



GCSE French German Spanish September 2024 Specification

Centre Administrative Guide

Summer 2026

GCSE French, German & Spanish

This guidance has been created to help support centres with the administrative tasks involved in preparing for and conducting GCSE exams.

This guidance is intended for the following specifications:

- GCSE French (1FR1)
- GCSE German (1GN1)
- GCSE Spanish (1SP1)

To contact our assessment or teaching support teams, please get in touch via our [Support Portal](#), choose the appropriate support categories, and select your preferred contact option.

February 2026

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Introduction

Guidance to centres

This document provides detailed guidance to centres on the GCSE speaking assessment in French, German and Spanish (2024 specification), along with a brief overview of the other assessments.

Department for Education (DfE) guidelines and Ofqual regulations

In line with DfE guidelines and Ofqual regulations, the qualifications listed below are linear qualifications, and all candidate work must be externally marked at the end of the course. All papers will be set and marked by Pearson Edexcel, including the speaking assessments and the writing examinations.

Candidates will be awarded qualification grades on the 9-1 grading system. No individual paper grades are formally awarded, although notional paper grade boundaries will be available.

This document should be read in conjunction with the subject specification found on the Pearson website and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#).

The timetable for these exams can be found on the Pearson website [2026 GCSE exam timetable](#).

Assessment availability

All four papers are compulsory; the written examinations must be sat in one terminal session.

| Specification | Summer 2026 | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Paper 1 | Paper 2 | Paper 3 | Paper 4 |
| <i>French (1FR1)</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>German(1GN1)</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <i>Spanish (1SP1)</i> | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Assessment type | Speaking window | Timetabled exam | Timetabled exam | Timetabled exam |

Assessment Summary

Papers for all language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) will be tiered.

Examinations of equivalent papers across different tiers should occur simultaneously.

Important: Mixed tier entry is not allowed. Each candidate must be entered for one single tier across all four papers by the entry deadline date. For more guidance on making tier entry decisions, please see [this advice](#).

Any change of tier should be completed before the speaking assessment takes place. Changing tier can still occur after the sequencing tool allocation stage is complete as it does not affect the card allocations (subject to late fees).

Paper 1: Speaking

This is an internally conducted assessment, externally assessed by Pearson Edexcel. The assessment must be conducted within the prescribed speaking assessment period as set by Pearson Edexcel and must be in a face-to-face setting.

Candidate recordings will be submitted digitally to Pearson using the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) portal. The security of the speaking assessment materials must always be maintained. The speaking assessment **must** be conducted by a suitable teacher-examiner. If the teacher-examiner is personally acquainted with the candidate, the centre must declare this to Pearson by emailing conflictofinterest@pearson.com.

Key Dates

The deadline for entries is Saturday **21 February 2026**.

TAW (Thematic context Allocation Window) on the Digital Sequencing Tool opens **Thursday 19 March 2026**.

TAW (Thematic context Allocation Window) on the Digital Sequencing Tool closes **Thursday 2 April 2026**.

The Digital Sequencing Tool reopens with card allocations on **Monday 13 April 2026**.

Speaking packs can also be accessed from **Monday 13 April 2026**.

The speaking assessment period is from **Thursday 16 April – Thursday 21 May 2026**.

The submission deadline for GCSE MFL candidate speaking recordings is two working days after the last speaking exam for that language has taken place in the centre.

The final submission deadline is therefore **Tuesday 26 May 2026***.

***Amended to Tuesday 26 May to allow for Bank Holiday Monday**

At a glance

| | | |
|----------------------|--|----------|
| 1F – Foundation Tier | 7 – 9 mins plus 14 minutes of silent preparation with an invigilator and one-minute recorded preparation in the exam room. | 50 marks |
| 1H – Higher Tier | 10 – 12 mins plus 14 minutes of silent preparation with an invigilator and one-minute recorded preparation in the exam room. | 50 marks |

We recommend that speaking assessments for each language and tier are scheduled on consecutive days for consistency of administration and security. However, if circumstances make this impossible, allow candidates to sit their speaking assessments when appropriate within the speaking window.

All speaking assessment recordings must be uploaded to the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) platform no later than two working days after all the speaking assessments for that language have been completed in the centre.

Candidates may make notes on both sides of one sheet of A4 paper during their preparation time. They must write their name, candidate number and centre number on the sheet. These do not need to be submitted via LWT and should be securely retained in the centre until the end of October.

To allow candidates to be marked, centres should upload the candidate recordings and the Candidate Speaking Record (CSR, downloadable from the Digital Sequencing Tool) to the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) system. Instructions for labelling are found later in this document.

Secure assessment materials

The speaking assessment comprises three consecutive tasks. The tasks must be conducted in the following order:

Task 1: Read Aloud, Task 2: Role play, Task 3: Picture Task/Conversation.

The stimulus cards for the Read Aloud, Role Play and Picture Tasks, as well as instructions to the teacher-examiner, all make up the secure and confidential assessment materials. For each tier, centres will also receive a teacher-examiner booklet. Upon receipt, the materials must be kept securely locked and inaccessible (except under the conditions described here). The pack may be opened **three working days** (no earlier than the 13th April 2026) before the start of the prescribed speaking assessment period.

As some centres may wish to have additional copies of the assessment materials to enable multiple teacher-examiners to conduct examinations simultaneously, an electronic version of the secure assessment materials will also be made available (with restricted access) on the Pearson website (under the Exam materials tab for each GCSE language). Only the registered Examinations Officer will be able to access these gold-padlocked materials.

If required, the Examinations Officer at the centre may print additional copies of the secure assessment materials, but this must only take place up to **three working days** before the start of the prescribed speaking assessment period. Furthermore, the Examinations Officer must keep a record of the number of copies printed and made available to the teacher-examiner(s) responsible for the conduct of the speaking assessments.

The teacher-examiner(s) responsible for the conduct of the speaking assessments are required to preserve absolutely the confidentiality of all the speaking assessment materials (including any printouts of the candidate card sequencing generated by the Digital Sequencing Tool): these materials must be handed back to the Examinations Officer upon completion of the assessments each day. Teacher-examiners are allowed to take the material for preparation purposes, but it must always be returned to the Examinations Officer for secure storage once preparation is finished. These must be kept secure until **Tuesday 30 June 2026**.

It is expected that a record will be kept in each centre of the planned speaking assessment dates along with the details of the teacher-examiner(s) conducting the assessments, and that this information will be available both prior to and during the speaking assessment period.

The assessment materials must **not** be removed from the centre premises.

