

Leaving Certificate Russian - Oral examination

There are **3 sections** to the oral examination, in the following order:

Section 1: General Conversation: narrative (4-5 minutes) (40 marks)

Section 2: General Conversation: discursive (4-5 minutes) (30 marks)

Section 3: One of the options below: (4-5 minutes) (30 marks)

(a) Project or (b) Picture Sequence

Section 1

General Conversation: narrative

In this section candidates are asked to talk about themselves and their lives. Candidates will be asked at least 7 questions relating to any/all of the topics listed below. All efforts will be made to ensure the conversation develops as naturally as possible. In general, the examiner should keep questions short and clear, candidates should be advised to respond in as full and detailed a manner as possible.

The criteria for assessment include:

1. Understanding of the questions
2. Pronunciation and intonation
3. Effectiveness of communication
4. Range of vocabulary
5. Linguistic accuracy and appropriacy
6. Fluency
7. Ability to sustain/manage the conversation (asking for repetition and/or clarification, expressing incomprehension, using avoidance strategies, confirming that something has been understood,...)
8. Complexity of responses

Topics:

1. Personal information and family details: Talking about where someone is from, details of their family.
2. Discussing leisure pursuits: Talking about free time, interests and activities (e.g. television, film, video, music, books, photography, sport), likes and dislikes.
3. Talking about learning and school: Talking about subjects studied, timetable, homework, extra-curricular activities, likes, dislikes and preferences.
4. Discussing family home: Describing one's home, garden, neighbourhood, and possessions.
5. Describing the general nature of the region or locality in which someone lives: (its defining characteristics, its situation relative to other places, the ethnic origins of its population, public amenities and public transport)
6. Holidays and travel: Talking about someone's holiday plans. Giving an account of holidays and visits.
7. Making plans and discussing future action: Describing one's career and/or further study plans/hopes.

Section 2

General Conversation: discursive

In this section candidates are asked to talk about an aspect of Russian life or culture that interests them. Candidates are also given the option to discuss a piece of literature (novel, short story, poem, play or extracts from these) or a film in Russian. Through a process of

negotiation with the candidate, the examiner will focus on one of the 5 topics listed below. Candidates will be asked at least 7 questions relating to that topic. All efforts will be made to ensure the conversation develops as naturally as possible. In general, the examiner should keep questions short and clear, candidates should be advised to respond in as full and detailed a manner as possible.

The criteria for assessment include:

1. Understanding of the questions
2. Effectiveness of communication
3. Range of vocabulary
4. Linguistic accuracy and appropriacy
5. Cultural knowledge
6. Ability to engage in discussion (expressing something as an opinion; stating that something is true or untrue; agreeing/disagreeing; ordering points in a discussion)

Cultural awareness topics:

1. **Everyday life in Ireland and Russia.** Describing the similarities and contrasts between normal everyday life in Ireland and normal everyday life in one of the communities associated with the target language, with particular reference to, for example: where people live; how people are educated; what people work at and how much people earn in various jobs; what kinds of transport facilities, amenities, shops and public services people expect to have provided in their cities, towns and villages.
2. **Leisure:** Comparing Irish festivals, customs and traditions with those in Russia. Comparing holidays at home and abroad (at a dacha, in the country, at a resort). How much holiday time people have, how they use it and how people spend their leisure hours generally.

3. Aspects of Russian culture: Russian history. Russian literature, art, cinema, TV. Russian popular/youth culture

4. Aspects of contemporary Russian life: a society in transition: the generation gap; sexual equality; health and lifestyle; changing perspectives regarding human relationships (marriage, the family, etc.); the challenges facing a multi-cultural state (racial equality, ethnic minorities)

5. The place of Russia on the world stage: Russia and Ireland/Europe/ the West. Russia and Central Asia/the Far East.

Section 3

Candidates are asked after Section Two, which of the two options, Project or Picture Sequence, they wish to avail of.

In this section the criteria for assessment include:

1. Identifying and naming the key concepts
2. Coherence of presentation
3. Understanding of the questions
4. Effectiveness of communication

5. Cultural awareness
6. Ability to sustain/manage the conversation

Examining the PROJECT

Candidates should be advised to ensure they have their name on their project. They bring it with them to the examination room, hand it to the examiner, but may point or refer to parts of it during their presentation or discussion.

1. **First section of project (uninterrupted narration / presentation):**
The candidate is asked to speak without interruption for up to two minutes. If the narration is still not finished then, the examiner may intervene. If the narration is very short or if the candidate gets stuck, the examiner may use questions to help them through this section.
2. **Second section of project:** The examiner will ask 2-3 questions, and expect 4-5 lines of response. The questions will elicit the following:
(a) Clarification of an aspect/aspects of the content of project
(b) Explanation of the process of doing a project
3. **Third section (opinion on a related wider issue or theme):**
The examiner will invite the candidate to explore the general themes arising from the project. They will ask 2-3 questions, and expect 4-5 lines of response.

Examining the PICTURE SEQUENCE

The **five** picture sequence cards are be presented, picture side up, to the candidate. The candidate is permitted to choose a picture sequence.

Three tasks are required:

1. **Uninterrupted narration** of picture sequence - can be in present tense.
The candidate is asked to speak without interruption for up to two minutes. If the narration is still not finished then, the examiner may intervene. If the narration is very short or if the candidate gets stuck, the examiner may use **questions to help them** through this section.
2. **Explanation:** The examiner will ask the candidate to explain 2-3 aspects of the picture sequence which were not clear/not dealt with in the telling of the story.
3. Opinion on **related wider issue**. The examiner will invite the candidate to explore the general issues arising from the picture sequence. They will ask 2-3 questions, and expect 4-5 lines of response.

N.B. In the project or the picture sequence, only if answers are very short and do not elicit the desired bulk of response will the examiner ask more than 3 questions per part.