

Modern Foreign Languages

OCR Advanced GCE Units F703 French/F713 German/F723 Spanish

Notes for Candidates – Oral Test

Notes for Candidates (ML/INFO/CAND/A2)

As a candidate, you will want to perform at your best. These notes are intended to help you do that.

FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination consists of two sections, which will take place in the following order:

- Section A: A discussion, based on a stimulus text written in the foreign language (5-6 minutes)
Section B: Topic conversation (10-12 minutes).

If your test is being conducted by a visiting examiner, he/she will want to meet all the candidates in a group at the start of the day, to explain to you the format of the examination. The examiner will speak to you in the foreign language during this meeting, so that you may become accustomed to his or her voice. If you are unsure about any aspect of the oral test or if you do not understand anything the examiner says, you should ask him/her to explain.

Section A: DISCUSSION OF TEXT

- You have 20 minutes in which to prepare for the discussion. You may make notes on the stimulus sheet if you wish. You take the sheet into the examination with you, but it will be collected at the end of the discussion.
- You are NOT allowed to use any dictionary during any part of the examination.
- In this part of the test, the examiner will be assessing whether you can understand and respond to the text and to the examiner.
- Bear in mind that you are required to use the information in the stimulus material in response to the examiner's questions - you are not expected to summarise the whole text.

Section B: TOPIC CONVERSATION

- The examiner will already have the top copy of your form listing the two areas which you are prepared to talk about in the conversation. When completing the form, you should write your headings in the foreign language. Your topic areas should come from the A2 list in section 2.2.2 of the Specification.
- The topic must relate to the target - language country.
- You may choose more than one area from the same broad topic, but there must be no overlap of material between the areas you choose. You may refer to the bottom copy of the form during the conversation, if you wish.
- It will be up to you to show what you know and to communicate your interest and knowledge to the examiner.
- In asking questions the examiner will be guided largely by the headings given on your form. This does not, however, rule out questions on other aspects of the topic which may occur to the examiner! You should not expect to deliver a monologue: this is meant to be a conversation, and you should be prepared for the examiner to ask questions. In particular, you should be ready to offer your own ideas and opinions, to analyse your material and draw conclusions. The examiner will want to see whether you can 'think on your feet'. If you limit yourself to purely factual material and have no ideas and opinions to offer, you cannot expect to score a high mark for the content of your discussion. Be prepared to discuss **issues!**
- The examiner will not necessarily ask you about both of your chosen topic areas. According to how the conversation progresses, the examiner will ask you about which topic you wish to discuss first. He or she may then ask about the second topic.
- You may take in to the examination **brief** notes to help you. These must be limited to one side of A4. You must **not** attempt to read out prepared sections from these notes. If you do so, the examiner will take the notes away.
- This part of the examination tests a range of language skills - pronunciation and intonation, accuracy, range of expression, spontaneity and fluency - all of which are a natural part of conducting a conversation. If you wish to score high marks, you should make an effort to use a variety of topic-specific vocabulary, not just common words, and a variety of linguistic constructions - for example, tenses other than the present, relative and subordinate clauses, passive, subjunctive etc.

Do remember that the examiner is on your side and wants to reward your strengths - but cannot do this if you keep them hidden!