



Higher
Course Assessment
Specification



Higher ESOL Course Assessment Specification (C727 76)

Valid from August 2014

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Assessment Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Course title: | Higher ESOL |
| SCQF level: | 6 (24 SCQF credit points) |
| Course code: | C727 76 |
| Course assessment code: | X727 76 |

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

Course assessment structure

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|--|------------------|
| Component 1 — question paper: listening; reading and writing | 70 marks |
| Component 2 — performance: speaking and listening | 30 marks |
| Total marks | 100 marks |

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge, or application.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

Drawing from personal, social, transactional, work- and study-related contexts, this added value consists of:

- ◆ applying language skills to understand and use detailed and complex written and spoken English in personal, social, transactional, work- or study-related contexts
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of language

Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A learner's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Grade description for A

For the award of Grade A, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Credit

To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a Grade D or better is achieved.

Structure and coverage of the Course assessment

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a question paper with three Sections and a performance. In the question paper, Section 1 is titled Listening, Section 2 is titled Reading and Section 3 is titled Writing.

The Sections of the question paper are as follows:

Component 1 - Section A — question paper (listening)

The purpose of this question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skill of listening for information.

This question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ ability to understand detailed and complex language spoken in English
- ◆ ability to identify and show understanding of the overall purpose, main points and aspects of detail
- ◆ ability to identify and show understanding of opinions and/or attitudes

This Section of the question paper will have 20 marks (20% of the total mark). Learners will listen to one monologue and one spoken interaction. Learners will answer questions in English and respond in English. Marks will be awarded for what is correct and credit will be given according to the accuracy and relevance of responses.

Component 1 — Sections B and C question paper (reading and writing)

The purpose of these Sections of the question paper is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skills of reading and writing.

This question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

Reading

- ◆ ability to understand detailed and complex language written in English
- ◆ ability to identify and show understanding of the overall purpose, main points and aspects of detail
- ◆ ability to identify how detailed vocabulary, language features and text structures are used to convey meaning
- ◆ ability to identify and show understanding of opinions and/or attitudes

Writing

- ◆ produce written English using detailed and complex language to convey meaning
- ◆ use structures and vocabulary, as appropriate to task
- ◆ use appropriate features of grammar, spelling and punctuation
- ◆ use conventions of style and layout appropriate to task

The question paper for Reading and Writing will have 50 marks (50% of the total mark).

Section B, titled 'Reading', will have 25 marks.

Learners will read two texts in English. They will respond to questions in English by using English.

These 25 marks will be awarded for identifying, explaining and showing awareness of features of text, opinions and/or attitudes and key aspects of detail.

Marks will be awarded for what is correct and credit will be given according to the accuracy and relevance of responses.

Section C, titled 'Writing', will have 25 marks.

Learners will produce two written texts. They will choose one title from the context of everyday life and one from the contexts of either work or study.

Learners will produce approximately 150-200 words for the everyday life writing task and approximately 250 – 300 words for the work or study writing task.

The structure and language used for each writing assessment should be appropriate to the task eg an e-mail for an everyday life task; a report for a work-related task or an essay for a study-related task.

10 marks will be available for the Everyday Life writing assessment task and 15 marks will be available for the work or study writing task.

Each title will have some limited support for guidance.

The Writing question paper will be assessed on the marking criteria addressing content and organisation, vocabulary and spelling, grammar and punctuation.

These 25 marks will be awarded for using appropriate structures, vocabulary and language features to convey meaning.

Component 2 — performance (speaking and listening)

The purpose of this performance is to allow learners to demonstrate challenge and application in the skills of speaking and listening. Learners will have a discussion in English on a chosen topic, responding to questions and initiating and supporting the interaction throughout, as appropriate.

This performance will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ ability to communicate orally in English using detailed and complex language to convey meaning
- ◆ ability to use structures and vocabulary, as appropriate to task
- ◆ ability to maintain interaction as appropriate to task, showing understanding of spoken English

The discussion may be with the assessor or with another person or group which may include other learners and an interlocutor.

Learners will demonstrate understanding of spoken English by responding to relevant questions.

The performance will have 30 marks (30% of the total mark).

This performance has one Section.

Five marks will be awarded for listening.

Another 25 marks will be awarded for speaking.

The performance will be recorded.

Setting, conducting and marking of assessment

Question paper — listening

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Learners will complete this in 30 minutes.

Question paper — reading and writing

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Learners will complete this in 2 hours ten minutes.

Controlled assessment — performance (speaking and listening)

This performance is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under a high degree of supervision and control

Evidence will be internally marked by centre staff in line with SQA marking instructions.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

Learners will complete this performance in approximately 8 – 10 minutes.

Administrative information

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History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

| Course details | Version | Description of change | Authorised by | Date |
|----------------|---------|---|------------------------------------|------------|
| | 1.1 | Page 2 Components amended, number of components reduced to two. Page 5-7 Clarification of components and additional information provided in 'Structure and Coverage of Course Assessment' Page 9 Question papers reordered, duration of question paper 2 increased to 2 hours and 10 minutes, duration of performance increased to 8 -10 minutes. | Qualifications Development Manager | April 2014 |
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