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GCSE

**PANJABI**

8683/SF Speaking

Report on the Examination

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8683/SF

June 2023

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## General comments

Almost all schools/colleges managed well with the requirements of the speaking tests, which resulted in many well conducted tests.

Changes were made to the 2023 papers to reflect the removal of the regulatory requirement to test vocabulary outside of the published vocabulary list. We sincerely apologise for the errors which occurred in this component as a result of these changes.

## Tier of entry

There was evidence to suggest that some students could have been entered for Higher tier. It is recognised that the unavailability of a mixed-tier entry means that such decisions are complex. It is important that schools/colleges recognise the complexity of such decisions and make appropriate choices, allowing students to perform to their full potential.

## Quality of recordings

For a very small number of tests, recording quality was poor. This was usually caused by the tests being recorded at a very low volume and were virtually inaudible. In other cases, the teacher-examiner could be heard clearly but not the student. Please remember that teachers are used to projecting their voice and therefore are likely to be louder; the microphone should be positioned closer to the student and the sound level should be set according to the student's output. All equipment should be tested before recording student tests to ensure it is audible.

## Teacher-examiner Tester Performance records (TTPRs)

The information provided on the TTPR is intended to provide teacher-examiners with feedback on the conduct of the speaking tests to inform the conduct of future tests. It is not possible to provide more detailed feedback than the information on the TTPR form. The feedback is provided on the basis of need only and will not be necessary for every school/college.

A breakdown of marks for each section of the speaking test for each student in your centre is available free of charge in ERA (Enhanced Results Analysis). ERA is accessed via Centre Services.

## Conduct of the tests

It is pleasing to note that many teachers conducted the tests in a highly professional way, strictly following the guidelines set out in the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations*. This allowed for efficient testing, something which puts the student at ease and helps the examiner at a later stage.

The prescribed combination of Role play, Photo card and General conversation in the AQA sequencing chart was followed by the vast majority of teachers. Unfortunately, there were a few instances of the wrong combination being used, resulting in the theme of the Photo card being duplicated in the General conversation. In such cases, the maximum mark for Communication in the General conversation that can be awarded is five out of a possible ten.

Unfortunately, there were also a few teacher-examiners who did not follow the speaking test procedures as laid out in the *Instructions for the Conduct of the Examinations*. First of all, the

introduction to each student must include the number of the Role play, Photo card letter and nominated theme of General conversation.

After starting the test, procedural issues should be announced succinctly in Panjabi, e.g. ਰੋਲ ਪਲੇ ਨੰਬਰ 9, ਫੋਟੋ ਕਾਰਡ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਥੀਮ (ਵਿਸ਼ਾ) ਇੱਕ ਦੋ ਜਾਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਆਦਿ ।

It is particularly important to announce a change of theme during the General conversation and under no circumstances should themes be mixed up or random/irrelevant questions on unrelated topics asked by the teacher-examiner. In a few cases teacher-examiners asked students random questions.

In order to help students perform to the best of their ability, it is essential that teacher-examiners read the specification thoroughly and familiarise themselves with the requirements of the tests as laid out in the *Instructions for the conduct of the exam* and the speaking test training materials, both available on the AQA website. There were cases of errors in the conduct of the exam that impacted adversely on students' marks.

It is essential that teacher-examiners are sufficiently prepared and have the appropriate level of language to conduct the test. There were a few cases in which teachers did not have sufficient knowledge and skills to conduct the tests and this had an impact on those students' performances and marks.

### **Timings**

Most students completed the Photo card task comfortably within the time limit. At Foundation tier, where the time limit is two minutes, there were some tests where all five questions were not asked within the time allowed. This was occasionally due to a very slow delivery by the student, but more often the result of too long and repetitive types of answers to the first three questions, especially the first question eliciting a description of the photo. In addition to that a few teachers asked additional questions which were not required by the task – only the five questions in the Teacher's Booklet should be asked.

Many General conversations adhered to the minimum and maximum timings. However there were some schools/colleges that had problems with timing this part of the exam. As a result, one or even both of the themes in the General conversation did not meet the minimum time requirement of a minute and a half for each theme. This had an impact on the mark awarded for Communication in that there was a reduction of two marks. Teacher-examiners are advised to make sure the time is spread evenly between two themes and note that the timing of the second General conversation theme starts when the first question on that theme is asked. All time up to this point is allocated to coverage of the first theme.

There were a small number of schools where tests were over long - approximately 16-18 minutes on average and the teacher-examiners did not follow the guidance in the Instructions and in the Teacher's Booklet. The maximum time for each student's test at Foundation tier is 9 minutes.

