

Welcome to the latest edition of Trinity's Skills for Life newsletter

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## Operational update by Lisa Petrocchi, Examinations Manager

With a new academic year upon us, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and hope that you will have seen a much improved turnaround of results and certificates. Here at Trinity we are constantly reviewing and assessing our level of service to partner centres and always welcome your feedback through contact with your co-ordinator or the centre evaluation questionnaires which can be found in your centre handbook.

As we look forward to the new year, I would like to remind you of some operational areas which will enable you to continue with the smooth running of your examinations.

But first, as we have two new co-ordinators in the team, here are the contact details should you have any issues relating to your Skills for Life exams:

**Alex Stone** has taken over from Carolyn Scott as the Speaking & Listening co-ordinator for the North of England and can be contacted on 0207 820 6179  
[alex.stone@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:alex.stone@trinitycollege.co.uk)

**Nazia Shah** has replaced Emily Tumeth as the co-ordinator for the Reading & Writing exams, her contact details are 0207 820 6176  
[nazia.shah@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:nazia.shah@trinitycollege.co.uk)

And **Karl Wood**, co-ordinator for Speaking & Listening exams in the South of England, 0207 820 6174  
[karl.wood@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:karl.wood@trinitycollege.co.uk)

### 1. Trinity Online Training

Last year we held several centre support events around the county, which covered training for Trinity Online. Whilst these events were a success this year we are offering users of Online one on one training, which can be general training or tailored to your specific requirements. Trinity co-ordinators are currently arranging visits to centres between now and March, so if you would like to receive training, please contact them to discuss and arrange a suitable date.

### 2. Timetabling

All centres must remember to provide a correct timetable for examiners on their arrival. Trinity Online does offer an exam Timetable Manager which can be downloaded as a stand alone programme on your desktop. The link is  
[www.trinityexams.org/downloads/index.php](http://www.trinityexams.org/downloads/index.php)

It will export your candidate records, work out the timing for individual interviews, the appropriate number of group discussions and schedule examiner breaks. Training can be provided over the phone with your co-ordinator or incorporated into your one on one training session. A reminder of the timetabling rules can also be found under Appendix J in the centre handbook.

### 3. Payment procedures

Batches can not be authorised until we receive confirmation of payment namely in the form of a purchase order, which can be requested from your finance department. This can be sent either by fax (0207 820 6161) or by post for the attention of your co-ordinator at the time of submission which will avoid any delay in batches being authorised

### 4. UK ESOL Exam Session Information: Venue information

Should your centre plan on having any Skills for Life exams off site, we must be advised at the time of submission the correct address and contact details of the rep responsible for that venue. This will ensure that sessions avoid any unnecessary delay. I need to remind you that for any off site venues these must still adhere to the Code of Practice for Trinity Examination Centres (Appendix B, Centre Handbook)

### 5. Advance Planning of Examinations - December 2006

In order that we can maintain our service levels, we would be grateful if you could indicate to us when you would like your Speaking & Listening sessions to take place in December 2006.

(Please note that this request does not replace you using Trinity Online to submit your candidate entries).

Please e-mail [lisa.petrocchi@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:lisa.petrocchi@trinitycollege.co.uk) with the subject title: SPEAKING & LISTENING SESSIONS and outline prospective dates and numbers of examiners required.

### 6. Late Entries

Whilst many centres are now better prepared for exams and have a greater understanding of Trinity Online, we must remind you that we are not able to accept any entries in the last two weeks before an examination session.

The closing date remains at four weeks before the exam. This does not affect block bookings for Speaking & Listening as long as the original booking was made prior to the closing date as centres can continue to make changes to candidates or levels right up to the time the batch is locked.

### 7. Reading & Writing exams 2006-2007

We advised you in May's newsletter that the dates for the Reading & Writing exams are now available until July 2007 offering the most flexible range of options and at the most popular times of the year. Should you need a reminder of these dates, these can be found on [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/dates](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/dates)

### 8. Your views: Skills for Life Centre handbook

We would like to hear your views on the current Skills for Life Centre handbook, Have you seen a copy? Is it user friendly? Is there any information you would like to see in it? Does it currently give you all the information you require? These are just a few ideas for you, you may have others.

Please e-mail your co-ordinator with the subject title: SFL CENTRE HANBOOK. We look forward to hearing your views and comments.

