

# Speaking and Listening Handbook

## Cambridge IGCSE™

### First Language English 0500

For examination from 2020



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## Introduction

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This handbook offers guidance on how to approach the Speaking and Listening Test (Component 4) of the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English 0500 syllabus.

**Please note: Component 4 replaces both Component 5 and Component 6 for examination from 2020.**

The main purpose of this support material is:

- to remind you of the requirements of the Speaking and Listening Test
- to suggest suitable approaches for you and your learners in preparing for the assessment of Speaking and Listening skills
- to provide samples of a range of topics, activities and approaches chosen by candidates from previous sessions
- to exemplify the practice of applying the mark scheme through examiner commentaries
- to provide you with a good understanding of the standards.

Accompanying this handbook is a set of five practice recordings. These are referred to in Section 5.

The content of this handbook is not intended to be prescriptive. Candidates can choose from a very wide range of topics and approaches, well beyond those selected for inclusion in this handbook, as long as the assessment criteria can be fully applied.

### How to use this handbook

Work through the guidance and advice in the handbook and attempt to mark the accompanying practice recordings. The moderator's comments in Section 5 are designed to help guide you to the appropriate achievement bands. Once you have completed your marking, compare your marks to those of the moderator in the appendix.

The Speaking and Listening Test component of the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English 0500 syllabus is marked by centres themselves and moderated externally by Cambridge.

### Further help

We hope that after working through this handbook, the criteria and requirements for the conduct and assessment of the Speaking and Listening Test component will be clear to you. However, if you have any problems or if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

#### Customer Services

Cambridge Assessment International Education  
The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
t: +44 1223 553554  
e: [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org)

Our School Support Hub [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support) provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

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## Section 1: Speaking and Listening

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Speaking and listening skills form an integral part of the broader aims of Cambridge IGCSE First Language English, which are reproduced here from the syllabus. You should always refer to the syllabus (for the year of the examination) as the authority on all technical and academic aspects of the programme.

### 1.1 Aims of the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English programme

As stated in the syllabus, the Cambridge IGCSE First Language English programme aims to enable candidates to:

- read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding, enjoying and appreciating a variety of language
- read critically, and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write accurately and effectively, using Standard English appropriately
- work with information and with ideas in language by developing skills of evaluation, analysis, use and inference
- listen to, understand, and use spoken language effectively
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions.

Cambridge IGCSE First Language English translates these aims into three broad assessment objectives (AOs), covering all forms of communication in English; AO1: Reading, AO2: Writing and AO3: Speaking and Listening.

This publication offers guidance and support exclusively on AO3: Speaking and Listening, and specifically in response to the separately endorsed Component 4: Speaking and Listening Test.

### 1.2 Assessment objectives for Speaking and Listening (AO3)

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

**SL1** articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined

**SL2** present facts, ideas and opinions in a cohesive order which sustains the audience's interest

**SL3** communicate clearly and purposefully using fluent language

**SL4** use register appropriate to context

**SL5** listen and respond appropriately in conversation.

Assessment objectives can be regarded as broad learning objectives. These are skills which learners will practise many times over the duration of the syllabus and are likely to be embedded in lessons and schemes of work already in use. When designing teaching schemes or lessons it is useful to highlight one or perhaps two objectives on which to focus.

### 1.3 Why Speaking and Listening work should be encouraged

Cambridge International believes that the incorporation of Speaking and Listening activities into regular classroom work for English is beneficial to learners' development. Speaking is a primary means of expression but in many contexts, its effectiveness depends on secure listening skills. Component 4 allows for and encourages a wide range of Speaking and Listening skills to be demonstrated (and assessed) – including making an individual oral presentation and taking part in a structured conversation.

## 1.4 Course planning

The course can be designed to build up to Component 4, the Speaking and Listening Test, with learners practising and improving skills along the way.

The test needs to be recorded during a two-month time window stipulated by Cambridge International and, in most cases, centres will choose to do this as swiftly as possible – for example, a centre with 30 candidates would be expected to conduct and record its Component 4 tests in just a couple of days using one teacher/examiner.

The two-month slot however can also be viewed as allowing some flexibility for ensuring that candidates are able to perform to their full potential.

It should be noted that candidates are only allowed to undertake the Component 4 test once in any specific examination series.

## 1.5 Encouraging successful work

There is a very broad range of Speaking and Listening activities which are suitable for inclusion in Component 4. You and your learners are encouraged to be as creative and lively as possible in choosing topics and activities. However, successful work will be that which can be assessed using the appropriate criteria.

It is important when task-setting that the criteria are considered at the planning stage.

Once the task is secure, implementation of it usually requires research, practice and refinement. Successful work is almost always work in which the learner has a clear interest in the topic or activity and is intrinsically motivated. Speaking and Listening requires a degree of energy and enthusiasm, and it is your responsibility in part to create the atmosphere for this. Learners are not restricted to the classroom for their Speaking and Listening work; other locations might also lead to productive work.

