

IN BRIEF...

Videos now available online. Please visit our website to view:

[Skills for Life Videos](#)

[ESOL for Work Videos](#)

Operations Update

Please keep an eye out for the next Operations Update letter, coming by post at the end of this month. You will need to sign the new *Code of Practice* and return it to us by post as soon as possible.

Trinity ESOL workshops - This Autumn 2008, Trinity is holding a series of workshops around the country to support teachers of ESOL Skills for Life and ESOL for Work. If you missed the opportunity to attend you can view selected content from the sessions on our website shortly.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Come and visit us at the following events.

ENGLISH UK Teachers Conference

15 Nov.
London

BESIG

22 Nov.
Bonn, Germany

LLU+

5 Dec.
London (LSBU)

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Reading and Writing Exam Dates 2008 - 2009

8-31 December 2008 dates are set and are available to view on our website: [December Dates 2008](#)

Between January and December 2009 we are offering 10 exam dates. Please view the confirmed dates for 2009: [2009 Dates](#)



ESOL Skills for Life Update - Pass Rates announced



Trinity is delighted to provide the following Skills for Life national pass rate data for our registered centres. The data is based on the previous academic year September 2007 - August 2008.

On the whole this year's results are quite similar to last year's.

Level	Speaking & Listening	Reading	Writing
Entry 1	84%	85.5%	76%
Entry 2	87.5%	83.9%	68.3%
Entry 3	92.4%	87.7%	72.1%
Level 1	92.6%	77%*	68.8%
Level 2	88.2%	67%*	59.5%

*The National Literacy Test is used for Level 1 and Level 2 Reading examinations and is not written by Trinity.

How to interpret Trinity ESOL Skills for Life Results

Speaking and Listening

Entry 1

You have received a results slip which shows your Entry 1 student's results as the following:

Samira Mohamed

3/3 2/3 2/3 3/3 2/3 1/3 2/3

In each pair of numbers, the first 3 (3/3) shows the score the candidate achieved, whilst the second 3 (3/3) shows the maximum score the candidate could have achieved. In this case, then, Samira scored the highest possible mark in the very first criteria. In total, she scored 15 out of a possible 21 marks. As the pass mark is always two-thirds in the Speaking & Listening exams, this means that Samira passed her exam overall.

You will need the following to help you make sense of what each mark refers to:

- The generic performance descriptors. This table can be found on p.23 of the Introduction Booklet.
- The task-specific mark scheme. This can be found on p.7 of the Entry 1 syllabus (or p.7 of the all-levels Speaking & Listening syllabus).

The task-specific mark scheme has two sections, the first of which is divided into 4 separate criteria and the second of which is divided into 3 separate criteria. The marks on the results slip follow the criteria in the exact same order as laid out in this table. So, Samira's marks can be broken down as follows:

3/3A 2/3B 2/3C 3/3D 2/3E 1/3F 2/3G

The first four grades (labelled here as A-D for convenience) relate to Task 1. Samira performs well in Task 1 overall.

A. Task 1, Speak to communicate - 3/3

This means that the examiner looked at the criteria in this part of the task-specific mark scheme and felt that Samira achieved these criteria to the 'secure pass' standard laid out in the generic performance descriptors.

B. Task 1, Listen and respond - 2/3

(2/3) means that Samira has performed to a 'pass' level according to the generic performance descriptors in the list of criteria given in the 'listen and respond' section of the task-specific mark scheme.

C. Task 1, Engage in discussion - 2/3

Again, Samira has achieved a 'pass' according to the generic performance descriptors when being assessed on her ability to 'engage in discussion' as outlined by the criteria in the task-specific mark scheme.

D. Task 1, Accuracy and range of the key language items - 3/3

This time, Samira achieved the highest possible score, meaning that according to the generic performance descriptors she has achieved 'secure pass' standard for the criteria laid out in the 'accuracy and range' section of the task-specific mark scheme.

The next three grades (labelled E-F) relate to Task 2. We can see that Samira performed less well in this task overall.

E. Task 2, Speak to communicate - 2/3

Samira's grade shows that she is slightly less able when it comes to Task 2 than she was in Task 1. However, she still achieved a 'pass' grade according to the generic performance descriptors.