**The Trinity website is now easier to use:** As well as using the links on the web pages you can type the following into your web browser at any time to find the pages and resources you need: e.g. [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/menu](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/menu) brings you to the menu page of the shortcuts. Type: [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/) followed by any of the 'Page names' below.

Page name	Description
<a href="#">menu</a>	Full list of short cuts
<a href="#">syllabuses</a>	Download syllabuses & handbooks, maps, roleplays
<a href="#">examoverview</a>	Structure and timings of the exams
<a href="#">videonotes</a>	Notes to the current DVD
<a href="#">video</a>	As above
<a href="#">onlinehelp</a>	Documents to help you use Trinity Online
<a href="#">latest</a>	New resources appearing on the site
<a href="#">pastpapers</a>	Download past exam papers (reading & writing)
<a href="#">specialneeds</a>	Go here if you have any special needs students
<a href="#">evaluation</a>	Complete the questionnaire to give us feedback
<a href="#">faqs</a>	All those questions answered
<a href="#">fees</a>	Current fees for 2006-07
<a href="#">bookings</a>	Standard entry or blockbookings explained
<a href="#">registration</a>	The registration process and documents needed
<a href="#">teacherssupport</a>	A developmental area to help you
<a href="#">administration</a>	Overview of procedures
<a href="#">dates</a>	Reading & Writing dates for the year
<a href="#">blockbooking</a>	More about block booking
<a href="#">staggered</a>	Start times for papers at peak periods
<a href="#">calculator</a>	Calculate total fees and number of discussion groups
<a href="#">autotimetabler</a>	A simple-to-use Excel timetabler
<a href="#">centrehandbook</a>	Everything you need to know to run the exams

## Academic Update

**For those of you unfamiliar with the structure of our examinations:  
An overview of Trinity's Skills for Life examinations, level by level**

Level	Speaking & Listening	Reading	Writing
<b>Entry 1</b>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Exchange of personal information <i>Up to 4 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Instructions and directions <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Simple narrative <i>10 Items</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Signs and symbols <i>5 Items</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 30 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Write a text giving basic personal details (e.g. complete a form) <i>About 30 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Write a brief message giving details of present activities (e.g. a postcard) <i>About 30 words</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 20 mins</i></p>
<b>Entry 2</b>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Exchange of information about daily routine, study, work <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Short account of recent past activity <i>Up to 2 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Role-play - making requests <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Group Discussion</b> Likes and dislikes in familiar contexts <i>Up to 10 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Instructional/ chronological text <i>10 Items</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Records of personal data <i>5 Items</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Public information texts, e.g. signs, notices and lists <i>5 Items</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 45 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Write a short record of a single personal past experience of activity (e.g. writing about a past experience related to a hobby) <i>About 80 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Write an informal description of a person or place (e.g. a note to someone describing a friend you ask them to meet at the station) <i>About 80 words</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 40 mins</i></p>
<b>Entry 3</b>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Exchange of information, comparing people and places <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Narration of a simple story (factual or fictional) <i>Up to 2 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Role-play - giving personal information in a formal context <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Group Discussion</b> Planning a social event <i>Up to 10 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Explanatory/ chronological text <i>8 Items</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Informational texts, e.g. contents pages, indices and menus etc. <i>6 Items</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Extracts from different text types for identifying text purpose including instructional <i>6 Items</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 60 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Write an account or narrative (either factual or fictional) of a sequenced past event (e.g. article about first day at college) <i>About 200 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Write an informal letter about a planned future activity or event (e.g. invitation to party) <i>About 120 words</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 60 mins</i></p>
<b>Level 1</b>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Exchange of information about personal past events <i>Up to 4 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Presentation - describing a process <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Role-play - formal requests for factual information, descriptions and comparisons <i>Up to 3 mins</i></p> <p><b>Group Discussion</b> Problem solving - dealing with common everyday problems and giving advice and suggesting solutions <i>Up to 15 mins</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>National Literacy Test</b> Multiple choice format (<i>40 items</i>)</p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 60 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> write a record of extended personal data for official purposes (e.g. annual appraisal form) <i>About 200 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Write a formal report making comparisons between, e.g. countries, lifestyles, jobs (e.g. article about differences between treatment of elderly people in 2 countries you know) <i>About 300 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Write an informal letter setting out a problem (real or imaginary) and asking for advice (e.g. letter about problem with accommodation) <i>About 150 words</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 100 mins</i></p>
<b>Level 2</b>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Formal presentation of chosen topic <i>Up to 6 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Informal discussion of presentation <i>Up to 5 mins</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Role-play - making and responding to complaints and criticism <i>Up to 4 mins</i></p> <p><b>Group Discussion</b> Debate of important issue - presenting pros and cons <i>Up to 20 mins</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>National Literacy Test</b> Multiple choice format (<i>40 items</i>)</p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 60 mins</i></p>	<p><b>Task 1</b> Write a detailed factual account (e.g. report for line-manager based on graph) <i>About 400 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 2</b> Correspond with businesses, offices, government /council departments (e.g. letter of complaint) <i>About 150 words</i></p> <p><b>Task 3</b> Write a creative or imaginative narrative (e.g. a story) <i>About 200 words</i></p> <p><i>Total time allowed: 100 mins</i></p>