Guidance for speaking assessment timing

| Foundation Tier | | Higher Tier | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Preparation time | 14 minutes of silent preparation with an invigilator and 1-minute recorded preparation in the exam room. | Preparation time | 14 minutes of silent preparation with an invigilator and 1-minute recorded preparation in the exam room. |
| Task 1 – Read Aloud | 1.5-2 mins * | Task 1 – Read Aloud | 2-2.5 mins * |
| Task 2 – Role play | 1-1.5 mins* | Task 2 – Role play | 1-1.5 mins* |
| Task 3 – Picture Task/Conversation | 1.5-2 mins* (picture description + follow-on questions); 3-3.5 mins (conversation) | Task 3 – Picture Task/Conversation | 2-2.5 mins* (picture description + follow-on questions); 5-5.5 mins (conversation) |
| Overall timings | 7-9 mins (+15 mins preparation) | Overall timings | 10-12 mins (+15 mins preparation) |

***Recommended timings**

Further information on timings is provided on the Pearson website specifically in “The Speaking Exam Crib Sheet for Teacher-Examiners” under the [forms and administration](#).

Assessment

It is expected that teachers delivering the qualification will also conduct the speaking assessments. Should the regular teacher-examiner become unexpectedly unavailable for the duration of the prescribed speaking assessment window, it is the centre's responsibility to arrange for a suitable replacement teacher-examiner to conduct the assessments at the centre prior to the submission deadline date.

Gender-neutral language

If a candidate wishes to use gender-neutral language in their speaking assessment, this should be agreed with the teacher-examiner in advance. Please see our [guidance on using gender-neutral language in assessments](#).

Task 1 – Read Aloud

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Structure | <p>Each set of Pearson Edexcel speaking assessment materials will include six different Read Aloud tasks for each tier.</p> <p>Each task consists of two cards – one for the candidate and one for the teacher-examiner (found within the teacher-examiner booklet)</p> <p>In the examination pack, there is a set of read aloud cards for the candidate; the appropriate card must be assigned to the candidate, which will be allocated by Pearson using the Digital Sequencing Tool.</p> <p>Candidates are given 1 minute preparation time: they may annotate the read aloud card to help them with pronunciation. During this time, candidates may write notes and practise as they wish—aloud or silently. The one- minute must be given to ensure fairness and must be recorded as required for the exam.</p> <p>At the beginning, all candidates are given one minute to practise the read aloud task (regardless of whether candidates use this).</p> |
| Teacher-examiner cards | <p>The teacher-examiner cards are located in the 'General Instructions to the Teacher' booklet. The cards are collated into a booklet for the teacher-examiner.</p> <p>The candidate should be offered 1 minute preparation time in the exam room to practise the read aloud out loud.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You should not offer any guidance or correction to candidates during this time.• The recording must be started at the beginning of the 1 minute. |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the 1 minute, you should say 'The test will now begin; please read the text' before proceeding to the assessed task. • When the candidate has finished the read aloud task, they must hand you the stimulus material before you ask the two follow-on questions. • You should ask the two follow-on questions as presented. The questions must not be rephrased. If the candidate does not respond, the question may be repeated twice. Where a candidate answers incorrectly, do not repeat the question. • The read aloud with follow-on questions is recommended to last between two and two-and-a-half minutes. |
| <p>Candidate card</p> | <p>Each candidate card contains the sentences or passage to be read out loud, as well as the instructions for the candidate. On the candidate cards, the instructions, setting and task are all in English. Teacher examiners / invigilators must be very careful to ensure that the correct cards are allocated. The cards will have 'Foundation' or 'Higher' tier clearly marked on them.</p> |

Task 2 – Role play

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Structure</p> | <p>Each set of Pearson Edexcel speaking assessment materials will include six different role plays for each tier.</p> <p>Each task consists of two cards – one for the candidate and one for the teacher-examiner (found within the teacher-examiner booklet) In the examination pack, there is a set of role-play cards for the candidate; the appropriate card must be assigned to the candidate, which will be allocated by Pearson using the Digital Sequencing Tool.</p> |
| <p>Teacher-examiner card</p> | <p>The teacher-examiner cards are located in the 'General Instructions to the Teacher' booklet. The cards are collated into a booklet for the teacher-examiner.</p> <p>These contain instructions on how to conduct the role play and the questions to ask. Teacher-examiners should read the role-play scenario prior to asking the first question.</p> <p>You should open the role play with the introduction provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher then asks the first question. • The role play is recommended to last between one and one-and-a-half minutes. • The set questions and comments must be asked as they are presented. There must be no supplementary questions and no |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| | re-phrasing. The statements/questions may be repeated but no more than twice. Where a candidate answers incorrectly, do not repeat the question. |
| Candidate card | <p>The candidate cards include prompts as a guide to what the candidate should say.</p> <p>On the candidate cards, the instructions, setting and task are all in English. Teacher examiners/invigilators must be very careful to ensure that the correct cards are allocated. The cards will have 'Foundation' or 'Higher' tier clearly marked on them.</p> |

Task 3 – Picture Task

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Structure | Each set of Pearson Edexcel speaking assessment materials will include 18 different picture tasks for each tier, three for each of the six thematic contexts. Each task consists of two cards – one for the candidate and one for the teacher-examiner (found within the teacher-examiner booklet). |
| Teacher-examiner card | <p>The teacher-examiner cards contain instructions on how to conduct this task and the questions to ask the candidate after the description.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should start the task with the instructions provided. • The description element of the picture task is recommended to last between two and two-and-a-half minutes. • To encourage the candidate to address all the prompts and to develop their description, you may prompt by asking the questions detailed on the teacher card. Each prompt can be used a maximum of three times. • When the candidate has finished the picture description, you should ask the two compulsory questions related to the picture the candidate described. The questions must be asked as presented. The questions must not be rephrased. If the candidate does not respond, the question may be repeated twice. Where a candidate answers incorrectly, do not repeat the question. • You should then develop the conversation with questions on the broader thematic context. A compulsory starter subject for the conversation is given on the card and you must begin with this subject. Example questions for present, past and future tenses are also given but these are not compulsory, you may use alternative questions. In order to access the full range of marks, your questions should allow candidates to answer in |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| | <p>present, past and future tenses and to develop their responses as well as they are able.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The follow-on conversation is recommended to last between five and five-and-a-half minutes. |
| Candidate card | <p>Candidates are asked to describe a picture and to respond to two follow-on questions.</p> <p>Teacher examiners/invigilators must be very careful to ensure that the correct cards are allocated. The cards will have 'Foundation' or 'Higher' tier clearly marked on them.</p> |

Conversation

Following the description and follow-on questions, the conversation must begin with the compulsory starter subject named by Pearson on the card. There is a suggested question provided as support to the teacher-examiner. It is not compulsory, and the teacher-examiner is free to use alternative questions suited to the level of their candidate(s).

