



GCSE

PANJABI

8683/SH Speaking

Report on the Examination

8683/SH
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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 were some students entered at Higher tier who were unable to cope with some elements of the test. In particular, they struggled with the Role play or certain questions on the Photo cards. 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 adequate choices, allowing students to perform to their full potential.

Quality of Recording

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 the 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 Higher tier, where the time limit is three minutes, there were some cases in which 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 type of answers to the first three questions, especially the first question eliciting a description of the photo.

Many General conversations adhered to the minimum and maximum timings. On the other hand, there were some schools/colleges that had problems with timing of this part of the exam. As a result, one of the themes in General conversation or sometimes even both, did not meet the minimum time requirement of two and a half minutes on each theme. This had an impact on the mark awarded for Communication in that there was a reduction of two marks. There were a number of performances at Higher tier, that exceeded the seven minute maximum time limit. The centers 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 immediately the first question on that theme is asked. All time used up to this point is allocated to coverage of the first theme. Schools/colleges are also reminded that anything said by the student beyond the time limit is disregarded for assessment purposes. There were a few teacher examiners who conducted very long tests lasting well beyond the maximum time.

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, which is acceptable but unfortunately some teacher-examiners provided key vocabulary at the same time which meant that students could not be credited. It was evident that teacher examiners were providing contextual information to help the student to form their answer. These responses could not be credited. Some teacher-examiners introduced their own questions to the Role play which again could not be credited.

Conducting the Photo card

There were some occasions that an entire question was paraphrased in a permissible way, e.g. ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਵਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਣ ਦਾ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਕੀ ਹੈ? was replaced with ਹਵਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਦੂਸ਼ਣ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਕੀ ਹੈ? (Photo card J). Alongside this, there were many cases where attempts at paraphrasing did not retain the original meaning of the question. 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. The explanation leading to the response are not permitted and students will not get the credit for these. 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.

Some teachers did not split two-part unseen questions, whilst others omitted to ask the second part e.g. (Photo card I) ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀ ਬਦਲਣਾ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਉਂ? Teachers asked both questions together and some students got confused and missed the explanations of their reasons.

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

Almost all teacher-examiners conducted this part of the test very well. 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 regular 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 two and a half minutes is spent on each theme.

The style of questioning for lower attaining students did not always allow them to perform to their full potential. 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. Teachers are reminded that these questions are example questions and these can be changed and adapted in accordance with student’s interests and ability. There were also 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. A small number of teachers used not only closed questions but explained the answer in their question by portraying a context which left students with no opportunity to expand their answers.

In order to give students 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, simple queries or requests for further detail. There were instances when teacher-examiners asked questions that students had already discussed earlier in their responses.

Teacher-examiners are advised that there is no need to announce the full title of themes in the General conversation. In fact, this reduces the overall time available and limits the opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability and skills.

Another aspect of the General conversation is the need to ask a question by the student. 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 questions not being asked within the maximum time limit 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 ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਪੁੱਛਣਾ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੋਈ ਗੱਲ ਜਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਪੁੱਛਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ? Some teacher-examiners did it well, even though the students declared ਨਹੀਂ ਜੀ, at the first instance, but other teacher-examiners did not. Failure by the student to ask a question leads to a one mark reduction.

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 Higher 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. There were a small number of tests where students did not get opportunities to use different time frames through the questions they were asked, which meant they were unable to gain higher than the 1-2 band. Teachers should prepare their questions allowing students to use three time frames clearly to get access to the maximum mark bands.

Not all teacher-examiners created opportunities for a spontaneous conversation.

Student performance in the Role play

The Role plays were conducted equally well in comparison with previous series. Most students were able to access the target language bullet points and were able to formulate an appropriate and concise response.

On occasions, some students gave far more information than was necessary to accomplish the task, which should be discouraged.

A significant number of students did not take into account the scenario from the introductory rubric

which is there to help them. Students should be advised to read the scenario introduction carefully at the start of the Role play in their preparation time.

Most students were able to effectively formulate the question from the prompt words provided in the question 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 Higher Tier Role play comments

Tasks that are not mentioned below were generally answered very well.

Role play 7

This Role play was about the use of mobile phone and almost all students did very well at this as it was very accessible. Some students could not provide two details required by task one and task four and they were awarded one mark.

