

AS Speaking tests in French, German and Spanish

Guide to the conduct of tests
7651/3T 7661/3T and 7691/3T



Objectives

- To understand how the speaking test functions.
- To understand how the student's performance in this test is assessed.
- To understand how this affects the examiner's role in the conduct of this test.
- To identify aspects of best practice that will enable the optimum performance by the student.

The AS speaking test

- The examiner will have the sequence of stimulus cards to be used with students.
- The student is given 4 stimulus cards.
- For the first discussion the student's 2 cards will be on the same sub-theme within the overall theme of social aspects.
- The student chooses 1 of these cards to prepare for the first discussion.

The AS speaking test

- For the second discussion the student's two cards will be on two different sub-themes from the overall theme of artistic culture.
- The student chooses one of these cards to prepare for the second discussion.
- Both cards are prepared within the 15 minutes allowed for preparation
- The student is responsible for managing the time so that both cards can be adequately prepared.

The AS speaking test

- The Part 1 discussion lasts between 6 and 7 minutes and the Part 2 discussion lasts between 6 and 7 minutes.
- The examiner is responsible for managing these timings.
- Marking of the tests will stop at 14 minutes after the phrasing of the first question in the Part 1 discussion.

The AS speaking test

- In the preparation time the student must prepare a question based on each stimulus card to put to the examiner in the course of each discussion.
- If the student omits to ask a question and is not prompted to do so by the examiner this will affect the mark awarded for Assessment Objective (AO) 2.
- This leads us logically to considering the mark scheme for the speaking test.

How performance is assessed

- Each discussion is assessed and marked according to the same mark scheme.
- The sub-totals for each discussion (30 marks each) are then added together and this gives the total mark for the test (60 marks).
- All 4 AOs are assessed in the speaking test.

AOs and marks available

- AO1 Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face to face interaction (5 marks).
- AO2 Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources (5 marks).

AOs and marks available

- AO3 Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken form, using a range of lexis and structure (10 marks).
- AO4 Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken (10 marks).

AOs and marks available

- Assessment is weighted more towards AO3 and AO4.
- Different emphasis from the legacy speaking test.
- Look in more detail at the mark bands and descriptors for each AO.
- Consider how this information impacts on how the examiner conducts the test.

AO1

Mark	Description
5	A good pace of delivery that makes nearly all responses easy to follow. The ideas and opinions expressed are mostly developed. Students respond appropriately to most unpredictable elements
4	A reasonable pace of delivery that makes most responses easy to follow. The ideas and opinions expressed are often developed. Students respond appropriately to some unpredictable elements.
3	Pace of delivery is such that some responses are easy to follow. The ideas and opinions expressed are sometimes developed. Students respond appropriately to a few unpredictable elements.
2	Pace of delivery is such that most responses are difficult to follow. The ideas and opinions expressed are only occasionally developed. Students respond appropriately to few unpredictable elements
1	Pace of delivery is very slow and disjointed throughout. The ideas and opinions expressed are rarely developed. Students respond appropriately to very few unpredictable elements
0	Nothing in the performance is worthy of a mark

AO1: key messages

- Pace of delivery and how easy or otherwise this is to follow.
- Development of ideas and opinions.
- Response to unpredictable elements.

From key messages to aspects of conduct: AO1

- Model in the asking of questions the sort of pace we want in the delivery of responses.
- A calm, relaxed but purposeful manner in the conduct of the test will help the student.
- Use questions that elicit views and opinions and that invite the student to develop points made.
- Make sure there are regular unpredictable elements.

Mark	Description
5	Students' responses show that they have a very good understanding of the material on the card.
4	Students' responses show that they have a good understanding of the material on the card
3	Students' responses show that they have some understanding of the material on the card.
2	Students' responses show that they have a limited understanding of the material on the card.
1	Students' responses show that they have a very limited understanding of the material on the card.
0	Nothing in the performance is worthy of a mark.

AO2 key messages

- Link between student responses and what these show of their understanding of the material on the card.
- Material on the card means the text containing target-language headings, any statement of opinion, any factual or statistical information and the printed questions.