The teacher-examiner card (found in the booklet) also has two further suggested questions using past and future tenses that you may wish to ask during the conversation. They are not compulsory and do not need to be asked consecutively or in the order given.

The candidate's responses should be used to continue the conversation about this subject, as well as to go into other areas of the thematic context, including the interests and experiences of the candidate. The conversation does not have to stay within the thematic context originally chosen but can lead naturally into other thematic contexts.

Exemplar materials and test recordings

To support centres in understanding the requirements of the assessment, we have included exemplar student work and sample test recordings for [French](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#). These materials give a sense of performance levels and offer practical guidance for planning, marking and training across all three languages.

Access to secure materials

Candidates are permitted 15 minutes' preparation time, which is split into two parts. The first part (14 minutes) will be spent in the invigilation room under supervised conditions, immediately prior to the assessment. The purpose of the 14 minutes is to prepare responses to the stimulus-based tasks that have been allocated to them, i.e. the read aloud, role play and picture task. The second part (one minute) will be spent in the exam room to practise the read aloud task out loud if they wish (recorded). Candidates must only be provided with stimulus cards at the start of the preparation time. They must not

know the numbers or content of the stimulus cards allocated to them in advance of the preparation time. The preparation time must be used to prepare the cards provided.

Candidates must not write on the role-play or picture stimuli cards (read aloud cards may be annotated to aid pronunciation).

During preparation time candidates may make notes on both sides of one sheet of A4 paper. They must write their name, candidate number and centre number on the sheet.

Candidates must not have access to a dictionary or any other resource, including a mobile phone, during the preparation and examination time.

Candidates must hand the relevant stimulus material to the teacher-examiner after each task (as outlined on the [Speaking Crib Sheet for Teacher-Examiners](#)) and they must return their notes after completing the examination.

Any notes made during the preparation time must be kept by the centre until the end of October in the year the assessment is completed.

Digital Sequencing Tool

Teacher-examiners must use the Digital Sequencing Tool to generate their candidates' individual sequences. This has been provided by Pearson for the allocation of the read aloud tasks- role play stimulus card, picture-based stimulus card, and the theme for the conversation. This online tool is designed to help ensure each candidate covers a broad range of thematic contexts from the specification. Guidance for the online Digital Sequencing Tool can be found [here](#).

During the TAW (Thematic context Allocation Window) centres will access the Digital Sequencing Tool to present candidates with their choice of two thematic contexts. This will be the basis of the picture task and follow-on conversation. Three working days prior to the speaking assessment window opening, centres will access the tool again to view the card allocations.

The User Guide for the sequencing tool can be found at the following link:

[GCSE Modern Foreign Languages Sequencing Tool User Guide](#)

Further information has been provided in the 'General instructions to the teacher' booklet accompanying the secure assessment materials.

Our Digital Sequencing Tool has been thoroughly tested and is as dependable as other exam systems like SDS for listening exams. In the unlikely event that you have any issues, please contact us urgently via the support portal, and our teams will help you with established contingency plans.

Recording requirements

Speaking assessments must be recorded digitally. Pearson Edexcel only accepts recordings in the following formats:

| | | | | | |
|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| .mp3 | .wav | .m4a | .wma | .aif | .aiff |
| .mpeg | .vlc | .ogg | .oga | .mid | .midi |

A full list of supported files can be found [here](#).

These must be submitted via the digital Learner Work Transfer portal (LWT). Details on using the portal can be found in this guide.

If centres record the speaking assessments in a different digital format, they must convert the recording to one of the above listed accepted formats before submitting them to Pearson Edexcel.

All recordings must be clearly labelled so that the centre and candidates can be easily identified. Please use the following labelling convention:

[unit number]_[tier]_[centre number]_[candidate number]_[surname]_[first letter of first name]. For example, 1FR1_1F_12345_0012_Smith_J.

Complete, unedited recordings of all assessments must be submitted to Pearson Edexcel for external marking via LWT. The Candidate Speaking Record (CSR) form must be downloaded from the sequencing tool, this is prepopulated for you so you will no longer need to add candidate/card details. You must, however, sign the declaration and upload the form to the administration section of LWT. Details of how to download the CSR form are included in this document.

Important reminders for centres

- Do not use more than one method to record speaking assessments.
- Ensure that each candidate's complete speaking assessment is recorded as a single track.
- Ensure the speaking assessment has been recorded clearly and fully before uploading onto LWT.
- Download the CSR form from the Digital Sequencing Tool digitally sign (type) your declaration and upload to the administration section of LWT.
- Keep a copy of the assessment recordings. If an examiner discovers a recording has not been uploaded, Pearson will contact the centre for a replacement.

Exam conditions and equipment

A quiet room is required for the speaking assessments. Only one candidate is to be examined at a time.

Except in specific agreed circumstances, no other person apart from the teacher-examiner conducting the assessment and the candidate should be present in the examination room. However, please ensure that you follow JCQ guidance and your own centre policy regarding additional individuals being present in the examination room(s).

Please note that centres must supply their own recording equipment. All recording equipment must be tested prior to use. Pearson Edexcel cannot recommend specific equipment or provide technical advice on their operation.

Recording of candidates

All candidates must be audio recorded. Please ensure recording equipment is positioned to pick up the candidate's voice clearly. Please ensure that the following points are adhered to when conducting speaking assessments:

- The recording equipment should be switched on and at the start of each assessment, the following information should be given GCSE (language), (Foundation or Higher) Tier, (teacher-examiner name), (candidate name), (candidate number).
- The one- minute read aloud preparation time should be recorded at the beginning.
- The three speaking tasks should be recorded consecutively without a break in between. The teacher-examiner should clearly state when one task has finished and the next begins during each speaking assessment.
- Candidates may bring notes from their assessment preparation time into the examination room (this can be both sides of one sheet of A4 paper for Tasks 1, 2 and 3 combined). These are collected at the end of the assessment.

In the read aloud, role play and picture task, teacher-examiners can repeat follow-on questions twice (i.e. say each question three times in total). Where a candidate answers incorrectly, do not repeat the question. Teacher-examiners must not deviate from the set questions or prompts. In the conversation section, there are no restrictions on repetition or rephrasing, but priority should be given to providing candidates with questions that will allow them the opportunity to give successful answers.

