

Trinity's new QCF Skills for Life Speaking and listening assessments compared with the old NQF assessments

Table 1: All levels

	No change	Change	Comment
Exam focus/ content	The assessments map to the National Literacy Standards and closely reflect the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum.	All exams include work-related tasks.	This change is to reflect government requirements.
Exam format	<p>Speaking & Listening continue to be assessed together.</p> <p>The exams follow the same format as before with an individual component and a group discussion component.</p>	<p>Group discussions will contain only three candidates</p> <p>Group discussions will be facilitated by the examiner.</p> <p>A group discussion has been added at Entry 1.</p> <p>Some tasks in the Individual component have changed.</p>	<p>A group of 3 is the optimum number for this task. It encourages turn-taking and distributes the interaction more evenly.</p> <p>As the QCF requires candidates to meet every criterion, giving the examiner the role of facilitator enables them to elicit language which has not yet been demonstrated by guiding the conversation appropriately. This also reduces the burden and expense for centres of providing their own facilitator.</p> <p>Entry 1 includes the group discussion component to meet the QCF assessment criteria and help learners build confidence in small groups from an early stage.</p> <p>These changes have been made to reflect the new assessment criteria and to encourage an authentic exchange of information.</p>
Exam timings	Each candidate still has the same amount of personal 'talk time' as before.	<p>The individual and group discussion timings are slightly different.</p> <p>Two minutes' administration time have been added after each group discussion for examiners to enter marks.</p>	The timings have been altered to take into account the addition of the group discussion at Entry 1 and the smaller group discussion size at other levels. For example, where the group discussion at Level 2 was previously 20 minutes for four candidates, it is now 15 minutes for three candidates.

Table 1: All levels continued...

Level and skill	No change	Change	Comment
Assessment	As in the NQF qualification, candidates must gain a score of two-thirds or more in order to achieve a pass.	<p>Candidates must additionally demonstrate the ability to meet each of the assessment criteria.</p> <p>The assessment criteria have changed. Each assessment criterion (except 1.3) is assessed during two different tasks. Each assessment criteria is marked on a scale of 0-4.</p> <p>Listening skills are more specifically tested in Task 2 of the individual component at all levels. Candidates are required to demonstrate active listening.</p>	<p>This change reflects QCF requirements.</p> <p>This change reflects QCF requirements. Each criterion is assessed twice to ensure the candidate has enough opportunity to demonstrate their ability in the area.</p> <p>This change reflects QCF requirements.</p>
Exam dates	Exams operate on an on demand basis. Centres may request an exam date of their choosing.		
Exam enrolment	Session booking deadlines and enrolment closing dates remain the same.	Enrolments made via Trinity's new online system.	Guidance is available on how to use the new Trinity Online system.
Exam administration	Candidates sit the exam at their registered exam centre. An external Trinity examiner visits the centre to conduct and assess the exams.	<p>Centres no longer have to provide facilitators.</p> <p>Exam timetables must include two minutes administration time after each group discussion.</p> <p>The Individual marksheets will now be A4 sized.</p>	<p>See above under exam format.</p> <p>See above under exam timings.</p> <p>This is to accommodate the larger number of individual assessments the examiner makes.</p>

Table 2: Speaking & listening exam per level

Level and skill	Old (NQF) papers	New (QCF) papers	Why
Entry 1 Speaking and Listening	7 minutes Two tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (4 minutes): The examiner and candidate exchange personal information. Task 2 (3 minutes): The candidate follows instructions and directions 	5 minutes + 5 minutes Three tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (3 minutes): The candidate needs to bring a picture/object representing an aspect of their current daily life and the examiner will ask questions about it. Task 2 (2 minutes): The candidate asks questions about the examiner's photo of someone doing something. Task 3 - Group discussion (5 minutes): Three candidates discuss a topic. Two lists of topics are provided by Trinity in the exam specifications. Candidates/centres choose which list to prepare. The examiner must be informed of the choice on arrival and selects a topic from the chosen list. List A contains work-related topics and list B general topics. 	A photograph or picture enables the candidate and examiner to talk about a familiar subject in an authentic exchange of information. The group discussion topics are all taken from the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum subject areas, and enable the centres to choose appropriate topics for their candidates to discuss.
Entry 2 Speaking and Listening	8 minutes + 10 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (3 minutes): Exchange of information about daily routine Task 2 (2 minutes): The candidate relates a recent past activity Task 3 (3 minutes): A role play (making requests) Task 4 - Group discussion (10 minutes): Discussing likes and dislikes 	8 minutes + 7 minutes. Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (3 minutes): The candidate needs to bring a photo/object which represents a past event and the examiner will ask questions about it. Task 2 (2 minutes): The candidate asks questions about the examiner's photo relating to a future event or plan. Task 3 (3 minutes): A work-related role play in which both examiner and candidate ask and answer questions. Task 4 - Group discussion (7 minutes): Three candidates discuss a topic. Two lists of topics are provided by Trinity in the exam specifications. Candidates/centres choose which list to prepare. The examiner must be informed of the choice on arrival and selects a topic from the chosen list. List A contains work-related topics and list B general topics. 	The use of photographs or pictures encourages authentic and interesting discussions about past and future events, and prevents recitation. The group discussion topics are all taken from the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum subject areas, and enable the centres to choose appropriate topics for their candidates to discuss.