Successful work can also be defined as that which provides an opportunity for learners to do their very best. This assumes therefore, that both you and your learner have prepared well and taken the appropriate steps (and time) to plan for quality Speaking and Listening work.

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## Section 2: Speaking and Listening Test (Component 4)

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The Speaking and Listening Test consists of two parts: The Individual Talk (Part 1) and the Conversation (Part 2). The whole test should last for 10–12 minutes in total. 40 marks are available overall, being equally divided between the two parts.

The Speaking and Listening Test should be considered a single continuous entity, with Part 2 following immediately after Part 1, without a break in the recording.

Component 4 is separately endorsed with grades of 1 (high) to 5 (low).

### 2.1 Part 1 Individual Talk (20 marks)

The candidate will talk for about 3–4 minutes on a single topic or theme which is selected by the candidate before the test. The talk should be continuous and there should be no need for the examiner to intercede.

Candidates are assessed on their ability to:

- prepare and organise appropriate and interesting material
- use a suitable presentational style
- show an awareness of their audience
- use a range of language devices.

The Individual Talk should be as lively as possible and, to ensure this, candidates are advised to prepare a topic in which they have a personal interest. They may prepare a 'cue card' (of postcard size) to bring into the examination room to remind them of the main points they wish to make. This single 'cue card', no larger than A5, should contain a list of key points, not continuous sentences, written on a one side of the card. A full, written script for the Individual Talk is **not** allowed. They may also bring into the examination room a limited quantity of illustrative material, such as maps, diagrams, statistics and pictures.

If used, the 'cue card' and illustrative material must be labelled with the candidate's name and examination number and retained by the centre until six months after the publication of results.

Reliance on extended notes taken into the examination room is not allowed. It should also be noted that recitation of a memorised script, even if wholly the candidate's own work and not taken into the examination room, is unlikely to allow the candidate to reach the higher bands of the mark scheme.

You may advise learners on the suitability of topics but must not be involved in the preparation of content or specific material for the Individual Talk.

It would be sensible for learners to research their topic several months before the test, and to practise the delivery of the presentation several times, each time modifying their approach and material slightly. Learners may work with their peers, in adapting their approach and content as required but the key idea and content must be original, and entirely the candidate's own work.

### Possible approaches

A wide range of possibilities exists for the individual task. Examples include:

- a presentation
- a talk
- a public speech
- a commentary
- a narrative
- a poem written by the candidate, accompanied by a brief commentary
- an original piece based on a literary text.

Despite the range of possibilities however, the dominant style in Part 1 tends to be the informative presentation. Candidates select a topic and provide historical and/or contemporary information about it. A small number of these presentations remain purely factual but many engage with an issue or controversy relating to the topic. For example, developments in media and technology can be related to issues of overreliance on technology and social media. These discursive elements add interest to the Individual Talks and lend themselves to a more productive conversation in Part 2.

Where the chosen topic relates directly to the candidate's personal situation or their country/location, there is sometimes scope for content that is more engaging than the purely descriptive or anecdotal.

Personal experiences and interests are another common focus, for example, recent trips abroad, reading, sport and music. These kinds of presentations vary in their degree of success, with the less successful talks simply describing likes, dislikes and experiences without further research or insight.

Candidates sometimes attempt to use techniques such as addressing the listener and using rhetorical questions. Such techniques can be very effective but as the listener/examiner should remain passive during Part 1, any attempt by the candidate to elicit a response is problematical. Candidates can, however, use these devices for rhetorical purposes, without the expectation of interaction in Part 1.

The use of visual aids and props can enhance presentations and may add interest to what might otherwise be rather dry talks. Candidates should, however, avoid over-reliance on such devices.

The list below gives examples of productive topics used by candidates in previous sessions:

- Artificial Intelligence
- The Representation of Diversity
- The Power of Music
- Terraforming
- Super Volcanoes
- Modern Art
- Urban Tribes
- Benefits of Bilingualism
- Being a Teenager in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Animal Rights
- Impossible Colours
- Benefits of Technology
- Added Sugar
- Genetically Manufactured Organisms.

**Note:** Cambridge International found that these topics lent themselves to interesting and engaging Part 1 presentations. They are presented here to indicate that topics which have a specific focus and a purpose work well. They are not intended as a prescriptive list. There are many other topics which would work equally well.



## 2.2 Part 2 Conversation (20 marks)

When the candidate has completed Part 1, the examiner should immediately move the test into Part 2: The Conversation. Part 2 should last between 7–8 minutes. It is an important part of the examiner's role to ensure that each candidate is given the opportunity to participate in a full Part 2.

The Individual Talk will lead into the Conversation with the examiner about the candidate's chosen topic. The role of the examiner in this part of the test will be that of an interested and sympathetic participant, allowing the candidate every opportunity to put forward views and to seek the opinions of the examiner. The examiner should avoid dominating Part 2, even if the topic being discussed is of particular interest.