### **Conducting the Role play**

In the Role play, the prescribed role in the Teacher's Booklet was adhered to by most teachers. There were cases however, where teacher-examiners reworded the Role play teacher script and any subsequent response by the student was invalidated. Teacher-examiners are reminded that the Panjabi phrases provided can only be changed if a student's response makes them inappropriate. Some teacher-examiners also asked questions which were not part of the script,

asked the tasks in the wrong order or even omitted some of them, causing confusion for the student. In some Role plays, if a student gave a complete though incorrect answer to a question, the mark given was zero, even if the teacher-examiner then repeated the question and a correct answer followed. Some teacher-examiners pursued a correct answer in this way and at times it seemed to affect the student's confidence. However, when a teacher-examiner recognised that a student was starting to give a wrong answer and interjected by repeating the question, any subsequent correct answer was rewarded.

In the case of two-part unprepared questions, often ones requiring opinions and reasons, it is good practice to elicit the two elements separately.

Also, many teacher-examiners prompted students to ask them the question task, but unfortunately some teacher-examiners provided key vocabulary at the same time which meant that students could not be credited.

### **Conducting the Photo card**

There were some occasions that an entire question was paraphrased in a way that changed the meaning, e.g. ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਦਾ ਆਲਾ ਦੁਆਲਾ ਸਾਫ਼ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ ? was replaced with ਆਪਣਾ ਘਰ ਸਾਫ਼ ਰੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ ? Alongside this, there were many cases of attempts at paraphrasing that did not retain the original meaning of the question and therefore invalidated any subsequent response by the student. Some teacher-examiners introduced their own questions or added supplementary ones. As a result, students did not gain a half minutes credit. There were also a few instances in which teacher-examiners asked only three questions instead of five which impacted on the mark which could be awarded.

Teacher-examiners are reminded that repetition of a question is allowed and that the original question can be paraphrased in the second asking; however, a full question must still be asked that retains its original meaning. Moreover, the question should not be repeated if a complete response has been given by the student. In such cases, the student's answer to the repeated question is disregarded for assessment purposes. In some cases despite of the student gave the answer teacher examiner continue to repeat the question to get more information of the that student.

In the Teacher's Booklet, it states: *No supplementary questions must be asked.* Despite this clear instruction, a surprising number of additional questions were asked. Students' answers to such questions were not taken into account for assessment and reduced the amount of time available for the student to answer the prescribed questions as fully as possible.

### **Conducting the General conversation**

In some schools/colleges, teacher-examiners covered only one theme in the General conversation or mixed up two themes, which impacted on student marks. There were a few instances of duplicating the theme from the Photo card in the General conversation, which reduced the marks available for Communication. For a large number of students, there was also an imbalance between the coverage of their nominated theme and that of the second theme. Teacher-examiners should ensure that at least a minute and a half is spent on each theme. As some teachers were not familiar with the test requirements they covered only one theme inviting students to do a presentation and asked only a few questions.

Most teacher-examiners used the suggested questions in the Teacher's Booklet without consideration of the ability of a particular student. Many teacher-examiners used the same

questions for each student, without using supplementary questions or requesting further clarification from the student. There were also a number of teachers using closed questions that have very limited usefulness, as they do not enable students to show their skills and knowledge of the Panjabi language.

In order to give the student the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to respond spontaneously, teacher-examiners should intervene and follow up what has been said, for example by seeking further detail, clarification, opinions or, for lower attaining students, simple queries or requests for further detail. There were a number of instances when teacher-examiners asked a question that students had already discussed earlier in their responses.

In the General conversation there is a requirement for students to ask a question to the teacher. Most students either asked the question at a time of their choice, or it was elicited by the teacher at the end of the test. Unfortunately, this led to some students not asking questions and therefore the one-mark penalty being applied to the mark for Communication as outlined in the mark scheme. Teachers should encourage students to accomplish this routine task early in the General conversation to ensure it does not go beyond the time allowed. Teachers should also remember that they are allowed to prompt the student to ask a question by saying, e.g. ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੋਈ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਪੁੱਛਣਾ ਹੈ? ਜਾਂ ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਪੁੱਛਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ? Some teacher-examiners did it well, even though the students declared ਨਹੀਂ, at the first instance, but other teacher-examiners did not. Failure by the student to ask a question leads to a one mark reduction.

It was pleasing to see that questions were consistently asked that allowed students to give and explain opinions, necessary to gain access to the highest tier top band for Communication. At Foundation tier, most students were given the opportunity to use all three time frames, thereby gaining access to the 9-10 band for Range and accuracy of language.

Probably the biggest challenge in the speaking test for teacher-examiners is the need to use a questioning technique that allows students to clearly demonstrate spontaneity. Not all teacher-examiners created opportunities for a spontaneous conversation.

### **Student performance in the Role play**

The Role plays tended to be done reasonably well. Most students were able to access the target language bullet points and were able to formulate an appropriate and concise response.

