

GCSE Languages, Paper 2: Speaking

Conduct of the tests



Session content

- Format of the tests
- Keeping the tests secure
- Teacher preparation and organisation
- Student preparation time
- Conducting the tests



Format of the tests

- Each student takes one test, either Foundation or Higher.
- The test consists of (in this order):
 - one role-play
 - one photo card
 - a general conversation.
- Tests for all languages conducted over a specified period (up to five weeks in April and May). Dates available on timetable in each series.
- AQA supplies the confidential examination material (role plays and photo cards).
- Notes by students are made on MFL Additional Answer Sheets (printed at the school/college).
- Teacher conducts and records tests as mp3 files.
- AQA marks the tests.



Security of the tests

- The speaking tests may be opened, if the teacher so wishes, up to three working days before the specified period in which tests are to be conducted.
- It is essential that the confidentiality of the speaking test material is strictly maintained prior to and throughout the period of the tests. Its content must not be disclosed and the material must be kept on the school premises, under secure storage.
- The speaking test material must be treated as confidential until the end of the specified period. It must be checked in and out of secure storage when in use and kept under secure storage when not in use.
- Students must not be allowed to write on or mark the role-play or photo cards under any circumstances. The cards must be collected in as soon as the photo card task has been completed.

Security of the tests

- Students may make notes on MFL Additional Answer Sheets during the supervised preparation period. Any such notes must be handed to the teacher as soon as the photo card has been completed. The notes must be stored under secure conditions until results day, after which they can be disposed of.

Preparation in advance of the test

At least a few days before the exams, sort out the order that students will do the test in and know which role-play and photo card each student will have, bearing in mind the nominated theme for the general conversation.

Check rooms for preparation and conduct of the tests:

Preparation room

- sequence charts per tier available in teacher's booklet
- sufficient sets of role-play and photo cards available.

Conduct room

- size of room
- furnishings, eg carpet to ensure high quality recording
- location – students in the preparation room must not be able to hear tests being conducted in the test room
- all language-related posters etc taken down or covered (in preparation room and room where the test is conducted).



Preparation in advance of the test (continued)

Check equipment condition and position to ensure both teacher and student can be heard clearly.

Know the instructions. Make sure invigilators are fully briefed in advance and know the instructions.

Organise students.

- Foundation candidates first?
- Higher candidates next?



Organisation on the day

In the preparation room:

- role-play cards
- photo cards
- MFL additional answer sheets for student notes
- instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations
- JCQ regulations
- candidate warning notices
- no dictionary allowed.

Reminder - students in the preparation room must not be able to hear tests being conducted in the other room



Organisation on the day (continued)

In the conduct room:

- recording device
- teacher's booklet
- sequence chart per tier (in back of teacher's booklet)
- instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations
- JCQ Regulations
- candidate warning notices
- clock/stopwatch
- copy of attendance list.

Is the room organised so that the teacher can conduct the tests and the student can feel comfortable?

Student will need desk space but still needs to be near enough to the recording device to ensure high quality recording.



Beginning the preparation period

Teacher:

- refers to student's place in the sequence of students being tested. There is one separate Sequence Chart for Foundation students and one for Higher students. These are in the teacher's booklet and show the role-play card and photo card that should be issued to each student, depending on their nominated theme for the general conversation
- hands the appropriate role-play card and photo card to the student to prepare.

Student:

- prepares under supervision for 12 minutes
- may make unlimited notes on the MFL Additional Answer Sheets which can be used during the role play and photo card parts of the test.

NB notes must be handed to the teacher before the start of the general conversation.

Preparation time for the student

- Make as many notes for the role-play and the photo card as you like in the 12 minutes.
- For the role-play, give only the amount of information you are asked for (one detail, two details, etc).
- For the photo card write answers/notes to the prepared questions that are developed well, but not so well that the maximum time may be exceeded. Most (ie three) of the five questions must be developed in order to score in the top band.
- Written notes can be read verbatim during the test.
- Be careful with pronunciation when reading from notes.



During the test - general

- The recording must **not** be stopped or paused at any time during the test.
- Do not correct the student's language in any part of the test.
- Do not speak so quickly that the student will find it hard to follow what you are saying.
- Announce the beginning of each section in the target language: 'we will start with the role-play', 'and now the photo card', 'now the general conversation beginning with theme...'.
• Announce in the target language when you move to the second theme in the general conversation
- In the event of a technical malfunction, the student concerned should be re-tested within the allocated period using different cards.
- Everything said by the teacher must be audible – nothing must be whispered.



