



MODERN LANGUAGES
Higher

Tenth edition – published March 2009



**NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS
TENTH EDITION PUBLISHED MARCH 2009**

COURSE TITLE: Modern Languages (Higher)

COURSE NUMBER: Cantonese C247 12
French C059 12
German C060 12
Italian C061 12
Mandarin (Simplified) C256 12
Mandarin (Traditional) C257 12
Russian C062 12
Spanish C063 12
Urdu C242 12

National Course Specification:

Course details: Cantonese, Mandarin (Simplified) and
Mandarin (Traditional) Courses added to the list of
Languages served by these Arrangements

National Unit Specifications:

Cantonese, Mandarin (Simplified) and
Mandarin (Traditional) Units added to the list of
Languages served by these Arrangements



National Course Specification

MODERN LANGUAGES (HIGHER)

COURSE NUMBER	C247 12 Cantonese	C256 12 Mandarin (Simplified)
	C059 12 French	C257 12 Mandarin (Traditional)
	C060 12 German	C062 12 Russian
	C061 12 Italian	C063 12 Spanish
		C242 12 Urdu

CANTONESE: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

F3F1 12 *Language (H)* **2 credits (80 hours)**

Optional units

F3F2 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

F296 12 *Language in Work (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

FRENCH: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

D339 12 *Language (H)* **2 credits (80 hours)**

Optional units

D342 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

D338 12 *Language in Work (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

GERMAN: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

D465 12 *Language (H)* **2 credits (80 hours)**

Optional units

D467 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

D464 12 *Language in Work (H)* **1 credit (40 hours)**

Administrative Information

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National Course Specification (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

ITALIAN: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

D471 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

D473 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

D470 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

MANDARIN (SIMPLIFIED): COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

F3CV 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

F3CT 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

F3CX 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

MANDARIN (TRADITIONAL): COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

F3CP 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

F3CN 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

F3CS 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

National Course Specification (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

RUSSIAN: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

D477 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

D479 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

D476 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

SPANISH: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

D483 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

D485 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

D482 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

URDU: COURSE STRUCTURE

The course consists of two units: one mandatory unit and one optional unit.

Mandatory unit

F183 12 *Language (H)* *2 credits (80 hours)*

Optional units

F184 12 *Extended Reading/Viewing (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

F185 12 *Language in Work (H)* *1 credit (40 hours)*

All units are available either as stand-alone units or as components of the Higher course. It is suggested that, when preparing candidates for the full course award, teachers and lecturers will prefer to teach both units concurrently, rather than complete the 80 hour unit before embarking on the 40 hour unit. By working through the content of both units concurrently, with a pro-rata allocation of time to each, teachers and lecturers will be able to provide a varied diet of activity for candidates in the course of each teaching week. However, within this structure, timetabling arrangements in centres should still allow candidates who wish to study one unit only to do so.

In common with all courses, this course includes 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the component units. This is used for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment. This time is an important element of the course and advice on its use is included in the course details

National Course Specification (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the course or units is at the discretion of the centre, candidates will normally be expected to have attained:

- Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2, including Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*
- or equivalent qualification.

* Candidates holding a Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 3 or 4 may be advised to follow the Intermediate 2 course (with the exception of Urdu).

CREDIT VALUE

The Higher Course in Modern Languages is allocated 24 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*

**SCQF points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this course.

For information about the automatic certification of core skills for any individual unit in this course, please refer to the general information section at the beginning of the unit.

National Course Specification: course details

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

RATIONALE

A course award at Higher in a foreign language is a benchmark achievement. It is an indication that the learner has reached a stage in foreign language learning which begins to allow her/him to use the language independently in confident and flexible ways. From this level of achievement, the candidate will be in a position to pursue further foreign language study or to use the foreign language in a variety of ways, which might include:

- specialising in the study of the language, literature and culture of the country (or countries) concerned (eg Advanced Higher, study at Higher Education level)
- deploying her/his language skills for specific purposes, such as study of a subject at a university or other tertiary level establishment in the foreign country as part of a British degree, or interacting at an appropriate level with speakers of the language within an employment context
- drawing on the acquired level of knowledge about language and facility in language use to learn a different foreign language
- communicating with similarly educated foreign contemporaries
- using acquired language skills to access media in the target language, including TV programmes, films and magazine articles, for personal enjoyment.

The main aim of the course, therefore, is for the candidate to develop communicative competence to a level of some sophistication in defined, relevant and useful contexts. The language contexts are detailed in Appendix 1 – Language content, showing themes, topics and topic development. Other important aims are to provide a worthwhile and enjoyable educational experience for the candidates and to provide them with an increasing bank of knowledge about the foreign country or countries and its/their customs and ways of life.

The course consists of two units, one of 80 hours designed to develop the relevant skills and competences within the context of three broad themes: lifestyles; education and work; and the wider world. The other unit offers candidates a choice of two options which may reflect their potential future language use or course of study or particular set of interests. One option focuses on extended reading and possibly viewing. The other option focuses on the productive, interactive or mediating uses of language which are often required in work-related contexts, though that productive work also requires the candidate to read and understand relevant textual material. It is anticipated that, in the first instance, centres may wish to direct candidates' choice, taking account of teaching expertise and available resources. Candidates must complete the language unit and one of the optional units in order to gain the course award.

