

THE SPEAKING TEST OF THE YEAR 9 EXAM IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

INTERVIEW FORMAT

The interview consists of three stages:

Stage 1 – Introduction (not assessed) – up to 2 minutes

Stage 2 – Task 1 (based on a picture card) and follow-up questions – up to 8 minutes

- Preparation time – 3 minutes
- Picture description – 2 minutes
- Questions – up to 3 minutes

Stage 3 – Task 2 (based on a situation card) – about 3 minutes

- Preparation time – 1 minute
- Acting out a situation – 2 minutes

Stage 1 has two functions: first, to provide a formal beginning to the interview and, second, to give the student an opportunity to warm up for the speaking test. The interview is recorded. Once the participants have been introduced, the interviewer selects a topic for the warm-up phase from among the four options given in the script. The topics are general interest topics that any B1 level student should be able to handle. In this part of the test, the students' performance is not assessed and they should use this stage to warm up to task 1 and 2 without being overly concerned about the quality of their language.

In **Stage 2**, the student gets a card with a photograph on the topic specified by the number of the card which they have picked. The student has three minutes to familiarise themselves with the photograph and think about how to do the task. At this stage, note-taking is recommended but not obligatory. The student is expected to describe the photograph using the questions given.

Once the student has completed the task or has been speaking for the allocated amount of time, the interviewer stops the monologue and proceeds with the four follow-up questions listed in the script. The questions aim to prompt the student to make use of different tense forms in the past, present and future in their answers. The final question is about making comparisons.

In **Stage 3**, the student and the teacher act out a situation based on the script and the situation card given to the student. The teacher introduces the situation and gives the student a situation card. In this part of the speaking test, the student has one minute to think about the situation. At this stage, note-taking is not allowed.

The teacher starts the conversation. The student has to follow the instructions on the situation card and respond appropriately by suggesting and discussing different options and agreeing or disagreeing with the teacher's proposals. At the end of the task, the student is asked to summarise the decisions made.

When the situation has been acted out, the interviewer ends the speaking test according to the script and the recorder is switched off. The interaction involving announcement of test results and managing student notes should not be part of the speaking test recording.

The speaking test result will account for 20% of the overall examination score. The student's performance will be rated by an assessor according to a marking scale (0–5) which includes the following criteria: (1) task completion, (2) vocabulary, (3) grammar, (4) fluency and pronunciation.