Reminders for centres

- At the start of every recording, the qualification, language, teacher-examiner's name, candidate's name and number are announced.
- The teacher-examiner should ensure that the end of one task and the start of the next task are clearly stated during the assessment.
- Recording equipment must not be paused during a speaking assessment.
- Never correct a candidate's language no matter how inaccurate it is during an assessment.
- Avoid finishing sentences for candidates except where it would be in their interest to move onto something else.
- At the end of the exam, the teacher-examiner must check that the test has been recorded before moving on to the next candidate.

To minimise errors during the speaking assessment, centres must ensure the person conducting the speaking assessment is familiar with the specification requirements, conduct and administration of the speaking assessment.

However, even with thorough preparation, we recognise that mistakes can happen. In the event of accidental teacher error on the day of the speaking exam, for example the teacher forgetting to ask a starter question from the stated subject on the teacher card at the start of the conversation, or accidentally re-phrasing a role play teacher question, we make every effort to ensure that candidates are not penalised in the event of a mistake by the teacher examiner. Each situation would be reviewed individually, and the centre would be contacted if the issue could constitute malpractice.

Checklist for conduct of speaking assessments

| TASK 1 – READ ALOUD | | |
|--|--|--|
| Teacher says | Teacher action | Student action |
| GCSE (language), (Foundation or Higher) Tier, (teacher-examiner name), (candidate name), (candidate number). The one-minute preparation time starts now. | Start recording. Don't correct or guide candidate during preparation time. | One- minute preparation time - can read the card aloud for practice if they wish. |
| (After 1 min.) Card X. The test will now begin, please read the text. | | Read out loud the card in French/German/Spanish. |
| | Collect card | |
| Now the follow-on questions. | Ask the two questions. Can repeat questions twice if candidate has not answered or asks for a repeat. Don't repeat if the answer is wrong. Don't rephrase the questions. | Answer the two follow-on questions. |

| TASK 2 – ROLE PLAY | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Teacher says | Teacher action | Student action |
| Card X. Now the role play. | Follow role-play script as printed. Can repeat Qs 2x as in read aloud. | Give their response in the role- play scenario. |
| | Collect card. | |

| TASK 3 – PICTURE TASK | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Teacher says | Teacher action | Student action |
| Which picture have you chosen? | | Say 'Picture 1' or 'Picture 2'. |
| Card X. Describe the photo. | Use set prompts after candidate description, if needed for fuller description. | Describe the photo in full, including people, location and activity. |
| Now the follow-on questions. | Ask the two compulsory questions. Don't rephrase the questions. Can repeat | Answer the two follow-on questions. |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| | Qs 2x as in read aloud and role play. | |
| Now the conversation. | Keep conversation to suggested timings. Start conversation with mandatory subject on teacher card. | Answer teacher questions. |
| | Continue the conversation within the thematic context or move onto other thematic contexts if appropriate. Include questions covering three-time frames (past, present and future). | Answer teacher questions. |
| End of test. | Collect card and candidate notes. | |

If a recording fails or is unsatisfactory in terms of audible quality, Pearson Edexcel must be consulted immediately via our [Support Portal](#).

Submission of candidate assessments

Assessment recordings with the Candidate Speaking Record form (CSR) must be uploaded to LWT within **two working days** of all speaking assessments for that language qualification being completed in the centre. Please ensure the CSR uploaded is the editable version and not a PDF copy of the form; also ensure the recordings include the one-minute preparation time for all candidates in which the read aloud can be practised.

Paper 2: Listening and understanding

This is a timetabled written examination externally assessed by Pearson Edexcel. There is one question paper at Foundation or Higher Tier.

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 2F – Foundation Tier | 45 mins including 5 mins reading time | 50 marks |
| 2H – Higher Tier | 60 mins including 5 mins reading time | 50 marks |

Candidates are assessed on their understanding of standard target language spoken in a range of public and social settings. Candidates will respond to multiple-response and short-answer open response questions featuring a variety of target language speakers. There is no requirement for candidates to produce written responses in the target language. All instructions to candidates are in English.

Instructions to centres

- You must check the paper the candidate receives matches the tier and subject they have been entered for.
- Candidates must use a black ink or black ball-point pen. They must not use pencil.
- Dictionaries are not allowed in any part of this exam.

Listening examination recordings

Digital recordings of the listening assessment can be accessed from our [Secure Download Service](#). MP3s of the listening examination recordings will be available for secure download 24 hours before the scheduled examination (or on the Friday if the examination is scheduled for a Monday).

- AM exam – MP3 recording will be accessible from 9am (24 hours ahead of the scheduled examination).
- PM exam – MP3 recording will be accessible from 1.30pm (24 hours ahead of the scheduled examination).

Transcripts of recordings

A transcript of the recording will be available one hour before the examination via the Secure Download Service (either 8am or 12.30pm on the day of the examination). No paper copies of transcripts are issued.

Secure Download Service

To access recordings via the Secure Download Service (SDS), your centre must register for this. Details on the service and how to register can be found [here](#).

Examinations Officers need to sign up for this service in advance of the exams. This service is accessed through Edexcel Online and not through the Pearson qualifications website. As a result, it will not be possible to access these live materials in the same way that other locked, password-protected materials on the website (such as recent past papers) have been accessed.

Equipment and examination conditions

The conduct of all listening examinations must take place in suitable conditions so that candidates are not disadvantaged. The equipment used should be of good quality so all candidates can hear the recording clearly.

The organisation of examining rooms is a matter for individual centres, although the Joint Council for Qualification (JCQ) has produced related [guidance](#). However, it is recommended that candidates are, wherever possible, examined in groups no larger than the size of their normal language class. The use of very large rooms (particularly where only modest playback equipment is available) is to be avoided wherever possible.

The volume should be set at a level which is comfortably heard, and the tone controls (where available) should be adjusted to give clear, undistorted sound. Invigilators are reminded that distractions such as opening doors or extraneous noise are likely to be far more significant than in ordinary written paper.

If centres allow the use of headphones, these must be point to point not multipoint. The centre is responsible for ensuring candidates can only access the listening assessment material and cannot access anything else via the headphones. The recording must be played as presented. Centres should ensure candidates do not have control over the playback.

If use of a 25% extra time recording has been granted, this will be available from the Secure Download Service.

Reading time

Candidates must use these five minutes of reading time to read through the paper and become familiar with its length and layout. Candidates may make notes or highlight key words on the question paper during this time, although they must not do this in (or near to) the answer boxes/spaces.

