

Instructions for the conduct of the exams (2021)

FCSE Modern foreign languages

These instructions apply to FCSE MFL exams in:

- Chinese (Spoken Mandarin) 8973
- French 8958
- German 8968
- Spanish 8998

Staff conducting the tests must read and be familiar with both these instructions and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#) in advance of the exam.

One copy of these instructions, together with a copy of JCQ's instructions, must be available in each exam room – including, for the speaking tests, the preparation area and the room(s) used for the conduct of the tests.

Yellow highlighting indicates a change or addition to the 2019 version of the *Instructions for the conduct of the exams*

Version 1.0

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General instructions

All FCSE materials are strictly confidential.

The FCSE specification assessment materials, Sets C, D (and E Speaking role-play tasks only), Units 1–8, are available to all registered FCSE schools/colleges via e-AQA Secure Key Materials (SKM). Access is limited to teachers and exams officers.

Teachers can print/copy the tests as needed and can study the materials at any time following access. **However, students not be allowed access to these, other than when they are being tested.**

Once copied, the tests must be kept in secure storage at all times. This secure storage may be in the Modern Foreign Languages Department.

The 'open window' for assessment means that completed tests cannot be returned to students at any time, to ensure complete confidentiality and comparability of experience for all students sitting the tests throughout their shelf life.

Bilingual dictionaries must not be used in any externally-assessed tests.

A complete portfolio must contain the following:

Full course:

- 3 listening tasks
- 3 reading tasks
- 3 writing tasks (**note:** one speaking task must be a role-play and one writing task must be a translation task)

Spoken short course:

- 3 listening tasks

Written short course:

- 3 Reading tasks
- 3 Writing tasks (**note:** one writing task must be a translation task).

Speaking tasks – 2021 only

For 2021 FCSE Full Course and 2021 FCSE Spoken Short Course in Chinese, French, German and Spanish, we have removed the requirement, with Ofqual's approval, for centres to record one of the three Speaking tasks. **This means no recordings should be submitted as there will be no moderation of Speaking in 2021.** We know that generating recorded evidence is time-consuming and can be made difficult by social distancing requirements.

The removal of the requirement for recordings brings FCSE into line with GCSE in 2021 in that no recorded evidence will be required and will enable you to complete the three Speaking assignments with your students remotely, via online technology, if you choose.

Students will still need to complete three Speaking tasks and details of the three Speaking tasks will need to be entered onto the Candidate Record Form (CRF). The 2021 CRF on the website should be used but the box for 'unit number of the recorded Speaking task' should be left blank.

The three tasks for listening, reading, speaking and writing **must** come from three different units, and each unit must come from a different theme.

Teachers should also familiarise themselves with the essential information contained in the *FCSE Notes and guidance* which can be found in e-AQA (Secure key materials).

All FCSE centre marks must be submitted online to AQA and the Moderator by 15 May 2021.

Externally set assignments

Listening tests

Requirements

- 1 Materials required:
 - sound files (available from e-AQA)
 - CD player (if required)
 - students' question paper
 - transcript of the recording
 - a copy of these instructions.
- 2 The tests will be provided as sound files on e-AQA Secure Key Materials (SKM) in MP3 format. The sound files can only be downloaded to the secure part of a school's network, ie the part of the network which is only accessible to ICT staff and not to students, until the permitted time. If required, the sound files can be copied to CD. Prior permission does **not** need to be sought from AQA. Appropriate measures must be in place to ensure that this material is kept totally secure at all times.

Preparation

- 3 **The listening sound files and transcripts must be treated as confidential exam materials.**
- 4 The machine(s) which will be used to play the recordings for the tests should be checked and serviced.
- 5 If possible, spare CD players should be available in case of emergency.

Conduct of the tests

- 6 A transcript is provided for the information of the teacher and may be referred to at any time following access from e-AQA.
- 7 Students should be seated in a manner appropriate to the fact that they are taking a formal assessment. They should not be able to see the question paper of other students.
- 8 Supervising teachers should note that the time taken to conduct the Listening tests will vary between units.
- 9 At the start of the test, students should be asked to complete the details at the top of the question paper.
- 10 When all students have completed the details at the top of the question paper they should be given clear instructions on how to complete the test.

Without reference to any answers or information which would unfairly advantage their students, teachers should go through the test, explaining what to do for each task and, if necessary, explaining icons or unfamiliar rubric.

- 11 Students must be instructed that, once the recording has started, there must be no questions or interruptions during the test. It is advisable, therefore, to give them two minutes to read through the question paper once teachers have gone through any possible issues.
- 12 There should be no reason for the recording to be stopped, except in an emergency. A tone on the recording will indicate the end of each item.