F. Task 1, Listen and respond - 1/3

On this topic, Samira fulfils only the 'below pass' generic performance descriptor when taken in conjunction with the task-specific mark scheme criteria for this task. Overall, taking both tasks into account, we can see that Listening is Samira's weaker area.

G. Task 1, Accuracy and range of the key language items - 2/3

Once again, Samira's performance on this task for this set of criteria is slightly lower than her performance in the first task, but this time she does achieve a 'pass'.

Samira achieves a 'pass' grade, because her overall grade is 15/21 (over two-thirds), even though her total grade in Task 2 is lower than two-thirds. It is not necessary to pass both tasks in order to pass this exam overall.

Entry 2 - Level 2

Please read the notes above, relating to the Entry 1 candidate, to see how the assessment system works in general. However, remember the following points:

- From E2 - L2 there will always be three tasks (rather than just two as in Entry 1), as well as a second component, the group discussion. This means that there are more marks to be allocated at these levels (10 grades in total at each level).
- Levels 1 and 2 have a wider range of mark allocation. Whereas the highest possible grade for any single section from Entry 1 - Entry 3 is always 3, the highest grade available for Levels 1 and 2 is 6. A 'pass' is still two-thirds, a 'secure pass' is considered to be 6.

Writing

Entry 1 - Level 2

You receive the following set of results for your student:

Sayid Hassan

4/6 2/6 1/3 6/6 2/6 1/3

As in the Speaking & Listening exam, each pair of numbers shows the grade the candidate achieved (before the slash), as well as the total mark available for that criteria (after the slash). In the above example, therefore, the first pair of numbers shows that Sayid achieved 4 out of a possible 6. Again, as in the Speaking & Listening exam, the pass mark in the Writing exam is always two-thirds of the total possible grade.

Each set of three marks refers to one task. At Entry 1 - Entry 3, there are always two tasks on a paper, so the candidate will receive 6 grades in total (as in the example for Sayid). At Levels 1 and 2, there are three tasks on each paper, so the candidate will receive 9 grades in total.

You will need the following to help you make sense of these grades:

- The generic performance descriptors (p24 of the Introduction booklet)
- The task-specific mark scheme (e.g. p19 of E1 syllabus, page varies depending on level)

This always means that the first, fourth and, if applicable, seventh grades refer to 'Text focus', the second, fifth and eighth grades refer to 'Sentence focus' and the third, sixth and ninth grades refer to 'Word focus'. For Sayid's first task, then, this breaks down as follows:

1) Text focus: writing composition - 4/6

As 4 out of 6 is exactly two-thirds, we can see that Sayid achieved a 'pass' level according to the generic performance descriptors, when applied to the specific criteria laid out in the task-specific mark scheme for Task 1 at his level. In general, this section relates to the candidate's ability to answer the question set with appropriate information and in an appropriate manner, as well as to follow the conventions of the style required, e.g. letter, form, report etc. Naturally, this ability will vary greatly from level to level so it is important to check the task-specific criteria at each level carefully. The text focus section is always out of 6, at all levels.

2) Sentence focus: grammar and punctuation - 2/6

2 out of 6 shows that Sayid's grammar and punctuation, as required by the task-specific mark scheme for his level, falls very much within the 'below pass' section of the generic performance descriptors. Sayid really needs to work on this area. The sentence focus section is always out of 6, at all levels.

3) Word focus: spelling and handwriting - 1/3

Again, Sayid's grade falls into the 'below pass' category of the generic performance descriptors when related to the task-specific mark scheme criteria. He is either spelling most common words (for his level) incorrectly, or writing so illegibly that it is difficult to interpret some words, or both. The word focus section is always out of 3, at all levels.

Sayid's second task can be broken down in exactly the same way - we can see that he performs very well on the 'Text focus', so we can assume that he has fully answered all parts of the question, in a coherent and logical way, using paragraphs where necessary and the required format. However, his 'Sentence focus' and 'Word focus' grades are the same as in Task 1, so we can deduce that Sayid needs to work on his grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting.

