

Cambridge IGCSE™

CHINESE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**0523/03**

Paper 3 Speaking

May/June 2026**MARK SCHEME**Maximum Mark: 60

Published

This mark scheme contains the instructions and marking guidance that our examiners used to mark candidate responses for this component.

Before they start marking, examiners complete a standardisation process. They review a range of candidate responses and discuss the mark scheme in detail to agree which answers can and cannot be accepted. Examiners award marks where it is clear that candidate responses have met the requirements of the mark scheme. These requirements may vary between different components or different versions of the same component, depending on the exact requirements of the question and the candidate responses seen during the standardisation process.

Sometimes, our mark schemes may allow marks to be awarded to responses which contain elements that are factually incorrect or for content not covered by the syllabus. We do this in response to the demands of a specific question to support candidates and make sure that our assessments are fair. However, these allowances should not be used as a guide for teaching and learning.

We cannot discuss the mark scheme with schools, and we recommend that schools read the mark scheme together with the assessment material and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

This document consists of **6** printed pages.

General marking principles

All examiners must apply these marking principles when marking candidate responses.

1	Examiners must award marks for each response in line with: - the specific content defined in the mark scheme - the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the level descriptions - the standard of response required as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.
2	Examiners must award whole marks (not half marks, or other fractions).
3	Examiners must award marks positively . This means that: - marks are not deducted for errors or omissions - marks are awarded for correct/valid answers as defined in the mark scheme and also for other valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme referring to your team leader as appropriate - the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar are judged only when the mark scheme indicates that these features are specifically assessed in the question. However, the meaning of all responses must be unambiguous.
4	Examiners must consistently apply the requirements of the mark scheme and any rules for what to do when candidates have not followed instructions correctly.
5	Examiners must use the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme, unless limited by the quality of the candidate responses seen.
6	Examiners must award marks according to the mark scheme and must not award marks with grade thresholds or grade descriptions in mind.

Speaking assessment criteria grid**Part 1: Presentation [Total: 20 marks]**

	Content and Presentation Knowledge of facts, ability to express opinion and raise issues for discussion	Vocabulary Pronunciation and Intonation	Structures
Level 5	9–10 marks	5 marks	5 marks
	• Full and well-organised coverage of the topic • Ideas and opinions included as well as factual points • Lively presentation that sustains examiner's interest fully	• Uses a wide range of precise vocabulary generally accurately • Pronunciation and intonation are clear	• Uses a variety of complex structures • Generally accurate
Level 4	7–8 marks	4 marks	4 marks
	• Good coverage and sound organisation of the topic • Makes relevant factual points with some ideas and opinions • Clear presentation that sustains examiner's interest	• Uses a sufficient range of vocabulary, which sometimes lacks precision • Vocabulary errors do not impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation are generally clear	• Uses some complex structures and a range of simple structures • Errors do not impede communication
Level 3	5–6 marks	3 marks	3 marks
	• Adequate coverage of the topic, generally organised • Includes some factual points with few ideas or opinions • Presentation is slow and somewhat stilted though examiner's interest is generally sustained	• Uses a limited range of vocabulary, but hesitates when going beyond simple structures • Vocabulary lacks precision but errors do not usually impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation sometimes lack clarity but communication is not impeded	• Generally uses simple structures accurately • Errors occur when complex structures are attempted • Any errors in simple structures do not impede communication
Level 2	3–4 marks	2 marks	2 marks
	• Thin coverage of the topic, lacking organisation • Few ideas or opinions • Mostly coherent but weak presentation that sometimes does not follow a logical sequence	• Uses a very limited range of vocabulary which is sometimes inadequate to convey even simple ideas • Pauses frequently • Vocabulary errors often impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation cause some communication difficulties	• Generally uses very simple structures, such as single-word responses • Errors often occur and some impede communication

	Content and Presentation Knowledge of facts, ability to express opinion and raise issues for discussion	Vocabulary Pronunciation and Intonation	Structures
Level 1	1–2 marks	1 mark	1 mark
	• Very thin and often irrelevant coverage • Very little factual information, only vague ideas and opinions • Incoherent presentation	• Uses enough words to convey only very short pieces of information • Pronunciation and intonation cause frequent communication difficulties	• Uses only very simple structures • Errors often impede communication
Level 0	0 marks	0 marks	0 marks
	• No rewardable content	• No rewardable content	• No rewardable content

Part 2: Topic conversation [Total: 20 marks] and Part 3: General conversation [Total 20 marks]

This grid is used for both Parts 2 and 3 and should be applied separately for each part.

	Comprehension and Responsiveness	Vocabulary Pronunciation and Intonation	Structures
Level 5	9–10 marks	5 marks	5 marks
	• No problems of comprehension • Responses are natural and spontaneous even to unexpected questions and to changes in direction of the conversation • Able to present and defend a point of view • Shows sustained ability to initiate and maintain conversation and to contribute at some length	• Uses a wide range of precise vocabulary generally accurately • Pronunciation and intonation are clear	• Uses a variety of complex structures • Generally accurate
Level 4	7–8 marks	4 marks	4 marks
	• Few problems of comprehension • Responds thoughtfully, and copes reasonably well with unexpected questions and with changes in direction of the conversation • Reasonably forthcoming but tends to follow examiner's lead • Responds relevantly and at length to questions which makes frequent prompting unnecessary	• Uses a sufficient range of vocabulary, which sometimes lacks precision • Vocabulary errors do not impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation are generally clear	• Uses some complex structures and a range of simple structures • Errors do not impede communication
Level 3	5–6 marks	3 marks	3 marks
	• Understands discussion around basic situations and concepts, but has difficulty with more complex ideas • Some delay in response • Needs prompting and encouragement to develop topics but attempts to keep the conversation going • May rely heavily on seemingly prepared responses	• Uses a limited range of vocabulary, but hesitates when going beyond simple structures • Vocabulary lacks precision but errors do not usually impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation sometimes lack clarity but communication is not impeded	• Generally uses simple structures accurately • Errors occur when complex structures are attempted • Any errors in simple structures do not impede communication

	Comprehension and Responsiveness	Vocabulary Pronunciation and Intonation	Structures
Level 2	3–4 marks	2 marks	2 marks
	• Generally has difficulty understanding • Responses to questions raised on the majority of topics are limited and brief • Needs prompting and encouragement to go beyond single-word responses	• Uses a very limited range of vocabulary which is sometimes inadequate to convey even simple ideas • Pauses frequently • Vocabulary errors often impede communication • Pronunciation and intonation cause some communication difficulties	• Generally uses very simple structures, such as single-word responses • Errors often occur and some impede communication
Level 1	1–2 marks	1 mark	1 mark
	• Severe problems of comprehension • Very marked hesitation • Limited responsiveness • Responses are so brief and imprecise that little is communicated	• Uses enough words to convey only very short pieces of information • Pronunciation and intonation cause frequent communication difficulties	• Uses only very simple structures • Errors often impede communication
Level 0	0 marks	0 marks	0 marks
	• No rewardable content	• No rewardable content	• No rewardable content