Playing the recording

Invigilators must start the recording at the beginning of the timed examination and once it has started, it must not be paused or stopped. The five minutes' reading time announced at the beginning of the test forms part of the recording (there will be five minutes of silence) and pauses between questions are also included.

Each extract is played three times, with appropriate pauses between individual sentences, after each extract and before the next question or part question.

After the third and final playing of the last question (Dictation - sentence 6), the announcer will state that candidates have two minutes remaining to check their answers. This two-minute checking time is also part of the recording. Once the two minutes are over, the announcer will state, 'End of test' and the invigilator can stop the exam.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding

This is a timetabled examination externally assessed by Pearson Edexcel. There is one question paper at Foundation or Higher Tier.

| | | |
|----------------------|------------|----------|
| 3F – Foundation Tier | 45 minutes | 50 marks |
| 3H – Higher Tier | 60 minutes | 50 marks |

Assessment overview

Candidates are assessed on their understanding of the target language in writing across a range of different types of texts, including blogs, internet forums, advertisements, tourist brochures, newspaper or magazine articles, emails, extracts from a diary or school project. Candidates are required to respond to multiple-response and short-answer questions based on these texts.

Candidates must answer all questions in each of the three sections:

Section A: The instructions to candidates are in English.

Section B: Contains a translation passage(s) from the target language to English, with instructions in English.

Instructions to centres

You must check the paper the candidate receives matches the tier and subject they have been entered for.

Candidates must use black ink or black ballpoint pen. They must not use pencils.

Dictionaries are not allowed in any part of this examination.

Paper 4: Writing

This is a timetabled written examination externally assessed by Pearson Edexcel. There is one question paper at Foundation or Higher Tier.

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 4F – Foundation Tier | 1 hour 15 minutes | 50 marks |
| 4H – Higher Tier | 1 hour 20 minutes | 50 marks |

Assessment overview

Candidates are assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in the target language for different purposes and audiences. Candidates are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions in the target language.

The instructions to candidates are in English.

Recommended word counts are specified for each question. Candidates must answer all questions and select from one of the two optional questions where appropriate.

Foundation tier

One picture-based question, two open-response writing questions, and one translation into the target language.

Higher tier

Two open-response writing questions and one translation into the target language.

Instructions to centres

You must carefully check that each candidate receives the correct paper, either at Foundation or Higher Tier. The paper the candidate receives must match the tier at which the candidate has been entered.

Candidates must use black ink or black ballpoint pen. They must not use pencils.

Dictionaries are not allowed in any part of this examination.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments

Before an examination or assessment, you can apply for access arrangements on behalf of a candidate with special needs. Access arrangements aim to meet the needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment.

Access arrangements are approved before an examination or assessment, and they allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment.

Special needs could include:

- Candidates with known and long-standing learning difficulties
- Candidates with physical disabilities, permanent or temporary
- Candidates with sensory impairment
- Candidates whose first language is not English, Irish or Welsh
- Candidates who have difficulties at, or near, the time of assessment that may have affected their performance in the assessment.

Use the Pearson Access Arrangement Online tool (PAAO), accessible via Edexcel Online, to apply. Instructions are found [here](#).

If your application is not approved, you may refer it electronically to Pearson Edexcel. This will go to the Special Requirements team, with any additional information for review.

Reasonable adjustment

Reasonable adjustment can help reduce the effects of a disability or difficulty that puts the candidate at a substantial disadvantage in an assessment. Reasonable adjustments cannot affect the integrity of assessment outcomes or give the candidate an assessment advantage over other candidates undertaking the same or similar assessments.

Each application will be considered individually considering the candidate's needs. The response will relate primarily to the effect the requested adjustment may have on the assessment objective being tested in the qualification.

For further support with access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, contact: uk.special.requirements@pearson.com.

Paper 1 Speaking assessment – Extra time

Candidates who are eligible will be allowed to add up to 25% of the maximum time permitted for assessment for that tier.

This will consist of extra time during the preparation time. The allocation of time must be managed by the centre in response to the needs and usual ways of working of their individual candidates, and should not exceed a total of 25% extra time of the assessment for that tier.

A standard way would be to give 17 minutes and 30 seconds silent preparation and 1 minute and 15 seconds of recorded practice.

If extra time is needed during the recording (i.e. 25% when the candidate is speaking) an application must be processed using [Access arrangements online](#).

Please ensure full details of your candidate's requirements are included with any requests submitted for extra time for the speaking assessment. This would include information on their usual way of working and your observations on what has helped make the assessment suitably accessible (based on mock assessments of the speaking component).

Paper 2 Listening examinations – Extra time

Please note that before applying for extra time, there must be an access arrangement in place for the candidate for the additional time. If this is not the case, then [an access arrangement application](#) will need to be made.

Where extra time has been approved and is to be made available for a candidate for the listening exam, the centre must ensure that appropriate invigilation and timetabling arrangements are in place.

Additional sets of recordings will be produced for those candidates who formally qualify for 25% extra time in GCSE listening examinations. These digital recordings will incorporate the additional time allowance and will only be available via our special secure download service (SDS). Other amounts of time are managed by the centre.

Instructions on registering for SDS and downloading materials are provided on pages 7 of this guide. As the extra-time sound files will appear alongside the standard-length digital recordings, care must be taken to select the correct ones for your candidates.

Live speakers

Where a live speaker is to be provided to the candidate, this should, wherever possible, be the candidate's subject or specialist teacher. However, an invigilator must be present in the examination room at all times.

The live speaker should be allowed access to the recording or transcript one hour before the published starting time for the examination. This is to allow time for the live speaker to prepare. It may be necessary to delay the start of the examination for the candidate(s) concerned. The candidate(s) must be placed under centre supervision whilst the live speaker prepares for the [examination](#).

To access the transcript or the recording, the centre must register for the Secure Download Service.

Supervised rest breaks

The timing of the examination should be paused and restarted when the candidate is ready to continue. Please note that the recording itself should not be stopped or paused but the teacher-examiner should state on the recording that 'the candidate is now taking a supervised rest break'.

During the supervised rest break the candidate must not have access to the question paper/answer booklet. If the candidate needs to leave the examination room, an invigilator must accompany the candidate.

There is no maximum time set for supervised rest breaks. The decision must be made by the SENCo based on their knowledge of the candidate's needs and the candidate's normal way of working when placed under timed conditions. The duration of the supervised rest break should ideally be determined by the SENCo before the start of the examination series.

More support

For more information about access arrangements and reasonable adjustments please visit the Pearson [access arrangements webpage](#), and see the JCQ [access arrangement page](#), in particular the [JCQ guidance](#) document on access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

For further support with access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, contact: uk.special.requirements@pearson.com.

