exchange information by responding in Korean to questions, statements, comments and/or other specific items in the text.

You will be required to produce one of the following text types: description, diary entry, email, fax, informal letter, message, note, narrative account, personal profile, postcard, recount, report, script of a speech/talk.

The instructions for the task will be in English.

## Preparing for the exam

The best way to prepare for this section is to read a wide range of text types from a number of different sources such as Korean newspapers, magazines, brochures, advertisements, packaging etc.

To prepare for Part A you can work through past HSC Korean exam papers. Past exam papers can be downloaded from the Board of Studies website:  
[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc\\_exams/](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/hsc_exams/)

To prepare for Part B you can respond to letters, emails, advertisements, articles etc.

The texts in the exam will be related to the topics prescribed in the syllabus so make sure you are familiar with topic-specific vocabulary.

For both sections, being able to use the dictionary will be very useful. Practise looking up words in the dictionary. The faster, the better. Remember, if you look up a word in the English-Korean dictionary make sure you crosscheck it in the Korean-

English dictionary.

## **In the exam**

### **Part A**

- Take note of any heading and illustrations accompanying the text. These often help in gaining an overall sense of the text.
- Read the questions before reading the text. The questions will help you focus on the most relevant information.
- Read the text more than once.
  - The first time you read the text, try to gain a general idea of the content.
  - When you read the text for the second time, mark the section of the text from where you think the answers come.
- Answer the questions fully and provide all relevant information.
- No two questions should require the same information.
- Make sure your writing is legible and that your answers make sense.
- Make sure that your answers are relevant to the questions asked. Underlining key words in the questions may help you do this. Commonly occurring words in questions include:
  - analyse
  - comment on
  - compare
  - contrast
  - describe
  - explain
  - give examples
  - how
  - what
  - who
  - why
- The mark allocation and the number of lines provided will give you an idea about how much information you need to give in your answer.
- Try to read for overall understanding before consulting a dictionary. If you have any spare time look up only essential, unknown words in the dictionary.

### **Part B**

- To help ensure you address all of the comments, questions, statements and other specific items provided in the text, underline each one.
- Write a brief plan to help organise your ideas.
- Keep it relevant. Remember, you are being assessed on how well you respond to the issues presented in the text.
- Make sure the register and level of language is appropriate.
- Use text type conventions. For example, a letter will have a greeting, body and signing off.
- If you look up a word in the English-Korean dictionary make sure you crosscheck it in the Korean-English dictionary and vice versa.
- Where possible keep to words, phrases and expressions you have gone over with your teacher. In particular, learn Korean expressions. This will help you to not translate directly from English.
- Try to keep within the word limit (150-200 words). If you greatly exceed the suggested length you risk the chance of making more mistakes and/or becoming repetitive. You will also use time that could be spent on another section of the paper.
- The best responses are creative and show appropriate use of authentic language.
- Sometimes shorter sentences work better than long and complicated ones.

## **What the markers are looking for**

**In Part A** you will be assessed on your ability to understand written Korean.

You will be expected to:

- identify and convey main points
- identify and convey supporting points
- identify and convey specific details

- accurately summarise, interpret and evaluate the information
- provide appropriate information from the text.

**In Part B** you will be assessed on your ability to exchange information in response to questions, statements, comments etc. provided in the text.

You will be required to:

- demonstrate general understanding of and ability to identify specific detail in the text
- analyse and respond to information in the text
- provide relevant information in your response
- develop and organise your ideas logically
- demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, register and text type.
- use the required ending form consistently. e.g., ~요. ~니다. ~습니다. etc.

## Advice - writing

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### About the exam

The writing in Korean section of the exam is worth 15 marks.

It is the third and final part of the written exam and is designed to assess your ability to express ideas and/or present information and/or opinions through the production of original written texts in Korean.

You will be required to respond to ONE task only.  
There will be a choice of tasks to choose from.

The tasks will be related to the themes and topics prescribed in the syllabus. You can download the Korean Continuers syllabus from the Board of Studies website:  
[http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc/pdf\\_doc/koreanc\\_syl.pdf](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/koreanc_syl.pdf)

Tasks will have different purposes, audiences and contexts.  
The tasks will require you to produce different text types. The possible text types include: description, diary entry, email, fax, informal letter, message, note, narrative account, personal profile, postcard, recount, report, script of a speech/talk.

You are required to write 200-250 words in Korean.

The instructions will be in English.  
You may use dictionaries in this section of the exam.

### Preparing for the exam

To prepare for this section of the exam you should:

#### **Read widely in Korean**

Note down interesting phrases, new vocabulary and facts that you will later be able to incorporate into your writing. As you read a wide range of texts and text types you will notice the different features of these text types. Make yourself familiar with the features that distinguish a text type.

#### **Learn from your mistakes**

Carefully go over work handed back by your teacher. If you don't understand why something has been marked out, ask your teacher. Keep all your work in a folder

and read over earlier pieces to see how much progress you have made. Check that you are not still making the same mistakes.

### **Practise regularly**

Write in Korean as much as you can. Writing a diary entry is good practice. Correspond with a Korean-speaking friend. Get into the habit of always planning your work and putting effort into it.

Practise writing under exam conditions by giving yourself a time limit in which to complete a task. As a guide, allocate 30 minutes per task.

### **Dictionary skills**

Practise being selective in your use of the dictionary. It's always better to use a word or phrase which you are familiar with rather than looking up a new one.

Practise using your dictionary so that, if you need to, you can look up words quickly. Remember, if you look up a word in the English-Korean dictionary make sure you crosscheck it in the Korean-English dictionary and vice versa.

### **In the exam**

- Read the questions carefully and select the one(s) for which you are best prepared.
- Jot down a rough plan of your response. This will help give your writing direction and structure.
- Try to include a variety of appropriate and relevant phrases. Avoid regurgitating irrelevant phrases that you have memorised and intend to use, regardless of the question.
- Avoid copying sections from the reading and responding section of the paper.
- Try to make your language as accurate and authentic as possible. Stick to phrases that you have gone over with your teacher. This will help prevent word for word translation from English.
- Make your response interesting. However, avoid bizarre or excessively humorous situations. Humour can be very difficult to translate into another language and often falls flat.
- Make your cultural references authentic. For example, you would like to visit Namdaemun Market if you were holidaying in Seoul.
- If you look up a word in the English-Korean dictionary make sure you crosscheck it in the Korean-English dictionary and vice versa. However, where possible keep to words, phrases and expressions with which you are familiar.
- Try to keep within the word limit (200-250 words). If you greatly exceed the suggested length you risk the chance of making more mistakes and/or becoming repetitive. You will also use time that could be devoted to another section of the paper.
- Check through your answer at the end. Ensure that you have been consistent with register and that your language is appropriate for the context, purpose and audience. Have you used correct word order? Could you use synonyms to avoid repetition? Have you used an appropriate level of language?

### **What the markers are looking for**

- Content: relevant to task
- Accuracy: knowledge and correct use of grammar and language structures
- Range of appropriate vocabulary related to the task or topic
- Range of grammatical structures
- Ability to follow conventions of text type
- Ability to structure and sequence ideas logically and coherently
- Level of language appropriate to content, purpose and audience
- Fluency: your answer should flow naturally
- Authenticity: your writing should read like Korean, not a direct translation from English.