

**National Qualifications
Modern Languages
(French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish)**

**Assessment of Speaking
Intermediate 1
Intermediate 2
Higher
(Advanced Higher)**

The following categories, criteria and pegged marks must be used to assess candidates' performance in Speaking for courses at the above levels.

The table for Advanced Higher will be used by SQA's Visiting Examiners: it is provided here for information.

Intermediate 1

Task: A face to face conversation/simulation/role-play of approximately 2 minutes with the lecturer/teacher/foreign language assistant in which the candidate exchanges information making four or five statements and asking three or four questions plus conventional greetings and leave-takings. (as in Outcome 1 of any of the component units)

Performance Criteria

- uses forms of address appropriate to the context, including conventional greetings/leave-takings
- understands and responds to comments and requests for information.
- provides and requests relevant information clearly
- communicates effectively, using a limited range of structure and vocabulary, with sufficient accuracy appropriate to this level to ensure comprehension by a sympathetic speaker of the target language
- demonstrates accent and intonation comprehensible to a sympathetic speaker of the target language

The candidate's performance is described in terms of the following four main characteristics with subheadings:

Content

- appropriateness to Intermediate 1¹Level
- communication of information and questions
- ability to sustain performance

Accuracy

- grammatical accuracy commensurate with Intermediate 1¹
- accuracy of pronunciation and intonation

Language Resource

- command and variety of structure
- range of vocabulary
- complexity of language structure

Interaction

- understanding of what is said
- fluency of response
- willingness to offer information

The overall candidate's performance should be allocated to one of the following categories using the specified criteria. Only the appropriate pegged mark can be awarded. Marks awarded must be based on a common standard of assessment applied to all candidates from a centre and therefore all marks must be correlated by the teacher/lecturer responsible.

¹ As outlined in the list of Themes and Topics prescribed for Intermediate 1 and in the Productive Grammar Grid for this level

Intermediate 1 Speaking

Task: A face to face conversation/simulation/role-play of approximately 2 minutes

Categories	Criteria	Pegged marks
Very Good	Communicates fluently and accurately and recovers well when there is some hesitation. A good range of vocabulary and structures for Intermediate 1. Understands almost all of what is said. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be readily understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	30
Good	Communicates fairly fluently and accurately and generally recovers well where there is some hesitation. An appropriate range of vocabulary and structures for Intermediate 1. Understands almost all of what is said, although may require some clarification. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be readily understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	24
Satisfactory	Handles language appropriate to Intermediate 1 with sufficient grammatical accuracy and a reasonable range of vocabulary to ensure that communication is achieved. May speak with considerable hesitation, but makes some attempt to recover. Understands most of what is said clearly and slowly by a sympathetic speaker of the language. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	18
Unsatisfactory (Near Miss)	Difficulty in achieving communication because of limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or serious inaccuracies in language appropriate to Intermediate 1. May speak with considerable hesitation, but makes some attempt to recover. Has difficulty in understanding what is said, even with help. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language although some points may not be immediately clear.	12
Poor	Communication seriously impeded because of very limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or serious inaccuracies in language appropriate to Intermediate 1. Has difficulty in understanding what is said. Pronunciation and/or intonation may be such as would not be readily understood without clarification, even by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	6
Very Poor	No redeeming features.	0

Intermediate 2

Task: A presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate (1-2 minutes) **and** a follow-up discussion with a speaker of the target language (4-5 minutes) (as in Outcome 1 of *Language* unit).

Performance Criteria

- makes a presentation which has appropriate structure and content
- sustains conversation, even though prompting or repetition may be necessary
- employs appropriate language with sufficient clarity and accuracy to achieve communication with a sympathetic speaker of the target language
- uses vocabulary and sentence structure to allow some limited flexibility of expression

The candidate's performance is described in terms of the following four main characteristics with subheadings:

Content

- appropriateness to Intermediate 2²
- expression of ideas and opinions
- quality of structure of presentation
- ability to sustain performance in conversation

Accuracy

- grammatical accuracy commensurate with Intermediate 2²
- appropriateness of pronunciation and intonation

Language Resource

- command and variety of structure
- range of vocabulary
- complexity of language structure

Interaction

- understanding of what is said
- fluency of response
- willingness to offer information/comment

Candidates may not perform at a uniform level across all of the above characteristics.