During the delivery of the Individual Talk, examiners are likely to make notes which can help them ask appropriate questions in Part 2 Conversation. Candidates must be prepared to supply additional factual material, where appropriate, and to express and defend a point of view. In order to give candidates every opportunity to do this, prompts such as, 'tell me more about...' and open questions such as, 'why?' and 'how?' are more useful than closed questions leading to 'yes' or 'no' answers. Although we expect candidates to expand their topic, it is important to remember that knowledge of the topic is not being assessed.

When choosing a topic for the Individual Talk, learners should consider the ways in which a conversation about their topic could develop. If they cannot themselves think of five or six questions they might be asked, it is unlikely that their topic will prove to be a good source for conversation.

Examiners should be ready to explore other aspects of the topic if candidates are obviously out of their depth. Questions should be re-phrased (rather than repeated) in an attempt to continue the dialogue. The candidate shouldn't know what the questions will be asked in advance.

## 2.3 The mark scheme

There are two sets of assessment criteria for this component: Part 1 (Table A) assesses the quality of the Individual Talk, and Part 2 (Table B) assesses the success of the Conversation.

In Part 1, only Speaking skills are demonstrated and assessed; in Part 2 Speaking and Listening skills are assessed using separate criteria.

**Note:** It should **not** be assumed that a level in the assessment criteria directly equates to a grade. Final grade thresholds are decided for each session based on available evidence.

**Table A: Level descriptions for Component 4, Part 1 – Individual Talk (20 marks)**

Level	Marks	Description
5	17–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full and well-organised use of content.</li> <li>• Lively delivery which fully engages the audience.</li> <li>• Employs a wide range of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) accurately and sometimes eloquently.</li> <li>• Sustained, appropriate and accurate use of language throughout.</li> </ul>
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound use of content.</li> <li>• Delivery may occasionally be stilted but often attempts to engage the audience.</li> <li>• Employs a good range of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) soundly.</li> <li>• Mainly appropriate and accurate use of language.</li> </ul>
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate use of content.</li> <li>• Delivery is secure but at times unimaginative, with some attempt to engage the audience.</li> <li>• Language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) are used safely and appropriately.</li> <li>• Appropriate and accurate use of language demonstrated but some inaccuracy may be present.</li> </ul>
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is thin or perhaps inconsistently used.</li> <li>• Delivery is not secure, with little attempt to engage the audience.</li> <li>• Limited employment of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) with some inaccuracy.</li> <li>• Some appropriate use of language but with some inaccuracy.</li> </ul>
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content is mostly undeveloped and/or very thin.</li> <li>• Delivery is weak, with no attempt to engage the audience.</li> <li>• Not able to use language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) or devices used with serious error.</li> <li>• Language is not used appropriately, or is used with serious inaccuracy.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not meet the above criteria.</li> </ul>

**Table B: Level descriptions for Component 4, Part 2 – Conversation (20 marks)**

For Part 2, record separate marks for speaking and for listening.

Speaking			Listening		
Level	Marks	Description	Level	Marks	Description
5	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extends the subject matter and elicits responses from the listener; speaks on equal terms with the listener.</li> <li>Employs a wide range of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) accurately and sometimes eloquently; sustained, appropriate and accurate use of language throughout.</li> </ul>	5	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A natural and fluent conversation.</li> <li>Responds fully to questions and develops prompts; deals confidently and sometimes enthusiastically with alterations in the direction of the conversation.</li> </ul>
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject matter is organised and expressed competently; attempts to speak on equal terms with the listener but with a varying degree of success.</li> <li>Employs a good range of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) soundly; mainly appropriate and accurate use of language.</li> </ul>	4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The conversation is occasionally fluent and sometimes shaped by the candidate.</li> <li>Consistently responds appropriately and in extended detail to questions and prompts; deals appropriately with most of the changes in the direction of the conversation.</li> </ul>
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deals with the subject matter adequately; the listener is generally but not always prominent.</li> <li>Language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) are used appropriately; appropriate and accurate use of language demonstrated, but some inaccuracy may be present.</li> </ul>	3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The conversation is maintained through the candidate's responses.</li> <li>Responds to questions adequately but deals less effectively with prompts; changes in the direction of the conversation are occasionally dealt with.</li> </ul>
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence of some linking together of ideas relating to the subject matter but it is inconsistent; accepts that the listener is in full control of the conversation.</li> <li>Limited use of language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) with some inaccuracy; some appropriate use of language but with some inaccuracy.</li> </ul>	2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The conversation is driven by the listener's questions.</li> <li>The candidate provides limited response to the questions and struggles to develop prompts; tends to maintain the direction of the conversation.</li> </ul>
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple facts and ideas are expressed with generally unsuccessful attempts at organisation; barely capable of engaging in a two-way conversation.</li> <li>Not able to use language devices (e.g. tone, irony, emphasis) or devices used with serious error; language is not used appropriately or is used with serious inaccuracy.</li> </ul>	1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A two-way conversation is not successfully maintained.</li> <li>The candidate responds simply or is unable to respond to questions or prompts; cannot recognise changes in the direction of the conversation.</li> </ul>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not meet the above criteria.</li> </ul>	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not meet the above criteria.</li> </ul>

For Part 1, examiners should remember that in order for a candidate to be assessed at Level 5, the presentation must consist of a lively delivery which fully engages the audience, and which uses a wide range of language devices accurately and sometimes eloquently. In other words, a rather straightforward informative talk, which is perhaps secure and safe, is likely to satisfy the criteria for Level 3. To reach the higher bands, candidates must demonstrate some of the above skills. Level 4 will indicate partial success in this aim.