On occasions, students gave far more information than was necessary to accomplish the task, which should be discouraged e.g. Role play 1 task 2 required students to give only one detail.

Some teachers did not split two-part unseen questions, whilst others omitted to ask the second part.

Most students were able to effectively formulate the question from the prompt words provided in the ? task, but in some cases used the inappropriate form of address. They had difficulties in addressing the teacher as ਤੁਸੀਂ/ਤੂੰ in the formal Role plays. This was taken into account when awarding the mark for KUL (Knowledge and use of Language). There were occasions when students asked a totally random question, sometimes relating to the previous task, but not linked to the given prompt which could not be credited.

The majority of students were able to respond appropriately to the unpredictable task which demonstrated their ability to deal with language in a spontaneous way.

All students need to familiarise themselves with the format and demands of the Role plays and the meaning of ? and ! symbols in particular.

### **Specific Foundation Tier Role play comments**

At Foundation tier, the following tasks generally proved to be most challenging for students.

#### **Role play 1**

Some students did not respond very well to bullet point three as they did not understand the requirement to ask a question as it appeared in the middle of this role-play. The question task was accessible and a majority of students formed an appropriate question.

#### **Role play 2**

This Role play was accessible to all students who attempted this as it was on a familiar topic about their friends. The question task generated appropriate questions, but some students used the incorrect form of address.

#### **Role play 3**

Many lower attaining students found this Role play challenging and mixed up some of the answers. A majority of students produced a valid question which was pleasing.

#### **Role play 4**

This appeared to be accessible despite a repetition of some words in bullet point three. Very few students were affected by this as it was clearly asking students about ਬਚੁਰਗਾਂ ਲਈ ਥਾਂਵਾਂ। Almost all students scored well in this Role play.

#### **Role play 5**

This Role play was accessible and students did very well in all tasks. Some lower attaining students found task three 'ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਿਹਤ ਲਈ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਯਤਨ' a little challenging as they could not understand the word ਯਤਨ. In the question task, a few students did not use informal address despite a reminder in the rubric.

#### **Role play 6**

This Role play was completed very well by most students as it was based on their immediate experience of school and education. They were able to answer all tasks with confidence as these were based on their plans after doing GCSEs.

### **Student Performance in the Photo card**

Generally, this part of the test was conducted very well and most students performed well. Most students did not need more than a minute and a half to answer all five questions and were able to give a reasonably well-developed response to the first prepared question ਇਸ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹੋ ?

Although the development of response is to be welcomed, students need to make sure that what

they say still addresses the question of what can be seen in the photo. It is perfectly acceptable to give a personal opinion about an aspect of the picture, e.g. ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਖੁਸ਼ ਲਗਦੇ ਹਨ।

In order to score in the top band, students had to answer all questions clearly and develop at least three responses by using several clauses. The lack of development of answers in some cases made it impossible for some students to score high marks. It is understandable that the answers to the three prepared questions were usually more developed than those to the two unseen questions.

Most students were able to give and explain opinions. However, there were still a few students who could not access the 10-12 band because no opinion was explained.

Some teacher-examiners only asked three questions while there were some others who incorrectly added additional questions. These actions affected students' marks.

### **Specific Foundation Tier Photo card comments**

Students usually found most of the photo stimuli and sets of questions to be equally accessible. The Photo card that students found the most challenging was Photo card D on the sub-theme of Global Issues. This presented some linguistic and conceptual challenges. However, teacher-examiners must be aware that these are topics in this specification and students must be prepared to encounter them in the speaking test.

Other comments are provided below on the cards used in this exam series.

#### **Photo card A**

Almost all students found this Photo card accessible as it was based on celebrating Diwali. Almost all students have had immediate experience of celebrating Diwali and other festivals and they were able to answer all questions very well.

#### **Photo card B**

The Photo card was interesting and accessible to students as it was based on their free time activities. Almost all students were able to answer all questions except a few lower attaining students.

#### **Photo card C**

This Photo card was also accessible to students as the photo provided them with some very good ideas. They could talk about their house and their area based on their immediate experiences.

#### **Photo card D**

This Photo card appeared to be challenging for students as they required some challenging vocabulary, such as ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਣ, ਕੂੜਾ-ਕਰਕਟ, ਗੰਦਗੀ etc. Students found the second question challenging and instead of answering what they do to keep the area around their house clean, they answered in the context of keeping the house clean.

#### **Photo card E**

This Photo card was accessible to students and they were able to answer confidently.

## Photo card F

This Photo card was accessible to all students as it was on the familiar topic of education –Post 16.

### General conversation

For most students, the Conversation element of the test was where they performed best.

Generally, students managed to maintain a conversation for the minimum amount of time across two themes. Most students tried to develop their responses, particularly to questions from the nominated theme. Students often gave and explained opinions in addition to basic information.