Although the length of the Presentation should normally be 1-2 minutes, no automatic penalty is to be applied to performances which fall outwith this duration.

The overall candidate's performance should be allocated to one of the following categories using the specified criteria. Only the appropriate pegged mark can be awarded. Marks awarded must be based on a common standard of assessment applied to all candidates from a centre and therefore all marks must be correlated by the teacher/lecturer responsible.

² As outlined in the list of Themes and Topics prescribed for Intermediate 2 and in the Productive Grammar Grid for this level

Intermediate 2 Speaking

Task: A presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate (1-2 minutes) and a follow-up discussion with a speaker of the target language (4-5 minutes).

Categories	Criteria	Pegged marks	
		Presentation	Discussion
Very Good	Speaks fluently and without undue hesitation, and/or recovers well when there is some hesitation. A good range of vocabulary and structures for Intermediate 2. Understands almost all of what is said. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be readily understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	15	15
Good	May speak with some degree of hesitation, but generally recovers well. An appropriate range of vocabulary and structures for Intermediate 2. Understands most of what is said, although may require some clarification. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be generally understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	12	12
Satisfactory	Handles language appropriate to Intermediate 2 with a degree of grammatical accuracy sufficient to ensure that communication is achieved. May speak with a considerable degree of hesitation, but makes some attempt to recover. Understands most of what is said clearly and slowly by a sympathetic speaker of the language. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	9	9
Unsatisfactory (Near Miss)	Difficulty in achieving communication because of limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or serious inaccuracies in language appropriate to Intermediate 2. May speak with considerable degree of hesitation, but makes some attempt to recover. Has difficulty in understanding what is said, even with help. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language, although some points may not be immediately clear.	6	6
Poor	Communication seriously impeded because of limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or serious inaccuracies in language appropriate to Intermediate 2. Has difficulty in understanding what is said. Pronunciation and/or intonation may be such as would not be readily understood without clarification, even by a sympathetic speaker.	3	3
Very Poor	No redeeming features.	0	0

Note: A total mark of 15 out of 30 equates to a "Pass" for the unit, provided performance in neither component falls below the "Near Miss" category.

Higher

Task: A presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate (1½ - 2 minutes) **and** a follow-up discussion with a speaker of the target language (4½ - 6 minutes), developing from the original topic and theme and **continuing into at least one of the other prescribed themes** (as in Outcome 1 of the *Language* unit).

Performance Criteria

- makes a presentation which has appropriate structure and content
- sustains discussion, even though prompting or repetition may be necessary
- employs appropriate language with sufficient clarity and accuracy to achieve communication with a sympathetic speaker of the target language
- uses vocabulary and sentence structure to allow some flexibility of expression

The candidate's performance is described in terms of the following four main characteristics with subheadings:

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| Content | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• appropriateness to Higher³• expression of ideas and opinions• quality of structure of presentation• ability to sustain performance in discussion |
| Accuracy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• grammatical accuracy commensurate with Higher³• appropriateness of pronunciation and intonation |
| Language Resource | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• command and variety of structure• range of vocabulary• complexity of language structure |
| Interaction | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding of what is said• fluency of response• willingness to offer information/comment |

Candidates may not perform at a uniform level across all of the above characteristics.

Although the length of the Presentation should normally be 1½-2 minutes, no automatic penalty is to be applied to performances which fall outwith this duration.

The overall candidate's performance should be allocated to one of the following categories using the specified criteria. Only the appropriate pegged mark can be awarded. Marks awarded must be based on a common standard of assessment applied to all candidates from a centre and therefore all marks must be correlated by the teacher/lecturer responsible.

Higher Speaking

³ As outlined in the list of Themes and Topics prescribed for Higher and in the Productive Grammar Grid for this level.

Task: A presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate (1½ - 2 minutes) and a follow-up discussion with a speaker of the target language (4½ - 6 minutes), developing from the original topic and theme and continuing into at least one of the other prescribed themes.

