



National
Qualifications

ESOL

Performance: Speaking and Listening

General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the Performance: speaking and listening Component of Higher ESOL Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment task(s) for this component of Course assessment which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

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Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Higher ESOL performance: speaking and listening.

This performance is worth 30 marks out of a total of 100 marks. This is 30% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a listening, reading and writing question paper.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the performance Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment 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 in this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes 30% of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the performance in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

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

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for this Component of the added value of this Course by means of a speaking and listening performance.

Assessment overview

The speaking and listening performance is a **discussion** using detailed and complex English with another person or a small group. The discussion will be on a topic chosen from one of the contexts of everyday life, work or study.

The candidate will:

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

Candidates take part in a discussion with another person or a small group to show they can communicate orally using detailed and complex English language. The discussion may be with another candidate or an interlocutor. If the discussion is with another candidate, assessors should ensure candidates of similar ability are paired for the assessment so as not to disadvantage any candidate.

Candidates should be made aware that they may be required to initiate the discussion or to show they can initiate by introducing new topics during the course of the discussion.

Candidates agree with the assessor the topic for the discussion. The topic may be the candidate's own choice or one proposed by the assessor and agreed with the candidate.

Assessors can provide any clarification required prior to the start of the preparation time. Candidates have approximately 15 minutes to prepare on their own for the discussion. Candidates will respond naturally to unrehearsed questions/comments from the other person or group and ask questions of the other participant(s).

As a guide, the discussion between two people should last approximately eight to ten minutes. For a small group discussion, the duration of the interaction should be increased accordingly to ensure that each candidate has the opportunity to fully demonstrate their speaking and listening skills.

The performance will be recorded and will be assessed in line with the Marking Instructions.

Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This assessment is a single assessment event. Candidates should undertake the assessment at an appropriate point in the Course.

All candidates should have the opportunity to initiate either at the start of the communication or to do so during the performance, eg by introducing new or associated topics when they take their turn to speak during the discussion.

In advance of the discussion, candidates may make brief notes during the preparation time. Assessors should make candidates aware that they should not use notes during the assessment because this could interfere with the natural flow of the discussion.

Candidates should prepare for the assessment independently but may be given guidance or clarification of the task, eg in deciding choice of context and topic for the performance.

Assessors should distinguish clearly between providing this kind of guidance/clarification in advance of assessment and the risk of providing support for the assessment itself.

Candidates must complete assessment, whatever the nature, independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the formal assessment process taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

The assessment of the performance is conducted by centres within SQA guidelines, under supervised and controlled conditions. Evidence is internally marked by assessors in each centre in line with the SQA Marking Instructions below and is quality-assured by SQA.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ a recording of a paired discussion lasting approximately eight to ten minutes – for a small group discussion, the duration of the interaction should be increased accordingly to ensure that each candidate has the opportunity to fully demonstrate their speaking and listening skills

Assessors should also complete an assessment record of the Component marks for each candidate, which should be retained by the centre.

General marking instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following general marking instructions are addressed to the Marker. Marking instructions are provided for examining teams in the case of externally marked Course assessment. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

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

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

General marking principles for the performance

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this performance. These principles must be read in conjunction with the Detailed Marking Instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response must always be assigned in line with these General Marking Principles and the Detailed Marking Instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking should always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.

The candidate's performance is described in terms of the following six main aspects in the tables below for speaking and listening:

- ◆ organisation, development and communication of ideas/opinions
- ◆ effectiveness and relevance of contribution
- ◆ accuracy and appropriateness of general and specialised vocabulary in context
- ◆ accuracy and use of structures, including complex structures, to communicate
- ◆ effectiveness of pronunciation
- ◆ understanding spoken English

Assessors should allocate a mark by following the instructions given below, and record this mark on the candidate assessment record. Assessors may provide a comment justifying why the mark was awarded.

For each of the sections for speaking and listening, the assessor should select the band descriptor which most closely describes the evidence gathered.

Assessment should be holistic. There may be strengths and weaknesses in the performance; assessment should focus as far as possible on the strengths,

taking account of weaknesses only where they significantly detract from the overall performance. Marks should be awarded for the candidate's demonstration of ability in the six main aspects in speaking and listening.

Assessors can award the highest level descriptor for speaking and listening even if there are minor errors. These should not detract from the assessor's overall impression of the performance.

Candidates may display ability across more than one band descriptor. Assessors should recognise the closeness of the band descriptors and consider carefully the most appropriate overall band with the candidate's performance.

Once the appropriate band descriptor has been selected, the assessor should follow this guidance:

- ◆ If the evidence almost matches the level above, award the highest available mark from the range.
- ◆ If the candidate's work just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from the range.

Otherwise the mark should be awarded from the middle of the range.

For band descriptors of 4 marks, for example 12-9, assessors should reconsider the candidate's abilities in the six main aspects. If the candidate just misses a 12, award 11. If the candidate is slightly above a 9, award a 10.