The course will contribute to the general education of the candidates by widening their horizons to encompass awareness of aspects of the culture of the country or countries where the language is spoken. It will also contribute to a wider understanding of how language works. The teaching approaches adopted will contribute to the development of confidence in interacting with others, at times at sophisticated levels, and in the ability to cope successfully and flexibly with unfamiliar situations. For those candidates choosing the *Language in Work* option, it will provide some knowledge of specific aspects of business, commerce or other similar contexts.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

COURSE CONTENT

Candidates seeking a Higher course award must achieve the 80 hour unit and one of the two 40 hour units. If the units are studied on a stand-alone basis, the successful completion of each unit will lead to national certification. The additional benefits which a candidate will gain by taking the full Higher course include the following:

- extended opportunities to apply developing skills in a range of contexts
- the development of translation skills
- additional exposure time to the target language in general, hence the opportunity to acquire greater fluency, flexibility and accuracy in the language.

It should be noted that all of the course content will be subject to sampling in the external assessment. The units are described briefly below. The unit specifications contain detailed information about standards and assessment. The Appendices are also an important part of the guidance on course content.

Appendices

For this level:

Appendix 1: Language content

Appendix 2: Summary of assessment procedures

For all levels:

Appendix A: Grammar grid (productive)

Appendix B: Explanation of terms

Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin(Traditional)Russian/Spanish/Urdu: Language (H)

This unit aims to develop all language skills for use in a range of purposes. Contexts for this language work are defined in three broad themes:

- lifestyles
- education and work
- the wider world.

The themes are subdivided into related topics. The themes and topics are shown in Appendix 1. The list of themes and topics must be treated as prescriptive, but centres will have the flexibility to develop the topics in ways which interest their candidates or are more relevant to their particular circumstances. Some suggestions on ways in which the topics might be developed are also given in Appendix 1.

Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin(Traditional)Russian/Spanish/Urdu: either Extended Reading/Viewing (H) or Language in Work (H)

It will be for each centre to decide, in the light of the expertise of the staff and the interests of the candidates, which of these options to offer, or whether both should be made available. It is hoped that teachers and lecturers will take account of the personal or vocational needs and interests of the candidates when making this choice. For this reason, the reading or viewing selected may either be an extension of a prescribed theme (see Appendix 1) or may relate to a new field of interest of relevance to particular candidates. The level of language would require to be appropriate for Higher.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Comparability of standards and assessment across the options will be achieved because the outcomes are similar and the expectations of performance are aligned even though the contexts on which the units are based are different.

Note:

With the exception of Urdu, for candidates who hold an award at Intermediate 2, the *Language in Work (H)* option provides the opportunity for the further development of previous learning acquired through the unit *Language in Work (Int 2)*. It should be noted, however, that previous study in this area is not a requirement for study of this option at Higher.

ASSESSMENT

To gain the award of the *Modern Languages (Higher)* Course, the candidate must pass the mandatory Unit and one optional Unit as well as the Course assessment. The candidate's grade is based on the Course assessment.

DETAILS OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment arrangements described below are mandatory. The course assessment will be by means of a combination of internal assessment (externally verified) and external examination. The assessment will take the following form:

Oral Assessment: Speaking (6-8 minutes, 25 marks)

Conducted internally and audio-recorded for external verification. The Speaking test is as described in the Language unit, Outcome 1.

Paper I: Reading and Directed Writing (1 hour 40 minutes, 45 marks).

Part A – Reading (55 minutes approximately, 30 marks)

Reading comprehension, involving written answers to questions in English (20 marks) and translation into English (10 marks). One passage of approximately 550-650 or 650-800 Chinese characters words will be set, related to the prescribed themes. A glossary will be provided and use of a dictionary is permitted.

Part B – Directed Writing (45 minutes approximately, 15 marks)

Directed writing task, based on a scenario given in English. Candidates will be required to provide specified information in a piece of writing of 150-180 words or 180-250 Chinese characters. Use of a dictionary is permitted.

For Chinese languages, Paper I lasts 2 hours 10 minutes.

Paper II: Listening/Writing (1 hour, 30 marks)

Section A – Listening (20 minutes approximately, 20 marks)

Listening comprehension, involving written answers to questions in English, in response to stimulus material, normally a conversation of 2-3 minutes' duration, played twice, related to the prescribed themes. This conversation will normally be presented on audio tape by two native speakers. Use of a dictionary is permitted.

Section B – Writing (40 minutes approximately, 10 marks)

Write in the target language a personal response, based on the taped conversation. Use of a dictionary is permitted. Length: 120-150 words or 150-200 Chinese characters.

For Chinese languages, Paper II lasts 1 hour 20 minutes.

Total marks for external assessment: 100

Total time for external assessment: 2 hours 40 minutes (excluding Speaking).

Total time for external assessment for Chinese languages: 3 hours 30 minutes (excluding Speaking).

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Further information about assessment is contained in the unit specifications in this document and in the National Assessment Bank. A summary of both the internal and external assessment arrangements is attached as Appendix 2.