After the tests

- 13 The question papers should be collected, marked by the teacher (**peer marking of any FCSE component is not permissible**), then kept strictly confidential until the portfolios are requested by the Moderator.
- 14 After completion of the tests, the recordings, if copied to a CD, must be placed in secure storage until further use. Sound files downloaded to the secure part of a school's network must be deleted.

Reading and compulsory writing tests

Requirements

- 1 One question paper for each student.

Conduct of the tests

- 2 Students should be asked to complete the details at the top of their question paper before starting the test.
- 3 When all students have completed the details at the top of the question paper they should be given clear instructions on how to complete the test.

Without reference to any answers or information which would unfairly advantage their students, teachers should go through the test, explaining what to do for each task and, if necessary, explaining icons or unfamiliar rubric.

After the tests

- 4 The question papers should be collected, marked by the teacher (**peer marking of any FCSE component is not permissible**), then kept strictly confidential until the portfolios are requested by the Moderator.

Note: listening and reading tests

Schools/colleges should note that where the Listening, Reading or compulsory Writing translation tests are conducted in one single session, papers must be collected in before the tests for another skill are distributed. Under no circumstances may students have access to more than one test at the same time.

Speaking tests

Requirements

- 1 Students must produce a minimum of three speaking assignments, **one of which must be a compulsory role-play task.**
- 2 All speaking assignments must be marked by the teacher and submitted to AQA for moderation.
- 3 The assessment criteria for speaking are in Section 4c of the FCSE specification and must be adhered to.
- 4 **Externally set role-play assignments**
 - Students may not see the compulsory role-play task in advance.
 - Dictionaries are not allowed in the preparation or production of the role-play task.
 - Students are allowed only one attempt at producing a role-play task.
 - Each role-play task must be produced in one single session.

Students should be given appropriate preparation time immediately before producing the role-play task, during which they may make notes. These notes must be handed to the teacher at the end of the test for secure disposal.

5 Internally set speaking tasks

- Students may know the tasks in advance.
- Dictionaries are only allowed in the preparation of the speaking assignments.
- Students are allowed two attempts at producing each assignment.

- 6 Teachers should remind students that they must not have access to any unauthorised material such as books, papers, mobile phones or any electronic devices during the recording.

For 2021 FCSE Full Course and 2021 FCSE Spoken Short Course in Chinese, French, German and Spanish, we have removed the requirement, with Ofqual's approval, for centres to record one of the three Speaking tasks. **This means no recordings should be submitted as there will be no moderation of Speaking in 2021.** See page 3 for further details.

Writing tests

Requirements

- 1 Students must produce three writing assignments. One writing task must be a compulsory translation task.**
- 2 All writing tasks must be marked by the teacher and submitted to us for moderation. Writing tasks **must be annotated**, in order to show the moderator which items/time frames etc have been credited.
- 3 The assessment criteria for writing are in Section 4c of the specification and must be adhered to.
- 4 Externally set writing assignments (translation)**
 - Students may not see the compulsory Writing translation task in advance.
 - Students may not make more than one attempt at the same translation task.
 - The translation task must be produced in one session under controlled conditions.
 - Dictionaries are not allowed in the preparation or production of the translation task.

5 Internally set writing assignments

There is no specified total number of words required for the completion of the internally set Writing assignments, but the assessment criteria indicate the minimum number of sentences for successful completion of the task.

Students will be given sight of the task before the date they are to produce their assignment but must not take the paper home.

Students may not make more than one attempt at the same assignment, although they may attempt a different assignment within the same unit if they wish to improve their work.

Students may have notes containing a maximum of 10 words in English and/or the target language. These must not contain full sentences or conjugated verbs.

The final version of the assignment should be completed in one session under controlled conditions.

Dictionaries are allowed in the preparation and production of the internally set writing assignments.

- 6 Students must not use translation software or translation websites.**

Senior FCSE moderator advice for teachers

- When choosing the topics, take students' views into account if possible as they are then less likely to become demotivated if they are involved in the decision making.
- Ask the student to sign the Candidate Record Form (CRF) at the start of the course to avoid problems at the end if students are absent.
- When the student is signing the CRF go through the declaration in detail (makes assessments more formal and also explains consequences of any examination misconduct).
- Arrange completed assessments alphabetically and file safely (easy to find documents for requested portfolios).
- Create spreadsheet of results as they are completed (students can see how they are doing and it can generate healthy competition).
- Highlight 'counting' tasks after each unit (easier to pick out the marks for the CRF and the samples for the portfolios).
- Students complete unit mark boxes on CRF after each unit is completed (promotes ownership and leaves less to do at the end).
- Total results after each unit and have cumulative results (students can see how close they are to the next boundary).
- Complete writing tasks on headed paper with centre and candidate name and number.