



EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ESWATINI  
Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**6873/04**

Paper 4 Oral Assessment A – E SPECIMEN

October / November 2021-2023

**TEACHER'S/EXAMINER'S NOTES**

**Great care should be taken to ensure that any confidential information given does not reach the candidates either directly or indirectly.**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This booklet contains:

- (a) Administrative guidelines on conducting the tests
- (b) Marking criteria
- (c) Copies of Cards A – E, with Notes for Teacher/Examiner

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This document consists of **14** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

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## NOTES ON CONDUCTING AND RECORDING THE TESTS

### GENERAL

1. The oral tests take place in the period before the main examination session as notified on the timetable. Each Centre decides on a convenient period within these dates for its oral tests. It is recommended that the tests are conducted within one week to allow sufficient time for a single Examiner to conduct all of the tests. See Section 4 below.
2. Centres must ensure well in advance of the tests that a suitably quiet room is available and that recording equipment is in good order.
3. Centres must adhere to dates for completion of the oral tests and for the receipt of mark sheets and recordings at ECOS to allow sufficient time for external moderation. It is vital that material does not arrive late.
4. For Centres with 30 or fewer candidates, there should normally be just one Examiner. Each Centre will select its own Examiner. This is normally a teacher within the English Language department, but could be someone local from outside the Centre. A group of neighbouring Centres might choose the same teacher to conduct all their tests; in such a case each Centre is still responsible for submitting properly completed forms and samples. ECOS is not responsible for any fees agreed upon.

Centres with more than 30 candidates may use more than one Examiner (applying the ratio of an additional Examiner for each 30 candidates). If using more than one Examiner, internal moderation must be carried out by the Centre so that a common standard is applied to all candidates.

5. Centres receive a set of Oral Assessment Cards accompanying this set of Examiner's Notes. Teachers/Examiners responsible for conducting the oral tests should familiarise themselves with these materials before the tests are held. These materials must remain confidential and must be kept in a secure place by the Centre until the end of the examination period.  
\*Requests for special consideration must be made on the **special forms** supplied to the centre, and returned to ECOS as indicated.
6. Each Centre must send to ECOS the following: (a) recorded conversation(s) or CD(s); (b) completed MS1 Forms; (c) completed Oral Examination Summary Form(s)

#### (a) Recorded conversations

Centres must send to ECOS a recording of all the candidates in a Centre.

Cassettes/CDs must be sent to ECOS together with completed documents. Cassettes/CDs must be clearly labeled with details of the candidates whose interviews have been recorded.

**(b) Form MS 1**

The computer-printed school based assessment mark sheet (Form MS 1) has two parts:

- \* The top sheet must be sent to ECOS in the separate envelope provided.
- \* The bottom sheet must be retained by the Centre in case of postal loss or subsequent enquiries, until after the issue of results.

Form MS1 is to be completed by transferring the mark for each candidate from the total Mark column on the Oral Examination Summary Form.

**(c) Oral Examination Summary Form**

This is a document on which marks for each candidate are to be entered in detail. Instructions for its completion will be found on the reverse of the form. The form must be submitted together with the recorded conversations and the middle MS1 copy.

Please be careful to check all mark additions. The Oral Examination Summary Form must show the breakdown of marks for all the candidates.

7. **(a)** The CD(s) along with completed MS1 and Oral Examination Summary Form should be returned to ECOS as soon as the oral tests have been completed at the Centre. Please do not wait until the end of the assessment period before sending them.

**(b)** Copies of all marks are to be kept by the centre in case of postal losses or delays.

**CONDUCTING THE ORAL TESTS**

8. The oral tests should proceed along the following lines:
- (A) Start the recording. Give the candidate's name and number. Welcome the candidate and explain briefly what is going to happen in the course of the test.
  - (B) Warm-up section: conduct a general conversation by asking the candidate a few questions about herself/himself, the school, etc, to give the candidates time to get used to the examination situation. The purpose of this section of the test is to put candidates at their ease. As a guide, about 2-3 minutes should be spent on this section.
  - (C) Hand the Oral Assessment Card to the candidate. This must take place AFTER the warm-up has taken place. Any necessary explanation should be given at this point, followed by a short preparation period (approximately 2-3 minutes), when the candidate is at liberty to ask questions. The candidate may not make notes during this period. The recorder should be paused by the Examiner while the candidate considers the Topic Card. The Examiner should indicate this by saying 'the recording will now be paused' so that the External Moderator knows that the candidate is being given time to study the card.

- (D) Main part of the test: conversation based on the Oral Assessment Card. Either the Examiner or the candidate may start the conversation. The notes in this booklet on each card give some suggestions about questions and prompts which might be used. This section of the test should last approximately 6-9 minutes.