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The purpose of grade descriptions, as outlined below, is to assist teachers and lecturers who will have responsibility for preparing and assessing candidates and to assist those who will have responsibility for the setting of the external examinations, by providing a general indication of the level of performance required to achieve an award at C and A in each of the skill areas. The grade descriptions must be interpreted to take account of the level of language and the nature and content of the tasks expected at Higher. The grade descriptions, together with the information contained in the Appendices, will enable teachers and lecturers to gain a clear impression of the level of language and the nature and content of the tasks appropriate to Higher. With regard to the productive skills (Speaking and Writing), more detailed descriptions of performance, including categories, criteria and pegged marks, will be provided to assist centres in the assessment and grading of performances. These criteria may be supplemented by examples of candidate performance, as appropriate.

Speaking

GRADE C	GRADE A
<p>Makes a short, prepared presentation on a chosen topic, and sustains discussion in a manner comprehensible to a sympathetic speaker of the target language.</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goes beyond exchange of factual /social information to express points of view • organises content of presentation to have clear start and conclusion • sustains discussion by going at times beyond minimal responses. <p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands most of what is said directly to her/him when clearly articulated • repetition /reformulation may be required. <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accent, intonation and pronunciation are sufficient to ensure communication; shows some awareness of rules • shows sufficient control of the rules of grammar appropriate to this level to ensure communication in spite of errors • language characterised by mostly simple sentences and reliance on high-frequency verbs and other words. 	<p>Makes a short, prepared presentation on a chosen topic, and sustains discussion easily. Expands on ideas and opinions expressed in the presentation.</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses ideas and opinions clearly and acknowledges different points of view • organises content of presentation to have clear start, progression of ideas and conclusion • sustains discussion by offering additional information /comments fairly frequently. <p>Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands almost all of what is said directly to her/him when clearly articulated • asks for repetition and/or clarification as required. <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows good awareness of rules of intonation and pronunciation • shows good control of the rules of grammar appropriate to this level and makes few errors of a major nature • language characterised by some complexity of structure and range of vocabulary.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Writing

GRADE C	GRADE A
<p>With the help of a dictionary, produces straightforward text in the target language, which is comprehensible to a sympathetic reader of the target language with little or no knowledge of English.</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing shows attempt to structure the presentation of information • in writing a personal response, goes beyond exchange of factual information to express point of view and in the directed writing task incorporates all the points of information required. <p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows sufficient awareness of the rules of grammar, appropriate to this level, to ensure comprehension in spite of errors • uses simple sentences, possibly with some awkward use of memorised material. 	<p>With the help of a dictionary, produces more complex text in the target language, easily comprehensible to a sympathetic reader of the target language with little or no knowledge of English.</p> <p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information is presented in a clear and structured manner • in writing a personal response, expresses and develops point of view with some sense of structure and, in the directed writing task, incorporates all the points of information required with some additional detail. <p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows good awareness of the rules of grammar, appropriate to the level with few errors of a major nature • uses more complex sentences, including a range of structure and vocabulary and makes appropriate use of memorised material.

Reading

GRADE C	GRADE A
<p>With the help of a dictionary, obtains factual information, with a satisfactory level of detail and accuracy, from text of some complexity likely to be encountered in personal, social or vocational life, relating to the prescribed themes and topic areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extracts and understands essential information from text which contains a number of major and subsidiary points, including the expression of points of view • understands a satisfactory proportion of points of detail and some of the opinions/ideas expressed • understands only partially text of some complexity. 	<p>With the help of a dictionary, obtains factual information, ideas and opinions, with a high level of detail and accuracy, from text of some complexity likely to be encountered in personal, social or vocational life, relating to the prescribed themes and topic areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extracts and understands key items of information and additional items of detail from text which contains a number of major and subsidiary points, including the expression of points of view • understands a high proportion of points of detail and grasps opinions/ideas expressed • understands text of some complexity.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Translation into English

The translation into English is allocated 10 marks. The text for translation will be divided into a number of sense units. Each sense unit is worth 2 marks, which will be awarded according to the quality and accuracy of the translation into English. In assessing the candidate's performance, the descriptions detailed below will be used. Each sense unit will be awarded one of the marks shown. The total number of marks gained will, where necessary, be converted to a score out of 10.

CATEGORY	MARK	DESCRIPTION
Good	2	Essential information and relevant details are understood and conveyed clearly and accurately, with appropriate use of English.
Satisfactory	1	Essential information is understood and conveyed clearly and comprehensibly, although some of the details may be translated in an imprecise or inaccurate manner. The key message is conveyed in spite of inaccuracies and weaknesses in the use of English.
Unsatisfactory	0	The candidate fails to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the essential information and relevant details. Errors may include mistranslation and/or the failure to translate relevant details.

Listening

GRADE C	GRADE A
<p>Listens to a conversation of some complexity between two speakers in the target language on subjects related to the prescribed themes, and obtains factual information with a satisfactory level of detail and accuracy. Speakers will articulate clearly at reasonable speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> extracts and understands essential information from stimulus material which contains a number of major and subsidiary points, including the expression of points of view understands a satisfactory proportion of points of detail and some of the opinions/ideas expressed understands only partially stimulus material of some complexity. 	<p>Listens to a conversation of some complexity between two speakers in the target language on subjects related to the prescribed themes, and obtains factual information with a high level of detail and accuracy. Speakers will articulate clearly at reasonable speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> extracts and understands key items of information and additional items of detail from stimulus material which contains a number of major and subsidiary points, including the expression of points of view understands a high proportion of points of detail and grasps opinions/ideas expressed understands stimulus material of some complexity.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING

The purpose of the course is to build on prior learning and to develop progressively the candidate's knowledge about the language, her/his competence in the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening, and her/his ability to handle the language in a number of defined contexts. The further development of the ability to express and understand opinions and views in the target language will form an important part of the content. In this connection, it is important not to over-estimate the level of maturity that most candidates will have reached by the time they embark on study at Higher, nor to make the assumption be made that all candidates will already have formulated views and opinions on the issues to be studied.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Language competence at Higher will be developed by extending the range and complexity of the language encountered by the candidates, and by encouraging an increase in range, fluency and accuracy in the language they produce. Candidates will be expected to handle previously encountered language situations, in which the information conveyed was mainly of a factual nature, with increased competence and confidence. They will also be expected to develop the further proficiency in the language necessary for understanding and expressing ideas and opinions. Course assessment will derive from the three prescribed themes and will test language ability as defined above.

By defining syllabus content and relating it clearly to assessment, learning and teaching can concentrate on thorough development of skills and understanding of language structure. It is an inevitable part of language learning that candidates will meet words, phrases and concepts with which they are unfamiliar. For this reason, it is desirable that no attempt should be made to exclude from the Higher course opportunities for candidates to show their ability to cope with such instances of unpredictability.

The prescribed themes and topic areas at Higher provide the focus for a range of activities which develop the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening in a variety of combinations for different uses (productive, interactive, receptive, mediating), and provide a context for work aimed at developing the candidates' knowledge of the structure/grammar of the language.

The additional 40 hours

The structure of Higher provides for an allocation of 40 hours in addition to the time allocation for each unit, giving a total time for the course of 160 hours. It is suggested that, at this level, the additional 40 hours might be used to provide added value in the following ways:

Induction:

- general overview of the objectives and content of the course
- introduction to ways of working on the course
- explanation of the form and content of the assessment arrangements.

Extending the range of learning and teaching approaches:

- further opportunities for formal or informal group work
- use of self-study materials
- greater use of a range of media/Information Technology
- individual projects.

National Course Specification: course details (cont)

COURSE Modern Languages (Higher)

Remediation, consolidation and extension:

- revising, recycling language as appropriate to meet the needs of all candidates
- extending/innovating as appropriate for more able (potential Advanced Higher) candidates
- practising known language in new situations within the topic areas
- providing further opportunities for the development of skills
- providing greater exposure to aspects relating to the background, culture and civilisation of the country or countries in which the target language is spoken.

Preparation for external assessment:

- preparing for course assessment elements which are not covered by internal assessment, such as translation and directed writing
- developing integration of language skills in a manner appropriate to this level
- building in opportunities for the candidates to demonstrate achievement of the required skills before the external assessment, eg taking a retest of Speaking if appropriate.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Language (Higher)
NUMBER	F3F1 12 Cantonese D339 12 French D465 12 German D471 12 Italian F3CV 12 Mandarin(Simplified) F3CP 12 Mandarin(Traditional) D477 12 Russian D483 12 Spanish F183 12 Urdu
COURSE	Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin (Simplified)/Mandarin (Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu (Higher)

This is a component unit of Higher Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin (Simplified) Mandarin (Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu.

SUMMARY

This unit aims to continue the progressive development of candidates' knowledge about language, their competence in the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening, and their ability to use these skills in appropriate ways within defined contexts. The assessment for this unit will focus on the skills of Speaking, Listening and Reading. The skill of Writing in the target language will not be assessed discretely, but will continue to be integral to the development of the other skills.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Make an oral presentation and engage in discussion in the target language.
- 2 Demonstrate understanding of the target language in spoken form.
- 3 Demonstrate understanding of text written in the target language.

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National Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*
- or equivalent qualification.

* Candidates holding a Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 3 or 4 may be advised to follow the Intermediate 2 course (with the exception of Urdu).

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National Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

2 credits at Higher (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Language (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Note on Coverage of Themes and Topics

Evidence that the candidate has reached the required level to pass a unit will be generated by the completion of tasks and activities related to the specified outcomes. For each level, a number of prescribed themes and topics have been elaborated and it is by using language within the context of these themes and topics that candidates will display their level of performance. An assessment instrument used by a centre to show that the candidate has reached the level of the unit may be devised by the centre according to set criteria or may be drawn from the National Assessment Bank. Such an instrument may cover only one of the prescribed themes. If a candidate gains a pass no other proof of attainment of the outcome with respect to other themes is necessary. However, the centre should retain evidence (eg teaching notes, texts, plans, records of work, candidate notes), which can indicate that, by the end of the unit, all prescribed themes have been covered by the candidate.

The justification for such an approach to gathering evidence of candidate performance lies in the nature of language development. The prescribed themes and topics provide the language contexts within which learners develop and then display their level of competence in the various skills of language use. It is not the context itself which defines a candidate's level of competence. The same topic can provide the context for levels of overall competence ranging from the near beginner to the native speaker. It is the level of performance in component competences - grammatical, socio-linguistic, cultural, strategic, discourse-related - which distinguish: a candidate operating at a certain level within one context (ie prescribed theme or topic) will be able to operate at the same level within another context. He or she may have to look up more words in a dictionary, or ask the interlocutor for help (both strategic competence-related activities) but the level of language used will be the same. Thus it is not necessary to require candidates to prove that they have reached the level of competence of the unit in each of the prescribed themes. Once they have reached it in one, they have proved their ability. All that remains is to extend their coverage. Of course, many candidates will have to work through all the prescribed themes as they improve towards the level of the unit and so early attempts at achieving the outcomes may not be successful.