Detailed marking instructions for the Higher performance: speaking

	Description of performance and mark							
Aspect of performance	25-22	21-19	18-16	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	0
Organisation, development and communication of ideas/opinions	Effective, coherent, well-organised and fluent output with only limited and mostly natural hesitation	Effective coherent and well-organised output with limited and mostly natural hesitation	Effective, coherent and organised output with limited inappropriate hesitation	Coherent and organised output with a level of hesitation which does not detract from communication	Communication lacks sufficient coherence and organisation and hesitation may interfere with the interaction	Communication lacks coherence and organisation and hesitation interferes with the interaction	Communication is not coherent or organised and hesitation interferes with the interaction	No evidence of the skills required in terms of organisation, development and communication of ideas/opinions
Effectiveness and relevance of contribution	<p>Contributes fully, effectively and relevantly throughout the interaction</p> <p>Demonstrates the ability to initiate with spontaneity and ease and show sensitivity to the norms of turn-taking which fully support the development of the interaction</p> <p>Fully and effectively achieves task with clear and detailed support for each point made</p>	<p>Contributes effectively and relevantly throughout the interaction</p> <p>Demonstrates the ability to initiate and show sensitivity to the norms of turn-taking which fully support the development of the interaction</p> <p>Fully and effectively achieves task with clear support for each point made</p>	<p>Contributes effectively and relevantly in order to maintain the interaction</p> <p>Demonstrates the ability to initiate and show general sensitivity to the norms of turn-taking which support the maintenance of the interaction</p> <p>Fully achieves task with support for most points made</p>	<p>Contributes effectively and with some relevance in order to maintain the interaction</p> <p>Demonstrates sufficiently the ability to initiate and show general sensitivity to the norms of turn-taking which support the maintenance of the interaction</p> <p>Achieves task with support for most points made</p>	<p>Does not contribute effectively and relevantly to maintain the interaction</p> <p>Task is only partially achieved</p>	<p>Does not contribute sufficiently to maintain the interaction</p> <p>Communication is mainly irrelevant to task</p>	<p>Does not contribute appropriately to maintain the interaction</p> <p>Communication is not relevant to task</p>	No evidence of the skills required in terms of effectiveness and relevance of contribution

Accuracy and appropriateness of general and specialised vocabulary in context	Shows knowledge of a wide range of specialised and general vocabulary and uses this with ease and accuracy within the context of the task	Shows knowledge of a wide range of specialised and general vocabulary and uses this accurately and appropriately within the context of the task	Shows knowledge of a range of specialised and general vocabulary and uses this appropriately and mostly accurately within the context of the task	Shows knowledge of a range of specialised and general vocabulary and uses this with a sufficient level of accuracy and appropriacy within the context of the task	Shows limited knowledge of a range of specialised and general vocabulary and uses this with insufficient accuracy within the context of the task	Shows very limited knowledge of specialised and general vocabulary and uses it inaccurately within the context of the task	Use of specialised and general vocabulary is inadequate and inaccurate within the context of the task	No evidence of the skills required in terms of accuracy and appropriateness of general and specialised vocabulary in context
Accuracy and use of structures, including complex structures, to communicate	Uses a wide range of structures, including complex structures, with a level of accuracy to clearly and effectively communicate	Uses a wide range of structures, including complex structures, with an appropriate level of accuracy to clearly communicate	Uses a range of structures, including some complex structures with an appropriate level of accuracy to clearly communicate	Uses a range of structures with an appropriate level of accuracy to clearly communicate	Uses a limited range of structures and does not display an appropriate level of accuracy to clearly communicate	Uses a very limited range of structures with a level of accuracy which interferes with communication	Structures used impede communication	No evidence of the skills required in terms of accuracy and use of structures, including complex structures, to communicate
Effectiveness of pronunciation	Production of English pronunciation features is consistently evident and fully effective	Production of English pronunciation features is evident and effective	Production of English pronunciation features is mostly evident and effective	Production of English pronunciation features is evident and sufficiently effective	Production of English pronunciation features is evident and partially effective	Production of English pronunciation features is rarely evident	Pronunciation features impede communication	No evidence of the skills required in terms of effectiveness of pronunciation

Detailed marking instructions for the Higher performance: listening

Description of performance and mark 5	Description of performance and mark 4	Description of performance and mark 3	Description of performance and mark 2	Description of performance and mark 1-0
Listens attentively to partner and responds with a high degree of fluency and with a level of spontaneity which effectively develops the conversation	Listens attentively to partner and responds with a degree of fluency and spontaneity which fully supports the conversation	Listens carefully to partner and responds appropriately and with a degree of fluency which supports the conversation	Attention to what is said by partner is not consistent throughout and responses are not always appropriate	Does not listen to partner's contribution and responds inappropriately to what partner has said
Understands fully and in detail what is said clearly and with adequate discourse structure	Understands fully what is said clearly and with adequate discourse structure	Understands what is said clearly and with adequate discourse structure	Has difficulty in understanding some of what is said clearly and with adequate discourse structure	Has difficulty in understanding most of what is said clearly and with adequate discourse structure, even with support from partner
Asks for clarification to check that he/she has understood what partner intended to say, if required	Asks for clarification to check that he/she has understood what partner said, if required	Asks for clarification to check that he/she has understood what partner said, if required	Does not ask for clarification on occasions when he/she has not understood partner	Does not ask for clarification when he/she has not understood partner

Administrative information

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History of changes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Subheading amended. 'Higher' added to title of detailed marking instructions tables. Position of wording amended in third row of detailed marking instructions for speaking table.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

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