

Modern Foreign Languages

OCR French Advanced GCE 7861 Unit 2654

OCR German Advanced GCE 7862 Unit 2664

OCR Spanish Advanced GCE 7863 Unit 2674

Administrative Arrangements Relating to Visiting Oral Examiners

We ask you to note and comply with the following points when making arrangements for Visiting Oral Examiners.

1. CONTACTING THE VISITING ORAL EXAMINER

- 1.1 Details of the oral provisional entries, submitted by Centres in October, are passed to the Visiting Oral Examiner in March; the Examiner is then responsible for contacting the Centre and arranging dates for the conduct of the examination. He/she will do this via a form ML/ORAL/VISIT/A2, which will give details of the proposed date(s) for the visit; **the second part of the form must be completed and returned to the Examiner within two days of receipt.**
- 1.2 In some cases where Centres are grouping together in order to have a Visiting Oral Examiner, the Examiner may ask them to attend at a neighbouring Centre to be examined with other candidates there. Centres are asked for their co-operation in making these arrangements; the host Centre is responsible for making the detailed arrangements and for ensuring that the information is transmitted to the visiting Centre, and the visiting Centre is responsible for forwarding the cassette/CD to the host Centre and for ensuring that the candidates have completed oral topic form (see below) before arriving for the examination.
- 1.3 The set examining period is 15 March – 15 May; **precise dates for the visit are set by the Examiner, not OCR.** Examiners have a tight and busy schedule; in arranging the time for the visit, the Examiner will take into account any days specified as "impossible" by the Centre on Form ML/ORAL, but Centres will otherwise be expected to accept the dates proposed.
- 1.4 It may take the Examiner some time to organise his/her programme of visits, and Centres should not be alarmed if they are not contacted until early March. If, however, the Examiner has not made contact by the end of March, Centres should telephone OCR (01223 553998) for further assistance.

- 1.5 The Examiner will not expect advance information about the topic areas selected by the candidates for discussion in the general conversation. The chosen topic areas should be listed by candidates on form ML/T/CAND/A2 and handed to the Examiner during the introductory briefing.

2. MATERIALS FOR THE EXAMINATION

The following materials are enclosed with these instructions:

- (a) **The time-table sheets (ML/ORAL/TIME/A2):** please ensure that these are completed (one sheet for each day of examining) **and the bottom copy forwarded to the Examiner at least seven days before the first day of examining.** The remaining copy is for the Centre's use. The following details must be completed, taking into account any requests made by the Examiner on form ML/ORAL/VISIT/A2:
- Centre details
 - candidates' names and numbers
 - the start times of each candidate's examination
 - the time for the initial meeting with candidates
 - the time for the start of the first candidate's preparation
 - any breaks requested by the Examiner on form ML/ORAL/VISIT/A2
- (b) **Information Sheet for Candidates** (see paragraph 4.1 below)
- (c) **Oral Topic form:** one form is enclosed for each candidate and may be issued at any point before the day of the examination (see paragraph 4.3 below).
- (d) A sheet of information for candidates (ML/INFO/CAND/A2) which Centres may photocopy and distribute if they wish.
- (e) **Blank cassettes/CDs and labels, and Working Mark Sheets;** Centres are asked to complete all of these before the arrival of the Visiting Examiner.
- (f) Confidential materials are despatched separately, and should be passed, **unopened**, to the Visiting Examiner on the first day of his/her visit.

3. ACCOMMODATION AND EQUIPMENT

3.1 Quiet conditions

These are essential. The examination room should be free from any noise and disturbance from outside the building (e.g. lawnmowers). It should not be close to corridors used by large numbers of pupils between lessons, but if movement within the building is unavoidable, steps should be taken to keep noise to a minimum. Notices should be displayed to prevent interruptions from people entering the room unaware that an examination is in progress.

3.2 The examination room

The candidate and the Examiner should be seated opposite each other across a table. The Examiner needs ample table space to arrange his/her documents, but the candidate should be close enough for a rapport to be established and for papers to be passed across the table without difficulty. Examiners greatly appreciate a supply of water/tea/coffee!

3.3 Separate preparation room

This is essential. It should be near the examination room, and must not be part of a corridor. Other pupils should not have access to the area. The room should be equipped with a table where the candidate can prepare the article for discussion.

3.4 Invigilation

Though not essential, it is highly desirable to have an invigilator present while candidates are preparing.

3.5 Dictionary

Dictionaries are **NOT** allowed in the preparation room **nor** the examination room.

3.6 Recording

It is a requirement of the examination that all oral tests are recorded, and Centres are responsible for providing equipment of as high a standard as possible for this purpose. If it is at all possible, an external microphone should be used rather than one that is in-built, and it should be placed on a soft surface between Examiner and candidate. Normally it will be necessary to place the microphone nearer to the candidate than to the Examiner.

Centres are asked to ensure that the recording equipment and microphone are set up and ready for use when the Visiting Oral Examiner arrives. The Examiner may wish to spend a few minutes at the start of the day familiarising him/herself with the operation of the equipment. The prepared blank tapes/CDs, labels and Working Mark Sheets should be placed near the recording equipment.

NOTE: It is possible that the Visiting Oral Examiner may wish to bring his/her own equipment. Examiners are asked to notify Centres well in advance if this is their intention.

4. PREPARING THE CANDIDATES

It is in everyone's interests that candidates should be as relaxed and confident as is possible in the circumstances. Four points should be mentioned here:

4.1 Information Sheet for Candidates

There is a leaflet, "Notes for candidates on the oral examination" which we think may be helpful. We would urge Centres to discuss the notes with their candidates, but this is of course entirely at the teacher's discretion.

4.2 The oral topic form

Centres should have received sufficient forms to distribute one to each candidate for each language. The form is self-carboning, and candidates should use it to write **in the foreign language a list of 3 topic areas** which they would like to discuss with the Examiner. The top copy of the form is to be handed to the Examiner during the general meeting at the start of the day (see 4.5 below). The **bottom** copy may be retained and used by the candidate during the test.

4.3 Supporting material

Candidates may refer to their own **brief** notes during the general conversation (but will not be allowed to read out prepared sections); such notes must be limited to one side of A4 paper or a maximum of 3 postcards.

4.4 General meeting

The Examiner will wish to begin by assembling all the candidates at the Centre concerned - or all the candidates to be examined that day - and explaining the procedure to them, so as to accustom them to the sound of his/her voice and to put them at their ease. Centres are asked to co-operate by making the necessary arrangements.

5. TIMING

*Before timetabling the candidates, Centres should check section 4 of the letter ML/ORAL/VISIT/A2 sent by the Visiting Examiner, giving the Examiner's expected time of arrival and his/her requests for breaks. **At least 30 minutes must be time-tabled for a lunch break, even if the Examiner has not requested it.***

5.1 The oral examination normally lasts for 15 minutes and must be followed by a few minutes' break for the Examiner. Candidates should be timetabled to arrive at the preparation room at intervals of 20 minutes (see also 5.2 below).

5.2 At the beginning of the day and after breaks, the timetable should allow for the first candidate to prepare the article; allowance is made for this on the Time-Table form.

5.3 Centres are asked to nominate a member of staff who will ensure that candidates arrive at the preparation room at the correct time.

6. AFTER THE EXAMINATION

The Visiting Oral Examiner is responsible for despatching the tapes/CDs; Centres should ensure therefore that all tapes/CDs, both used and unused, are collected and taken away by the Examiner at the end of the examination.

NOTE: Visiting Examiners are not allowed to comment to Centres about the performance of candidates in individual sections of the examination, nor about the standard reached by any individual candidate.

Thank you for your co-operation!