The grade descriptions are context-free, but for some candidates at this level the context will continue to be important because the notion of recycling and transferring of language competence may not yet have been sufficiently developed.

The performance criteria for a pass for each skill should be interpreted, where appropriate, as being the same as the Grade C description in the course specification.

Content relates to the prescribed themes and topics outlined in Appendix 1.

OUTCOME 1

Make an oral presentation and engage in discussion in the target language.

Performance criteria

- a) Makes an oral presentation which has appropriate structure and content.
- b) Sustains discussion, even though prompting or repetition may be necessary.
- c) Employs appropriate language with sufficient clarity and accuracy to achieve communication with a sympathetic speaker of the target language.
- d) Uses vocabulary and sentence structure to allow some flexibility of expression.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

Evidence requirements

A performance of oral work (approximately 6-8 minutes' duration) recorded on audio cassette and incorporating a presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate followed by a face-to-face discussion with a speaker of the target language. The discussion must develop from the original topic and theme and continue into at least one of the other prescribed themes.

Notes consisting of a maximum of 5 headings, each with up to 8 words in the target language, may be referred to during the presentation.

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate understanding of the target language in spoken form.

Performance criterion

Demonstrates understanding of the main content and specific points of detail of the text.

Evidence requirements

Written work in English or other appropriate evidence, demonstrating understanding of text, recorded or spoken live, of 2-3 minutes' length and heard up to 3 times.

The task will be done under controlled conditions as specified in Appendix B, normally within one teaching block/period. Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

OUTCOME 3

Demonstrate understanding of text written in the target language.

Performance criterion

Demonstrates understanding of the main content and specific points of detail of the text.

Evidence requirements

Written work in English, or other appropriate evidence, demonstrating understanding of a text of 400-450 words or 500-600 Chinese characters. A glossary of terms likely to prove difficult may be provided at the end of the reading text.

The task will be done under controlled conditions as specified in Appendix B, normally within one teaching block/period. Use of a dictionary is permitted.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Language (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

Language development could be encouraged in the following ways:

Language use – productive/interactive/mediating:

- by extending the candidate's ability to recount and discuss orally events and issues of personal and topical interest in the target language, with increased emphasis on communicating views and opinions
- by extending the candidate's ability to recount and discuss in writing events and issues of personal and topical interest in the target language, with increased emphasis on communicating views and opinions.

Language use – receptive/interactive/mediating:

- by extending the candidate's ability to listen to the target language and demonstrate understanding of language of increasing complexity related to the prescribed themes
- by extending the candidate's ability to read texts in the target language related to the prescribed themes, for gist and detailed understanding.

Knowledge about language:

- by improving the candidate's grasp of key aspects of grammatical structure
- by extending the range of grammatical structure which the candidate can deploy.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The unit builds on existing good practice by encouraging an integrated teaching approach, which seeks to develop skills in combination rather than in isolation. Progression from previous levels will be in terms of the candidate's ability to handle language in more sophisticated ways, and in terms of the range of language encountered by the candidate. The quality and accuracy of the language which s/he produces, together with its content, will also reflect this progression.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Oral communication (Outcome 1)

Following a prepared presentation, candidates will be required to discuss issues and respond to questions in the target language following on naturally from the topic chosen. The interlocutor must ensure that the discussion develops from the original topic and theme and continues into at least one of the other prescribed themes. This test of oral communication will contribute to both the internal assessment of the unit and to the external assessment of the course. For the purpose of the unit assessment, the candidate's performance will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. The performance criteria for a pass should be interpreted as being the same as the Grade C descriptions in the course specification.

For the purpose of the course assessment, the candidate's performance will also be marked in terms of content, accuracy, language resource and intonation in accordance with the grade descriptions given in the course specification, using performance criteria and pegged marks issued by SQA .

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Language (Higher)

Listening (Outcome 2)

Candidates will listen to texts from live and, where possible, audio- or video-recorded sources in the target language. For the purpose of the unit assessment, they will listen to views and opinions and accounts of events being expressed within topics included in the prescribed themes, and will be required to demonstrate comprehension by undertaking tasks such as the following:

- responding in English to questions in English
- choosing the correct multiple-choice option in English
- listing in English the views/intentions expressed or the events recounted
- making notes in English under given headings.

A variety of these tasks should be used in the internal assessment of listening. Use of a dictionary is not permitted.

Reading (Outcome 3)

For the purpose of the unit assessment, candidates will read a text of 400-450 words, and will demonstrate comprehension by undertaking tasks such as the following:

- responding in English to questions in English
- choosing the correct multiple-choice option
- writing a summary
- completing grids to indicate understanding
- following written instructions to complete a task

A variety of these techniques should be used in the internal assessment of reading. A glossary of terms likely to prove difficult may be provided at the end of the text. Use of a dictionary is also permitted.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Extended Reading/Viewing (Higher)
NUMBER	F3F2 12 Cantonese D342 12 French D467 12 German D473 12 Italian F3CT 12 Mandarin (Simplified) F3CN 12 Mandarin(Traditional) D479 12 Russian D485 12 Spanish F184 12 Urdu
COURSE	Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin (Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu (Higher)

This is a component unit of Higher Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin(Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu.