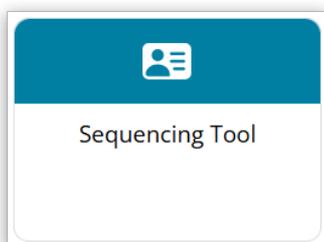
Downloading the Candidate Speaking Record (CSR) form from the sequencing tool.

A copy of the Candidate Speaking Record form CSR must be downloaded from the online Digital Sequencing Tool and submitted to the admin section of the LWT portal. The CSR form is populated with candidate details and card allocation, so teacher-examiners will need to digitally sign (type) their name and signature and date the declaration before uploading.

How to access the online Digital Sequencing Tool

The Digital Sequencing Tool (Live Version) is found on the Pearson Portal. Users can access the Pearson Portal [log in here](#).

Click on the 'Sequencing Tool' tile:



How to download the CSR from the online Digital Sequencing Tool

In the Digital Sequencing Tool go to the Manage Task Assignment, in select entry enter the following details: GCSE (9-1) > June 2026 > FRENCH > All Papers (adapt language as relevant). It is important to ensure you select All Papers so that all candidates are listed in the CSR. It is important not to select IF or IH in papers as this will produce a CSR only showing those candidates. The same goes for selecting a "Group" filter, this will only print the candidates that are listed in that group.

Home > Manage Task Assignment

Manage Task Assignment

1 Select Entry

Select the details for the entries you wish to manage.

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|------------|
| Qualification Type | Exam Series / Availability Window | Subject | Paper |
| GCSE (9-1) | June 2025 | FRENCH | All Papers |

Or select the entries from a group of learners you have setup.

Group name

Select Group

RESET NEXT >

2 Select Learner

3 Select Thematic Context

4 Confirmation of the saved Thematic Contexts

Submitting work to Pearson via LWT

All speaking assessment recordings must be recorded digitally and uploaded via our [Learner Work Transfer \(LWT\) portal](#).

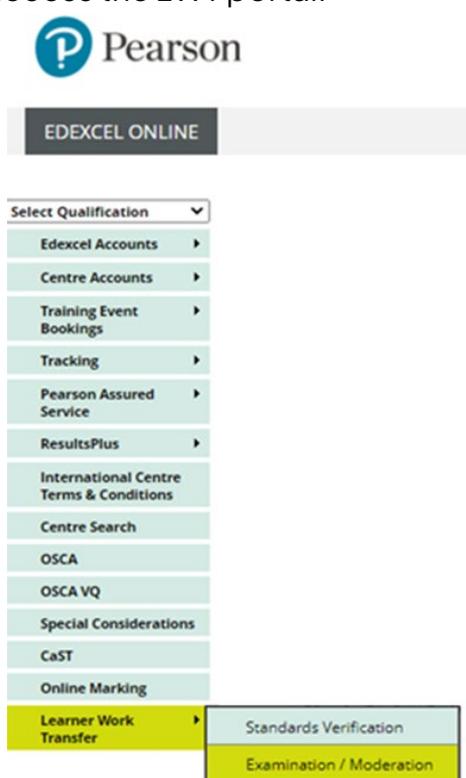
What is Learner Work Transfer?

Learner Work Transfer (LWT) is a digital portal that enables centres to submit their candidate speaking recordings to Pearson Online. Audio files for GCSE MFL must be submitted via this portal, which is available to access through Edexcel Online (EOL).

How to use LWT to submit speaking assessments

1. Accessing the LWT portal

Access the portal through your Edexcel Online account under 'Learner Work Transfer'. Instructions on how to access LWT can be found [here](#). Make sure that pop-ups are enabled in the browser to access the LWT portal.

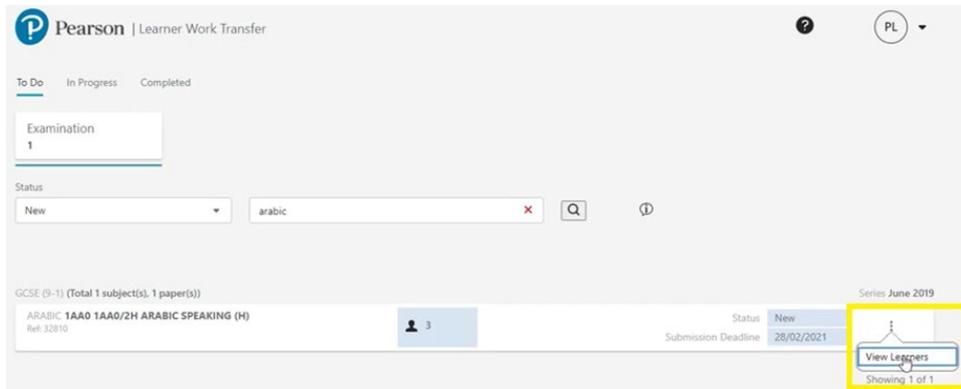


2. Viewing candidates in the portal

An example of the Learner Work Transfer dashboard is shown below. Depending on the state of the process (To Do, In Progress or Completed), the default view will start on a particular tab.



The search box can be used to narrow down the results as required. Click the three vertical dots on the right, then select View Learners to open the unit.



A list of all learners entered for the unit will be presented. If there are additional learners who have not yet been entered, entries for them should be made through the usual process. This should be updated within 24 hours. If evidence has been uploaded for some learners, when the new entries have been added, the request will show a status on 'In Progress (C)' to represent a change.

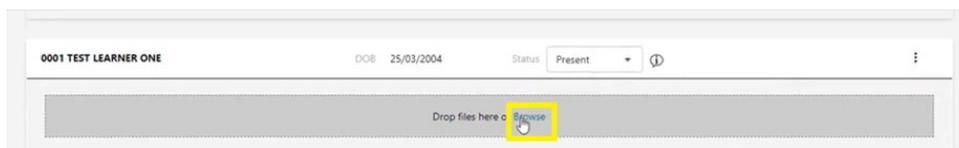
3. Naming documents for upload

Use the following naming convention when uploading files to learner folders:

