

Exam format

Total exam time: 15 minutes

The exam consists of three assessed phases:

- ▶ Candidate-led discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Interactive phase (up to 4 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 5 minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately
- ▶ Communicate facts, ideas, opinions and explain viewpoints about a chosen topic linked across a series of extended turns
- ▶ Maintain coherence and cohesion throughout the phase by organising discourse
- ▶ Engage the examiner in discussion of the topic
- ▶ Handle interruptions by using recovery strategies
- ▶ Respond to the examiner's contributions and requests for further information, clarifications and explanations

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take control over the interaction
- ▶ Maintain the discourse by asking for information and making comments
- ▶ Help the discussion along by inviting comment from the examiner
- ▶ Take and give up turns when appropriate to do so
- ▶ Take the opportunity to use the language functions listed opposite, as appropriate to the individual task

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding by responding appropriately to the examiner
- ▶ Share responsibility for the maintenance of the interaction with the examiner
- ▶ Follow up on comments from the examiner in order to develop the conversation
- ▶ In case of a breakdown in communication, take steps to repair it

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Expressing feelings and emotions
- ▶ Expressing impossibility
- ▶ Reporting the conversation of others
- ▶ Speculating
- ▶ Persuading and discouraging

Grammar

- ▶ Third conditional
- ▶ Present perfect continuous tense
- ▶ Past perfect tense
- ▶ Reported speech
- ▶ Linking expressions, eg *even though*, *in spite of*, *although*

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▶ Cohesive devices, eg *so to continue*, *in other words*, *for example*
- ▶ Reporting verbs, eg *say*, *tell*, *ask*, *report*, *advise*, *promise*
- ▶ Appropriate words and expressions to encourage further participation
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The correct pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ Rising and falling intonation to indicate giving up and offering turns
- ▶ Stress, intonation and pitch relevant to the language functions listed above
- ▶ Stress and intonation to indicate emotion

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- ▶ Society and living standards
- ▶ Personal values and ideals
- ▶ The world of work
- ▶ Unexplained phenomena and events
- ▶ National environmental concerns
- ▶ Public figures past and present

Please note, Grade 8 candidates should not select their topic from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 31 of the full specification).

Grade 8 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level B2.2.