## Academic Overview - About the Assessment

The following information is taken from pages 20-24 of the Introduction Booklet

### Speaking and Listening

**The examiner uses two documents to assess the candidate's performance. These are:**

- the generic performance descriptors (found in the table below)
- the task-specific mark scheme for each task at each level (found in the syllabus at each level)

#### **The Generic Speaking and Listening Descriptors**

These give details of a qualitative and quantitative nature regarding the competences expected to be demonstrated by the candidate in the relevant communicative skills and key language functions and items.

There are three levels of performance.

Band A - Secure pass

Band B - Pass

Band C - Below pass

The terms 'secure pass' and 'pass' are used by the examiner only, in order to provide a clearer and more comprehensive scheme of assessment. They are not recorded either on the certificate for the candidate or on our data systems - for both of these purposes, only the terms 'pass' and 'below pass' are used.

There are three sets of generic descriptors which are used to assess the following assessment strands.

Set one: coverage of component skills

Set two: accuracy, range and appropriacy of the key language items of the level

Set one has three criteria. These are the Speaking and Listening standards:

- speak to communicate
- listen and respond
- engage in discussion

Set two has only the one criterion:

- accuracy, range and appropriacy of the key language items of the level

All assessment criteria are equally weighted.

### **The Task-specific mark scheme**

The Task-specific mark scheme details the actual performance and competence required for each particular task at each qualification level.

The performance and competences are set out as in the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum* either as general level descriptors or individual component skills, knowledge and understanding whichever is more relevant to the actual task.

The individual entries are organised under the criteria identified above in the generic performance descriptors.

The mark schemes are divided into separate tasks, then into the relevant assessment criteria, followed by the individual performance or competences.

The maximum possible number of assessments in each task is four. The number of criteria actually addressed in each task differs according to the requirements of that particular task.

## Generic performance descriptors - Speaking and Listening

Assessment strands	Band A: Secure pass	Band B: Pass	Band C: Below pass
<b>Coverage of component skills, knowledge and understanding of the level</b>  1. Speak to communicate 2. Listen and respond 3. Engage in discussion	The candidate's contributions provide sustained evidence of good coverage of the relevant component skill/s, knowledge and understanding throughout the task in each of the three standards. The candidate achieves the communicative purpose of the task with ease and independently without the need for support from the examiner.	The candidate's contributions provide some evidence of coverage of the relevant component skill/s, knowledge and understanding in each of the three standards. The candidate achieves the communicative purpose of the task but may need some support from the examiner to do so.	The candidate's contributions provide limited evidence of coverage of the relevant component skill/s, knowledge and understanding in each of the three standards. The candidate only partially achieves the communicative purpose of the task even with the support of the examiner.
<b>4. Accuracy, range and appropriacy of the key language items of the level</b>	The candidate uses a wide range of specified items successfully. These are well-controlled and are used appropriately and consistently throughout the task. There are few inaccuracies.	The candidate attempts to use a range of the specified items. The candidate's contributions are mostly appropriate for the task and are generally well-controlled although some inaccuracies may be evident but do not impede communication.	The candidate produces very few samples of the key language items. These are not well-controlled and inaccuracies can impede communication. The candidate's contributions may not, at times, be appropriate for the task.
<b>Entry marks</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Level 1 &amp; Level 2 marks</b>	<b>6/5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3/2/1</b>

### Comments on Speaking and Listening sessions based on feedback from examiners

The feedback Trinity receives from these sessions is overwhelmingly positive. Most candidates are extremely well-prepared and ready to take the exam. Examiners and candidates alike seem to genuinely enjoy the whole experience!