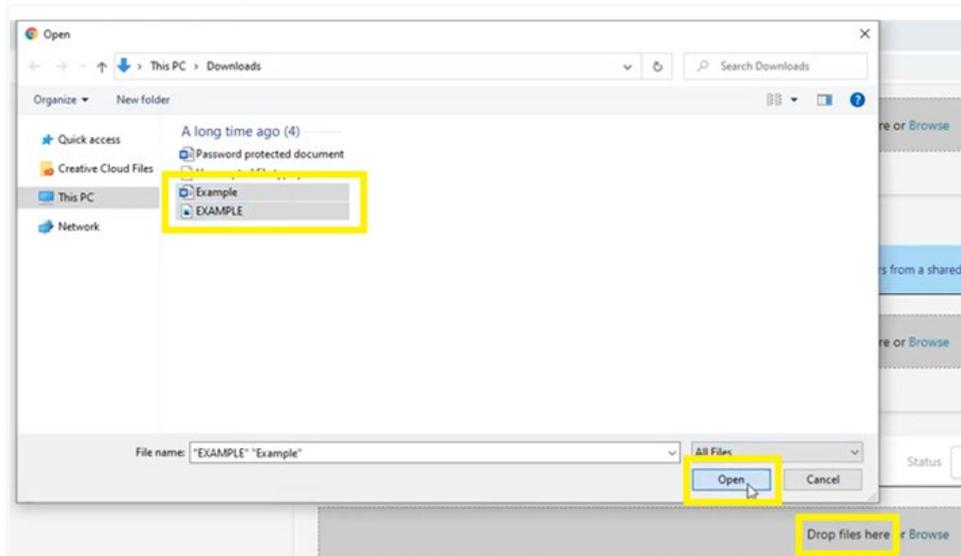
'[unit number]_[tier]_[centre number]_[candidate number]_[surname]_[first letter of first name]' e.g. '1FR1_1F_12345_0012_Smith_J'

4. Uploading files

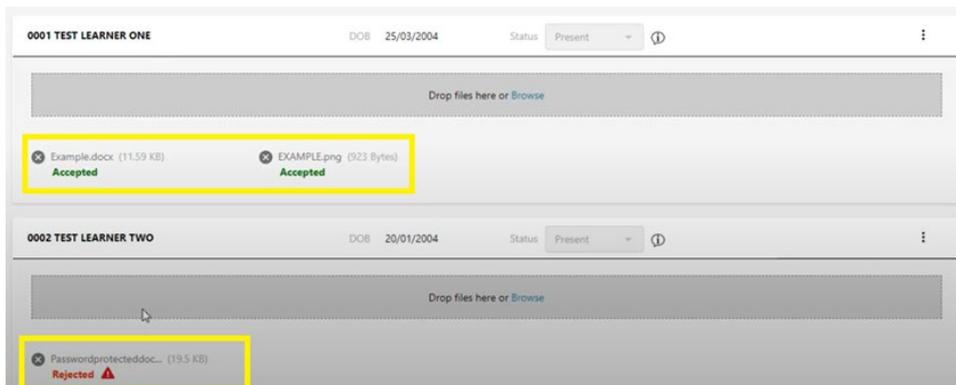
To upload learner evidence (recordings), click 'Browse' under the learner.



This will open a file explorer. Click on a file to upload or hold down the 'Ctrl' key to select multiple files then click 'Open'. Alternatively files can be dragged from your computer onto the grey area of the page, where it states 'Drop files here'.



Files uploaded will then move to 'Scanning' state. Once the checks are successful, it is updated to 'Accepted' or 'Rejected'. If the incorrect document has been uploaded, it can be removed by clicking the 'X' next to the file name.



Zip files should not be uploaded. The CTRL button can be held down whilst selecting multiple files in the file explorer if it is necessary to upload multiple files for a single learner in one go. LWT is a secure platform, so there is no need to encrypt files.

The portal accepts most of the popular file types including mp3, mp4, jpeg. A full list of accepted file types can be found [here](#).

Centres must submit one single, complete audio recording per candidate for each assessment. This recording should include the full interaction.

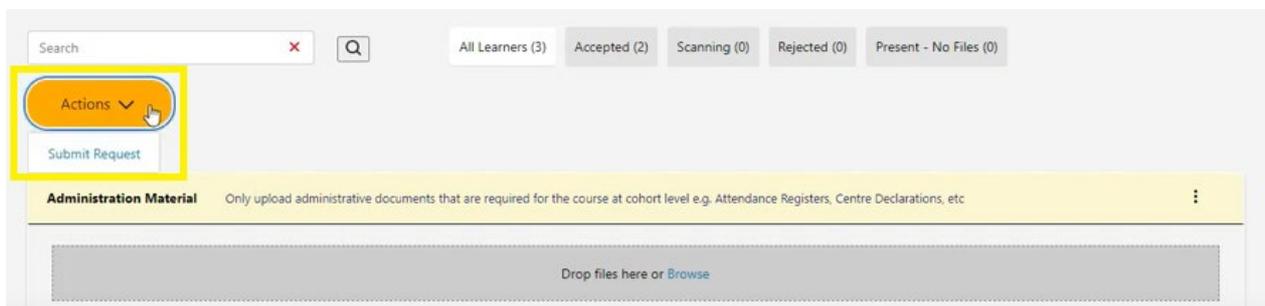
For any learners who were absent for the assessment, the centre should change their status to 'Absent' using the 'Status' dropdown. This will replace submitting a separate attendance register, which is not required.

If the learner's work is not available (for example where special consideration is being applied) the status should be changed to 'No Evidence'. Special consideration should be completed via an application following the usual process.



'Administration Material' section should only be used for documents (CSR forms) that apply to all candidates at a cohort level.

Once you have at least one file uploaded per learner and indicated their status (absent/no evidence), the 'Submit Request' option will become available at the top of the screen and from the 'In Progress' dashboard.



Once the assessments have been submitted, a confirmation message will be received. Click 'Ok' to proceed. This will send the files to the examiner, and it will no longer be possible to add, edit, or remove anything. The completed tab shows units which have been submitted for marking.