SUMMARY

This unit aims to develop competence in the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening. The broad context for the unit is extended reading, which can be supported by viewing. The skills of Reading, Listening and Speaking will not be assessed discretely, but will be integral to the development of the skill of Writing, on which assessment will be focused.

OUTCOME

Convey information in writing in the target language about the source material read/viewed.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*
- or equivalent qualification.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	FK
Publication date:	March 2009
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	09

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National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Extended Reading/Viewing (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*

* Candidates holding a Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 3 or 4 may be advised to follow the Intermediate 2 course (with the exception of Urdu).

Administrative Information

Superclass: FK

Publication date: March 2009

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 09

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National Unit Specification: General Information (cont)

UNIT Extended Reading/Viewing (Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Extended Reading/Viewing (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Note:

The type of texts in the target language which candidates will study should be drawn from one or more of the following categories:

- texts linked by subject matter, such as magazine or newspaper articles or short stories, reflecting the interests of individual candidates
- texts linked by subject matter, developing in greater depth a topic studied
- a book appropriate to the level of study and to the interests of the candidates written for speakers of the target language
- film, video or TV viewing supported by written texts.

OUTCOME

Convey information in writing in the target language.

Performance criteria

- a) Provides appropriately organised information relevant to the area of study.
- b) Employs appropriate language with a reasonable degree of accuracy as appropriate to this level.
- c) Demonstrates ability to use some variety of vocabulary and structures.

Evidence requirement

A piece of writing in the target language of approximately 100-150 words or 120-200 Chinese characters relating to one aspect of the text(s) studied and expressing a personal response/reaction by the candidate. The writing will be supported and produced as part of the ongoing work of the class under controlled conditions, as defined in Appendix B. The use of a dictionary is permitted.

Working notes including any teacher/lecturer comments and the final version must be retained by the centre.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Extended Reading/Viewing (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The purpose of this option is to encourage candidates to study source materials in the target language. The type of study undertaken should be drawn from any of the categories specified in the unit. By concentrating on language use for receptive purposes, it is hoped to develop in candidates a high level of competence in comprehension. However, as in the Language unit, all four skills will continue to be developed through working in and with the target language, which continues to be seen as the connecting thread.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Although the assessment task for this unit focuses on Writing, the main content of the unit on which it is based involves Reading and Listening/viewing. These other skills will provide the context for successful performance in the Writing task set.

Written communication

In the course of the unit, candidates should be encouraged at various stages to reflect on and discuss in the target language the content of their reading/viewing supported by reading. In this way, this outcome should arise naturally out of class activity rather than be an end product. The final text for the outcome should therefore reflect this process.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).



National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Language in Work (Higher)
NUMBER	F296 12 Cantonese D338 12 French D464 12 German D470 12 Italian F3CX 12 Mandarin(Simplified) F3CS 12 Mandarin(Traditional) D476 12 Russian D482 12 Spanish F185 12 Urdu
COURSE	Cantonese/French/German/Italian/Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin (Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu (Higher)

This is a component unit of Higher Cantonese/French/German/Italian/ Mandarin(Simplified)/Mandarin(Traditional)/Russian/Spanish/Urdu.

SUMMARY

This unit aims to develop competence in the four skills of Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening. The broad context for the unit is language in work. The skills of Reading, Listening and Speaking will not be assessed discretely, but will be integral to the development of the skill of Writing, on which assessment will be focused.

OUTCOMES

Convey factual information in writing in the target language.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	FK
Publication date:	March 2009
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Version:	09

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National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Language in Work (Higher)

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the unit is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained:

- ♦ Intermediate 2 in the appropriate language or its component units (with the exception of Urdu).
- ♦ Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 1 or 2*
- ♦ or equivalent qualification.

Candidates holding a Standard Grade in the appropriate language at Grade 1 or 2 and Writing award at Grade 3 or 4 may be advised to follow the Intermediate 2 course (with the exception of Urdu).

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit a Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

There is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components in this unit.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Language in Work (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

NOTE ON RANGE FOR THE UNIT

The type of study undertaken in the target language should be drawn from a series of linked texts on a vocational or work-related area of study selected from the vocational areas of:

- ♦ work experience
- ♦ business studies
- ♦ travel and tourism
- ♦ information technology

OUTCOME

Convey factual information in writing in the target language.

Performance criteria

- a) Provides appropriately organised information relevant to the format.
- b) Employs appropriate language with a high degree of accuracy appropriate to this level.
- c) Demonstrates ability to use some variety of vocabulary and structure if appropriate to the task.

Evidence requirements

- ♦ two letters (length: 150-180 words or 120-200 Chinese characters) related to different vocational areas chosen by the candidate.
- ♦ one email (length: 50-80 words or 60-100 Chinese characters) related to a vocational area chosen by the candidate.

The writing will be supported and produced under controlled conditions, as defined in Appendix B. Use of a dictionary is permitted. Original drafts, including lecturer/teacher comments, and final texts must be retained.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Language in Work (Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

By concentrating on language use for receptive purposes, it is hoped to develop in candidates a high level of competence in comprehension and in language in its spoken and written forms. As in the Language unit, all four skills will continue to be developed through working in and with the target language.