Each individual Writing task, regardless of level, is worth a maximum of 15 marks. As with the other Trinity Skills for Life exams, candidates do not need to pass each task to pass overall. It is the total grade for the whole paper which counts. Sayid achieves 16 out of a possible 30, lower than two-thirds, so his overall result is 'below pass'.

Reading

Entry 1 - Entry 3

For these levels your candidate will receive a result either out of 15 (Entry 1) or 20 (Entry 2 and 3). This will look like this:

Munir Shah
13/15

Once again, at Entry 1 - Entry 3 only, the pass mark is two-thirds. For Entry 1, therefore, the pass mark is 10/15. For Entry 2 - 3, the pass mark is 13/20. In the above example, Munir has achieved a 'pass' grade.

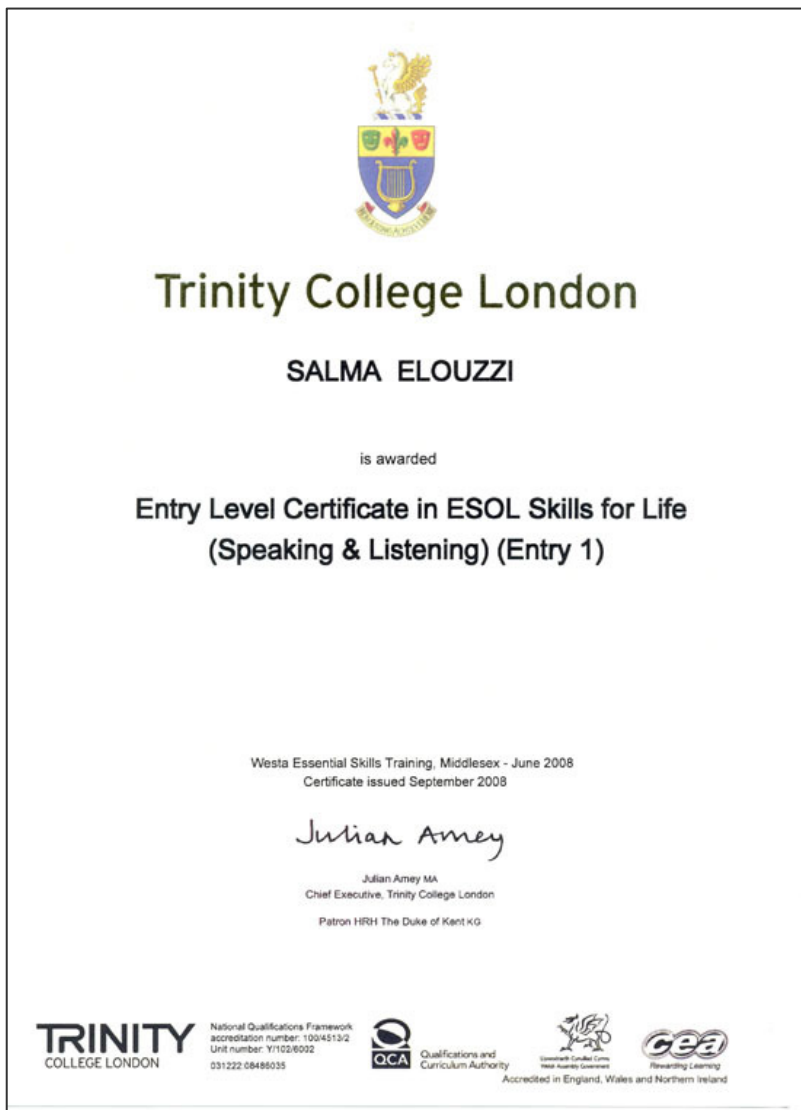
At these levels we do not provide a break-down of the marks, as there is no task-specific mark scheme due to the variable nature of a Reading exam. Each individual item varies from month to month.

Level 1 and 2

These exams are not produced by Trinity, as they are the National Adult Literacy Tests, they are provided to us by QCA. The pass mark varies for each paper but is usually around two-thirds.

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New Certificate Poster and Coat of Arms poster

By now, you should have received two new Trinity posters to display in your centre. The first poster explains the various components of the new Trinity certificate. The second poster explains the various components that make up Trinity's new Coat of Arms.