From key messages to aspects of conduct: AO2

- Don't leave misinterpreted or misunderstood material unchallenged.
- Guide the student towards reviewing and rethinking the wrong interpretation or misunderstanding.
- Keep as close as possible to the phrasing of the printed questions as it appears on the card.
- Don't use explicit 'comprehension testing' questions.
- Remember to prompt the student to ask a question or a 1 mark penalty will be applied in AO2.

AO3

Mark	Description
9-10	A good range of varied vocabulary and complex language and some knowledge of appropriate idiom are demonstrated. Application of grammar is mostly accurate. Pronunciation and intonation are very good.
7-8	Some variety of vocabulary and complex language is demonstrated. Application of grammar is often accurate. Pronunciation and intonation are good
5-6	Little variety of vocabulary and structures is demonstrated. Application of grammar is sometimes accurate. Pronunciation and intonation are fairly good.
3-4	Predominantly simple language with limited variety of vocabulary and structures. Application of grammar is rarely accurate with some serious errors. Pronunciation and intonation are mostly intelligible.
1-2	1 – 2 The range of vocabulary and structures is significantly limiting. Little evidence of accurate grammar with frequent serious errors. Pronunciation and intonation are poor.
0	Nothing in the performance is worthy of a mark.

AO3 key messages

- Variety of vocabulary, complexity of language and appropriateness of idiom – idiom refers to a form of expression particular to the target language.
- Accurate application of grammar: serious errors are defined as those which adversely affect communication.
- Pronunciation and intonation – not expected to be of native speaker standard.

From key messages to aspects of conduct: AO3

- Use questions that provide opportunities for complex language to be demonstrated.
- Encourage the student to explain points in ways that can show more varied vocabulary.
- Distinguish between idiom and idioms and discourage responses peppered with the latter.
- Emphasise good and very good pronunciation and intonation in practising speaking skills.

Mark	Description
9-10	Very good critical response. Very good knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. Students are mostly successful in developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub-theme.
7-8	Good critical response. Good knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. Students are often successful in developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub-theme. The performance is worthy of a mark.
5-6	Reasonable critical response. Reasonable knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. Students are sometimes successful in developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub-theme.

Mark	Description
3-4	Limited critical response. Limited knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. Students are occasionally successful in developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the subtheme.
1-2	Very limited critical response. Very limited knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub theme covered in the discussion. Students are rarely successful in developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub theme.
0	Nothing in the performance is worthy of a mark.

AO4 Key messages

- Quality of critical response.
- Quality of knowledge and understanding of aspects of sub-theme covered.
- Level of success in developing arguments, justifying points of view, drawing conclusions – all based on the understanding of the sub-theme.

From key messages to aspects of conduct: AO4

- Factual knowledge per se is not what is required.
- Knowledge and understanding that allow views and opinions to be developed, points of view to be justified or conclusions to be supported are what the mark scheme rewards.
- Encourage 'student-led' knowledge ... from what you've learned in your studies / as far as you are aware / in the country or communities you've studied.
- Don't ask for random facts and figures to be quoted back from articles in textbooks etc.

From key messages to aspects of conduct: AO4

- If appropriate, draw on student's first hand knowledge gained from a visit abroad or contact with pen friends.
- If the student's responses focus too much on factual knowledge, work in some opinion questions.
- Keep the balance between knowledge and understanding and the purposes these are for (development, justification, support or evidence).

The structured dialogue approach

- Each discussion is supported by a stimulus card.
- Each card has three printed questions.
- Stagger the asking of the printed questions across about the first 3 minutes of the test.
- This will force you to focus on and follow up responses to the questions and to use supplementary questions.
- This in turn will create the unpredictable elements you need.
- Having explored the printed questions through follow-up questions and discussion, focus on wider aspects of the sub-theme.

Further help and support

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

- advice and Guidance notes for new AS Speaking tests
- AS Speaking example assessment
- AS Speaking Tests 01 and 02 (sound files).

Please see our assessment resources pages for [French](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#) to find our new AS Instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations June 2017.

AQA contacts

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Thank you
