



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Bengali

46353

(Specification 4635)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The overall performance on this component was very pleasing and students responded very well to the demands of the Speaking Test.

The format of the Speaking Test in the new specification differs from the legacy specification in that it is untiered, there are no Role Plays and the Presentation and Conversation are pre-prepared with the topics being chosen in advance by the student.

Most centres followed the instructions for this examination and conducted them smoothly. Teacher-examiners, however, must complete the Detailed Mark Sheets appropriately and all recordings should be clearly labelled with the student's details, as instructed in the document *Modern Foreign Languages Instructions for the June 2011 AQA Examinations – GCSE Specification*.

This year most centres used CDs and memory sticks, which was appreciated by the examiners, as the clarity of the recordings is much better than tapes.

It was also noted that the Presentation and Discussion component of the test was still omitted totally or some centres missed the Discussion part only. This affected the students' performance, including the most able students. They received poor marks as a result of not completing all sections of the test.

Teacher-examiners should also be aware that the aim of this examination is to demonstrate the speaking ability of students in 'standard Bengali'. However, in some centres, teacher-examiners have continued to conduct the test in the Sylhety dialect. This is inappropriate for this Speaking Test and disadvantaged students who did not perform in standard Bengali. Teachers must ensure that their students are not penalised because of inexperienced examiners not speaking standard Bengali.

Centres are reminded that teacher support meetings for the Conduct of GCSE Speaking Tests are held annually in March and they are advised to send a representative, where possible. These meetings are extremely helpful in aiding teacher-examiners to learn the correct procedures necessary to effectively conduct the Speaking test. Centres are also advised to study the specification to clarify the correct format of the Speaking test. For further details, please check the Bengali pages on the AQA website:

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/languages/new/bengali_overview

Presentation and Discussion

The majority of students had prepared well for this section and a wide variety of topics were discussed, such as *My pet*, *The present government of the UK*, *Independence day of Bangladesh*, *21st February* and *the language movement* etc.

The most common topics were *Me and my family* and *My school*. Some excellent work was produced but some centres chose one or two topics for all students and the students presented their tasks using the same words and sentence structures, rendering it difficult to differentiate between the ability of the students. It is suggested that teacher-examiners should prepare their students for the Presentation with a variety of topics, appropriate to the ability of the student.

Although student performance varied greatly, the majority were well prepared and performed very well in this section. However, in some cases, there were too few questions asked for

this section to be adequately addressed by the student. In addition, some teachers did not keep to the allotted time for the test and students were thus unable to reach their full potential in this area.

Conversation

There was, as always, evidence of exemplary practice in this part of the test.

This year, students were more confident, as they knew which topics they were going to talk about in advance. There was evidence of some excellent work and a high quality of language, with some students developing and being allowed to develop a mature exposition of their opinions and ideas.

In some cases students were not asked open-ended questions and were therefore unable to take the opportunity to develop their answers and express their opinions. At the same time, in some centres, nearly all students chose the same topics with very little variation and gave pre-prepared answers without showing any originality. This is not considered to be good practice.

The teacher-examiner's role is vital in the Speaking test. They should be fully prepared for the test, with a range of questions to suit the abilities of their students.

The teacher-examiner must also read thoroughly the *Modern Foreign Languages Instructions for the June 2011 AQA Examinations – GCSE Specification* to ensure that all instructions are followed to the letter.

On the whole, the majority of tests were well conducted, allowing students to perform to the best of their ability.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion

Guidance Notes for Examiners

The following guidance, provided to examiners during the marking period, is reproduced below for information.

1. Principles of marking

- 1.1 The Speaking Tests are marked in accordance with the criteria for assessment published in the specification and given on subsequent pages of this booklet.
- 1.2 No allowances can be made for poor or incorrect teacher conduct of the tests.

2 Mechanics of Marking

Please ensure that the grids on the Detailed Mark Sheet are completed accurately. Please conform to the lay-out shown in the exemplar Detailed Mark Sheet given in this guide. **Please note in particular that the Presentation and Discussion and the Conversation marks should be recorded in order: Communication, Range of Language, Accuracy, Interaction and Fluency.**

3 Presentation and Discussion and Conversation

- 3.1 The Presentation and Discussion is marked separately from the Conversation. You must assess and award marks for each of the four categories (Communication, Range of Language, Accuracy, Interaction and Fluency) for the Presentation and Discussion and then again for the Conversation.

NB: In the Presentation and Discussion the mark for Interaction and Fluency is awarded on the basis of the Discussion element only.

- 3.2 If the Presentation or Discussion is missing, a maximum of 4 marks can be awarded for Communication.
- 3.3 You may need to listen to each candidate more than once, especially in the early stages of your marking to ensure that you are marking each category individually.
- 3.4 The marks awarded for Range of Language, Accuracy and Interaction and Fluency must not be more than one mark higher than the mark awarded for Communication.
- 3.5 A mark of zero for Communication will result in a zero score for the task as a whole.
- 3.6 If a mark is awarded for Communication this will inevitably lead to the award of marks for Range of Language, Accuracy and Interaction and Fluency.
- 3.7 To score a mark of 4 for Range of Language the candidate needs to use a minimum of two verb tenses.
- 3.8 You should stop marking the Presentation and Discussion approximately 3 minutes after the start of the test. You should stop marking the Conversation approximately 9 minutes from the start of that section of the test.

- 3.9 If a candidate speaks on only **one** topic throughout the Conversation, you should find the appropriate band for Communication and then adjust the mark as shown in the table below. Marks have been halved and half marks rounded up.

For example, if a candidate would have scored 8 marks for Communication for two topics, this mark would then be reduced to 4 marks for one topic only; if a candidate would have scored 4 marks for two topics then this would be reduced to 2 marks for one topic only. Please see table below for illustration of the full range of marks which can be awarded in these circumstances.

Communication Marks		
Two Topics		One Topic
8	→	4
7	→	4
6	→	3
5	→	3
4	→	2
3	→	2
2	→	1
1	→	1
0	→	0