Please note: The Certificate Poster that you've received is just an example of how the ESOL Skills for Life or ESOL for Work certificates will look - even though it is an example of the Graded Examinations in Spoken English certificate.

Trinity Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector - DTLLS

Do you still need to get fully qualified to teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector?

If so, Trinity offers the DTLLS qualification - and you can skip Part 1 if you already have your CertTESOL, CELTA or equivalent!

For more information about this and details of where you can take the course visit www.trinitycollege.co.uk/dtlls

Do you want to offer the Trinity DTLLS programme?

We are interested in hearing from colleges, universities and training organisations who would like to become a Trinity DTLLS (English ESOL) course provider. Please contact huan.japes@trinitycollege.co.uk

A day in the life of ...

Customer Services Manager, Language Examinations - Emma Parker



7.45: journey

My journey to work is usually relatively stress-free and reasonable in comparison to some commutes (about 45 minutes). I tend to arrive around 8.30am in order to prepare for the day ahead. The people in my team (Customer Service Officers) usually arrive between 9-9.30am.

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08:30: emails

The first thing I always do when I arrive is check my emails. As we offer exams around the world the time differences mean that issues can arise while we are out of the office. So even if everything has been dealt with by end of Friday, by Monday morning there may be many new questions to answer.

09:30: checking deadlines

The Customer Service team aims to get all results & certificates to centres within 4-6 weeks of the exam dates. One of my regular morning activities is to check for any results which are approaching the 4 week timeline to make sure that we chase up with the relevant parties to prevent the results from becoming overdue.

10.00: meetings & archiving

At the moment, we are currently in the process of changing our office lay-out, including moving some departments to another floor in our building. This means that I have to be involved in meetings to discuss how this will be implemented. As a large part of the preparation for the move, all possible paperwork has to be archived and this is giving us an opportunity to make sure that only paperwork from recent exam sessions are kept on site. As we have electronic copies relating to all the exam sessions, this means we only need to keep the originals on site for recent exams. It is my job to co-ordinate the archiving & office organisation for the Customer Service team.

11.00: problem-solving

I check to make sure everything is in order regarding technical and printing procedures and updates. My role is less about reacting to immediate problems and more about making sure procedures are in place to prevent them from occurring in the first place.

12.00: team updates

I check with my team members to see if they have any difficulties, or if they need any advice. I also make sure that any relevant company information has been passed to them. If there is anything I need them to follow up on or work on (such as checking our generic "query" folders where anyone can contact us if they have a query relating to certificates or results:

query.certificates@trinitycollege.co.uk

or

query.results@trinitycollege.co.uk

I will remind them.

12.30: lunch

I usually try to get out of the office as I find I focus much more clearly in the afternoon if I do take a break. As there is not much choice of places to go in Vauxhall, I will often make sure I go to Clapham or Victoria for a change of scenery.

13.30: emails, calls & paperwork

After lunch I generally try to catch up on any remaining emails, make any phone calls which are due & follow up on any paperwork which is pending on my desk. I don't receive that many phonecalls as our co-ordinator teams are usually the front line for any contact with centres or

colleges, but I will often have to respond to queries from suppliers or resolve any issues reported to me by the co-ordinator teams.

14.30: reports

There are several internal reports that I regularly update, and other ad hoc projects to report on. I will often spend my afternoons working on these. The reports are then looked at either by my colleagues & me at an operational level to try to improve performance, or at a Director level when considering future developments.

16.00: certificate paper

I check the stock of certificate paper both at our head office & at our 3rd party printer. We have upgraded our certificate paper this year to include a security feature of a watermark. The quality of the paper has also been improved by using a much thicker paper. The improvements to the paper quality means that ordering new certificate paper can take longer than previously, and it means that the quantity in stock needs to be carefully monitored. If we are running low of any certificate type (there are 5 different types of certificate paper for our Language exams), I ensure the relevant order is placed to maintain correct stock levels.

16.30: time to go home

Another day is over & it's time for the journey home.

if you would like to provide the next **'Day in the life of...'** or have a **'Case Study'** about a student, please email esol@trinitycollege.co.uk