

Paper 3 Speaking

Cards are taken from the 1606 series

Sample 1 (22/40)

Part 1: Frame 1 Part 2: Card 4 Part 3: Frame 4

Communicative ability and content - 7

Expresses opinions without undue difficulty. Conveys detailed and relevant information. Responds well to a range of questions and expands on some ideas under discussion.

The student responds readily to the questions. Her responses are generally on the topic, although in Part 2 she answers the question in an oblique manner. Here, she gives an example of how the shopping experience was improved, contrasting it with that experienced previously. In Part 3 her responses are generally relevant, and she provides some details to support her ideas and opinions. She also responds well to the more demanding questions towards the end of the examination.

Pronunciation and fluency – 4

Pronunciation and intonation are sometimes accurate though errors may interfere with communication. Accent sometimes impedes communication. Candidate hesitates sometimes.

On occasion, the student pronounces words incorrectly, which interferes with communication: e.g. have/help; coffee/café; button; products; there have/they have. Some individual sounds are not clearly differentiated, e.g. 't' / 'th'. There is a lack of variation in intonation at sentence level which places some strain on the listener. The student's accent sometimes has an impact on communication. She is not hesitant, however.

Lexical range and accuracy – 6

Candidate uses an adequate range of structures and vocabulary. Some attempts to use complex language which are sometimes successful. Candidate may occasionally lack the resources to maintain interaction.

The student has a wide enough vocabulary at her disposal, which she uses effectively. She attempts to use more complex language, e.g., fashion sense, although not always successfully - e.g. a cappella, renewed project. She is able to maintain interaction throughout.

Grammatical range and accuracy – 5

Generally accurate using straightforward language.

Less accurate in more unfamiliar language situations.

Some error impact slightly on communication.

There are grammatical errors in the student's utterances. She displays an awareness of basic grammatical structures (e.g. present tense, there is, there are, future tenses) but she does not always produce correct sentences. In addition, the errors are not consistently the same. She is sometimes less accurate when talking about more abstract topics; however, she displays sufficient control of structures to convey her message. There are lapses in subject-verb agreement (the shop have), plurals, and when the subject is referred to a second time (plural noun/singular pronoun). There are errors in the use of prepositions. However, these do not have a significant impact on communication.

The interlocutor

The interlocutor establishes a good rapport with the student, and the examination is conducted in a relaxed atmosphere. The interlocutor follows the script, although she asks at least one question of her own. This was a closed question, and although it did not prove to be a problem for the student, this type of question has the potential to close down a conversation. It is for this reason that the interview is scripted. In Part 2, the student answers the question to some extent, but for the sake of clarity, the interlocutor should have repeated the question to ensure that the student had the opportunity to answer it directly.

Sample 2 (33/40)

Part 1: Frame 3 Part 2: Card 2 Part 3: Frame 2

Communicative ability and content - 8*Expresses opinions without undue difficulty.**Conveys detailed and relevant information.**Responds well to a range of questions and expands on some ideas under discussion.*

The student is able to convey her opinions and ideas clearly to the listener. The information she provides is relevant and on the topic. She responds well to most questions, but she does not expand or develop her ideas as fully as possible.

Pronunciation and fluency - 8*Pronunciation and intonation are generally comprehensible and clear.**Accent is noticeable but does not generally impede communication.**Candidates generally responds without undue hesitation.*

The student is comprehensible. She makes very few pronunciation errors (e.g. buses /buzzes). However, unevenness in her sentence stress, e.g. trailing endings, leads to a lack of clarity on occasion. Her accent does not impede communication. The student is hesitant on occasion, but when she is, she is not looking for words.

Lexical range and accuracy - 9*Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriately, accurately and precisely.**Candidate has appropriate linguistic resources to be able to overcome problems and maintain interaction.*

The student has a wide range of vocabulary at her disposal which she uses to good effect in order to convey her ideas. There are instances of collocation (speak freely/provide subsidies) which indicate good control over this area of the language. There are no obvious errors in word choice, although there are grammatical errors associated with some words. The student has sufficient lexical resources to maintain interaction.

Grammatical range and accuracy - 8*Generally accurate in a relatively wide range of fairly complex language.**Occasional errors evident, particularly when using more complex language.*

The student has control over a fairly wide range of grammatical structures. She is able to formulate present and past tenses with ease. She has control over several complex structures, e.g. concession – it's not that ... it's.... However, she is less accurate and competent when using hypothetical language. There are also errors in subject-verb agreement when the subject is referred to a second time, e.g. plural noun/singular pronoun, as well as in the use of countable and uncountable nouns.

Comment on the interlocutor

1. The interlocutor carries out his role adequately. He generally follows the wording on the question cards, although not always in the order given.
2. When the student asks for another topic in Part 2, the interlocutor changes to another set. This is permitted; however, the student cannot ask for any further topics.
3. In Part 1, the interlocutor asks a question of his own. The language he uses is fairly complex and could have presented problems for the student and thereby disadvantaged her. It is for this reason that the speaking test is scripted.
4. The student is given more than one minute of preparation time. In the interests of fairness, all timings should be strictly adhered to.