For Part 2, Listening skills are assessed using an independent set of descriptors. The essence of a good listener is that he/she will choose the right moment to respond and will respond accurately and, in some depth, hopefully adding to the conversation. If a candidate responds to most of the examiner's prompts soundly, this is likely to result in a Level 4 mark (7–8). For higher reward, the candidate would need to develop and extend the point being put forward and take a more prominent role in the conversation.

When considering each of the three separate marks to be given to a candidate, the marker should apply a 'best-fit' judgement if the work does not match one level statement precisely. It is often the case that a candidate's performance will fall across more than one level so the marker must consider, on the balance of the evidence, which level best fits the performance for each of the three separate marks to be awarded.

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## Section 3: Planning for the Speaking and Listening Test

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### 3.1 Academic considerations

In Component 4 (the Speaking and Listening Test), learners should select the topic for their Individual Talk themselves, prior to the test. Teachers may advise on the suitability of topics for this but should not be involved in the preparation of material for this task. Learners who adhere to the following guidelines are likely to perform better in Part 1 of the test.

1. Use material which is original or has been created or heavily adapted by the candidate. This is particularly relevant in the case of material drawn from literary sources. Avoid lifting online material which the candidate has not invested in or customised.
2. Use a wide variety of language devices to carefully capture the audience's attention.
3. Choose interesting content. If the topic is interesting, it is more likely that the presentation of it will be lively and engaging.
4. Prepare. A candidate who arrives for the test and completes an Individual Talk lacking in prior preparation is unlikely to perform as well as one who has practised and received general guidance about the skills required to present a successful talk. The normal role of the teacher in guiding, encouraging and developing learners' skills is applicable. The candidate should be encouraged to practise by using a small number of bullet points which act as prompts for the talk, rather than memorising and reciting a complete talk.
5. Enjoy the experience. The format of this oral task encourages a relaxed atmosphere. If the candidate can convey confidence, the task is likely to be completed more successfully.

Examiners should adhere to the following guidelines when fulfilling their role in the conversation.

1. Maintain a lively dialogue on the topic of the candidate's Individual Talk. Avoid moving the conversation into unrelated areas.
2. The examiner will probably conduct a more efficient discussion if he/she has had prior notice of what the candidate is preparing to talk about.
3. Bear in mind that Listening skills are assessed using a separate set of criteria. Examiners will probably need to make a spontaneous judgement of a candidate's Listening skills, while posing questions and prompts and offering opinions in attempting to draw out those skills.
4. Be careful not to dominate, while remaining constantly involved in the conversation. The emphasis is still on the candidate being able to generate and extend the conversation.
5. Use questions and prompts to try to develop the candidate's own thoughts and ideas about the topic. As it is a topic he/she has chosen, there should be scope to probe and extend it further.

You should encourage candidates to make their Part 1 talks livelier by perhaps incorporating more creative presentational styles and by relying less on recited factual information. A key action may be to ensure that learners begin working on their tasks with the aim of stimulating the listener. It is important for learners to research their topics fully to bring fresh, interesting content to their task.

If candidates wish to talk about a hobby or interest, it is suggested that they find a creative way of doing this, with new information or through a different kind of delivery. The quality of Part 1 could be improved by candidates focusing on the idea of an 'intelligent' audience that they wish to inform, entertain or even intrigue.

There is scope for further creativity in approaches to Part 1, for example by learners taking up a 'voice' or presenting a dramatic monologue. Where learners speak about travel, for example, they could speak in the role of a tour guide.

### 3.2 Logistical considerations

The syllabus recommends using one examiner per centre (where candidate numbers allow) to make it easier to keep to a common standard. Centres with large candidate numbers will use more than one examiner and must ensure that all examiners administer the test according to the syllabus

The logistics of conducting all of the tests will therefore depend on:

- how many candidates there are
- how many teachers are going to work as examiners
- how long you wish to take in recording all of the tests.

For example, a centre that is entering 90 candidates for the examination, may well want to use three examiners to conduct about 30 tests each. Using this ratio of examiners to candidates, the tests could be completed in two days. However, Cambridge International is very aware of the limitations and constraints that some centres experience. For example, it might be that only two teachers are available to examine the candidates in the above example – this is fine, but we suggest that up to a full week should be utilised if two examiners are conducting 90 tests.