In general, bad experiences only occur when candidates are either quite clearly not of the required level or completely under-prepared. Tutors are advised to distribute copies of the relevant part of the syllabus as well as the table above to all candidates and make sure that they are completely familiar with what is expected of them in all parts of the exam.

Specific feedback from the last few months' papers has focussed on the following areas:

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some candidates are memorising and reciting events and stories but unfortunately, when examiners spontaneously comment on details, the candidates cannot respond. Please consult the Speaking and Listening syllabus for details of where candidates can take in notes.</li> <li>• Candidates speak for too long when telling the story at Entry 3 (Task 2). This is unsettling for both examiner and candidate, as the examiner will have to cut them short to complete the exam in the required time. Please prepare your students to talk for no longer than two minutes.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations at Level 2 are not formal enough or a formal presentation is given on an informal topic (such as 'my last holiday'). The task requires a formal presentation such as may be given at work or at college.</li> <li>• Candidates are not aware that they need to ask the examiner questions. In order to completely fulfil the 'Listen and Respond' criterion, these questions also ought to be relevant to the topic which is being discussed.</li> </ul> |
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## Facilitating

Examiners report that in the main, facilitators are coordinating the group discussion well. This is especially true when the facilitator knows the candidates and is able to make them feel at ease during the Group Discussion component. However, we are aware that many facilitators are rather nervous about this aspect of the exam. Here are a few tips which we hope will help!

- Make sure the room is arranged so that the candidates are facing each other, and not you.
  - If a candidate looks at you for support/confirmation instead of a fellow-candidate, simply look away in the direction of another candidate and that candidate will follow your lead.
  - Start by asking the candidates to introduce themselves, thank them and then read the task. Again, at this point it is a good idea to look at them expectantly/encouragingly, as they are more likely to take the lead and begin the discussion.
  - Sit back, to show that you are now out of the conversation. If all goes well, you will not have to say another word until the examiner gives you the nod!
  - If the candidates are moving very much off the topic, or seem to be answering a different question entirely, try to ask them a question which will bring them back onto the topic. You could target the candidate who seems to be most responsible for moving the conversation in the new direction, with a question such as 'Ahmed, where could you take your friend?', if the question was about organising a trip for a friend and Ahmed appears to have understood that he must talk about what his friend likes to do. However, do give the candidates a chance, as often they may be discussing what the friend likes to do in order to better decide where to take him - they are usually more on-track than you think!
  - Do not enter the conversation yourself - never add an idea or comment of your own.
- If one or more of the candidates are being excluded from the conversation, first give the others a chance to include them and as a last resort direct a question at them specifically. For example, if the others are talking about taking a friend shopping you could ask 'Lila, do you think you should take your friend shopping?' This should remind the others that Lila needs to be included in the conversation and encourage Lila to make more effort to join in. Again, don't add any new ideas of your own here.
  - If the candidates genuinely seem to have run out of ideas, ask them the supplementary prompt. However, wait until they have paused for a good few seconds before you do, as very often they simply need time to think for a moment and are quite ready to continue the conversation further. By jumping in with the supplementary question too readily you may disadvantage a quieter candidate who has formed some ideas but needed to build up the confidence to contribute them, as they may now feel they are not able to mention them at all and need to start again with a whole new idea! However, the supplementary prompt will always be connected in some way to the original question.
  - Don't speak to the examiner whilst this part of the exam is in progress.

The main comments we receive from examiners regarding facilitating, as mentioned above, are where a facilitator either almost enters the conversation themselves by adding their own suggestions, or, at the opposite end of the spectrum, they say absolutely nothing even when a candidate is clearly struggling and could easily be helped out with a couple of words of encouragement.

## Centre organisation in the Speaking and Listening sessions

Examiners also have extremely positive feedback on how well-prepared the centres are. They are often very impressed by the fact that co-ordinators of the exams manage to make the whole session such a pleasant experience for both candidates and examiners, often under rather difficult circumstances. Where comments were less positive, the problems encountered during the Speaking and Listening sessions were:

- Inadequate rooms
- Inadequate timetabling or timetable not adhered to
- Unprepared or stressed co-ordinators causing undue nervousness and panic in candidates
- Over- or under-zealous facilitators (see advice on facilitating below)

We are aware that each centre has various difficulties to overcome when it comes to organising exam sessions, and that it can be a very stressful time for those involved. However, our main priority must be, at all times, the candidates, and it is vital that their exam is not jeopardised in any way by any of the above factors.

