



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Panjabi

46803

(Specification 4680)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The overall impression of the quality of work was very good as in previous years. This was the second examination in the new specification and students were generally well prepared according to the rules and regulations set out in the specification. The students performed better in the Presentation than in the Discussion. Students also performed well in the Conversation part of the test, scoring high marks.

Presentation and Discussion

The Presentation and Discussion is marked separately from the Conversation in the new specification.

The overall standard of attainment in this area of the test was observed to be good. Students were generally well prepared for the Presentation. The range of topics chosen for the Presentation was observed to be significantly wider this year due to the element of choice outside the specification. The most common topics were 'Holidays', 'Family and Relationships', 'School' and 'Festivals'.

Presentations were generally of a better standard than the Discussions. A small number of teacher-examiners did not conduct the Discussion and a very small number left out the Presentation and the Discussion, both of which had a significant adverse impact on students' scores. A small number of teacher-examiners interrupted the Presentation prematurely, disadvantaging their students. In some cases, the Discussion was not clear and could not be separated from the Conversation. In a small number of cases, the style of Discussion questions was not thought out clearly as many of the questions were 'cloze' type, demanding very brief responses. In the majority of cases, the Discussion questions were carefully selected and were appropriate and relevant to the spoken material presented. In a small number of cases, the Discussion questions were not clearly thought out and were irrelevant. The requirement of using two tenses for grade C and above did not pose any problems for the students. The students at grade C and above handled the unpredictable element of the discussion questions well.

Teacher-examiners are reminded of their responsibility to guide and prepare students for the Presentation and Discussion requirement of the test. However, the majority of teacher-examiners conducted this part of the test very skilfully and their excellent preparation was the key to the high performance of their students. Teacher-examiners are reminded to take extra care to prevent the overlap between the topics covered in Presentation/Discussion and Conversation.

Conversation

Conversations on the whole were well conducted. The majority of the topics selected were from the specification. A high percentage of teacher-examiners prepared relevant questions to suit the ability of the students. Some teacher-examiners did not differentiate the questions for less able students which meant that their students were not always able to access the vocabulary. Teacher-examiners are reminded to adapt and develop the questions with students to draw suitably sophisticated language according to their ability and make them relevant to their experiences as far as possible. Equally, teacher-examiners should modify the questions for less able students. Most students were fluent and independent and were able to sustain the conversations without much prompting. Most students were speaking from experience and found this part of the examination natural and enjoyable. Less able students were obviously hesitant and required prompting.

Most teacher-examiners were well organised and prepared for this part of the examination. However, a small number of teacher-examiners asked too many questions quickly, one after another, and this did not provide enough opportunities for the students to develop the conversation. Teacher-examiners should aim to develop a natural conversation providing links between the questions, allowing students to elaborate and refine points, and use a variety of language structures. The questions posed should take account of the age range and ability of students and language used in questions should be selected accordingly. There were, however, some very good teacher-examiners who succeeded in developing natural and interesting conversations with their students, allowing them to take the initiative and to show the full range of oral skills, using a variety of time frames and expressing opinions. The students at grade C and above handled the unpredictable element of the conversation questions well.

Teacher-examiners are reminded to prepare students to use different tenses in the tests and ask relevant questions to allow them to do this. The quality of recordings was significantly better this year as the majority of schools recorded the tests digitally, but there were still a few instances where students could not be heard properly and a few where the background noise caused too much interference. With many students, the recordings of students' voices were found to be too quiet whereas generally no such problems were encountered in hearing teacher-examiners. Teacher-examiners are reminded of the technical requirements to make students' recordings as audible as possible. The recordings should also be checked to ensure that individual tests have been recorded. There were a few schools where CDs were damaged due to a lack of appropriate packaging material.

The coverage of conversation topics was conducted satisfactorily and two topics from two different contexts were selected in the majority of cases.

AQA will be organising teacher support meetings in the spring term on good practice in the conduct of the Speaking tests. Schools are strongly advised to send, where possible, new teachers or those who are unsure of the tests and the requirements of the new specification to these training sessions.

Teachers are reminded that 2013 will be the last year when recordings on cassette tape will be accepted.

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.