It is recommended that 15–20 minutes is allocated to each candidate's test to enable a candidate to enter the room, settle, undergo the test and leave. This timeframe should also allow time for the examiner to reflect on the candidate's performance and make at least an initial judgement as to the marks to be awarded for each of the three separate categories.

Ideally, there will be a collaborative effort at a centre, where several colleagues can work together in planning for, managing, conducting and administering a large number of tests. Cambridge International recommends that a single teacher should examine no more than 30 candidates as a rough guideline – and that therefore two teachers would share the examining for between 30 and 60 candidates. Each centre will need to decide the most effective approach given the considerations above.

For Component 4, there is a period of two months in which all of the tests must be conducted. For information regarding the test window and the deadline for the receipt of your marks and your samples for external moderation, please refer to the *Cambridge Handbook* and the samples database at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples).

### 3.3 Managing the delivery of Speaking and Listening lessons

Practice for the tests should be integrated into your scheme of work. For example, by perhaps choosing a broad area of interest, e.g. environmental issues, and then inviting learners to generate individual speeches about areas of interest related to the given topic, you can provide a cohesive approach. In this scenario, the rest of the class could function as a valid 'practice' audience, and there could be some integration of speaking and listening into a larger scheme of work. Indeed, all speaking and listening activities help in preparation for the test, whether it be group discussion to practise listening skills, or constructive peer criticism following a practice presentation, for example.

Alternatively, a centre may prefer to conduct a series of stand-alone tests for their learners to practise a topic which is not the one to be chosen for the actual Speaking and Listening Test.

Please note that the recorded final test must be conducted in a secure examination room performed under normal Cambridge International examination regulations and only the examiner and the candidate can be present. A practice session used as a classroom activity, as described above, cannot function as the final Speaking and Listening Test.

Speaking and listening lessons can be used of course to 'feed into' the work that learners are doing to prepare for their presentations. Similar skills can be practised over and over, and extension work you have encouraged in class could stimulate learners into deciding their test topics. It is sensible, therefore, to bear in mind the requirements of the Speaking and Listening Test when designing or modifying your teaching schemes.

It is important that you understand the extent to which a teacher can be involved in a particular learner's work. As we have stated elsewhere, your involvement should be minimal, considering that success in the examination assumes a degree of autonomy on the part of the candidate. Cambridge International therefore recommends that you speak in general terms when guiding candidates toward topic choice, without recommending or specifying a particular focus. With regard to practising and enhancing the key skills associated with speaking and listening, these should be targeted in regular classroom time.

It is not ethical or permissible that you work with a single candidate and practise an individual test. Part 2 must be a spontaneous discussion and this is best achieved if it is the first time the teacher has heard Part 1 being delivered.

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## Section 4: Administration of the Speaking and Listening Test

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### 4.1 Key points

All the tests for the entered cohort must be completed within the stipulated test window for the examination series.

All tests must be conducted under examination conditions in a secure room suitable for the purpose.

Every test must begin with an introduction by the examiner stating the centre's name and number, the candidate's name and examination number, the examiner's name and the full date on which the test is being conducted. It is not acceptable for a centre to record one generic introduction covering its whole entered cohort. More information on this process is given in Section 4.4: *Recording candidates* below.

The test must be attempted only once by a candidate. Once a candidate has begun the test it cannot be re-started, nor should it be repeated.

All tests must be recorded and sent as part of the sample for the external moderator.

It is permissible for an examiner who is external to the school to conduct the tests. It is an advantage of Component 4 that it is a single examination which can be conducted by an examiner who does not know or who has not met or worked with candidates.

### 4.2 Internal moderation

Where more than one teacher is assessing candidates, arrangements need to be made for internal moderation. It may be necessary, due to the number of candidates, for several teachers to be involved in the management of the tests. You must make sure that all teacher/examiners administer the test according to the syllabus.

Internal moderation is more than just comparing the approach to marking of different examiners. It also assumes that there has been some coordination among teachers to ensure that tests are being conducted in a similar manner and that the marking is consistent. It is sensible, therefore, for an English department to appoint a person to oversee the tests (usually the Head of Department), and to manage the administration of the tests. This person is known as the internal moderator.

When conducting a test, an examiner will come to an initial impression of a candidate's performance and will probably note down a mark which seems appropriate. This is fine. Many examiners keep a few rough 'first impression' notes discreetly while listening to Part 1 of the test and add to these during Part 2. It is good practice for an examiner to highlight a candidate who has perhaps been difficult to assess and to return to this candidate during an internal moderation session.



