



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Polish

46853

(Specification 4685)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

Overall, there was a good level of performance by students in the Speaking Tests. This was enhanced by good preparation on the part of the students and in most cases by good teacher conduct of the tests. The majority of students were native speakers whose first language is Polish although they may now have lived outside Poland for some years. There were also some non-native Polish speakers and a few students of non-Polish origin learning Polish as a foreign language.

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.

Most students came well prepared for this part of the test. The most popular topics chosen were Holidays, Family, School and Leisure. The Holiday topic provided an opportunity to give detailed descriptions of places visited, to narrate past events and to give personal opinions. The Leisure topic gave students a chance to demonstrate detailed knowledge of a variety of subjects and there were some excellent Presentations about unusual hobbies, as well as books and films which they had enjoyed. In all the topic areas, the highest marks were obtained by students who gave full descriptions and accounts, showed a good knowledge of vocabulary, used a minimum of two tenses and expressed justified personal opinions. It was clear that a minority of students approached this section of the test unprepared. Their Presentations were short and sketchy and they relied on their good command of Polish to get them through the Discussion.

The length of the Presentation and Discussion together should be 3 minutes (ideally Presentation 1½ minutes, Discussion 1½ minutes). This year, examiners reported instances where this section of the test was too long (marking stopped after 3 minutes) or too short (where there was not enough time for students to go into any depth or to develop their answers fully). Teachers are also reminded that the Presentation does not have to be memorised and reproduced verbatim; neither should it be read from a script. Both the Presentation and the Discussion should have an element of spontaneity. In some schools/colleges teachers went straight to the Discussion element, giving students no chance to deliver a Presentation. In other schools/colleges a Presentation was offered, but no Discussion. It has to be stressed that omission of one or other element from the Presentation and Discussion is invariably detrimental to the student. Teachers are also reminded that there should be a clear break between the end of the Discussion and the beginning of the General Conversation, so that examiners know from which point to start marking the conversation.

General Conversation

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

For the majority of students, this section of the test posed no problem. High marks were consistently scored with many students obtaining the full 20 marks. Pronunciation and knowledge of grammar were generally excellent. The most popular topics chosen were taken directly from the Specification and included Healthy Living, Home and Local area, School, Family and Holidays. As before, marks from the top band were awarded to students who spoke confidently and fluently, drawing on their own experiences and using an extensive range of topic-specific vocabulary, well developed sentences with complex grammatical structures, at least two verb tenses and several justified personal opinions. Marks from the

lower bands were awarded to students who answered in single words or short phrases without attempting to develop their responses and to those who persistently used English words, familiar colloquialisms or answered by repeating words and structures from the teacher's questions. It is possible that some students had been entered for the test at too young an age, since they appeared to lack the necessary maturity to give responses of the required depth.

Examiners reported many schools/colleges where there was a failure to meet the requirements of the examination, either with regard to the timing of the tests or with other aspects of the rubric. In some schools/colleges the General Conversation was considerably shorter than the required minimum of 7 minutes, which significantly reduced marks across all categories for the students concerned, even if their Polish was excellent. There were instances where students' performance was severely hampered by the poor questioning technique of teachers who asked only closed questions, alternated randomly between topics or monopolised the conversation. Sometimes students were allowed to speak at length on each of their two chosen conversation topics before answering any questions, thus submitting what appeared to be in effect three Presentations and Discussions. Teachers are urged to familiarise themselves with the specified requirements of the Speaking Tests so that the demands of the rubric are fulfilled and students are not unnecessarily disadvantaged.

Administration by Centres

There was evidence that teachers are embracing the new media with most tests now being sent to examiners on CD and some on memory sticks. A relatively small number were sent on cassette tape and **teachers are reminded that 2013 will be the last year when recordings on cassette tape will be accepted.** Use of the new technology has not been entirely without problems: examiners reported a considerable number of blank, inaudible, partially inaudible or muffled recordings. In addition, there were recordings which came unlabelled without the centre number and candidate number or wrongly labelled, or the teacher referred to the student by the wrong name during the test. All these inaccuracies caused severe problems in the marking process.

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