

Ofqual published the outcome of its consultation on the assessment of MFL spoken language skills in 2021 on 5th. November 2020 ... and, following consultation, the criteria teachers must use to assess students' spoken language skills.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/gcse-mfl-spoken-language-assessment-criteria-and-approach>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/933254/GCSE_Subject_Level_Conditions_and_Requirements_for_Modern_Foreign_Languages_and_Certificate_Requirements__2021_.pdf

Headline extracts:

'Given the disruption being caused by the pandemic, teachers may assess their students' spoken language skills during normal classroom activities or as individual, one-off assessments.

We have confirmed that exam boards will not be required to review evidence of student performance as this would undermine the intended flexibility of the approach, and would be burdensome for centres.

Each school and college will need to provide a statement to its exam boards, to say they have taken all reasonable steps to make sure students have the opportunity for their spoken language to be assessed'.

Detailed extract

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(b) a 'spoken language statement' is a true and accurate written statement made by a Centre to an awarding organisation which confirms that it has taken reasonable steps to secure that each Learner to which that Centre has delivered the assessments to be taken in a particular assessment cycle for a GCSE Qualification in Modern Foreign Languages which the awarding organisation makes available has had the opportunity to take a spoken language assessment.

Spoken language assessments should, but do not have to, take place during normal teaching and learning rather than during a one-off performance. The criteria set out below are not intended to be used in a formal examination context and there is no requirement to set up Centre-devised speaking tests to arrive at an outcome unless this is a necessary arrangement for specific Learners, e.g. for private candidates.

Teachers may base their judgements on the accumulation of evidence of a Learner's language performance through everyday classroom activities over time. This means

Teachers have scope for various opportunities for Learners to demonstrate competence against the criteria set out below. There is no requirement for an awarding organisation to review this evidence.

Teachers may share the criteria with their Learners, as well as their 'working at' level, if they wish, to enable them to discuss, monitor and assess their own progress and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Teachers should arrive at judgements taking into account a Learner's strengths and weaknesses in performance across a range of contexts, themes and activities with different purposes.

Themes are those broad themes which will be taught in order to cover the requirements for Listening, Reading and Writing as outlined in the awarding organisation's specification.

Speaking activities can be integrated into the teaching and learning of these skills in order to develop the skill of speaking in its own right as well as supporting the development of the other skills.

Different purposes may cover for example, conversations, presentations, transactions, formal and informal settings, descriptions and narrations. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Learners can demonstrate their speaking skills in relation to different purposes in a whole class context, working in pairs and groups or in a one-to-one interaction with the Teacher.

To be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction a Learner must –

(a) take part in different tasks that are varied across different themes,

(b) use language for different purposes, and

(c) meet all of the criteria at the level for the Communication and interaction aspect and all of the criteria at the same level for at least two of the three other aspects of assessment with one aspect permissible at the level below. This includes awarding a pass to Learners who fail to meet the criteria for one of Range of language, Accuracy or Pronunciation and intonation.

(A Learner who does not meet the criteria to be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction, or who has not been exempted on grounds of disability from the assessment but who does not take it, is issued a result of 'not classified'.)

The criteria below are to be applied to Learners entering at either the foundation or higher tier.

The criteria are not intended to be a mark scheme ...

The criteria for Pass, Merit and Distinction do not relate to specific tasks, but are designed to be used across a range of contexts, purposes and teaching situations.

The key focus is on competence in Communication and interaction which is mandatory at the level to be awarded. To be awarded that level the expectations for Communication and interaction and two of the other aspects must be met in full. One of the other aspects may be one below the level to allow for a range of performance.

The criteria allow a Learner to present a 'spiky profile' in performance ...