### 4.3 Administration

Administrative information for Component 4 (Speaking and Listening Test) has been removed from the syllabus. Teachers should refer to relevant sections about the processes in the *Cambridge Handbook*, available on our website [www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridge-for/exams-officers/](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/cambridge-for/exams-officers/). Forms are available from the Samples Database at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples)

The final date and methods for submitting the internally assessed marks are detailed in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

The *Oral Examination Summary Form*, which includes the final marks for each candidate, and where applicable, any amendments made as a result of internal moderation, needs to be sent to Cambridge along with a sample of recordings. Details of who selects the sample, the size of the sample and in what format it should be saved are found on [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples). If marks have been altered as a result of internal moderation, it is necessary to indicate on the *Oral Examination Summary Form* which of the three marks has been altered rather than just indicating the altered total mark in the 'internal moderation' column.

The accuracy of transcription of the marks from the *Oral Examination Summary Form* to the official *Internal Assessment Mark Sheet (MS1)* must be carefully checked.

Please find the *Oral Examination Summary Form* at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples).

### 4.4 The use of digital recording equipment and CDs

The use of modern, digital recording equipment is recommended as this produces higher quality recordings, but also allows the easy transfer of the appropriately collated tests either to be burned onto a single CD or copied to a single USB drive. External moderators welcome this as it makes their task quicker and more efficient. Centres are therefore encouraged to send in their recordings on CDs or USB drives using a readily available common format such as MP3.

Separate tracks should be created and each track should be re-named with the candidate's name and candidate number (so not track 1, track 2). It is also helpful if the candidate's total mark can be included in the track name, but the essential information is candidate name and number. An advantage of using a CD or USB drive is that the tracks will be automatically in a sequence that is helpful for the external moderator, if they are labelled correctly.

Another advantage of using digital recording and creating audio files is that the centre will have a backup of all candidate recordings. Centres are required to keep a copy of the recorded tests and replacement copies are sometimes requested if those sent to Cambridge are faulty in some way. This can occur because the original CD/USB drive was formatted incorrectly or because it was damaged in transit. When sending in recordings on CD or USB drive, please ensure that a suitable cover or case is included to protect the CD/USB drive in transit. Cambridge is not able to release candidates' marks unless external moderation has taken place, so a broken CD for example, could potentially slow down the release of marks while a replacement CD is sought.

## Recording candidates

Please note that **all candidates** must be recorded and marks submitted by the centre. Cambridge will then select the sample which must then be sent to Cambridge for external moderation. These recordings, together with the appropriate documentation, form the centre's sample for the external moderator. If your centre has 16 or fewer entries, then all the recordings would have to be sent to Cambridge.

Centres must check well in advance that a suitably quiet room is available and that their recording equipment is working. Please avoid rooms that are too close to a playground, recreation room or noisy classroom. Unnecessary background noise must be excluded.

The recording equipment should be tested in situ before the actual test, ideally with one of the candidates, and then checked regularly during a recording session involving several candidates' tests to ensure its continued reliability and functionality. A recorder with external microphones is recommended so that separate microphones can be used for the candidate and the examiner. If only one microphone is used, it should be placed facing the candidate. With a softly-spoken candidate, the microphone should be placed nearer to the candidate before the start of the test. Please do not adjust the volume control during an examination.

Whether using CDs or USB drives, it is essential that these are new and have no prior recordings or data on them. These must be supplied by the centre.

### **Each recording should be introduced clearly by the examiner as follows:**

'Centre name and number: *e.g. New School, Wellington, Centre number: NZ999*

Examination: *Cambridge IGCSE First Language English, Syllabus 0500 Component 4, Speaking and Listening Test.*

Examiner: *e.g. Ms Tui Smith*

Date: *e.g. 2nd March, 2020*'

### **Each candidate should be introduced clearly by the examiner as follows:**

'Candidate number: *e.g. 0123*

Candidate name: *e.g. Charlie Cheng*

At the end of the recording, please state: *End of recording*'.

Once a test has begun, **do not interrupt the recording**. On no account should you stop and re-start the recording during a test. The contents of each CD or USB drive must be clearly labelled. Before the CD is sent to Cambridge, make spot checks to ensure every candidate can be clearly heard.

## 4.5 Submission of work to Cambridge

**Cambridge requires a recording of the tests from each centre to carry out external moderation.**

The sample should consist of:

- the recordings for the entered cohort, preferably collated onto one CD or USB drive if possible
- the *Oral Examination Summary Form(s)* for the entire entry
- a copy of the mark sheet that has already been sent to Cambridge.

Cue cards and other illustrative material used by the candidates should be retained by the centre for six months after the publication of results and does not need to be sent to Cambridge as part of the centre's sample.

It is not necessary for centres to include any written material within the sample that seeks to justify the marks that have been awarded. The marks depicted on the *Oral Examination Summary Form*, together with the recordings, are sufficient for an external moderator to make a judgement.

## 4.6 External moderation

External moderation is undertaken by a team of moderators appointed by Cambridge International. The external moderator seeks to perform three main duties:

- to check that the test has been conducted by both the examiner and the candidate appropriately and according to the syllabus requirements
- to check that administrative matters (the use of correct documentation, sampling, correct addition of marks) have been carried out competently
- to check that candidates have been assessed accurately, to verify that the assessment criteria have been applied satisfactorily.