Linked texts may include written business documents, such as correspondence, promotional materials, articles on the vocational sector chosen, TV or video programmes relating to the chosen field or computer-based information on screen (a copy of which should be retained on paper or electronic storage medium). While this option may cover a relatively wide field within one vocational area, it is important that the various texts/source materials used should form a coherent area of study. These target language texts could be generated by a local community work placement programme in a firm with business links in the target language country. The level of language should be appropriate for Higher.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Although the assessment task for this unit focuses on Writing, the main content of the unit on which it is based involves either Reading – as part of an in-depth study of a vocational area – or an integrated language experience in the workplace. The other language skills will therefore provide the context for successful performance in the Writing task set.

Written communication

For the purpose of assessment, the candidate will be required to provide three pieces of writing in the target language produced in the course of this unit; two formal letters and an email, in response to a given stimulus scenario originating from the vocational areas.

- ♦ The letters should be 150-180 words or 120-200 Chinese characters in length. This task should be carried out under controlled conditions as described in Appendix B.
- ♦ The email will originate from a stimulus scenario originating from one of the vocational areas, and should be 50-80 words or 60-100 Chinese characters in length. This task will also be carried out under controlled conditions as described in Appendix B.

For both writing tasks the use of a dictionary is permitted. The assessment of writing at this level and in this context is related primarily to practical writing tasks and in communicating information and comment associated with a work-related task.

The performance criteria should be interpreted alongside the Grade C descriptions in the course specification.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Language in Work (Higher)

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

Appendices

Language Content
Unit: Language (H) – 80 hours

Appendix 1

THEMES	TOPICS	TOPIC DEVELOPMENT
Lifestyles	Family, friends, society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues in relationships with friends/family • role of the individual in the home and in society • advantages/disadvantages of home area
	Leisure and healthy living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leisure interests • health issues
Education and work	School/college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critique of own school/college • personal achievement to date such as in a record of achievement or an ELP*
	Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job intentions and aspirations • employment issues
The wider world	Holidays and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparison of types of holiday/travel • past holidays/journeys
	Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critique of local area in Scotland as tourist centre • areas of interest in target language country/countries and beyond

*European Languages Passport, (Council of Europe, 2001).

NB This Grid should be read in conjunction with the course and unit details

INTERNAL

UNIT Language	O1 : S	Presentation on topic of choice; follow-up discussion
	O2 : L	1 text 2-3 minutes; responses in English; played up to 3 times
	O3 : R	1 text 400-450 words; 500-600 Chinese characters
UNIT Extended Reading/ Viewing	Option A O1 : W	Extended Reading/Viewing Written personal response to aspect of text(s) studied (100-150 words or 120-200 Chinese characters) in target language
UNIT Language in Work	Option B O1 W	Language in Work Practical writing (2 letters 150-180 words or 120-200 Chinese characters and 1 email 50-80 words or 60-100 Chinese characters) in target language

EXTERNAL

Speaking	25%	As for the Language unit, marked out of 25
Listening	20%	1 text 3-4.5 minutes, interview, played twice (20 minutes approximately)
Reading	30%	1 text 550-650 words or 650-800 Chinese characters , including translation into English
Writing	25%	Personal opinion 120-150 words or 150-200 Chinese characters linked to Listening Directed writing to stimulus in English 150-180 words or 180-250 Chinese characters

Appendix A GRAMMAR GRID (PRODUCTIVE)

VERBS

	ACCESS	INTERMEDIATE 1	INTERMEDIATE 2	HIGHER	ADVANCED HIGHER
Person	The person involved is indicated clearly by pronoun/noun. Meaning of the verb is clear.	Notion of endings of verbs for regular verbs and common irregular verbs. Person must be clear from the verb if the language does not usually use pronouns.		Less common irregular verbs.	
Time	Notion of time may be unclear from the verb. Other time words may make timing obvious.	Notion of present, future and past time clear from verb (though may be very inaccurate in form). Increasing accuracy of form in regular and then common and less common irregular verbs.	Generally recognisable forms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present • immediate future (or future) • completed past • continuous past 	Future Pluperfect (or equivalent)	Other past tenses
Mood/modality	Notions of volition (<i>would like to...</i>); being able to; imperatives (<i>must do something...</i>) as learned in common phrases.	Some manipulation of verbal forms.	Control of modal verbs in common tenses. (Verbs) expressing beliefs, opinions. Conditional tense or equivalent. (if relevant)	(Verbs) expressing feelings, hopes. Reporting others' views, speech.	Modals in less common tenses. Subjunctive forms.
Commands	Common singular/plural commands.	Command rules for common irregular/regular verbs.			

APPENDIX A (CONT)

Nouns

	ACCESS	INTERMEDIATE 1	INTERMEDIATE 2	HIGHER	ADVANCED HIGHER
Gender		Notion of gender; most common words remembered.	Some conventions of gender, individual nouns showing increasing accuracy.		
Number	Singular/plural indicated by noun, or article or number or ending for common words.	Common irregular plurals.	Rules of plural forms.		
Case	←-----	If relevant, case made evident enough to give clear meaning by the noun or article as necessary.	Concept of case shown by noun or modifier as appropriate.		

pronouns

Subject/ Object	(See person of verb above.) If relevant, able to distinguish <i>I/you/we/one</i> as subject or object.	Subject and direct object pronouns (all).	Indirect object pronouns (as relevant in the language).		
Reflexive	←-----	Common reflexive verbal forms with pronouns as learned phrases.	Reflexives with common verbs in appropriate tenses.		
Emphatic	First/second person. →		All persons.		
Relative				Common relative pronouns, in different cases as relevant.	Less common relative pronouns.
Position		Notion of position of direct or indirect pronouns (NB commands).	Notion of rules where more than one pronoun is involved.		