**The total duration of the oral test, from the beginning of (B) to the end of (D), should be approximately 10-12 minutes.**

**Note that only (D) is to be assessed.**

**The oral test must be conducted in English throughout.**

9. Examination conditions must prevail in the area where the oral tests take place. Adequate supervision must be provided to ensure that candidates leaving the room for the oral tests do not communicate with those waiting to enter.
10. No other person should be present during the oral test, with the exception of a Representative of ECOS or CIE.
11. Candidates are not allowed to bring any notes into the examination room, nor are they allowed to consult dictionaries.
12. Candidates should be examined singly.
13. A range of Oral Assessment Cards is provided, and the Examiner (not the candidate) chooses the card to be used for each candidate. As wide a variety as possible of the cards should be used during the oral tests at the Centre. In order that candidates are given every chance to do themselves justice, the Assessment Card should be selected with care. The warm-up may give the Examiner an indication of the best card to select. **Remember that the test is one of spoken language not subject knowledge: it if becomes apparent that the candidate finds the topic difficult or inappropriate it is perfectly permissible to move into more productive areas. There is no need to stick rigidly to the Examiner prompts in such cases.**
14. The Examiner should be positioned so that s/he is facing the candidate, with a table or desk in between. Candidates should not be able to see notes made on Oral Examination Summary Forms or similar paperwork.

## **RECORDING THE CONVERSATION**

15. Centres must ensure that their recording equipment is in good working order. The recorder and the CD(s) should be tested on site, some time before the actual oral tests, ideally with one of the candidates. The warm-up section of the test also provides an opportunity to check audibility. Where possible it is advisable to use a recorder with external microphones so that separate microphones can be used for candidate and Examiner. If only one microphone is used it should be placed facing the candidate.

It is important to check audibility levels before recording begins; adjustments to the volume control during an examination should normally be avoided. Care should be taken to avoid extraneous noise and long gaps. Checks should be made throughout the oral testing session to ensure that voices are clearly audible.

With the exception of a permitted pause between the warm-up and the main part of the test (see Section 8 above), once the oral test has begun the recording should run without interruption.

Each CD should begin with a clear statement by the Examiner as follows:

Centre Number: [e.g.] AZ 999  
 Centre Name: [e.g.] Abcxyz Academy  
 Examination: 6873 English Language  
 Examiner Name: [e.g.] Ms Z. Abced  
 Date: [e.g.] 1 October 2017

Each candidate recorded on the CD should be clearly indicated on the recording by the teacher as follows:

Candidate Number: [e.g.] 0021  
 Candidate Name: [e.g.] Abdi Zachariah

At the end of the recording the Examiner should state clearly 'End of Recording'.

Before the CD is dispatched, spot checks must be made to ensure that every candidate is clearly audible. The contents of each CD must be clearly labelled.

## GENERAL ADVICE

16. Please bear the following in mind when marking:

**Be objective.** Do not allow any knowledge of a candidate's personality and attitudes to influence objective assessment. For example, knowledge that a candidate is very conscientious in her homework is irrelevant in assessing her oral test. If the candidate's performance is affected because s/he faces difficult circumstances or personal problems at the time of the test this is a matter to be dealt with via Special Considerations procedures, for which Exams Officers at Centres complete separate documentation. Oral Tests Examiners must not make any separate allowance themselves in such cases.

**Be realistic.** Remember that it is not necessary for a candidate to be of native speaker standard to be given maximum marks within any single category. But knowledge of a candidate's first language must not lead a marker to ignore particular habitual errors and overlook inaccuracy.

**Be consistent.** It is important that the marking criteria are applied in the same way for all the candidates at the Centre, so that a reliable rank order for the Centre is obtained.

**Be positive.** Marking the test should be seen as giving credit for what candidates can do not penalising them for what they cannot do. This does not mean that matters of inaccuracy in, for example, grammar and pronunciation are to be overlooked but is a reminder that an SGCSE oral test is intended to credit positive achievement.

17. To conduct oral tests effectively, good Examiners:

- familiarise themselves with Oral test material before the test is conducted.

- always put candidates at their ease from the outset (smiling as candidates enter the room, indicating where they should sit etc.) while maintaining a clear sense that the oral test is being conducted in a formal examination situation
- never walk about or distract candidates
- always appear interested, even in mundane matters
- never interrupt with their own views
- candidates should not be made to feel embarrassed about expressing viewpoints which are not like those of the teacher or examiner. The teacher/examiner may wish to ask questions about those views, **but** must not be antagonistic towards the candidate.
- never correct mistakes
- never show undue surprise or impatience
- never give the impression that there must be 'right' answers to questions. Avoid expressions such as 'very good' which candidate may interpret as a comment of performance.
- always bring the best out of their candidates by asking 'open' questions which allow candidates to respond at length. Avoid strings of 'closed' questions prompting yes/no answers. Examiner should rather use questions like 'tell me more about...', 'why' and 'how'.
- never conduct the oral test as if it is a test of knowledge
- never indicate their opinion of candidates' performance during or after the oral test – a good Examiner will normally send a candidate out of the test smiling, no matter how good or bad the candidate's performance has been.