Table 2: Speaking & listening exam per level continued...

Level and skill	Old (NQF) papers	New (QCF) papers	Why
Entry 3 Speaking and Listening	8 minutes + 10 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (3 minutes): An exchange of information comparing people or places Task 2 (2 minutes): The candidate narrates a simple story Task 3 (3 minutes): A role play, giving information in a formal context. Task 4 – Group discussion (10 minutes): Planning a social event 	8 minutes + 8 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (3 minutes): The candidate needs to bring a photo/object representing a specific experience in the past and the examiner will ask questions about it. Task 2 (2 minutes): The candidate asks questions about a choice the examiner has to make. Task 3 (3 minutes): A role play on a work-related problem in which the candidate and examiner evaluate and plan a solution. Task 4 - Group discussion (8 minutes): Three candidates plan an event in a social, work or study-related context. 	<p>The picture or object encourages an authentic exchange of information and the discursive nature of the interaction prevents recitation.</p> <p>In both the role play and the group discussion, the candidate has to plan action with others to achieve the assessment criteria.</p> <p>The group discussion is very similar to before, but is in a work-related context, and candidates need to express their opinions as well as plan an event.</p>
Level 1 Speaking and Listening	10 minutes + 15 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (4 minutes): An exchange of information about past events. Task 2 (3 minutes): The candidate relates a process Task 3 (3 minutes): A role play, requesting information, descriptions and comparisons. Task 4 – Group discussion (15 minutes): Problem solving, giving advice and making suggestions 	10 minutes + 10 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (4 minutes): The candidate describes how to do something and the examiner will ask questions about it. Task 2 (3 minutes): The candidate listens to the examiner's past event and asks questions. Task 3 (3 minutes): A work-related role play in which the candidate plans a project with the manager (the examiner) and decides what needs to be done and by when. Task 4 - Group discussion (10 minutes): Three candidates discuss possible ways of approaching a problem or situation, and negotiate and plan together to discuss and evaluate possible solutions. 	<p>The picture or object in Task 1 encourages an authentic exchange of information and the discursive nature of the interaction prevents recitation.</p> <p>In both the role play and the discussion, the candidate has to plan action with others to achieve the assessment criteria.</p> <p>The group discussion is similar to before, in that candidates have to discuss problems and solutions, but they also need to compare ideas, negotiate and make suggestions in order to fulfill the assessment criteria.</p>

Table 2: Speaking & listening exam per level continued...

Level and skill	Old (NQF) papers	New (QCF) papers	Why
Level 2 Speaking and Listening	15 minutes + 20 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (6 minutes): The candidate delivers a formal presentation on a topic of their choice Task 2 (5 minutes): The candidate gives clarification and explanations in response to examiner's detailed questions on their topic Task 3 (4 minutes): A role Play, making and responding to complaints and criticisms Task 4 – Group discussion (20 minutes): Candidates are given topics of global or national importance and express views, opinions and feelings and support their arguments with evidence 	14 minutes + 15 minutes Four tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1 (7 minutes): The candidate makes a 4-minute presentation with pros and cons with the object of persuading the examiner and then enters into a debate with the examiner for a further 3 minutes. Task 2 (3 minutes): The examiner explains a complex process to the candidate who asks questions and makes appropriate comments to signal their understanding. Task 3 (4 minutes): A work-related role play in which the candidate makes and responds to complaints and criticism. Task 4 – Group discussion (15 minutes): Three candidates discuss an issue of national or global importance. 	<p>Task 1 is very similar to Tasks 1 and 2 of the old exam combined, but with a more focused outcome, i.e. to persuade the examiner.</p> <p>Task 2 is a new task designed to assess candidates' ability to follow complex instructions (as required by new QCF assessment criteria).</p> <p>Task 3 is the same as before, but is now in a work situation.</p> <p>The group discussion remains similar to before but with a more defined focus. Please note that candidates are assessed on their ability to contribute constructively to the conversation, however, and not on their ability to solve the world's major problems!</p>