APPENDIX A (CONT)

ADJECTIVES

	ACCESS	INTERMEDIATE 1	INTERMEDIATE 2	HIGHER	ADVANCED HIGHER
Rules of agreement		Notion of agreement and common forms – regular plus some irregular.	Increasing irregular forms or ending rules for case as relevant.		
Rules of position		Notion of position of adjectives.	Rules of position.		
Possessives	<i>My/Your.</i>	Indication of possessive for all persons.	Agreements as appropriate.		
Comparative/ Superlative	Indication of comparative.		Common irregular comparatives Notion of superlatives.	Less common comparatives and superlatives.	

adverbs

Rules of order			Notion (where relevant) of rules of order.		
Comparative/ Superlative	Indication of comparative.		Common irregular comparatives Notion of superlatives.	Less common comparatives and superlatives.	

APPENDIX A (CONT)

PREPOSITIONS

	ACCESS	INTERMEDIATE 1	INTERMEDIATE 2	HIGHER	ADVANCED HIGHER
		Notion that prepositions may change case/form of noun/article etc as relevant.	Most common prepositional effects.	Less common prepositional effects.	
other					
		Key concepts of grammatical features of any language not definable by the foregoing categories should be handled in similar ways in a continuum through Intermediate 1 to Advanced Higher, as appropriate.			

APPENDIX B

Explanation of terms

Within the arrangements for assessment at different levels, reference is made to a number of different conditions for the production of evidence of candidates' performances. This Appendix defines the key categories. It should be regarded as a further point of reference to supplement the information provided within course and unit specifications.

1. Supported Writing

The concept of supported writing is that candidates are able to access a number of types of support while undertaking a writing task, whether or not that task is then subject to assessment. By this means, candidates are encouraged to redraft work and therefore both to produce a final product which is likely to be polished and to acquire the habit of reflection and critical awareness which is a feature of effective development of this skill.

The teacher/lecturer will discuss the task in general terms with all candidates as part of the learning/teaching process. The candidates will do the writing task under controlled conditions. At an appropriate point thereafter, the teacher/lecturer will discuss with the candidate what s/he has written, focusing on general comments such as presentation of content, points of grammar and range of vocabulary and structure (if such is necessary to improve the quality of the writing). The comments should not be 'corrections' of the candidate's work, in that no correct forms should be indicated orally or in writing. However, the general comments may be indicated in writing in the margins. Samples of annotated candidate draft will form part of the National Assessment Bank support materials.

Candidates will then be given an opportunity to redraft on one occasion. The final version should also be produced in controlled conditions, but with reference to a dictionary only, not to the original draft. Normally, the redrafting should occur within a maximum of one week of the candidate producing the original draft, in order for the candidate to gain maximum benefit from the learning/teaching process. If the final version still does not meet the performance criteria for a pass, the process of teacher/lecturer comment and candidate redraft may be repeated. All versions must be kept.

For evidence, the centre should normally retain the original drafts, with teacher/lecturer comments and the final version. Note that redrafting is not obligatory if the initial piece of work is deemed an immediate pass.

2. Directed Writing

Directed writing is the name which has been given to some writing tasks. It should be understood as meaning simply that the content of the candidate's writing is to be directed towards specified headings or to the inclusion of certain points of information. Thus, while the task may allow the candidate to introduce content of her/his choosing, some elements will be predetermined by the nature of the task. This does not necessarily mean a close prescription of what is to be written.

3. Template

The most directed type of writing is that which is to be written to a template. Often, the template (eg in the form of a letter) will require short phrases to be inserted by the candidate, though at other times the inserts may be of a longer and/or more complex nature. This type of directed writing is mostly, though not exclusively, to be found in the Language in Work units.

4. Controlled conditions

By this is meant the completion of tasks or assessments within the presenting centre and under the supervision of the teacher/lecturer, without examination conditions having to be imposed. It is expected, however, that the candidates will complete the work on their own without reference to fellow candidates or the teacher/lecturer, unless the nature of the task (eg interactional) makes that necessary.

5. Reference Material

At Advanced Higher, the use of relevant reference material is permitted in the production of the internally assessed piece of writing in the target language. By this is meant text(s) and/or other primary sources studied (eg newspaper articles, business reports, promotional material). The use of secondary sources related to them (eg critical commentaries, teaching notes, previous drafts) is not permitted.

6. Teaching block/period

This refers to the block of time available for work at any one time. The length may range from 30 minutes in some schools to 2 hours 30 minutes in some colleges of further education. The length of time provided for candidates to undertake an assessment task should be neither artificially shortened nor prolonged. For example, if it is estimated that a task would take 50 minutes when the school's timetable is organised in 30-minute blocks, it would be necessary for the task to be completed within a double rather than a single period. At the other extreme, the availability of an extended period of time should not lead to the completion of the task being unnecessarily prolonged.