## MARKING CRITERIA

**Give a mark out of 10 for each category (structure, vocabulary, development and fluency), and then add these marks to give an overall total out of 30.**

<b>Mark</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Development and Fluency</b>
<b>9-10</b>	The candidate demonstrates ability to use a variety of structures accurately and consistently. The candidate is confidently in control of the structures used.	The candidate shows enough command of vocabulary to respond with precision. Shades of meaning are achieved and some sophisticated ideas are communicated.	The candidate shows sustained ability to maintain a conversation and to contribute at length, offering an opinion where necessary. The candidate can initiate and respond to change in direction of the conversation.  Pronunciation and intonation is clear.
<b>7-8</b>	Structures will be generally sound, but will not be used entirely accurately or with consistent confidence. There will be some errors in attempting to use more complex sentences.	The candidate has a sufficient range of vocabulary to convey information and ideas with competence. Errors are noticeable, however, when attempting to use more complex and precise vocabulary.	The candidate responds relevantly and at some length which makes frequent prompting unnecessary, resulting in a competent conversation.  Pronunciation and intonation is generally clear.
<b>5-6</b>	The candidate can use simple structures securely but has difficulty venturing beyond them.	Vocabulary conveys simple ideas and information clearly, though it is not wide or varied. There may be hesitation, repetition and searching for words.	The candidate makes an attempt to respond to questions and prompts. Effort will need to be made to develop the conversation; only partial success will be achieved.  There is some lack of clarity of pronunciation and intonation, but it is unlikely to impede communication.
<b>3-4</b>	Structures will generally be very simple, limited and with errors, which will restrict communication.	Vocabulary will generally be inadequate to convey simple ideas.	Responses tend to be brief and widely spaced. The candidate has to be encouraged to go beyond short responses and struggles to develop a conversation.  Pronunciation and intonation causes some communication difficulty.
<b>1-2</b>	Attempts at structured sentences will rarely achieve communication. However, some attempt at a response will be made during the discussion.	Use of single words is the norm and there will be long gaps.	Responses are so brief that little is communicated. The candidate hardly engages in a conversation.
<b>0</b>	Completely limited/no attempt at a response	Completely limited/ no attempt at a response.	Completely limited/no attempt at a response.

## A Cleanliness

**Sometimes people use the saying, “cleanliness is next to godliness”.**

Discuss with the examiner your opinion on cleanliness.

You may wish to consider the following ideas to help develop the conversation:

- instances where one can display cleanliness
- how being clean or otherwise affects you
- benefits of cleanliness
- whether cleanliness is inborn or learnt
- promoting a culture of a clean society.

You are free to consider any other related ideas of your own.

You are not allowed to make any written notes.

### **Notes: for Teachers/Examiners**

#### **Phase 1: Warm-up**

Ask the candidate a few questions about herself/himself, the school etc. to give her/him time to get used to the exam situation. Do not mark this phase.

#### **Phase 2: Initial Task**

Hand the assessment card to the candidate and go through the instructions to make sure the candidate understands what has to be done.

The candidate should be given a few minutes to read through the task and prepare. No written notes should be made.

#### **Phase 3: Development**

Discuss with the candidate the ideas and suggestions put forward.

## **B Studying in Foreign Countries**

**There's a notable increase in the number of students studying in institutions outside Eswatini.**

Discuss with the examiner your views on learning in another country.

You may wish to consider the following ideas to help develop the conversation:

- your thoughts about studying in a foreign country
- causes of students' migration
- advantages and disadvantages
- whether the government should create more studying opportunities locally
- how international relations are promoted.

You are free to consider any other related ideas of your own.

You are not allowed to make any written notes.

### **Notes: For Teachers/Examiners**

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## **C Group Activities**

**Some people like working in a group while others prefer working alone.**

Discuss with the examiner your views on this matter.

You may wish to consider the following ideas to help develop the conversation:

- your experience of working in a group
- activities that can be done in a group
- benefits and disadvantages
- personalities and groups
- whether societies need to promote group activities.

You are free to consider any other related ideas of your own.

You are not allowed to make any written notes

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**D Recycling**

**Recycling refers to the process of treating used materials so that they can be used again.**

Discuss with the examiner your views on recycling.

You may wish to consider the following ideas to help develop the conversation:

- your understanding of recycling
- what you think can be recycled
- reasons why people recycle
- ways of recycling
- whether recycling is important for developing a community/country.

You are free to consider any other related ideas of your own.

You are not allowed to make any written notes.

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**Phase 3: Development**

Discuss with the candidate the ideas and suggestions put forward.

## **E Success**

**Success is achieving something you have been working on, with good results.**

Discuss with the examiner your ideas on success.

You may wish to consider the following ideas to help develop the conversation:

- successes you have achieved so far
- successful people you know
- whether too much success can lead to a person's downfall
- how a successful nation is rated
- ways in which a government can ensure a successful country.

You are free to consider any other related ideas of your own.

You are not allowed to make any written notes.

### **Notes: for Teachers/Examiners**

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