## Reading papers

### How are marks awarded in the Reading exams?

#### Entry 1 - Entry 3

Entry 1 papers have **15** items, and **15** marks are available. Entry 2 and 3 papers each contain **20** items, with **20** marks available. The pass mark for the Entry 1 paper is **10**, and for the Entry 2 and Entry 3 papers the pass mark is **13**. See also the table at the top of page 11 of this newsletter.

Each item is numbered, and each number represents **one** mark. No numbered item has a value of two or more marks, and no half marks are awarded. For example, you might see the following in one of our papers:

13. On which pages can you find information about exams?

\_\_\_\_\_ **and** \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer:** (page) 14 **and** (page) 29

This question is worth **one** mark. No half marks are awarded, so the candidate must answer **both** parts correctly to gain the mark.

**Or**

6-8. Complete the sentences with one of the following:

... is worth one mark.
... are awarded.
... has a value of three marks

6. Each numbered item \_\_\_\_\_

7. No half marks \_\_\_\_\_

8. This question numbered 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_

In total there are **three** marks available here. If a candidate answers the item numbered 6. correctly but items 7 and 8 incorrectly, they will receive **one** mark.

#### Level 1 - Level 2

Level 1 and Level 2 papers are the National Literacy Tests. They always consist of forty items, **all** of which are multiple choice. Again, each item represents **one** mark. The pass mark is variable depending on the paper used, but is usually around two thirds of the total available marks, i.e. around 24-27.

## Comments on Reading Sessions

Overall, candidates are completing the reading papers well. Where problems do occur it is mainly because the candidate is very clearly not of the level being tested.

Specific feedback from the June/July 2006 papers focussed on the following areas:

- Candidates not reading the question properly - especially where the question includes the word 'not'
- Candidates circling two or more answers when only one should be circled (unless otherwise indicated)
- Problems with recognising 'I' in the text at Entry 1

- Candidates drawing on their own experience or imagination to answer questions rather than basing their answers on the text provided
- Alphabetical order question causing problems - surprisingly, to both candidates who come from countries which use the Roman alphabet as well as others.

## Writing papers

### How are marks awarded in the writing exams?

The marker uses two documents to assess the candidate's performance. These are:

- the generic performance descriptors (found in the table below)
- the task-specific mark scheme for each task at each level (found in the syllabus at each level)

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### The Generic Writing Performance Descriptors

These give details of a qualitative and quantitative nature regarding the competences expected to be demonstrated by the candidate in the relevant communicative skills and key language functions and items.

There are three levels of performance.

Band A - Secure pass

Band B - Pass

Band C - Below pass

The terms 'secure pass' and 'pass' are used by the examiner only, in order to provide a clearer and more comprehensive scheme of assessment. They are not recorded either on the certificate for the candidate or on our data systems - for both of these purposes, only the terms 'pass' and 'below pass' are used.

There are three sets of generic descriptors which are used to assess the following assessment strands.

- Text focus: written composition
- Sentence focus: grammar and punctuation
- Word focus: spelling and handwriting

At all levels for the Text focus and Sentence focus criteria, marks are allocated using a 7-point scale.

At all levels for the Word focus criterion, marks are allocated using a 4-point scale.

#### The assessment criteria are equally weighted.

The weightings for the three criteria are as follows:

- Text focus: written composition 40%
- Sentence focus: grammar and punctuation 40%
- Word focus: spelling and handwriting 20%

Whilst the importance of correct spelling and legible handwriting is acknowledged, it should not be possible for a candidate to achieve a qualification such as this by spelling every word correctly and writing beautifully and yet not actually achieving the communicative purpose of the task

### The Task-specific mark scheme

The Task-specific mark scheme details the actual performance and competence required for each particular task at each qualification level.

The performance and competences are set out as in the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum* either as general level descriptors or individual component skills, knowledge and understanding whichever is more relevant to the actual task.

The individual entries are organised under the criteria identified above in the generic performance descriptors.

The mark schemes are divided into separate tasks, then into the relevant assessment criteria, followed by the individual performance or competences. All tasks at all levels are assessed using the three assessment criteria.