When the moderator has listened to and assessed the sample, one of the following conclusions will be reached:

1. The marks submitted are accurate and consistent. The centre's marking is confirmed as satisfactory. No change to the marks is required.
2. The marks are consistent but either generous or severe, or a consistent pattern of inaccuracy can be seen. In this case, the external moderator will make an adjustment to some or all of the marks but will not disrupt the rank order presented by the centre.
3. The centre's marking is generally accurate but there have been occasional 'errant' marks. In these cases, the external moderator will use an *Amendment Form* to re-assess some of the candidates.
4. The centre's marks are seriously inconsistent and/or wholly inaccurate. The external moderator cannot correct the problem easily and the rank order of candidates indicated by the centre is shown to be invalid. In this scenario it may be that internal moderation has not been conducted, and evidence of this can be seen in inconsistent marking by the different examiners. *However, please note that this outcome is rare.* Whatever the reason for such inconsistency, Cambridge may request that the centre re-marks the candidates' work or it will be re-assessed by a senior moderator and the marks adjusted accordingly.

## 4.7 Feedback from the external moderator

The external moderator will complete a feedback form for your centre.

There are three key areas that will be commented upon in the report:

- whether the centre's marks have been adjusted and if so, why
- administration of the test
- the conduct of the test.

The principal moderator also produces a Principal Examiner's Report for Teachers (PERT) that indicates the strengths and weakness of the performance of the whole cohort for a particular examination series. This is available on the School Support Hub [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support) and offers feedback on four key areas:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>Part 1</b> | Was there sufficient variety in approaches?<br>What constituted good/strong Individual Talks?<br>What were the common elements in weaker ones?  |
| <b>Part 2</b> | How well did examiners extend and enhance the topics/themes?<br>Were candidates aware of their expected role in developing the conversations?<br>Did both parties generally stay on task? |
| <b>Topics</b> | A list of well-chosen topics that allowed focused conversation in Part 2.   |
| <b>Advice</b> | For centres, highlighting 'key messages' for success in future sessions.  |

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## Section 5: Sample Speaking and Listening Tests

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In this section you are going to practise applying the assessment criteria to the five recorded examples of the Speaking Test accompanying this handbook. For each test, a Cambridge moderator has provided a commentary and a set of appropriate marks. The marks appear in the Appendix. It is suggested that you attempt to mark each test first, and then retrieve the marks awarded by the moderator to compare against your own.

The commentaries are written to help guide you to the appropriate achievement bands and contain advice on strong and weak aspects of the conduct of the tests. See Table A and Table B for the assessment criteria for Part 1 and Part 2.

### 5.1 Track 1 – Animal rights

This topic has become increasingly popular and, as is the case here, often leads to an impassioned and articulate performance based not only on sound research but also a deep personal interest in the subject. Part 1 is over the time allowed at just over 4 minutes and 30 seconds, but this is not significant. There is a clear structure to the presentation, presumably the result of thoughtful preparation, and the content is well-organised and used well. The delivery is lively and fully engages with the audience through the successful employment of a range of language devices. Generally, accurate use of language is sustained throughout the talk with only the occasional slippage of agreement and awkward phrasing apparent. Overall, despite the extended length and the aforementioned technical errors, this is a strong talk full of attributes that can be awarded positively.

The strength of the Part 2 response is that it is a natural and fluent conversation with the candidate operating on equal terms with the examiner. The candidate consistently responds at length and in depth to the questions she is asked and, in doing so, elicits responses from the listener that allow the conversation to evolve. The examiner recognises the candidate's ability and provides an excellent platform for her to demonstrate both her knowledge of the chosen topic and her ability to successfully articulate her thoughts and feelings. At just over 7 minutes in length, the examiner has ensured that the candidate has been given a full opportunity to showcase her skills.

### 5.2 Track 2 – Building computers

This candidate clearly possesses an in-depth knowledge of his chosen subject that leads to an informative but rather dispassionate talk that, at around 4 minutes and 40 seconds in length, is slightly over the permitted time. Whilst the timing is not particularly significant in itself, it is symptomatic in this instance of a wider issue. There is a rather monotonous unimaginative quality to the delivery which suggests the candidate has carefully prepared the content but isn't as aware or confident about the delivery. Language devices are used safely and appropriately but the range is not good. There is a lot of technical vocabulary, used accurately which assumes the audience is computer literate. Such an approach is fine in this instance as the examiner does demonstrate a technical knowledge in Part 2. When assessing this candidate's response to Part 1, it is necessary to consider more than one level so a 'best-fit' scenario is needed.

At around 6 minutes 15 seconds in length, the conversation is short of the minimum 7 minutes required for Part 2 of this component. However, there is sufficient evidence available to reach a fair and accurate assessment of the candidate's performance in Part 2. The conversation is fluent in parts and occasionally shaped by the candidate, though mostly he responds in detail to questions asked by the examiner. The candidate is quietly enthusiastic in his comments and his passion for his chosen subject is more evident in this conversation than was apparent in Part 1. The examiner's own knowledge of computers and his willingness to engage in a technical conversation allows the candidate greater scope to demonstrate a wider range of oral skills than was evident in Part 1. The subject matter is extended and the candidate elicits responses from the examiner that take the conversation forward.