Many students used complex structures and vocabulary, which gave them access to the top marks for Range and accuracy of language. Overall students' vocabulary was mostly good but occasionally students used English words through effective code-switching. Some of the cognates and special names were used in the English form e.g. *Sixth Form, Science, Art, level, interview, grade*. It is pleasing to note that some students did elaborate and explain their meaning in detail in Panjabi.

There were also a few students with more limited Panjabi vocabulary and their language was sometimes repetitive and conveyed only basic information. These students often mixed different time frames, noun cases and verb endings. A few of them could not speak using appropriate grammatical structures.

Finally, in some cases there was a noticeable issue with language accuracy when Panjabi sentence structure becomes an issue. Some unnatural word combinations or word order are common, which are direct copies from English.

Some students demonstrated the ability to incorporate a greater range of structure, including modal verbs and common subordinating conjunctions. The other common mistakes made by the students appeared to be subject verb agreement and the appropriate use of *ਚੈ, ਹਾਂ, ਹਨ, ਹੋ* etc. However, in some cases, the potential mark for both Communication and Range and accuracy of language was lowered significantly by the frequency of serious errors that impeded the intended meaning.

The standard of pronunciation and intonation was usually very good or excellent and students often received high marks.

### Advice to teachers

#### General

- Do a short test recording before the first student's test to check recording levels and clarity.
- Position the microphone or digital recorder so that it picks up both voices clearly.
- The *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations* document is available on the AQA website for each exam series. It is *essential* that you follow the instructions in that document.
- In the *Instructions* document, you are told how to introduce each student in English. This is what you should say at the start of the recording for every student: GCSE Panjabi examination, June (*year of exam*). Centre number \_\_\_\_, student number \_\_\_\_, student name \_\_\_\_. Role play number \_\_\_\_, Photo card letter \_\_\_\_, General conversation theme chosen by student Theme (1, 2 or 3).

- Use Panjabi throughout the exam once you have introduced the student and his/her Role play and Photo card combinations and the nominated theme for the General conversation in English.
- Respond positively to what the students say, even if it is not very good. It will encourage them for the rest of the test.
- Practice pronunciation as often as possible.

### Role play

- Keep to your script as laid out in the Teacher's Role.
- If you see that a student is starting to give the wrong answer to your question, stop him/ her and repeat the question. Once the student completes an incorrect answer, a mark of zero for Communication is given for that task, even if you repeat the question and a correct answer is given subsequently.
- If a student asks for repetition of your question or if there is no answer, you may repeat the question.

### Photo card

- You may paraphrase a question, provided the same meaning is maintained. However, be aware that if the meaning is changed, the student's reply will not be credited.
- Ask all five questions in the Teacher's Booklet, but do not ask any follow up questions.
- Keep an eye on the timing. If a student's replies are very long and it looks as though you may not be able to ask the final question in the two minute maximum time, it may be better to interrupt an answer and ask the next question.

### General conversation

- Encourage students to vary their language structures and vocabulary as much as possible. Opinions are the most obvious area to focus on – not everything has to be described as ਪਸੰਦ ਨਾਂ ਬੋਰਿੰਗ and there are other ways to say ਚੰਗੀ ਲਗਦੀ ਹੈ/ਪਿਆਰੀ ਲਗਦੀ ਹੈ etc.
- Train students to give and justify opinions without necessarily being asked to do so. This can form the basis of different starter activities.
- Be sensitive to the ability of the students – someone who struggles to describe his/her town is not going to be successful discussing more challenging aspects of the topic, e.g. the impact of global warming.
- Try to ask students questions that reflect their interests and ability. Do not ask all students identical questions.
- In order to achieve a greater sense of spontaneity in the conversation, follow up a student's response by asking about what they have just told you.
- Announce the change of theme in Panjabi: ਆਉ ਹੁਣ ਅਗਲੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।
- Keep a close eye on the time. If one of the themes lasts for less than 1 minute 30 seconds, there is a deduction of two marks for Communication.
- The maximum length of the General conversation is five minutes. **Everything after that will not be marked.**
- Remember to prompt the student to ask you a question if they do not do it without being asked. It is better to get them to ask you the question in their nominated theme so that you do not forget to do it later.
- If the first question the student asks you makes no sense, get them to ask you another one.

### **Advice to students**

- Use the 12 minutes' preparation time wisely. You can write down exactly what you are going to say in the Role play tasks and in response to the three prepared questions on the Photo card.
- For the Photo card questions, try to prepare answers of at least three sentences, using a verb in each one.
- Listen carefully to the questions that your teacher asks you for the unprepared questions in the Role play and Photo card and to all questions in the General conversation.
- You can ask for repetition of a question in any part of the test, but make sure it is in Panjabi. You can say ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੁਬਾਰਾ ਪੁੱਛੋ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਰ ਪੁੱਛੋ ।

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.