



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Polish

46853

(Specification 4685)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

Further copies of this Report on the Examination are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2011 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

General Comments

It was felt that the Speaking Test in its new format was equally accessible to both native and non-native speakers of all abilities and backgrounds. The fact that students were able to choose their own topics and prepare the material in advance largely relieved them of the stress normally associated with an exam. Overall, examiners were impressed by the high standard of spoken Polish and the generally positive reaction to the new format of the test.

Presentation and Discussion

This section of the Speaking Test was worth 20 marks and was assessed under the categories of Communication, Range of Language, Accuracy and Interaction & Fluency.

Students generally appeared well prepared for this part of the test and spoke confidently on a range of topics, some of which were taken directly from the specification, while others were of the students' own choice. There were some excellent descriptions of unusual hobbies, famous people and interesting events. Examiners awarded high marks to students who gave detailed descriptions and accounts, used complex sentence structure, a range of appropriate vocabulary, and gave personal opinions. Although students were only required to use 2 verb tenses, virtually all used 3 to 4 tenses with confidence. Many students gained the full 20 marks. A minority of students were clearly unprepared and although their knowledge of Polish was excellent, they failed to satisfy the assessment criteria.

There were a number of irregularities in the conduct of the Presentation and Discussion. Some teachers did not ask students to give a Presentation, but began immediately with the Discussion. Other teachers totally omitted the Discussion. Some teachers failed to observe the timing requirement (Presentation 1½ minutes; Discussion 1½ minutes; marking stops after 3 minutes). Occasionally students were allowed to give a Presentation which lasted 3 minutes, which meant that the subsequent Discussion was discounted. Some Presentations were too short (under 30 seconds). It was not evident which students were using the permitted prompt of 5 short headings, but unfortunately a minority of students appeared to be reading from a script or delivering memorised material.

General Conversation

This part of the Speaking Test was worth 20 marks and was assessed under the same 4 categories as the Presentation and Discussion.

Most students showed evidence of careful preparation for this section of the test and gave an excellent performance. Topics were mainly chosen from the specification, but a small proportion of students discussed topics of their own choice. Examiners were assessing an ability to convey a large amount of information, give full descriptions, narrate events and express justified personal opinions. They were also looking for an unpredictable element in the Conversation such as the ability to answer an unexpected question or to clarify a point. The vast majority of students did not disappoint. They spoke in long, well developed sentences using a range of topic-specific vocabulary and making reference to the past and future. Positive and negative opinions were expressed and explained. Many gained the full 20 marks.

Since a large proportion of students this year were native Polish speakers, their grammar, pronunciation and intonation were faultless and their speech was fluent. However, a number of examiners commented that the distinction between native and non-native speakers is becoming blurred. Some native speakers responded to questions only in monosyllables or short phrases, and there were many examples of anglicised pronunciation and the use of English words. Examiners also considered that some students had clearly been entered for

the exam at too young an age, and were unable to hold a conversation of the required depth on any topic.

As before, there was evidence of poor teacher conduct in the General Conversation. Some teachers asked closed questions, interrupted the student, dominated the conversation or cut it short. In some centres there was inappropriate informality both on the part of the teacher and the student. Students who spoke only on one topic instead of two received a reduced mark in the Communication category, as did students whose Conversation stopped short of the minimum 7 minutes.

Administration by Centres

This year about half of the recordings were on CD, about half were on tape cassette and a small minority were on memory sticks. There was strong evidence that some centres were having difficulty mastering the new media. Examiners received a considerable number of blank CDs, partial recordings, or inaudible or poor quality recordings, which made the task of marking difficult if not impossible and invariably students lost marks because of this. This was compounded by the fact that the accompanying paperwork was incomplete or missing. Many centres did not include Detailed Mark Sheets with the recordings, and if they were included, they were sometimes incomplete or inaccurate. A minority of teachers gave their name as the examiner and entered marks for the students' work themselves.

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