Categories	Criteria	Pegged marks	
		Presentation	Discussion
Very Good	Confident handling of language with a high level of accuracy. Speaks fluently and without undue hesitation, or where there is some hesitation recovers well, and readily goes beyond minimal responses. Wide range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to Higher. Immediate and almost total understanding of almost everything said. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be readily understood by a speaker of the language.	10	15
Good	The language is mostly accurate, with a wide range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to this level. Speaks fluently and without undue hesitation, or where there is some hesitation recovers well, and generally goes beyond minimal responses. Understands almost everything said. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be generally understood by a speaker of the language.	8	12
Satisfactory	Completes task, demonstrating sufficient accuracy in a range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to this level, to convey meaning clearly, in spite of errors. May be hesitant and give only minimal correct responses or speak at greater length with less accuracy. Capable of coming to an understanding of all that is said. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	6	9
Unsatisfactory (Near Miss)	Difficulty in achieving communication because of limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or serious inaccuracies in language appropriate to Higher. Understands most of what is said clearly and slowly by a sympathetic speaker. May speak with a considerable degree of hesitation, but makes some attempt to recover. Pronunciation and intonation sufficient to be generally understood by a sympathetic speaker of the language.	4	6
Poor	Communication seriously impeded by inadequate vocabulary and structures and/or by gross errors in language appropriate to Higher. Frequently has difficulty in understanding what is said, even with help. There may be occasional other tongue interference. Pronunciation and intonation may be such as to require clarification, even from a sympathetic speaker of the language.	2	3
Poor	No redeeming features.	0	0

Note: A total mark of 12 out of 25 equates to a "Pass" for the unit, provided neither component falls below the "Near Miss" category.

Advanced Higher (for information)

Task: Discussion with a Visiting Examiner appointed by SQA sampling across both units studied.

The following categories, criteria and pegged marks will be used by Visiting Examiners appointed by SQA to assess candidates' performance in Speaking in external course assessments. The criteria must be interpreted with reference to the appropriate section of the Productive Grammar Grid. (see Arrangements document).

Categories	Criteria	Pegged marks
Very Good	Confident handling of language with a high level of accuracy. Wide range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to Advanced Higher. Immediate understanding of everything said. Speaks fluently and without undue hesitation, readily taking the initiative. Can express ideas and exchange opinions with ease, incorporating appropriate discussion techniques.	50
Good	The language is mostly accurate, with a wide range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to Advanced Higher. Immediate understanding of almost everything said. Speaks fluently and without undue hesitation. Fairly enterprising, sometimes taking the initiative. Can express ideas and exchange opinions effectively, with occasional use of discussion techniques.	40
Satisfactory	Generally competent, demonstrating a reasonable range of vocabulary and structures appropriate to Advanced Higher. Although there may be some initial difficulty, is capable of coming to an understanding of all that is said. May take the initiative and be reasonably fluent but with a number of errors, or may be more inhibited but speak with greater accuracy. Can express ideas and exchange opinions adequately, though may need some prompting. Pronunciation and intonation adequate to convey meaning clearly. Performance may be uneven but the good outweighs the bad.	30
Unsatisfactory	Has sufficient accuracy and command of vocabulary and structures to convey meaning, despite quite frequent error in areas appropriate to Advanced Higher. Sometimes encounters difficulty in understanding what is said. Is prepared to go beyond minimum responses and may occasionally take the initiative. Is inhibited in expressing ideas and opinions and may have some difficulty in going beyond prepared contributions without substantial prompting. Communication may be impeded by occasional other tongue interference or weaknesses in pronunciation and/or intonation.	20
Poor	Difficulty in achieving communication because of limited range of vocabulary and structures, and/or serious inaccuracies in areas appropriate to Advanced Higher. Has occasional difficulty in understanding what is said, even when questions are repeated or reworded. Tends not to go beyond minimum responses. On the whole, can only restate rather than develop prepared contributions. Pronunciation and intonation may be inadequate to convey meaning clearly.	10

Very Poor	No redeeming features.	0
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