Role play 8

Almost all students were able to answer all tasks as the topic was very accessible and based on their immediate experience of friendship. A majority of them scored high marks in this Role play.

Role play 9

Some students could not answer both part of question one which required ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਕੂਲ ਕਿਸ ਚੈਰਿਟੀ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਵੇਂ? and a number of students provided one detail about the work but could not name the charity. Some students repeated the answer to task three and could not score full marks.

Role play 10

Some students found task three difficult to answer as it was asking specifically ‘ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਾਣ ਪੀਣ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਪਰਦੂਸ਼ਣ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਵਧਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ? Other tasks in this Role play were done well as it was based around their city and was familiar.

Role play 11

This Role play was accessible to almost all students as it was about education, particularly about GCSE, grades and what they do to prepare for their GCSE examinations. Almost all students did very well in this Role play.

Role play 12

Some students found task 4 challenging as they could not provide details of facilities available at their school particularly to support A level students and they talked about generic facilities.as they covered healthy food in the first task. The question task was well phrased by almost all students.

Student Performance in the Photo card

Generally, almost all students did very well at this task as it provided them with a visual stimulus to talk about. Students seemed well prepared for this part of the test. Most students gave a reasonably well-developed response to the first prepared question ਇਸ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹੋ ? Their replies were reinforced when students used a set of phrases that can be used to describe the people, background, feelings and opinions with reasons.

Although development of responses 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. (Photo card H) ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪ੍ਰੈਕਟੀਕਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। (Photo card K)

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. There were a number of students who gave only short answers to the majority of questions, including a very brief description of the photo. 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 and they justified their opinions with logical reasons and scored good marks at this part of the test.

However, a few teachers asked some additional questions and some only asked three questions rather than five which impacted on students' marks.

Specific Higher Tier Photo card comments

Students usually found most photo stimuli and sets of questions to be equally accessible. The Photo card that students found the most challenging was Photo card J on the sub-theme of global issues. The tasks present some linguistic and conceptual challenges. However, teacher-examiners must be aware that these topics are 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 G

The last question appeared to be demanding as students found it difficult to understand ਪਰਦੂਸ਼ਣ ਰਹਿਤ .

Photo card H

Almost all students found this Photo card very accessible and managed to answer all questions.

Photo card I

Students found this card very accessible despite a little word ਢੇ missing in task three.

Photo card J

This Photo card appeared to be challenging for students and they found it difficult to elaborate their response to task 2, the main reason for an increase in air pollution. A number of students answered giving the reason for general pollution rather than specifically referring to air pollution.

Photo card K

This Photo card was very accessible for almost all students as they were well prepared on this topic of my studies. They attempted all tasks very well.

Photo card L

This Photo card was accessible for students as they could talk about different professions. For task 5 they sometimes struggled to express their views about jobs in the area of music.

General conversation

For most students, the General 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 some students with more limited 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 significant number of students had difficulties in using appropriate subject and verb combination, their sentence ending were incorrect as they were not clear whether to use ਚੈ, ਚਾਂ, ਚਨ, ਚੋ etc.

Finally, in some cases there was a noticeable issue with language accuracy when Panjabi sentence structure became an issue. Some unnatural word combinations or word order were 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. 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. Examiners cannot mark what they cannot hear.
- 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. Not to do so will mean that the student's response will receive a mark of zero for Communication in that task.
- 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 response will not be credited. Examples of appropriate paraphrasing are provided in the published mark scheme.
- 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 three 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, ਚੰਗੀ, ਮਾੜੀ, ਦਿਲਚਸਪ ਜਾਂ ਬੇਰਿੰਗ* and there are other ways to say *ਮੇਰੀ ਮਨਪਸੰਦ, ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਲਗਦੀ ਹੈ*।
- 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. 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 ਗਲਬਾਤ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਤੇ ਕਰੀਏ ਜਾਂ ਹੁਣ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਤੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।
- Keep a close eye on the time. If one of the themes lasts for less than 2 minutes and 30 seconds, there is a deduction of two marks for Communication.
- The maximum length of the General conversation is seven 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 ਦੁਬਾਰਾ ਪੁੱਛੋ, ਜਾਂ ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਫਿਰ ਪੁੱਛੋ, ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਫਿਰ ਦੱਸੋ for example.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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