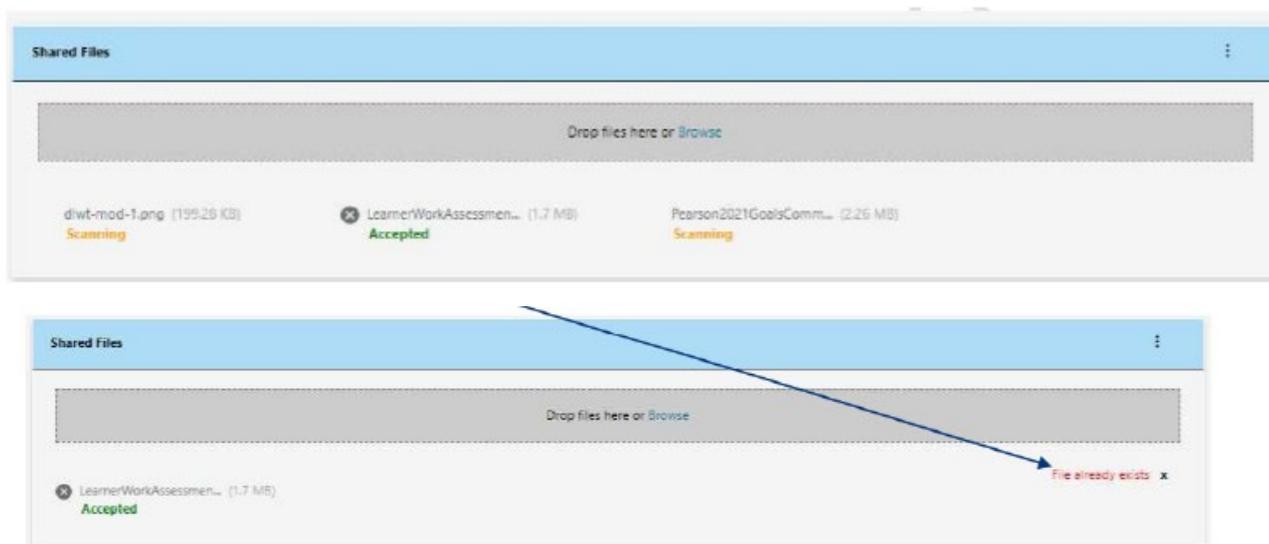
If the assessor finds that the wrong material has been uploaded, they can return the unit to the centre. The Examinations Officer should receive an email from the assessor or Pearson. The returned submissions will show in the 'In Progress' tab with a status 'Returned'. These can then be added or removed before resubmitting the files.



If incorrect documents have been uploaded and submitted, Pearson should be [contacted](#) immediately to request the submission be returned for amendment.

5. Linking a file to multiple learners

Use the 'Shared Files' feature to upload a file that must be shared between multiple learners. Files can be dragged and dropped into the grey space or browse to the required file within the centre's system.



A file cannot be uploaded directly to a learner or via the shared files functionality if another file with the same name and format has already been uploaded to that card. For example, multiple PDFs called 'speaking form' cannot be uploaded to the same learner, or within the shared file section. If this occurs, an error message is shown.

If you have any issues with the LWT system, please [contact us](#) for support.

Learner Work Transfer FAQs

How do I access Learner Work Transfer (LWT)?

Access is via Edexcel Online (EOL) - our short [video guide](#) gives step-by-step instructions on accessing Learner Work Transfer.

I am trying to log in but get an 'Access Denied' message.

You need the 'Basic Access' profile on your EOL account to access Learner Work Transfer - please check with your administrator (usually the exams officer in the centre) that you have this profile ticked.

I am not sure how to upload work to Learner Work Transfer.

Please follow the step-by-step guidance on pages 30-35 of this guide. [Training slides and a support video](#) are also available on our website. Additional information and guidance are available on our dedicated [LWT support page](#).

What files are accepted?

We support a range of common file types, which are listed [here](#). Files up to 8GB in size are accepted. Files must not be password protected - the system is secure, so password protection is not required.

I can't see all the learners for a subject on Learner Work Transfer.

Any late entries will show on LWT within 24 hours of being entered. Where late changes to entries were made, such as late tier entry changes, you may see both entries appear on your dashboard for the same candidate. You should upload the assessment files to the correct entry and mark the legacy entry as 'No evidence' in the 'Status' dropdown.

A learner I have withdrawn is still showing on Learner Work Transfer.

Please use the 'Status' dropdown to select 'No evidence' for this learner.

I cannot submit the learner work I have uploaded.

Check that all learners either have at least one file uploaded or are marked as absent. Check that all files uploaded have been accepted - any that show as rejected will need to be removed and replaced.

I realised I had uploaded the wrong file after pressing submit.

Please [contact us](#) and we will ensure that the allocated examiner returns the entry to your centre for amendments to be made.

For support with other FAQs, please see our [Learner Work Transfer FAQs page](#).

General FAQs

What is good practice when setting up exams?

The JCQ document Instructions for Conducting Examinations contains the key guidance. Exam rooms should be cool, accessible and quiet and appropriately spaced (1.25m). Any signs or materials that may aid the candidates should be removed or covered. JCQ produces official signs at this [location](#).

What happens if something goes wrong in an exam?

If an interruption occurs for any reason, the test should be allowed to continue under test conditions unless exceptional circumstances prevent this. In cases where candidates are disadvantaged, a special consideration appeal can be submitted by the Examinations Officer. If a technical issue causes the listening test to become disrupted, candidates should remain in silence without writing until the secondary device for playing the audio is put into use.

What are the rules around using keyboards?

Candidates may use keyboards in cases of special consideration or if it is their normal way of working. In cases where candidates are using a laptop or PC to complete an MFL exam, a card in the exam is permitted that has a list of keyboard shortcuts for accents and special characters etc. No other information should be printed or written on the card. The PC/laptop should not have access to the internet.

We are an international centre and our entry deadline is later than the UK and falls after the TAW two-week window; what should we do?

We would advise entering earlier in line with the UK deadlines in order to be ready in time for the TAW window.

How can Pearson be contacted directly?

The customer service portal is at <https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/contactsupport>. Safeguarding concerns can be reported [here](#).

Where can FAQs on the Digital Sequencing Tool be found?

[GCSE Modern Foreign Languages Sequencing Tool User Guide](#)

Appendix 1

Checklist – Paper 1 Speaking

Before the assessment

- Upon receipt of speaking materials from Pearson Edexcel, store securely.
- Agree candidates' thematic context choices for conversation part 1 (between 19th March – 2nd April)
- Open materials three working days before the start of the prescribed five-week assessment period.
- Plan speaking assessment materials using the Digital Sequencing Tool.
- Test recording equipment.
- **In the preparation room** Give candidates the allocated stimulus cards and a blank sheet of A4 paper to make notes (candidates can use both sides).

During the assessment

- Switch on recording equipment.
- Announce candidate name and number.
- Candidates will have one- minute preparation time, which must also be recorded.
- Announce transitions between tasks in English.
- Collect the stimulus cards and notes from the candidate on completion of the picture task.
- On completion of the assessment, announce 'End of assessment'.
- Check the recording before moving on to the next candidate.

After the assessment

- If necessary, convert recordings to an appropriate digital format.
- Upload all files onto LWT.
- All materials to be kept secure until end June 2026.
- Notes made during preparation time to be kept secure until the end of October 2026.