Band A: Assessment strand	Secure pass	Band B: Pass	Band C: Below pass
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## Generic performance descriptors - Writing

<b>Text focus: written composition</b>	The candidate achieves the communicative purpose successfully and with ease by consistently addressing the identified readership in an appropriate layout, style and register and including all relevant content material. The candidate demonstrates knowledge and control of the required text organisational features.	The candidate achieves the communicative purpose in a limited way by attempting with some success to address the identified readership and by using layout, style and register appropriate to the task. Most of the relevant content material as indicated by the question rubric is included. The candidate shows awareness of the required text organisational features.	The candidate only partially achieves the communicative purpose by attempting with limited success to address the identified readership. At times, layout, style and register are not appropriate to the task. Only some of the relevant content material as indicated by the question rubric is included and there are significant omissions. The candidate attempts to use organisational features with limited success.
<b>6 marks</b>	<b>Mark allocation</b>	<b>5/4 marks</b>	<b>3/2/1 marks</b>
<b>Band A: Secure pass</b>	<b>Assessment strand</b>	<b>Band B: Pass</b>	<b>Band C: Below pass</b>
A range of the stated language items and relevant language functions is used accurately, consistently and appropriately throughout the writing. Sentence structure is accurate and the writing is characterised by a high level of control of punctuation.	<b>Sentence focus: grammar and punctuation</b>	There is evidence of the ability to use the stated grammatical items and language functions with a degree of control although inaccuracies may be evident and the full range may not be employed successfully. Sentence structure is appropriate and punctuation is used successfully to convey the intended meaning.	There is some evidence of an attempt to use a few of the stated grammatical items and language functions but these are not well-controlled and inaccuracies may impede communication. Sentence structure is not well-controlled and correct punctuation, although attempted, is not achieved consistently.
<b>6 marks</b>	<b>Mark allocation</b>	<b>5/4 marks</b>	<b>3/2/1 marks</b>
Spelling is consistently accurate and text is legible throughout.	<b>Word focus: spelling and punctuation</b>	Spelling of key words is accurate and text is for the most part legible.	Some key words are spelt correctly. Spelling is not consistent. Text may be difficult to read in places.
<b>3 marks</b>	<b>Mark allocation</b>	<b>2 marks</b>	<b>1 mark</b>

## Comments on Writing Sessions

Our pass rates show that the vast majority of candidates are well-prepared for the exams and are at the right level to take it. Comments note that improvements are being seen in how well prepared candidates seem to be at the lower level (Entry 1 - Entry 3).

However, at Levels 1 and 2, the standard of candidates' work varies somewhat from centre to centre. At all levels, candidates must be made aware of what is being tested in the exam.

Please use the overview table (on page 3 of this newsletter) with your candidates so they are aware of the tasks and the word counts that are expected.

Specific feedback from the June/July 2006 papers focused on the following areas:

- Mis-reading the task, or answering a question they have in mind rather than the task set.
- Layout
- Answering forms too literally - eg. on a work application form, writing 'I'm housewife, I can't work'.
- In Task 1 of the Entry 2 paper, some candidates did not focus on a specific past occasion and instead wrote about the type of event being asked about in general.
- Formality and register inappropriate
- Lifting of rubric rather than re-phrasing in candidates' own words and adding original ideas.

## Centre organisation in the Reading and Writing sessions

Our regular inspections show that most centres provide excellent facilities for their candidates and run very well-organised sessions for the reading and writing exams. When we receive papers back here at Head Office they are mostly well packaged and well-ordered, with all of the relevant paperwork correctly completed, including the log sheet. The vast majority of centres return their papers the day after the examination takes place, posting the papers by special delivery, with some larger centres alerting us to the fact that they will need an extra day or two as their

papers are often first returned to an internal examination department before being sent back here. However, in the few cases where these procedures are not adhered to, candidates are unfairly disadvantaged. Results are delayed and, if we suspect your centre of misconduct during an examination session, papers may be voided.

**Please make sure your centre adheres to the correct procedures and that your candidates are not disadvantaged in any way.**

## Centre Support Update from Janet and Brian

There are quite a few items on our agenda this time round, so we'll try and keep it as brief as we can.