### 5.3 Track 3 – Xbox games

Part 1 is short at only 1 minute 10 seconds. The candidate begins quite confidently but soon runs out of material and the examiner is correct to intercede and move into Part 2. The problem with this talk is the lack of sufficient preparation and practice. What content there is lacks development. The language used by the candidate is appropriate, but delivery is weak because there is little actually said. This topic is acceptable and when prepared properly has merit, but this is a largely unsuccessful attempt at a response to Part 1.

The examiner works very hard in Part 2 to maintain a conversation and to engage the candidate in a meaningful exchange but with limited success. Whilst the expectation is that the examiner maintains Part 2 for the full 7–8 minutes, it is somewhat understandable that this conversation is curtailed at around 5 minutes 30 seconds. Indeed, this is not really a genuine conversation, but a question and answer session driven entirely by the examiner. The candidate has very little to say about his topic and provides limited responses to the series of questions asked. Prompts are occasionally dealt with but largely unsuccessfully. When the candidate does respond at any length there is some evidence of ideas being linked together but it is inconsistent.

### 5.4 Track 4 – Base 60 mathematics

This is an unusual topic and indicative of the wide range of subjects that can lend themselves to Component 4. The talk has been prepared thoroughly and the content is appropriate. The candidate demonstrates a commendable knowledge of his topic, so it seems it is well-chosen and, at 3 minutes and a half minutes in length, fulfils the criteria appropriately. The use of content is certainly adequate and perhaps arguably sound, but the delivery is unimaginative. A limited range of language devices is employed, although those present are used safely and with accuracy. There is little in the way of an appreciation of audience, so the talk is informative without being particularly engaging. Again, to form an accurate assessment of this talk, a 'best-fit' scenario should be employed as the performance moves between different levels at different points in the performance.

Part 2 is an occasionally fluent conversation which is sometimes shaped by the candidate but is generally led by the examiner. The subject matter is expressed with some competence by a candidate who knows his topic well. There are several examples of inaccurate language used, e.g. 'mathematician actually needs a lot of creativity' and 'the solution of them is quite hard to think', and a limited range of language devices is employed, possibly because the candidate is shy and finds it difficult to operate on equal terms within the conversation. At around 5 minutes into the conversation, the examiner begins to widen the subject matter to include a more general discussion of the candidate's love for mathematics and possible career choices. The focus remains linked to the original topic, so the conversation does not become 'off-task', but this movement away from the original topic suggests that the examiner is running out of ideas directly connected to base 60 and the candidate has not extended the subject matter to allow a more focused conversation to be maintained. At just 6 and a half minutes, the length of the conversation confirms this and raises an important point about the suitability of a chosen topic. When a candidate chooses a topic, he/she should consider carefully whether it can be sustained across a 3–4-minute talk, and also whether he/she has enough to say about it to sustain a 7–8-minute conversation in Part 2.

### 5.5 Track 5 – Horse riding

Part 1 is a presentation that lasts for approximately 3 minutes 15 seconds. The candidate employs a good range of language devices and clearly engages with the audience. The subject matter is a sound mixture of factual information, anecdote and reflection. It is organised and expressed accurately. The candidate is clearly passionate about the chosen topic and has plenty to say. A visual aid is employed successfully in the form of a photograph because it enhances the presentation without disrupting the fluency of the delivery.

Part 2 is close to the upper limit of time allowed at just under 8 minutes. This reflects a well-chosen topic that the candidate is willing to discuss in depth. It begins by the candidate ending her presentation with a question to the examiner that acts as a smooth transition between the two parts of the test. The examiner is careful not to spend too long on the answer before directing the focus back to the candidate. This ensures the conversation begins in a natural way and demonstrates the candidate is capable of shaping its direction. The subject matter is expressed competently and with some attempt at organisation. As in Part 1, a good range of language devices is employed, though the use of language is not always entirely accurate.

## Appendix: Sample Speaking and Listening Test marks

Topic	Part 1 (20 marks)	Part 2 Speaking (10 marks)	Part 2 Listening (10 marks)	Total Mark (40 marks)
<b>Track 1</b> <b>Animal rights</b>	19	10	10	39
<b>Track 2</b> <b>Building computers</b>	14	9	9	32
<b>Track 3</b> <b>Xbox games</b>	4	4	4	12
<b>Track 4</b> <b>Base 60 mathematics</b>	12	7	7	26
<b>Track 5</b> <b>Horse riding</b>	15	8	9	32

Cambridge Assessment International Education  
The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
t: +44 1223 553554  
e: [info@cambridgeinternational.org](mailto:info@cambridgeinternational.org) [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org)

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