During the test - role-play

- Teacher must keep to the script – not doing so could disadvantage students.
- Repetition is okay if the student doesn't reply but it is recommended that there is only one repetition of a given question as it may be off-putting to the student to have more.
- If the student gives a complete but incorrect answer, the teacher cannot repeat the question.
- If the student gives an incorrect answer, but then self-corrects, this is acceptable.
- If more than one detail is requested, but the student only gives one, say 'And ...' or 'Anything else?' in the target language.
- In a two-part task, let the student answer the first part, then ask the second part (pause shown by '...' in the teacher's script).
- If a student completes the task but is about to give more information, interrupt and move on.
- When you are asked a question by the student, keep the reply brief.
- No need to time the role-play.

During the test – photo card

- A question may be paraphrased but the same meaning must be maintained.
- Look at the questions carefully in advance to see if you might want to change the wording of some. For instance, in Spanish *Internet* instead of *la Red* in French *ami(e)* for *copain/copine*. In practice, this is likely to relate to the unprepared questions, as the student will have prepared answers to the first three questions in the preparation time. Paraphrasing one of the prepared questions may prove off-putting to the student.
- Interrupt a student who may not be able to answer all five questions because the first answers are very long.
- If a student has a long pause, it may be better to move on so more questions will be answered.
- More able students may use conjecture about the photo ('I think it's hot because the people are wearing shorts'), which is acceptable.
- 'I like the photo' or a similar opinion will not be acceptable on its own.

During the test – photo card (continued)

- Time the recording with a stopwatch. Timing begins as soon as you begin the question ‘What is there in the photo?’; two minutes maximum at Foundation, three minutes at Higher. If a question has been asked on 2 or 3 minutes, the student is allowed to complete their answer. If the student is speaking at this point, allow them to complete their answer.
- Ask only the five questions in the teacher’s booklet, no follow-up questions.
- Collect in the cards and notes before the start of the general conversation.



During the test – general conversation

- The general conversation must be on the two themes indicated in the speaking test sequence chart. The first one is the student's nominated theme and the second one is the remaining theme (not the theme covered by the photo card).
- Be clear about which topics and sub-topics are covered in each theme (see the specification, pages 10-11). The vocabulary lists in the specification also give further guidance on the scope of the sub-topics.
- Coverage of the two themes should be of a similar amount of time per theme.
- Questions asked of each student should reflect his/her ability and interests. Foundation students may not do so well if they are asked lots of questions in different tenses. However, in order to score in the top band for range and accuracy of language, Foundation students need to make successful reference to all three time frames.

During the test – general conversation (continued)

- Suggested questions covering the full ability range are provided for each theme in the teacher's booklet as a guideline but these questions are not compulsory and teachers are free to use their own questions if they wish.
- During the test, have a list of questions per theme to refer to should the conversation begin to dry up.
- There is no requirement to cover a specific number of topics or sub-topics for each theme.
- Students have to ask you a question during the general conversation. If, at the end of the conversation, they haven't asked one, say in the target language, 'Is there anything you want to ask me?'
- The purpose of the question that the student asks in the general conversation is to elicit information, it is not essential to include a verb, if information can be elicited in another way. The example, therefore, of the student asking 'And you?' would be perfectly acceptable provided that it made sense in, and was appropriate to the context.

During the test – general conversation (continued)

- A question must elicit information, rather than repetition/clarification of something the teacher has said. So ‘Can you repeat that please?’ would not meet the requirement.
- When you are asked a question, keep your reply brief.
- Time the general conversation with a stopwatch. Timing begins as soon as you begin to ask the first question. Five minutes maximum at Foundation, seven minutes at Higher. If a question has been asked on five/seven minutes, the student is allowed to complete their answer.
- If a student has a long pause, it may be better to move on so that the spontaneity/fluency mark is not adversely affected.
- Remember to say ‘end of test’ on the recording for each test.



After the tests

- Each student's recording must be saved as an mp3 file.
- All recordings must be transferred either to a memory stick or to a CD.
- The filename must contain the component code, centre number and candidate number, eg 8698SF_55217_0041.mp3.
- In addition, the centre number and component code should be written on a CD with an indelible pen. Do not use a sticky label. Similarly a memory stick must have a tag attached.
- As soon as all the tests are completed for the centre, the memory sticks/CDs must be sent to the AQA examiner together with the Attendance List. This must be done within one working day of the last date of the five-week period at the latest.
- You are advised to keep a copy of the recording in case of loss in the post or damage to memory stick/CD in transit. Ensure the memory stick/CD is packaged carefully, using bubble wrap or padding.



Resources to accompany this presentation

Please see our teaching resources pages for [French](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#) to find:

- GCSE Speaking marked example assessments with commentaries
- GCSE Speaking test sound files to accompany example assessments

Please see our assessment resources pages for [French](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#) to find our new GCSE Instructions for the conduct of the examinations June 2018.

Marked example assessments will be available for other languages in summer 2017.



AQA Contacts

If you have any questions about the content of this webcast, please contact the languages team using the email address or telephone number below.

mfl@aqa.org.uk

Tel: 01423 534 381





Thank you