1. We would like to receive more regular feedback from you regarding any recent examination session, so please make sure that one of your academic colleagues who was around during the exams completes the evaluation questionnaire. This is the only way we can respond quickly to any problems that might arise. This questionnaire is sent out in the examination packs and can also be downloaded from the website.
2. We are currently working on shortcuts to pages and downloads on the website so that you can find things more easily. For example, if you are looking for past papers, type into your browser:  
[www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/pastpapers](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/pastpapers)  
Appearing on the website soon: past papers from 28<sup>th</sup> June and also 2 new maps for E1!  
Take a look at  
[www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/menu](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/menu) for a full list of shortcuts
3. Everybody likes to read about success. Do you have any case studies you can share with the ESOL community about any of your students who have achieved something because they attended an ESOL course and took a Trinity exam? Why not contact us and tell us about it so we can share it with others!
4. Don't forget we can come and visit you if you need some support with administrative and/or academic matters. Contact your co-ordinator for admin and Janet or Brian for academic visit requests:  
[janet.golding@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:janet.golding@trinitycollege.co.uk) or  
[brian.cooper@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:brian.cooper@trinitycollege.co.uk)
5. Keep using the DVD we sent you recently and read the notes to it at  
[www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/video](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/video)  
(by the way - did you notice that address? That's an example of the new shortcuts!)
6. While we are on the subject of video - we always need more and more samples of students at all levels so that we can produce a DVD to help you prepare your students. If you and your students are willing to be videoed, please contact Janet or Brian and we will be pleased to work out a schedule with you.
7. Remember you can have your oral exams anytime, anywhere including in the workplace. Contact your co-ordinator to arrange your oral exam bookings and of course use Trinity Online to make those admin tasks quick and easy.
8. Absenteeism is an ongoing concern for you and also for all examination boards. Why do your students fail to show up at the exams? How do you deal with it? Please email us and let us know. Thanks.
9. Despite rumours to the contrary, Speaking & Listening is STILL a standalone qualification. Your students will receive a certificate when they pass their Speaking and Listening and this also counts towards an all-modes qualification.
10. Please get in touch with Huan Japes at Trinity if you would like to know more about our ESOL teaching qualifications or if you are thinking of becoming a Trinity TESOL course provider.  
[huan.japes@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:huan.japes@trinitycollege.co.uk)

11. With the new academic year there is usually a lot of staff movement, comings and goings. Please would you help by making sure new colleagues see this newsletter. Remind the person who has access to Trinity Online to update your centre's contact details and all email addresses so that we can keep in touch.
12. Anyone can add their name to the KEEPMEINFORMED mailing list by sending an email to [brian.cooper@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:brian.cooper@trinitycollege.co.uk) with KEEP ME INFORMED in the subject line.
13. We are attending the annual NRDC/DfES SfL conferences in London, York, and Birmingham in November. We look forward to seeing you there!
14. Appearing shortly on the website – a searchable FAQ document to answer all those little questions you have about the SfL exam procedures and syllabuses.
15. Another new shortcut for you: [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/dates](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/dates)
16. In case you haven't already noticed, fees for 2007 have been frozen at the same prices as 2006. Guess what the shortcut web address is..... ? [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/fees](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/sfl/fees)
17. We mentioned the evaluation questionnaire above - but 2 years on since the start of Trinity's SfL exams, what do you really think of the exams and us? Why not drop Janet or Brian an email?
18. A new promotional leaflet is being prepared and we will send you supplies as soon as they

are available. Don't forget that your centre has the Centre Handbook which contains all the necessary appendices and procedures you need to know about when running an exam session

19. Every tutor is strongly recommended to read the Introduction Handbook which accompanies the syllabuses. All this documentation can be found on our website.
20. We are thinking of producing photocopyable classroom resources for ESOL and welcome your suggestions about what would be most useful for your lessons.
21. To help you prepare your candidates for our examinations, we have include the total marks and pass marks for each of the examinations. See table below.
22. Each centre is about to receive an updated L2 syllabus. This is because there was an error in the words counts for the Writing Paper. Please make sure you read it if you teach this level.

**Table of possible total marks and pass marks per level**

Level	S& L total	S& L Pass	Reading total	Reading pass	Writing total	Writing pass
Entry 1	21	14	15	10	30	20
Entry 2	30	20	20	13	30	20
Entry 3	30	20	20	13	30	20
Level 1	60	40	National Literacy Test	pass mark variable, approx 60%	45	30
Level 2	60	40	National Literacy Test	pass mark variable, approx 60%	45	30

### Pass rates

The pass rates on the right are from all of our centres' combined statistics and represent candidate performance from April 2006 to July 2006 inclusive. We hope these help when comparing your centre's performance to these national statistics.

Level	Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening
<b>Entry 1</b>	91%	75%	84%
<b>Entry 2</b>	87%	68%	84%
<b>Entry 3</b>	88%	75%	89%
<b>Level 1</b>	66%	65%	89%
<b>Level 2</b>	72%	61%	89%